

THE HONG KONG BIRD REPORT 1966



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HONG KONG BIRD REPORT 1966

Records Compiled by
M. A. WEBSTER

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Edited by

E. D. Webb

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HONG KONG BIRD WATCHING SOCIETY

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INTRODUCTION

Membership is up to nearly seventy, including a good many Overseas Members who as usual are nearly all ex-Resident Members and old friends. This is the highest membership we have had.

During the year we lost Major Macfarlane who stayed long enough to see the new Check List into the hands of the printers. We are most grateful to him for bringing Major Caunter's new list up-to-date to 30th April 1966, which makes it just six years since the original Check List was completed. Mr. R.H. Hughes, who was a founder member and served on the committee from 1964 to 1966 also left. Recently we have suffered a great loss in Maura Benham who left the Colony on retirement in March. She was on the committee since its inception, was Hon. Recorder since March 1965, wrote "An Introduction to the Birds of Hong Kong", gave two courses of extra-mural lectures on birds for the University and helped the Society in many other ways. We are fortunate in obtaining in Mr. M.A. Webster an experienced successor as Hon. Recorder, and we also have a fine crop of new members.

Outings during the year were as follows:—

2nd January	Pak Tam valley, beyond Tai Mong Tsai
21st January	Mai Po/Lok Ma Chau
13th February	Long Valley, near Sheung Shui
27th February	Sek Kong woods/Lam Tsuen valley
13th March	Mai Po/Lok Ma Chau
11th April	Ping Shan/Mong Tseng
1st May	Mai Po, evening meeting
15th May	Mai Po/Lok Ma Chau
30th May	Lam Tsuen valley/Shataukok egretty

(Summer recess for birds and watchers. Too hot perhaps for organised Outings but individual members kept a good watch on things)

30th August	Mai Po/Lok Ma Chau
18th September	Mai Po, evening meeting
29th September	Mai Po/Lam Tsuen valley
17th October	Ping Shan/Luen Tak
30th October	Mai Po/Taipo Kau forestry reserve
14th November	Ping Shan/Mong Tseng

4th December Ho Chung valley
27th December Ping Shan/Mong Tseng

This again was an increase on previous years.

The weather was extremely wet in the early summer, with disastrous floods and landslides on 12th June. No strange sightings were recorded in this period, perhaps because everyone was far too busy to notice. During the last part of the year there was prolonged drought, accompanied by a notable absence of some expected winter visitors.

The new Check List was on sale in late October.

During the year, the Hong Kong Bird Ringing Project under Mr. F.O.P. Hechtel ringed 2,026 birds of 78 species. Work was carried out mainly on the Mong Tseng peninsula during the winter months and at Mai Po during the spring and autumn migrations.

Mr. Brian van Buuren kindly gave us a copy of "A Guide to the Birds of Ceylon" by G.M. Henry; this fits in well with our books on the birds of Burma, India, Malaya, Borneo and Japan.

We have bought Vaurie's "Birds of the Palearctic Fauna—non-passeriformes". And added a much-needed new storey to our bookcase in the British Council Library.

Major Macfarlane gave a lecture before the Royal Asiatic Society on the effects on bird life in the Colony of the encroachments of man, with suggestions for reconciling their conflicting claims. Maura Benham gave another series of extra-mural lectures for the University and proved a good recruiting sergeant for the Society.

Hong Kong was represented at the International Council for Bird Preservation conference at Cambridge in July by Arthur Walton, co-founder, first chairman and second Hon. Life Member. As one of the results of the conference, the I.C.B.P. has approached the Hong Kong Government urging the preservation of the Mai Po marshes and increased protection for the egretty at Shataukok.

E. D. W.

REPORT ON THE BIRDS, 1966.

This year's report is based on the new Revised Check-list of the Birds of Hongkong (which has, incidentally, done a good proportion of the Recorder's work for him), and numbering follows the new list. Both of the year's new species, the Collared Siva and the Japanese Robin, are already included in the new Checklist.

The growing interest in the birdlife of Hongkong is exemplified by the number of records submitted, which was almost double the previous maximum. This has enabled a more accurate estimate of certain species, which in turn has affected the following grouping of species (requested by a distinguished British ornithologist). It should be pointed out that 1966 records have been included in this breakdown, which does not therefore tally exactly with the Checklist. Additionally, some species occur in more than one category.

Total species recorded:—	348	
Residents:—	51	
Summer visitors:—	15	
Occasional nesters:—	4	
Passage migrants:—	84	
Winter visitors:—	119	
Irregular visitors:—	100	(most of these are probably regular passage migrants).
Now extinct:—	1	

In 1966, 239 species were recorded. Apart from the usual crop of "rarities" which a restricted geographical area is bound to produce, the following species have shown noticeable increases:—Golden Eagle, Bonelli's Eagle, Moorhen, Watercock, Eastern Little Stint, Himalayan Cuckoo, Common Kingfisher, Pekin Robin, Ince's Paradise Flycatcher, Styan's Grasshopper-Warbler, Von Schrenck's Reed-Warbler, Rubythroat, Fire-Breasted Flowerpecker, Common Rosefinch. First breeding records have been made for the following species:— Little Grebe, Banded Rail, possibly the Jay, and probably the Watercock.

Note by the Hon. Recorder:—

The meticulous way in which records have been kept and collated in the past, both by the previous Recorder, and by the editors of the Checklist, have very much simplified my task, both

as regards accuracy and presentation. I have however considered it proper to introduce a number of innovations which require some explanation.

1) I have almost entirely eliminated references to subspecies, unless field distinctions are indisputable (e.g. the Blue and Red-bellied Rock Thrushes). Most of the other species concerned, notably the Yellow Wagtail group, are at best clinal, and at worst (from a Recorder's point of view) in such a stage of evolutionary development that even where one form is dominant, variants are so common that subspecific differentiation is no longer valid. The issue is further complicated by the fact that a large proportion of our birds reach us as migrants in immature plumage, when the relative abundance of different forms cannot be determined.

2) The initiation of a Ringing scheme has enabled the status of some species to be re-examined, and this has been noted in the Systematic list.

3) Two groups in particular, the genera *Aquila* and *Phylloscopus*, present such problems for field identification that they necessitate special treatment. In the first instance, sightings are listed under types rather than under species (any comments would be welcomed!) For *phylloscopi*, all sight records without sufficient description to indicate that the birds were in very fresh plumage have been excluded.

4) The two Sand-plovers have been grouped together, as it is not normally possible to distinguish them in the field. The only safe distinction, by bill-length, is not normally adequate unless both species are present within 5 yards of the observer.

5) Species 57 in the Checklist consists, in my opinion, of two distinct species, *A. virgatus* and *A. gularis*, which have completely different wing-formulae. This was brought to light during the examination of a female *gularis* caught in November 1966. Again, species 269 should probably be divided into *L. ochotensis* and *L. pleskei*. *Pleskei* is heavily striated, has a different wing-formula, and a much more massive bill (almost reminiscent of *acrocephalus*). *Ochotensis* shows little striation, and the breeding-ranges probably overlap.

Finally, a few requests from the Hon. Recorder:—

- 1) Please submit as many records as possible, even of common species.
- 2) Please give your field descriptions of rarities, and particularly of difficult groups e.g. *aquila*, *locustella*, *phylloscopus*.
- 3) Please report all eagles, even if you can't identify them.
- 4) Breeding records are badly needed for most species.
- 5) Please use the numbering system of the **new** Checklist.
- 6) Please submit all 1967 records before January 15th, 1968.

M. A. W.

SYSTEMATIC LIST, 1966

1. Red-Throated Diver *Gavia Stellata*

Two divers, almost certainly of this species, off Castle Peak, on Nov. 20 (REH).

2. Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps Cristatus*

Up to 40 in Deep Bay throughout January and February (AMM, DGR, FOPH, EDW, MEMB) with 120 on Feb. 20 (AMM). Three in Deep Bay on Mar. 6 (AMM, EDW). Two in same area on Dec. 27th (S.O.) and 22 on Dec. 30 (FOPH).

4. Little Grebe *Podiceps Ruficollis*

Up to 40 at Tai Lam Chung Reservoir in January and February (AMM, EDW, DGR). Breeding proved for the first time in Hongkong, at Mai Po marshes (at least two pairs), and San Tin (at least one pair) (AMM). The maximum number of adults at Mai Po in the summer was six (AMM). Additionally one bird was heard on the Ping Shan marshes on July 24 (AMM), and three seen in the same area on Aug. 7 (DGR). One on the new reservoir above Sek Kong on Oct. 8 (REH), two at the same place on Oct. 20 (DJG), two at the feeder reservoir above Tai Lam Chung on Nov. 5 (DJG), five at Jubilee Reservoir on Dec. 9 (DJG) and Dec. 24 (EDW), and about 20 at Tai Lam Chung on Dec. 26 (EDW).

7. Spotted-Billed Pelican *Pelicanus Philippensis*

Up to 55 in the Deep Bay area up to Mar. 6 (AMM, DGR, MEMB). Two in the same area on Dec. 31 (FOPH, MAW).

8. Cormorant *Phalacrocorax Carbo*

Up to six in the Deep Bay area in January to March (AMM, MEMB, EDW, DGR). One off Ping Chau, Lantau, on Mar. 15 (MEMB, EDW). One on Tai Lam Chung on Feb. 20 (AMM). Up to 70 off Hayling Chau on Mar. 19-20 (DGR). About 130 off Lantau on Feb. 16 (EA). On July 11, one juvenile off Gordon's Hard, and two adults in Deep Bay (EDW). From Nov. 13 to the end of the year, records of individual birds from several coastal areas in the New Territories (MEMB, REH, EDW, DGR) with 12 in Deep Bay on Dec. 31 (FOPH, MAW).

12. Yellow Bittern *Ixobrychus Sinensis*

Recorded at Mai Po and Luen Tak from Apr. 21 (EDW) to Oct. 17 (FOPH). A minimum of 10 pairs at Mai Po and 10 pairs at Luen Tak estimated to be breeding (AMM).

13. Chestnut Bittern *Ixobrychus Cinnamomeus*

Up to three on the Deep Bay marshes—extreme dates Apr. 28 to Aug. 31 (FOPH, AMM, EDW). One at Mong Tseng on Aug. 8 (FOPH). One ringed at Mai Po on Sept. 29 (FOPH).

14. Black Bittern *Ixobrychus Flavicollis*
One at Luen Tak on Sept. 17 (EDW).

17. Chinese Pond Heron *Ardeola Bacchus*
Reported throughout the year in the New Territories. 103 nests counted at Sha Tau Kok on June 5 (MEMB, FOPH) One at Aberdeen on Apr. 4 (RAIW).

18. Cattle Egret *Ardeola Ibis*
Recorded from Feb. 13 (Long Valley—S.O.) to Sept. 19 (Mai Po—S.O.). 31 nests counted at Sha Tau Kok on June 5 (MEMB, FOPH). At least 250 near Mai Po on Sept. 7 (AMM).

19. Little Green Heron *Boturides Striatus*
Up to three on the Deep Bay marshes from May 7 to Sept. 7 (AMM, EDW, DGR). One near Lo Wu on Sept. 9 (DGR).

20. Little Egret *Egretta Garzetta*
Throughout the year in the New Territories. 31 nests counted at Sha Tau Kok on June 5 (MEMB, FOPH).

22. Swinhoe's Egret *Egretta Eulophotes*
Two pairs nested at Sha Tau Kok (DGR, EDW, MEMB, AMM, FOPH).

23. Reef Egret *Egretta Sacra*
Several at Kai Tak on Jan. 28 (FOPH). One at Bluff Head on Feb. 20 (REH). One at Cheung Chau on Mar. 13 (REH). One at Jubilee Reservoir on Dec. 24 (EDW).

24. Great Egret *Egretta Alba*
In the Deep Bay area up to Apr. 28, and from Sept. 4 to the end of the year. One at Mai Po on Jun. 5 (AMM).

25. Grey Heron *Ardea Cinerea*
Most reports are from January to March, and October to December, but 18 were at Mai Po on Apr. 27 (AMM), 2 at Mai Po on May 8 (AMM), and one at Ping Shan on June 5, July 24, and Aug. 6 and 31 (AMM).

26. Purple Heron *Ardea Purpurea*
One at Mai Po on Jan. 30 (EDW). Several records from April to October from the Deep Bay marshes, with a maximum of six on Oct. 30 (SO).

28. Black Stork *Ciconia Nigra*
Two at the mouth of the Shum Chun River on Feb. 6 (AMM), and one at the same place on Oct. 16 (FOPH).

29. White Ibis *Threskiornis Melanocephalus*
One at the mouth of the Shum Chun River on Jan. 9 and 16 (AMM, DGR).

31. **Lesser Spoonbill** *Platalea Minor*
 Three at Mai Po on Mar. 27 (SO). A flock of c. 30 over the coast near Tai Lam Chung on Apr. 3 (EA).
33. **Yellow-Nib Duck** *Anas Poecilorhyncha*
 One over Deep Bay on Feb. 6 (AMM) Two at Mai Po on Sept. 11 (AMM, DGR), a new early date. Five at Mai Po on Sept. 25 (DGR).
35. **Falcated Teal** *Anas Falcata*
 About 30 at the mouth of the Shum Chun River on Jan. 21 (SO). About 20 in the same area on Apr. 3 (EDW). Parties of up to 15 near Mai Po on Dec. 23 (JAO).
36. **Teal** *Anas Crecca*
 Five off Lo Wu on Feb. 25 (AMM). Three at Mai Po on Sept. 25 (DGR, FOPH). Two at Mai Po on Nov. 27 (DGR). A drake at Tai Lam Chung on Dec. 26 (EDW). "A good autumn migration" at Mong Tseng and Pok Wai (JAO).
38. **Garganey** *Anas Querquedula*
 At Mai Po, ten on Mar. 27, one drake on Apr. 17, and one drake (probably a winged bird) on June 5 (AMM). One at Mai Po on Sept. 4, five at Ping Shan on Sept. 10, and two drakes at Mai Po on Sept. 11 (AMM, DGR).
40. **Pintail** *Anas Acuta*
 A female at Mai Po on Sept. 29 (EDW, REH).
43. **Scaup** *Aythya Marila*
 One near Lung Sheung Wan on Jan. 9 (JAO). One off Sai-kung on Dec. 29 (JAO).
46. **Red Breasted Merganser** *Mergus Serrator*
 c. 20 in Deep Bay off Sha Kong on Feb. 20 (AMM, DGR).
47. **Shelduck** *Tadorna Tadorna*
 A small flock was present at the mouth of the Shum Chun River from Jan. 9 to Mar. 27, with a maximum of 24 birds seen on Jan. 21 (AMM, DGR, EDW, MEMB).
52. **Black-Eared Kite** *Milvus Migrans*
 Common and widespread.
53. **Brahminy Kite** *Haliastur Indus*
 One bird frequented the May Road area from July 3 to Oct. 9 (FOPH). This is the second colony record.
54. **Buzzard** *Buteo Buteo*
 Common in many areas up to Mar. 23 (RAIW). Single birds at Ting Kau on Apr. 15 (DGR), and Shataukok on May 30 (AMM). Common again from Oct. 17 (FOPH, DGR) to the end of the year.

56. **Sparrowhawk** *Accipiter Nisus*
 Only one spring record, a bird over Boundary Street, Kowloon on Apr. 2 (DGR). First autumn record, Mong Tseng, Sept. 25 (EDW), and thereafter single birds in scattered areas throughout the Colony.
57. **Japanese Sparrowhawk** *Accipiter Gularis*
 An immature female hit the Peak Tram wires near Macdonnell Road on Nov. 2, and was recovered by ELH. The bird was identified by FOPH and MAW, cleaned and finally released on Nov. 16. The wing-formula eliminates *accipiter virgatus*, which is now normally considered a distinct species from *gularis*. This appears to be the first Colony record for which the species has been definitely established, though there are two previous records which may be either *gularis* or *virgatus*.
58. **Goshawk** *Accipiter Gentilis*
 Three spring records—one on Feb. 18 at Tai Po Kau (MEMB, FOPH), one at Tai Lam Chung on Feb. 20 (AMM), one on April 11 at Mong Tseng (SO). One at Luen Tak on Oct. 17 (DGR), the first October record in the Colony.
- 60-63. **The Genus Aquila**
 1966 records are classified as follows:—
60. **Golden Eagle** *Aquila Chrysaetos*
 Probably an immature at Mai Po on Jan. 9 (EDW). This bird was seen overhead, and showed pale tail with dark terminal band, and pale patch at base of dark primaries. In addition the following: One adult at Mai Po on Jan. 9 (AMM, DGR), one at Mong Tseng on Jan. 11 (FOPH), two adults at Lo Wu on Feb. 13 (SO), one adult at Sek Kong on Feb. 18 (AMM), one adult at Fanling on Mar. 4 (AMM). One at Starling Inlet on Nov. 13 (REH).
61. **Imperial Eagle** *Aquila Heliaca*
 One at Mai Po on Nov. 6 (DGR). An adult, with a pale head and white shoulders. Seen again on Nov. 20 (EDW).
63. **Spotted Eagle** *Aquila Clanga*
 A juvenile at Mai Po on Jan. 9 (AMM, DGR); description includes the following remarks: "two pale wing-bars" (AMM, DGR). "other white markings above" (AMM), "definitely no white on rump" (AMM), "faint white rump and vent" (DGR). Although both observers consider this to be a rapax, I consider that the second, and fourth (if correct) characters mentioned rule out rapax; both species have the double wing-bars. AMM also reports a similar bird from Kam Tin on Jan. 13, Sek Kong on Feb. 8, Mong Tseng on Feb. 20 (with DGR), and Mai Po on Mar. 6. Spotted Eagles with white upper tail-coverts were seen on Feb. 13 at Lowu (AMM, DGR, SO), and Feb. 20 at Mong Tseng (AMM, DGR).

(Except where the observer's initials are underlined, all identifications have been made by the Recorder from field-notes submitted to him; it should be noted that Hongkong lies well outside the normal range of chrysaetos and rapax, and neither of these species is likely to occur with any frequency. But since very little field-work has been done in China over the last 30 years, these species may have extended their range during that period. Certainly most of the previous records of chrysaetos are well documented; on the contrary, all past records of rapax which I have been able to examine are open to doubt, and some (those which mention white upper tail-coverts) are undoubtedly clanga, while others (those with a conspicuous pale patch at the base of the primaries) are probably chrysaetos. Many observers have obviously been misled by La Touche's erroneous identification—and none mention the rusty-yellow patch on the nape which seems to be the only safe characteristic of rapax).

64. Bonelli's Eagle *Hieraetus Fasciatus*

Two at Mong Tseng on Jan. 10 (DGR). One over Happy Valley on Jan. 30 (C & ED). One at Tai Lam Chung on Feb. 20 (AMM). One at Ho Chung on Mar. 13 (EDW, SO). One at Mong Tseng on Apr. 11 (SO). One at the Upper Aberdeen Reservoir on Apr. 15 (EDW).

66. White-Bellied Sea-Eagle *Haliaeetus Leucogaster*

Frequent records from many parts of the colony (MEMB, RAIW, AMM, EDW, MAW, DGR). Suspected breeding near Tai-O, and on Shek Wu Chau (per MEMB).

68. Serpent Eagle *Spilornis Cheela*

One in the Lam Tsuen Valley on Sept. 29 (EDW, REH, SO), the tenth Colony record.

69. Marsh Harrier *Circus Aeruginosus*

All records are from Deep Bay area. At least four birds (a male, a female, and two immatures) spent the winter of 1965-1966 in this area, individuals being recorded on 16 occasions up to Apr. 30 (MEMB, EDW, REH, AMM, DGR). The first autumn record was a female at Ping Shan on Oct. 17 (DGR); five further records for the latter part of the year (EDW, MEMB).

70. Pied Harrier *Circus Melanoleucos*

A young male at Mai Po on Feb. 6 and Mar. 27 (AMM).

70.—72. "Ring-tail" Harriers—females of Pied, Hen, or Montagu's.

Harriers *Circus Spp.*

One at Lowu on Feb. 13 (SO). One at Mai Po on Mar. 27 (AMM, MEMB). Two at Mai Po on Apr. 4 (EDW), and one at the same place on Apr. 17 (AMM). One at Ping Shan on Oct. 17 (SO), one at Mong Tseng on Oct. 30 (SO), one over Deep Bay on Nov. 27 (EDW).

74. Osprey *Pandion Haliaetus*

All records are of single birds over the Deep Bay area, except for two birds over Deep Bay on Jan. 22 (EDW), and one in the Tai Lam Chung area on June 16 and 17 (DGR), the latter being an unusual date. Apart from this, the latest spring record was on May 8 (DGR, AMM), and the earliest autumn record on Aug. 6 (AMM).

76. Hobby *Falco Subbuteo*

Two females at Sek Kong on Jan. 31 (AMM), a male at Tsai Tseng on Mar. 13 (AMM). A female at Mai Po on Sept. 4 (AMM), and a male there on Sept. 11 (DGR). Another bird at Mai Po on Sept. 25 (DGR), and a male at Ping Shan on Nov. 9 (EDW).

77. Peregrine Falcon *Falco Peregrinus*

Most records come from built-up areas, notably one which was captured after chasing a pigeon into a house on Barker Road (MDIG), and birds which roosted on the Bank of China Building in the latter part of the year (EDW), and on the Peninsula Hotel in November and December (DGR).

79. Merlin *Falco Columbarius*

A female flew into a window on Hayling Chau on Sept 27 (per DGR), a new early date.

81. Kestrel *Falco Tinnunculus*

Numerous records up to April 8 and from Sept. 23 to the end of the year, mainly in the New Territories.

82. Francolin *Francolinus Pintadeanus*

Heard in many areas from March to August, and a few seen. Two sightings reported in December (SO, DJG).

83. Quail *Coturnix Coturnix*

Two at Sheung Shui on Mar. 3 (JAO). Single birds reported from Mong Tseng/Ping Shan on Oct. 9, Nov. 9, Nov. 14, Nov. 27 (EDW, SO).

85. Barred Button Quail *Turnix Suscitator*

One trapped at Mong Tseng on Dec. 20 (FOPH).

87. Common Crane *Grus Grus*

Three on the Mai Po marshes on Oct. 30 (SO, FOPH, MEMB, EDW), the fifth Colony record.

88. Water Rail *Rallus Aquaticus*

Single birds at Luen Tak on Sept. 17, and Mai Po on Sept. 18 (EDW).

89. Banded Rail *Rallus Striatus*

Reported frequently from the Mai Po marshes up to Sept. 19. A slightly damaged egg found on Apr. 27, and three chicks on Aug. 30 (AMM, MEMB), are the first proved breeding records for Hong Kong.

90. **Baillon's Crake** *Porzana Pusilla*
One on the Ping Shan marshes on Sept. 10 (AMM), the third Colony record. One trapped at Mai Po on Sept. 29 (FOPH), the fourth Colony record.
93. **White Breasted Waterhen** *Amaurornis Phoenicurus*
Common in the New Territories.
94. **Moorhen** *Gallinula Chloropus*
This species is said to be a winter visitor to the Colony, but the majority of 1966 records are of summering/breeding birds. The exceptions are:—one at Lowu, and one at Fanling on Feb. 13 (AMM, MEMB), a juvenile at Mai Po on Oct. 30 (FOPH) and one at Ping Shan on Nov. 14 (SO). All other records are from the Deep Bay marshes between April 28 and Sept. 10 (MEMB, AMM, DGR, EDW, REH). Breeding records (all from AMM) can be summarised as follows:—three broods at Mai Po (June 5, Aug. 30 (two)), one near San Tin (Sept 1), and six near Luen Tak (July 24, Aug. 6 (three), Aug. 31 (two)).
95. **Watercock** *Gallicrex Cinerea*
Five at Mai Po on May 30 (AMM), including 4 males. Frequent records from Mai Po, Ping Shan, and Luen Tak, throughout the summer (AMM, DGR) with a maximum of 16 at Ping Shan on Aug. 6 (eight males, five females, and three possible juveniles) (AMM). This is the first indication that the Watercock may breed in Hong Kong; it was previously regarded as an "occasional visitor". The last record at Mai Po was one on Sept. 29 (REH). Apart from these areas, the only records are one near San Tin on Sept. 1 (AMM), and one in Long Valley on Sept. 9 (AMM, DGR).
96. **Coot** *Fulica Atra*
One at San Hui on Jan. 3 and 4 (EA). Two at Lok Ma Chau on Feb. 13 (AMM). Two near San Tin on Sept. 1 (AMM). One at Ping Shan on Oct. 17 (MEMB, SO). One near Sha Kong on Nov. 27 (EDW). Three at Mai Po on Dec. 31 (FOPH, MAW).
97. **Pheasant-Tailed Jacana** *Hydrophasianus Chirurgus*
A male at Ping Shan on Sept. 5 (AMM), and one in the same area on Oct. 17 (EDW, MEMB, DGR, SO). Two at Ping Shan on Nov. 6 (EDW).
98. **Painted Snipe** *Rostratula Bengalensis*
A male shot by a hunter at Mai Po on Sept. 26 (per FOPH). Considered an "average season" by hunters (JAO).
103. **Little Ringed Plover** *Charadrius Dubius*
Common on the Deep Bay marshes up to April 14, and from Aug. 30 to end of year. Maximum c. 80 on Nov. 13 (MEMB, FOPH). Reported also from Yuen Long and Castle Peak (DGR, AMM).

104. **Kentish Plover** *Charadrius Alexandrinus*
Common on the Deep Bay marshes up to Apr. 24, and from Sept. 7. About 40 at Kai Tak on Jan. 28 (FOPH).
105. **Greater Sand-Plover** *Charadrius Leschenaultii*
106. **Mongolian Sand-Plover** *Charadrius Mongolus*
Common at Mai Po from Mar. 6 to May 30, and from July 17 to Nov. 13.
108. **Grey Plover** *Charadrius Squatarola*
Small numbers (maximum 14) at Mai Po up to May 15; one at Mai Po on Oct. 30 (MEMB, EDW, SO), and three there on Dec. 31 (FOPH, MAW).
109. **Asiatic Golden Plover** *Charadrius Dominicus*
Up to five at Mai Po from Apr. 17 to 24 (AMM, DGR). Up to six at Mai Po from Aug. 28 to end of year. Five at Castle Peak on Oct. 8, and one there on Oct. 10 (DGR).
110. **Turnstone** *Arenaria Interpres*
Up to six at Mai Po from Apr. 17 to May 22, (AMM, DGR, FOPH, MEMB, EDW). Up to eight there from Aug. 28 to Sept. 18 (AMM, DGR, EDW, MEMB).
111. **Fantail Snipe** *Gallinago Gallinago*
112. **Pintail Snipe** *Gallinago Stenura*
113. **Swinhoe's Snipe** *Gallinago Megala*
Up to Apr. 30 and from Sept. 9 to end of year. Common on the Deep Bay marshes, with odd records elsewhere in the New Territories. One at Hong Kong stadium on Oct. 16 (DGR).
Positive identifications (from wildfowlers' bags) as follows:—
111. Seven on Feb. 13 (Lowu), one on Sept. 25 (Mai Po), eight on Sept. 10 (Ping Shan).
112. One on Oct. 18 (Luen Tak).
116. **Woodcock** *Scolopax Rusticola*
One at Ping Shan on Oct. 17 (DGR, MEMB, EDW, SO). Considered a good year by hunters (JAO).
117. **Curlew** *Numenius Arquata*
Seen at Mai Po up to May 1, and from Oct. 30. Maximum seventeen on Jan. 30 (EDW).
118. **Australian Curlew** *Numenius Madagascariensis*
Two at Mai Po on Apr. 25 (AMM), the first record since 1959.
119. **Whimbrel** *Numenius Phaeopus*
Up to 100 at Mai Po from Apr. 17 to May 1, and up to 40 from Aug. 14 to Oct. 30 (a new late date).

121. **Black-Tailed Godwit** *Limosa Limosa*
Four near San Tin on Apr. 2 (REH). Seven at Mai Po on May 1 (SO). One on Sept. 7 and one on Sept 11 at Mai Po (AMM, DGR).
122. **Bar-Tailed Godwit** *Limosa Lapponica*
One at Mai Po on Apr. 21 (AMM, DGR), and one in the same area on Sept. 11 (DGR).
123. **Green Sandpiper** *Tringa Ochropus*
Widespread in the New Territories up to Apr. 26, and from Sept. 2 to end of year. Most records are of single birds, though parties of up to ten were recorded on several occasions, with about 25 in Long Valley on Sept. 9 (AMM, DGR).
124. **Wood Sandpiper** *Tringa Glareola*
Most records come from the Deep Bay marshes, with up to 50 birds between Mar. 3 and May 1, and up to 40 between Aug. 31 and Nov. 27. Two or three at Castle Peak on Oct. 8 and 10 (DGR). Two at Mai Po on July 17 (AMM) provide the second July record for the Colony.
125. **Common Sandpiper** *Tringa Hypoleucos*
Widespread throughout the New Territories up to May 8 and from July 17 to end of year. A few records from the Harbour area.
126. **Redshank** *Tringa Totanus*
Five at Mai Po on Jan. 20 (EDW). Up to 50 on the Deep Bay marshes from Mar. 27 to May 30, and up to 40 there from Aug. 1 to Sept. 29. One at Mai Po on Nov. 20 (EDW).
127. **Spotted Redshank** *Tringa Erythropus*
One at Mai Po on Feb. 6 (AMM). A total of 135 + at Lok Ma Chau on Feb. 13 (AMM). Up to six at Mai Po between Mar. 27 and Apr. 27 (AMM, EDW). Six at Mai Po on Sept. 29 (EDW, REH). Six at Luen Tak on Dec. 27 (EDW). Over 100 on the Mai Po marshes on Dec. 31 (FOPH, MAW).
128. **Greenshank** *Tringa Nebularia*
Up to 20 on the Deep Bay marshes up to May 15, and up to 25 there from Aug. 28 to Oct. 30. Six at Mai Po on Dec. 31 (FOPH, MAW).
129. **Marsh Sandpiper** *Tringa Stagnatilis*
c. 25 at Mai Po on Apr. 17, and 20 there on Apr. 18 (AMM). Up to 3 seen there until May 1. One on the Deep Bay marshes between Aug. 30 and Sept. 25.
130. **Grey-Rumped Sandpiper** *Tringa Brevipes*
Up to ten at Mai Po from Apr. 17 to May 30. One there on Sept. 11, and again on Sept 25 (AMM, DGR).

131. **Terek Sandpiper** *Tringa Terek*
Up to 40 at Mai Po from Mar. 27 to May 30, and up to 20 on the autumn migration from Aug. 14 to Oct. 10.
132. **Knot** *Calidris Canutus*
Up to 20 at Mai Po from Apr. 17 to May 25. Four there on Sept. 7 (AMM).
133. **Great Knot** *Calidris Tenuirostris*
Up to 22 at Mai Po from Apr. 17 to May 8, and up to 13 there from Aug. 28 to Sept. 11.
134. **Eastern Little Stint** *Calidris Ruficollis*
Up to 80 between Mar. 27 and May 30, and up to 25 from Aug. 1 to end of year, all on the Deep Bay marshes. On Nov. 13, at least 90 birds in the same area (FOPH, MEMB). The frequent records for November, and one in December are unprecedented, and suggest that a few birds may winter here.
136. **Temminck's Stint** *Calidris Temminckii*
About 30 at Ping Shan on Nov. 6 (EDW), and about 40 there on Nov. 9 (EDW). About 20 at Mai Po on Nov. 20 (EDW). About 12 at Ping Shan on Nov. 29 (EDW). Ten at Mai Po on Dec. 31 (MAW, FOPH).
137. **Sharp-Tailed Sandpiper** *Calidris Acuminata*
Two at Mai Po on May 8 (AMM, DGR), and 4 there on May 22 (EDW).
138. **Dunlin** *Calidris Alpina*
Up to 35 on the Deep Bay marshes to May 1, and up to 20 from Sept. 7 to end of year.
139. **Curlew Sandpiper** *Calidris Ferruginea*
Small numbers between Apr. 17 and May 27, with a maximum of 12 on May 8. Up to 7 between Sept. 7 and Sept. 29. All on the Deep Bay marshes.
140. **Sanderling** *Crocethia Alba*
Four or five at Mai Po on Apr. 10 (EDW).
141. **Spoon-Billed Sandpiper** *Eurynorhynchus Pygmaeus*
Two at Mai Po on Apr. 17 (AMM), and again on May 5 (AMM, DGR).
142. **Broad-Billed Sandpiper** *Limicola Falcinellus*
About 12 at Mai Po on May 8 (AMM, DGR) and 10 there on May 22 (EDW). Up to 40 there between Aug. 28 and Oct. 30.
143. **Ruff** *Philomachus Pugnax*
One at Mai Po on Sept. 11, Sept. 18 and Oct. 12 (AMM, EDW, DGR, MEMB, SO).

144. **Red-Necked Phalarope** *Phalaropus Lobatus*
 About 45 off Lantau on Apr. 19 (AMM, EA), and about 70 off Peng Chau and Cheung Chau on Apr. 22 (EA). One at Mai Po on Sept. 18 (EDW, MEMB).
145. **Black-Winged Stilt** *Himantopus Himantopus*
 One at Mong Tseng on Apr. 22 (FOPH), one on Castle Peak Bay on June 2 and 4 (EA), and one at Ping Shan on Nov. 9 (EDW).
147. **Collared Pratincole** *Glareola Pratincola*
 One at Brick Hill on Mar. 3 (RAIW), and one at Mai Po on May 22 (EDW).
148. **Herring Gull** *Larus Argentatus*
 Frequent records for the first part of the year, up to 100 being seen in Deep Bay and in Hong Kong harbour. The latest date was April 2, with an exceptional record of one adult (probably mongolicus) in Castle Peak Bay on May 20 (EA). The first winter record is from Cheung Chau on Nov. 27 (REH). No other records until Dec. 27, when about 40 appeared in Hong Kong harbour (EDW, REH), the numbers increasing to about 200 on Dec. 31 (FOPH, MAW).
152. **Black-Headed Gull** *Larus Ridibundus*
 Common in Deep Bay and Castle Peak Bay up to April 10 (EDW), and again from Dec. 10 to the end of the year. Three in Hong Kong Harbour on Dec. 31 (FOPH, MAW).
154. **White-Winged Black Tern** *Chlidonias Leucoptera*
 An adult at Mai Po on May 30 (AMM).
156. **Gull-Billed Tern** *Gelochelidon Nilotica*
 Up to 11 at Mai Po from April 3 to June 5. Six at Mai Po on Aug. 1 (EDW).
157. **Caspian Tern** *Hydroprogne Caspia*
 One off Mai Po on Jan. 21 (EDW, AMM, MEMB, SO). Up to 5 there between Mar. 6 and May 22. Fourteen at Taipo on Nov. 13 (DGR).
158. **Common Tern** *Sterna Hirundo*
 A party of c. 8 just north of Tai O, Lantau, on April 19 (AMM), the third Colony record.
159. **Black-Naped Tern** *Sterna Sumatrana*
 One at Mai Po on May 1 (EDW, SO).
160. **Little Tern** *Sterna Albifrons*
 Up to 28 at Mai Po between April 17 and May 15. Single birds at Mai Po on Aug. 28 (EDW), and Sept. 18 (EDW, MEMB, SO), and one at San Tin on Sept. 25 (DGR).

164. **Rufous Turtle-Dove** *Streptopelia Orientalis*
 Up to 10 daily until Mar. 3 at Taipo Kau (LR). Two at King's Park on Jan. 29 (RJB). One at Brick Hill on Feb. 17 and Mar. 9 (RAIW). Two at Mong Tseng on Feb. 19 (REH), and one there on Mar. 16 (FOPH). Two at Caroline Hill on Nov. 10 (FOPH).
165. **Spotted Dove** *Streptopelia Chinensis*
 Common and widespread.
166. **Red Turtle-Dove** *Streptopelia Tranquebarica*
 Three near Silver Strand on Dec. 26 (JAO).
167. **Rose-Ringed Parakeet** *Psittacula Krameri*
 Only two reports from Hongkong island, one bird at Government House on Mar. 5 (DGR), and one at Repulse Bay on July 28 (REH). All other records are from the Mong Tseng/Ping Shan area, where up to six birds were seen on several occasions throughout the year.
168. **Cuckoo** *Cuculus Canorus*
 A male near Mong Tseng on Aug. 21 (MEMB, FOPH, ELH).
169. **Himalayan Cuckoo** *Cuculus Saturatus*
 One in the Lam Tsuen Valley on Apr. 3 (AMM, EDW). One at Tai Po Kau on Apr. 20 (AMM). One at Castle Peak monastery on May 5 (DGR). All were males. There have been only three previous records for the Colony.
170. **Indian Cuckoo** *Cuculus Micropterus*
 Reported from various parts of the New Territories, including Lantau and Stonecutters Island (AMM, DGR, FOPH, REH, MEMB). Extreme dates Apr. 19 to Oct. 2.
172. **Plaintive Cuckoo** *Cacomantis Merulinus*
 Widespread during the summer in the New Territories and on Hongkong Island. Extreme dates Feb. 25 to Aug. 7.
175. **Koel** *Eudynamis Scolopacea*
 Reported throughout the New Territories from Feb. 2 to Sept. 26. Heard at Deepwater Bay on May 16 and July 20 (MEMB).
176. **Crow-Pheasant** *Centropus Sinensis*
 Common and widespread.
177. **Lesser Crow-Pheasant** *Centropus Bengalensis*
 Widespread, but less common than 176.
178. **Barred Owlet** *Glaucidium Cuculoides*
 One in the Lam Tsuen valley on Mar. 16, and another in the same area on Mar. 18 (AMM).

180. **Collared Scops Owl** *Otus Bakkamoena*
 Heard calling at Castle Peak on Jan. 29 and Feb. 4 (AMM), and at Shouson Hill in November & December (MPR). One trapped at Mong Tseng on Dec. 18 (FOPH).
186. **Savannah Nightjar** *Caprimulgus Affinis*
 Heard and seen at Mong Tseng and Ting Kau in April to June (AMM, DGR, FOPH) and at Castle Peak on Oct. 29 and Dec. 10 (MEMB, FOPH).
187. **Large White-Rumped Swift** *Apus Pacificus*
 Reported frequently from Hongkong Island and the New Territories between Feb. 21 and Oct. 7.
188. **House Swift** *Apus Affinis*
 Common and widespread.
189. **Pied Kingfisher** *Ceryle Rudis*
 Up to two birds reported frequently from the Deep Bay marshes in all months of the year except August (EDW, MEMB, FOPH, AMM, MAW, REH, DGR).
191. **Common Kingfisher** *Alcedo Atthis*
 Frequently seen throughout the New Territories in all months of the year, the greatest number reported being 20 at Mai Po on Sept. 29 (SO). Of the 62 birds ringed, all but 5 were trapped at Mai Po between Sept. 23 and Nov. 14 (FOPH). One seen at Aberdeen on Mar. 28 (RAIW).
192. **White-Breasted Kingfisher** *Halcyon Smyrnensis*
 Widespread in the New Territories throughout the year, with a few records from Hongkong Island.
193. **Black-Capped Kingfisher** *Halcyon Pileata*
 Quite common in the New Territories in winter, with most records from Deep Bay marshes. The last spring record was on Apr. 11 (AMM), and the first autumn record on Sept. 9 (AMM, DGR).
195. **Broad-Billed Roller** *Eurystomus Orientalis*
 Up to 3 reported between Sept. 19 and Nov. 28, mainly from Pokfulam and Castle Peak, but also from Ping Shan and Jubilee Reservoir (MEMB, EDW, FOPH, DJG, DGR).
197. **Great Barbet** *Megalaima Virens*
 Heard, and occasionally seen, throughout the year in the Lam Tsuen Valley and the Tai Po Forestry Reserve. Also at Ho Chung on Mar. 13 (SO), and Mong Tseng on Oct. 12 (DJG).
198. **Black-Naped Green Woodpecker** *Picus Canus*
 One in the Lam Tsuen Valley between Mar. 15 and Mar. 22 (AMM).

200. **Wryneck** *Jynx Torquilla*
 Reported throughout the New Territories, but especially from Mong Tseng and Ping Shan, up to April 4, and from Sept. 24 to end of year (AMM, FOPH, DGR, REH, DJG, MEMB, EDW). One was seen at King's Park on four occasions between Nov. 4 and Nov. 18 (RJB).
203. **Swallow** *Hirundo Rustica*
 Common and widespread throughout the year, with maximum numbers in March/April and August/September. Several breeding records.
204. **Red-Rumped Swallow** *Hirundo Daurica*
 One at Mai Po on April 21 (AMM, DGR).
206. **Sand-Martin** *Riparia Riparia*
 Small numbers, up to nine, at Mai Po between April 10 and May 1 (EDW, AMM, DGR). 12-14 at Luen Tak on May 1 (DGR). One ringed at Mai Po on Sept. 28 (FOPH).
208. **Rufous-Backed Shrike** *Lanius Schach*
 Common and widespread. The "dusky" variant was also commonly reported.
209. **Bull-Headed Shrike** *Lanius Bucephalus*
 One female in the Lam Tsuen Valley on Feb. 20 (EDW). A male at Yuen Long on April 17 (AMM).
210. **Brown Shrike** *Lanius Cristatus*
 Common up to May 3, and from Aug. 21 to end of year. (The various subspecies are impossible to differentiate in the field where immature birds, which comprise the majority of the Hongkong records, are concerned).
211. **Black-Naped Oriole** *Oriolus Chinensis*
 Seen from April 8 to Oct. 12 in various parts of the New Territories, and near Pokfulam and Government House on Hongkong island.
212. **Black Drongo** *Dicrurus Macrocerus*
 Observed in various parts of the New Territories between March 7 and Nov. 20. The only records for Hongkong island are single birds at Pokfulam on Jan. 30 and Nov. 26 (MEMB), both unusual dates, and two on the Peak on July 27 (REH).
213. **Ashy Drongo** *Dicrurus Leucophaeus*
 One at Shouson Hill on Dec. 29 (MPR).
214. **Hair-Crested Drongo** *Dicrurus Hottentottus*
 Common throughout the New Territories between Mar. 13 and Oct. 17. Single birds at Pokfulam on Mar. 20 and Oct. 9 (MEMB, FOPH), and an adult with two young on the Peak on June 29 (FOPH), where one was ringed on Sept. 13 (FOPH).

215. **Chinese Starling** *Sturnus Sinensis*
Reported frequently from the New Territories from the beginning of the year to Aug. 31 (AMM, FOPH, REH, RAIW, DGR, MEMB, EDW), and from King's Park, Kowloon between March 15 and Sept. 25 (RJB, AMM)
216. **Silky Starling** *Sturnus Sericeus*
Throughout the New Territories up to March 19 (REH, DGR, AMM, EDW, MEMB). About 15 at Ping Shan on Sept. 17 (MEMB, EDW, SO), and one at Ho Chung on Dec. 4 (EDW, SO).
217. **Grey Starling** *Sturnus Cineraceus*
One at Mong Tseng on Feb. 19 (REH). A flock of c. 10 at Sek Kong on Mar. 11 (AMM). Up to 20 in the Mong Tseng/Ping Shan area from Nov. 14 to end of year (EDW, MEMB, SO).
218. **Black-Necked Starling** *Sturnus Nigricollis*
Small numbers reported throughout the New Territories in all months of the year. Breeding reported at Sha Tau Kok (DGR).
219. **Common Mynah** *Acridotheres Tristis*
Reported throughout the year from the Mong Tseng/Ping Shan area.
220. **Crested Mynah** *Acridotheres Cristatellus*
Common and widespread.
221. **Jay** *Garrulus Glandarius*
One at Tai Mong Tsai on Jan. 2 (EDW, MEMB, SO). Two at Jubilee reservoir on Jan. 8 (EDW). One at Tai Lam Chung on Jan. 9 (REH), and again on Jan. 23 (AMM). One in the Lam Tsuen Valley on Feb. 13 (DGR). Four at Tai Po Kau on April 21 (RAIW), and two there on May 30 (DGR). The latter observation concerns two birds "visiting a large nest in a pine tree", but breeding was not proved. Four at Jubilee Reservoir on Dec. 9 (DJG). One at Sai Kung on Dec. 11 (REH).
222. **Blue Magpie** *Urocissa Erythrorhyncha*
Common and widespread in wooded areas.
223. **Magpie** *Pica Pica*
Common and widespread.
224. **Treepie** *Crypsirina Formosae*
One at Luen Tak on Nov. 27 (EDW). Two at Mong Tseng on Dec. 1 and one on Dec. 9 (FOPH). Four at Ho Chung on Dec. 4 (MEMB, EDW, SO). Three at Tai Po Kau on Dec. 11 (DGR).
226. **Jungle Crow** *Corvus Macrorhynchus*
Widespread in small numbers throughout the year.
227. **Collared Crow** *Corvus Torquatus*
Reported throughout the New Territories in ones and twos, with 4 at Mai Po on Dec. 31 (FOPH, MAW).
228. **Black-Winged Cuckoo-Shrike** *Coracina Melaschistos*
Two at Mai Po up to Mar. 6 (AMM, DGR, EDW, MEMB). One at Pokfulam on Jan. 31 (EDW). One at Castle Peak Monastery on Sept. 19 and 20 (DGR). One at Tai Po Kau on Sept. 21 (DGR). One at Mong Tseng on Sept. 25 (EDW). One at Ho Chung on Nov. 29 (REH).
231. **Ashy Minivet** *Pericrocotus Divaricatus*
One in the Lam Tsuen Valley on Mar. 18 (AMM). One at Castle Peak on Mar. 28 (AMM). One at Pokfulam on April 20 (EDW). A small party at Mong Tseng on Sept. 25 (EDW). Three at Castle Peak on Oct. 11 (DGR).
232. **Grey-Throated Minivet** *Pericrocotus Solaris*
One at Castle Peak on Feb. 26 and 27 (AMM).
233. **Scarlet Minivet** *Pericrocotus Flammeus*
A female at Ho Chung on Dec. 4 (MEMB, EDW, SO).
234. **Chestnut Bulbul** *Hypsipetes Flavala*
The irruption recorded late in 1965 produced a number of records from the Lam Tsuen Valley, Tai Lam Chung, Tai Po Kau, Castle Peak Monastery, Tai Mong Tsai, Ho Chung, and the Peak, with flocks of up to 12 birds. The latest spring record was April 13 (EDW). Between Oct. 14 and the end of the year, there were eight further records, from Saikung, Tai Po Kau, Jubilee Reservoir, Castle Peak Monastery, and Kowloon Catchment Reservoir.
235. **White Headed Black Bulbul** *Hypsipetes Madagascariensis*
Up to 30 recorded, usually in company with 234, at Tai Po Kau, Castle Peak Monastery, and the Lam Tsuen Valley, up to April 6.
236. **Crested Bulbul** *Pycnonotus Jocosus*
Common and widespread.
237. **Chinese Bulbul** *Pycnonotus Sinensis*
Common and widespread.
238. **Red-Vented Bulbul** *Pycnonotus Aurigaster*
Common and widespread.
243. **Black-Faced Laughing Thrush** *Garrulax Perspicillatus*
Locally common.

244. **Black-Throated Laughing Thrush** *Garrulax Chinensis*
Several on the Peak on April 9 (MEMB, FOPH).
245. **Hwamei** *Garrulax Canorus*
Commonly heard throughout Hongkong island, and also in the New Territories.
246. **White-Cheeked Laughing Thrush** *Garrulax Sannio*
Two at Barker Road, Hongkong island, on April 10 (MDIG).
248. **Pekin Robin** *Leiothrix Lutea*
Two ringed at Pokfulam on Jan. 1 (FOPH) (three others were ringed there on the previous day). Two at Pokfulam on Jan. 30 (MEMB), and one there on Feb. 6 (REH). A juvenile at Government House garden on Mar. 14 was probably an escape (EDW).
249. **Collared Siva** *Minla Castaniceps*
A flock of about 30 in the Lam Tsuen Valley (DGR, AMM) on Jan. 16 provided the first colony record. Another flock of 15-20 was seen at Tai Po Kau on Dec. 11 (DGR).
251. **Ince's Paradise Flycatcher** *Terpsiphone Paradisi*
One at Hongkong University between Mar. 12 and April 5 (MP). One at Pokfulam on April 17 (MEMB). One at Mong Tseng on April 24 (MEMB, ELH). One at Lo Wu on Sept. 9 (AMM, DGR). One at Pokfulam on Sept. 20 and 21 (EDW, REH) and Dec. 10 (EDW). One at Tai Po Kau on Sept. 21 (DGR).
252. **Japanese Paradise Flycatcher** *Terpsiphone Atrocaudata*
A male at Castle Peak Monastery on April 6 (DGR). One at Castle Peak on Sept. 16 (DGR).
253. **Grey-Headed Flycatcher** *Culicicapa Ceylonensis*
One at Pokfulam up to Mar. 20 (MEMB, FOPH, RAIW, EDW, REH). One seen at Tai Po Kau on Feb. 15, and one ringed there on Feb. 19 (FOPH). One at Pokfulam on Nov. 26 (MEMB) and Dec. 10 (EDW). One near the Peak on Dec. 26 (FOPH).
254. **Black-Naped Monarch Flycatcher** *Hypothymis Azurea*
One ringed at Pokfulam on Jan. 1 (FOPH), and seen there up to Mar. 20 (FOPH, MEMB). One in the Lam Tsuen Valley on Jan. 16 (AMM, DGR). One at Ho Chung on Mar. 19 and 25 (REH). One at Pokfulam on Dec. 18 (REH).
255. **Brown Flycatcher** *Muscicapa Latirostris*
Common throughout the colony during winter. Last spring date April 28 (AMM). First autumn date Sept. 5 (DGR).

256. **Grey-Spotted Flycatcher** *Muscicapa Griseisticta*
One in the Lam Tsuen Valley on Feb. 13 (DGR). One at Mai Po on April 21 (AMM, DGR) and May 1 (EDW, MEMB, SO). One at Castle Peak on Sept. 16 and 20 (DGR). One on Sept. 25 (DGR). One at Castle Peak Monastery on Oct. 3 (DGR).
257. **Ferruginous Flycatcher** *Muscicapa Ferruginea*
One at Castle Peak Monastery on Mar. 23 and 31 (DGR), April 2 (AMM), and two on April 3 (MEMB, FOPH). One at Pokfulam on April 3 (REH) and April 6 (EDW, MEMB, REH).
258. **Verditer Flycatcher** *Muscicapa Thalassina*
Single birds at Castle Peak Monastery on Jan. 13 and Feb. 14 (DGR), Feb. 19 (AMM), and Mar. 1 (DGR), at Ho Chung on Feb. 9 (DGR), at Barker Rd., Hongkong on Feb. 20 and Mar. 13 (MDIG), and near the Peak on Jan. 8 (MEMB), and Mar. 10 and 11 (FOPH). One at Ho Chung on Nov. 29 (REH), and Dec. 4 (MEMB, EDW, SO). One near the Peak on Nov. 22 and Dec. 22 (FOPH).
259. **Red-Breasted Flycatcher** *Muscicapa Parva*
Single birds from various parts of the New Territories up to April 10 (REH, AMM, MEMB). Also from Oct. 12 onwards (DJG, FOPH, DGR). One near the Peak on Oct. 27 (FOPH).
260. **Robin Flycatcher** *Muscicapa Mugimaki*
One at Pokfulam on April 3 (REH) and Nov. 12 (REH). Two at Ho Chung on Nov. 19 (EDW).
262. **Tricolour Flycatcher** *Muscicapa Zanthopygia*
One at Mai Po on Sept. 4 and 5 (AMM, DGR). Two ringed near the Peak on Sept. 17 (FOPH). One at Mong Tseng on Sept. 25 (EDW).
263. **Hainan Blue Flycatcher** *Niltava Hainana*
At least two pairs in the Tai Po Kau forestry reserve between April 12 and July 10 (FOPH, MEMB, AMM, DGR).
264. **Blue and White Flycatcher** *Cyanoptila Cyanomelana*
Recorded from various parts of the island and the New Territories between Mar. 28 and April 16 (DGR, AMM, REH, MP, MEMB) and Oct. 3 to 29 (DGR, EDW). Two in the Lam Tsuen Valley on Sept. 3 (AMM).
265. **Chinese Bush Warbler** *Cettia Diphone*
Frequent records in the New Territories up to April 11, and from September 18 to end of year.
267. **Short-Tailed Bush Warbler** *Cettia Squameiceps*
All records are from Pokfulam between Jan. 1 and Mar. 20 (REH, MEMB), and one on Dec. 11 (MEMB), except for one bird on the Peak on Mar. 2 (MEMB) and 3 at Ho Chung on Mar. 13 (REH).

- 268. Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler** *Locustella Certhiola*
One at Mai Po on April 27 (AMM), and one ringed there on May 13 (FOPH). Between Aug. 30 and Nov. 11, up to three at Mai Po (where 3 were ringed), five at Ping Shan, five at Long Valley, and one at Ting Kau (FOPH, AMM).
- 269. Styan's Grasshopper Warbler** *Locustella Ochotensis Pleskei*
(N.B. Pleskei (Taczanowski) is probably a separate species; all 1966 records refer to Pleskei; L.O. Ochotensis has not been proved to occur in Hongkong). One ringed at Mai Po on May 13, and five more between Sept. 28 and Nov. 12 (FOPH).
- 270. Von Schrenck's Reed-Warbler** *Acrocephalus Bistrigiceps*
Recorded from the Mai Po area on Jan. 9 (AMM), from April 17 to May 15 (EDW, AMM, MEMB, DGR), and from Sept. 11 to Nov. 13 (FOPH, AMM, DGR).
- 271. Great Reed-Warbler** *Acrocephalus Arundinaceus*
Recorded, mainly from Mai Po, between Mar. 27 and May 18 (FOPH, AMM, DGR), and from Aug. 30 to Nov. 13 (FOPH, AMM, MEMB, EDW, REH, DGR).
(Phylloscopus warblers:—apart from 273, all phylloscopus warblers occurring in Hongkong are extremely difficult to identify in the field—or even in the hand. Main plumage characteristics easily become occluded; consequently sight records given below are only those where the birds concerned were in extremely fresh plumage and all distinguishing characteristics were clearly noted. No satisfactory estimate of the status of these species can be given until much larger quantities have been ringed).
- 273. Dusky Warbler** *Phylloscopus Fuscatus*
Many reports from the New Territories up to April 28 and after Sept. 10.
- 274. Yellow-Browed Warbler** *Phylloscopus Inornatus*
Believed to be extremely common in winter. 14 were ringed (FOPH), last spring date being Mar. 18, and first autumn record Nov. 12. Sight records extend to May 5, and start again from Sept. 12.
- 275. Pallas's Warbler** *Phylloscopus Proregulus*
Two at Tai Lam Chung on Jan. 22 (AMM). One at Castle Peak Monastery on Mar. 1 (DGR). Two ringed at Mong Tseng on Dec. 6 and 21 (FOPH).
- 276. Arctic Warbler** *Phylloscopus Borealis*
Common on autumn passage; 11 ringed between Sept. 14 and Oct. 15 (FOPH). A few sight records at Castle Peak between Mar. 3 and April 6 (DGR). The earliest autumn sighting was on Sept. 3 (AMM).
- 278. Crowned Willow Warbler** *Phylloscopus Occipitalis*
One in the Lam Tsuen Valley on Jan. 16 (AMM, DGR).

- 279. Yellow-Breasted Willow-Warbler** *Phylloscopus Cantator*
One at Castle Peak Monastery on Mar. 16, 24, and 28 (AMM, DGR). One at Mong Tseng on Dec. 5 and 8 (FOPH).
- 282. Long-Tailed Tailorbird** *Orthotomus Sutorius*
Common and widespread.
- 285. Brown Wren-Warbler** *Prinia Subflava*
Common in the Mai Po area.
- 286. Yellow-Bellied Wren-Warbler** *Prinia Flaviventris*
Common and widespread.
- 287. Fantail Warbler** *Cisticola Juncidis*
Common on the Deep Bay marshes, and also reported from various other parts of the New Territories.
- 288. Japanese Robin** *Luscinia Akahige*
A female (or possibly a first-winter male) at Tai Po Kau on Jan. 30 (AMM, DGR) was the first colony record.
- 289. Red-Tailed Robin** *Luscinia Sibilans*
Up to 3 seen at Pokfulam until Mar. 27 (FOPH, DGR, MEMB); four were ringed there in the same period (FOPH). One at Tai Po Kau on Feb. 20 (RAIW).
- 290. Bluethroat** *Luscinia Svecica*
One at Mai Po on Feb. 6 and another on April 21 (AMM). Four ringed from Sept. 25 onwards at Mai Po and Mong Tseng (FOPH). Two at Mai Po on Dec. 31 (FOPH, MAW).
- 291. Rubythroat** *Luscinia Calliope*
64 were ringed; last spring date Apr. 22, first autumn date Sept. 27 (FOPH). For the same period, only 11 sight records! The main area for this species seems to be Mong Tseng, though records are sufficiently widespread to suggest that the species is common wherever there is thick cover.
- 292. Red-Flanked Bluetail** *Tarsiger Cyanurus*
Single birds as follows:—Tai Mong Tsai (Jan. 1), Cloudy Hill (Jan. 22), Castle Peak (Feb. 5, 26, 27, Mar. 9), Ho Chung (Feb. 27, Mar. 25) (AMM, REH, MEMB, DGR). The first autumn record was on Sept. 24, near the Peak (MEMB), and the species was subsequently recorded from many areas; 14 were ringed (FOPH).
- 293. Magpie Robin** *Copsychus Saularis*
Common and widespread.
- 294. Daurian Redstart** *Phoenicurus Auroreus*
Common up to April 3, and from Sept. 25 to end of year. Records come from most areas on Hongkong Island and the New Territories.

295. **Plumbeous Water Redstart** *Rhyacornis Fuliginosus*

A male and a female at Ho Chung up to Mar. 25 (REH, EDW, DGR, MEMB). A female at Tai Mong Tsai on Jan. 2 (SO). A female at Tai Po Kau on Feb. 27 (AMM). A male and a female near Bride's Pool on Jan. 9, and a female there on Feb. 20 (MEMB). One female on the Castle Peak Road 10 m.s. on Mar. 26 (DGR). The first autumn record was on Nov. 11, when a female was seen on Battery Path, Queen's Rd., Central; this bird remained until the following day (ELH, REH, MEMB). At Ho Chung, a male and a female from Nov. 29 (REH, EDW, MEMB). Two males and a female at Tai Lam Chung on Dec. 26 (EDW).

296. **Stonechat** *Saxicola Torquata*

Commonly reported in the New Territories up to April 21, and from Sept. 18 to end of year.

297. **Grey Bushchat** *Saxicola Ferrea*

Three at Tai Mong Tsai on Jan. 2 (SO). Two in the Lam Tsuen Valley on Jan. 16 (AMM, DGR), and on Jan. 22 (REH). One near Ho Poi on Jan. 30 (REH). One at Castle Peak monastery on Feb. 19 (AMM). Two at Castle Peak Monastery on Oct. 31 (DGR). One ringed at Mong Tseng on Nov. 24 (FOPH).

298 (a) **Blue Rock-Thrush** *Monticola Solitaria Pandoo*

Reported from various parts of the New Territories up to April 10, and from Sept. 9 to end of year. One on the Peak on Oct. 4 (MEMB).

298 (b) **Red-Bellied Rock Thrush** *Monticola Solitaria Philippensis*

Reports from throughout the Colony up to April 22, and from Sept. 20 to end of year.

300. **Violet Whistling Thrush** *Myiophoneus Caeruleus*

Reported throughout the year from various parts of Hong-kong island and the New Territories, always near running water.

301. **Pale Thrush** *Turdus Pallidus*

Up to 3 at Castle Peak between Feb. 5 and Mar. 29 (AMM, DGR). One at Pokfulam on Feb. 3 (ringed by FOPH), and again on Mar. 13 (MEMB). One ringed at Mong Tseng on Dec. 2 (FOPH).

304. **Grey-Backed Thrush** *Turdus Hortulorum*

A common winter visitor (see Ringing List). Last spring date April 6 (RAIW); first autumn date Nov. 20 (MEMB).

306. **Blackbird** *Turdus Merula*

Fairly widespread up to Mar. 29. The only record for the latter part of the year is a pair in the Lam Tsuen Valley on Nov. 20 (EDW).

307. **Grey Thrush** *Turdus Cardis*

Widespread in the winter months, but apparently less common than 304. Last spring date April 16 (REH). First autumn date Nov. 21 (DGR).

310. **White's Thrush** *Turdus Dauma*

One at Tai Hang Hau on Jan. 29 (REH). One in the Lam Tsuen Valley on Feb. 27 (MEMB, EDW, SO), and again on Mar. 20 (AMM).

313. **Great Tit** *Parus Major*

Common and widespread.

315. **Richard's Pipit** *Anthus Novaeseelandiae*

Common up to May 1 and from Sept. 5 to end of year. Summer records as follows:—June 5, one at Ping Shan (AMM); June 16, one at Tai Lam Chung (DGR); July 25, seven or eight at Ping Shan (EDW).

316. **Indian Tree-Pipit** *Anthus Hodgsoni*

Common up to April 24, and from Oct. 11 to end of year.

317. **Red-Throated Pipit** *Anthus Cervinus*

One at Yuen Long sewage farm on Mar. 15, and two on Mar. 24 (DGR). Three at Mong Tseng on April 11 (DGR).

319. **Upland Pipit** *Anthus Sylvanus*

One heard on Castle Peak on Jan. 24 (AMM). Heard on Tai Mo Shan on Mar. 19 (AMM) and June 23 (DGR).

320. **Forest Wagtail** *Dendronanthus Indicus*

One at Jubilee Reservoir on Jan. 8 (EDW). One at Ting Kau on Sept. 20 (DGR).

321. **White Wagtail** *Motacilla Alba*

Common up to May 1, and from Sept. 18 to end of year.

322. **Grey Wagtail** *Motacilla Cinerea*

Many winter records. Last spring date May 1; first autumn date Sept. 17, except for one bird seen at Mai Po on July 17 (AMM).

323. **Yellow Wagtail** *Motacilla Flava*

Common up to May 1, and from Aug. 30 to end of year.

324. **Fork-Tailed Sunbird** *Aethopyga Christinae*

Seen regularly at Tai Po Kau. One in the Lam Tsuen Valley on Jan. 16 (AMM). One at Castle Peak Monastery on Feb. 16 (DGR). One at Ho Chung on Mar. 13 (SO) and Dec. 4 (EDW).

325. **White-Eye** *Zosterops Japonica*

Common and widespread.

- 326. Scarlet-Backed Flowerpecker** *Dicaeum Cruentatum*
 Seen in the Lam Tsuen Valley on Mar. 16, 18, and 22 (AMM) and May 30 (DGR, EDW, SO). Two in Government House garden from Jan. 10 to Jan. 16 (EDW). Two at Tai Po Kau on July 10 (MEMB). One at Wong Chuk Yeung on Oct. 29 (REH).
- 327. Fire-Breasted Flowerpecker** *Dicaeum Ignipectus*
 Far more records than usual. One in the Lam Tsuen Valley on Jan. 16 (AMM, DGR), and one there on May 30 (DGR). One in Government House garden on Jan. 19 (EDW). Single birds in the Peak area on Jan. 29 (C & ED), Feb. 2 (C & ED), and Feb. 17 (FOPH). One at Tai Po Kau on Sept. 21 (DGR). One, possibly two, in Government House garden from October up to Dec. 12 (EDW). Four at Wong Chuk Yeung on Oct. 29 (REH). One near the Peak on Dec. 24 (FOPH).
- 328. Black-Tailed Hawfinch** *Eophona Migratoria*
 Up to c. 20 in various parts of the New Territories until Mar. 23. A flock of c. 15 reported from Pokfulam in early March (per MEMB). Two at Hongkong University on Mar. 14 (MP), and 5-6 there on April 4 (MP). Earliest autumn date Nov. 9 (EDW).
- 329. Chinese Greenfinch** *Chloris Sinica*
 Seen regularly in various parts of the New Territories in the winter, but only in the Castle Peak area in summer (AMM, DGR). The largest flock was of 40-50 on Violet Hill on Dec. 28 (FOPH).
- 331. Common Rosefinch** *Carpodacus Erythrinus*
 A flock of c. 12 in the Lam Tsuen Valley on Feb. 13, and three there on Mar. 21 (AMM). Five at Mong Tseng on Feb. 19 (REH). A party of c. 5 at Ping Shan on Oct. 17 (EDW, MEMB, DGR, SO). Eleven were ringed at Mong Tseng on various dates up to Mar. 18, and from Nov. 25 to end of year (FOPH)
- 332. Masked Bunting** *Emberiza Spodocephala*
 Common throughout the New Territories, with a few records from Hongkong Island, up to Apr. 28, and from Oct. 20 to end of year.
- 335. Tristram's Bunting** *Emberiza Tristrami*
 Several reports of up to 7 birds from Tai Po Kau between Jan. 23 and Feb. 19 (DGR, FOPH, MEMB). One at Ho Chung on Mar. 13 (SO). One in the Lam Tsuen Valley on Mar. 16 (AMM). Two ringed at Mong Tseng on Nov. 23 and 24 (FOPH).
- 337. Yellow-Breasted Bunting** *Emberiza Aureola*
 One at Castle Peak on Jan. 7 (DGR). 3-4 at Mai Po on Apr. 17 (DGR). Up to 100 present in the Deep Bay marshes between Sept. 25 and Nov. 14, during which period 26 were ringed (FOPH, MEMB, EDW). One at Ting Kau on Nov. 19 (DGR). Two ringed at Mong Tseng on Nov. 24 and Dec. 1 (FOPH).

- 338. Grey-Headed Bunting** *Emberiza Fucata*
 Small numbers (up to 15) seen in various parts of the New Territories up to April 11 (AMM). One at Ping Shan on Nov. 9 (EDW).
- 339. Little Bunting** *Emberiza Pusilla*
 Parties of up to 11 in various parts of the New Territories up to April 3 (DGR, REH, AMM, EDW, MEMB). Two ringed at Mai Po on Dec. 1 (FOPH). One above Aberdeen on Dec. 9 (MPR).
- 340. Crested Bunting** *Melophus Lathamii*
 Reported from many parts of the New Territories up to April 16. The following are the only later records:—one at the top of Route TWSK on June 18 and 23 (DGR), one on the Shatin Pass Road on May 7 (RJB), one at Tai Lam Chung on Aug. 23 (AMM), one at Ping Shan on Nov. 6 and 9 (EDW).
- 341. Tree Sparrow** *Passer Montanus*
 Numerous.
- 343. Red Avadavat** *Estrilda Amandava*
 All records are from Mai Po; c. 10 on Apr. 21 (AMM, DGR), 1 on Apr. 25 (AMM), 5 on June 5 (AMM), up to 22 on many dates between Aug. 30 and Nov. 13 (FOPH, DGR, AMM, EDW, REH, MEMB).
- 344. Java Sparrow** *Padda Oryzivora*
 One in Government House garden on June 19 (EDW). One at Ting Kau on Oct. 10 (DGR). 11 near the Peak on Nov. 29 (FOPH).
- 345. Chestnut Munia** *Lonchura Malacca*
 Up to 6 at Mai Po from March to October (FOPH, DGR, AMM, REH, EDW, MEMB). Two at Tai Po Kau on Jan. 23, and one at Shataukok on June 21 (DGR) showed the characteristics of the nominate race, whereas all the Mai Po birds were apparently atricapilla.
- 346. Spotted Munia** *Lonchura Punctulata*
 Common in the New Territories up to April 3 and from Sept. 2 to end of year. The only summer record is of 5 birds at Shataukok on May 30 (SO). c. 8 at Pokfulam on Oct. 23 (MEMB).
- 347. White-Backed Munia** *Lonchura Striata*
 Three in the Lam Tsuen Valley on Mar. 14 (AMM). Three on the Peak on Mar. 26 (FOPH). One at Pokfulam on Nov. 26, and 3 there on Dec. 11 (MEMB).

SPECIES OF DOUBTFUL STATUS

Emerald Dove

Chalcophaps Indica

One at Tai Po Kau on Sept. 20 (DGR).

(This species has been seen several times over the past few years, but records have always been regarded as escapes. In view of the fact that the range of this species extends as far north as Formosa (see La Touche), it must be regarded as a strong possibility that our records are of genuinely wild birds).

LIST OF OBSERVERS

Mr. E. Anderson	Major A.M. Macfarlane
Miss M.E.M. Benham	Mr. J.A. Ozorio
Dr. R.J. Barnes	Mr. M. Peaker and Mrs. S.J. Peaker
Mr. C. Dale	Mr. M.P. Rice
Mrs. E. Dale	Sir Lindsay Ride
Mr. D.G. Galloway	Mr. D.G. Robertson
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Mr. R.E. Hale	Mr. M.A. Webster
Mr. F.O.P. Hechtel	Mr. R.A.I. Wilson
Mrs. E.L. Hechtel	

Records from Society Outings entered as SO

RINGING IN HONGKONG

The start of ringing in Hongkong by Mr. F.O.P. Hechtel in December 1965 has already contributed in many ways to our knowledge of distribution of many species (as noted in the systematic list). It is proposed to publish a ringing list annually in the Report; we hope that the next year's list can begin to show a few recoveries.

M. A. W.

RINGING LIST

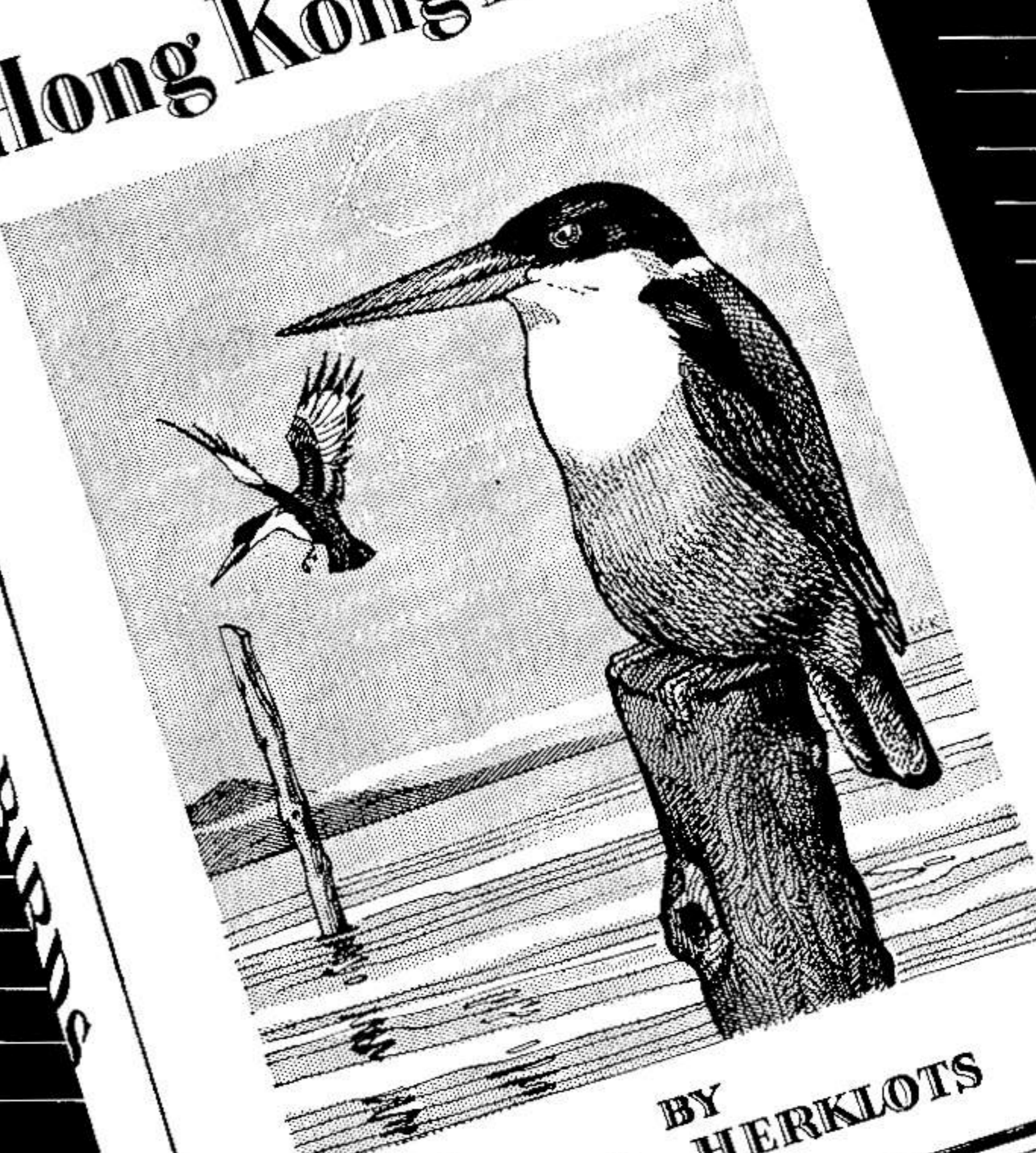
	<u>Species</u>	<u>1965</u>	<u>1966</u>	<u>Total</u>
12.	Yellow Bittern		10	10
13.	Chestnut Bittern		1	1
57.	Japanese Sparrow-Hawk (<i>gularis</i>)		1	1
81.	Kestrel		1	1
82.	Francolin		1	1
85.	Barred Button Quail		1	1
90.	Baillon's Crake		1	1
125.	Common Sandpiper		2	2
134.	Eastern Little Stint		6	6
139.	Curlew Sandpiper		1	1
177.	Lesser Crow Pheasant		2	2
179.	Scops Owl	1	1	2
191.	Common Kingfisher		62	62
192.	White-Breasted Kingfisher	1	19	20
193.	Black-Capped Kingfisher		4	4
200.	Wryneck	1	17	18
203.	Swallow		8	8
206.	Sand-martin		1	1
208.	Rufous Backed Shrike	4	20	24
209.	Bull Headed Shrike	1		1
210.	Brown Shrike		5	5
214.	Hair-Crested Drongo		1	1
215.	Chinese Starling		2	2
220.	Crested Mynah		1	1
222.	Blue Magpie		3	3
234.	Chestnut Bulbul		2	2
235.	White Headed Black Bulbul		1	1
236.	Crested Bulbul	3	24	27
237.	Chinese Bulbul	48	480	528
238.	Red-Vented Bulbul	14	73	87
243.	Black-Faced Laughing Thrush		8	8
245.	Hwamei		1	1

Species	1965	1966	Total
248. Pekin Robin	3	4	7
254. Black Naped Monarch Flycatcher		1	1
255. Brown Flycatcher		6	6
259. Red Breasted Flycatcher		1	1
262. Tricolour Flycatcher		2	2
265. Chinese Bush Warbler	1	13	14
267. Short Tailed Bush Warbler		1	1
268. Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler		4	4
269. Styan's Grasshopper Warbler (pleskei)		6	6
270. Von Schrenk's Reed-Warbler		21	21
271. Great Reed-Warbler		233	233
273. Dusky Warbler	3	88	91
274. Yellow-Browed Warbler		14	14
275. Pallas's Warbler		2	2
276. Arctic Warbler		11	11
282. Long-Tailed Tailor-Bird		6	6
285. Brown Wren-Warbler		4	4
286. Yellow Bellied Wren-Warbler		14	14
289. Red-Tailed Robin		4	4
290. Bluethroat		4	4
291. Rubythroat	6	64	70
292. Red-Flanked Bluetail		14	14
293. Magpie Robin		2	2
294. Daurian Redstart		12	12
296. Stonechat	3	31	34
297. Grey Bushchat		1	1
300. Violet Whistling Thrush		8	8
301. Pale Thrush		2	2
321. White Wagtail		11	11
322. Grey Wagtail		4	4
325. White-Eye	20	165	185
328. Black-Tailed Hawfinch		7	7
329. Chinese Greenfinch		1	1
331. Common Rosefinch		11	11
332. Masked Bunting	20	144	164
335. Tristram's Bunting		4	4
337. Yellow Breasted Bunting		28	28
339. Little Bunting		2	2
341. Tree Sparrow	5	65	70
343. Red Avadavat		5	5
345. Chestnut Munia		1	1
346. Spotted Munia	3	27	30
	<u>167</u>	<u>2026</u>	<u>2193</u>

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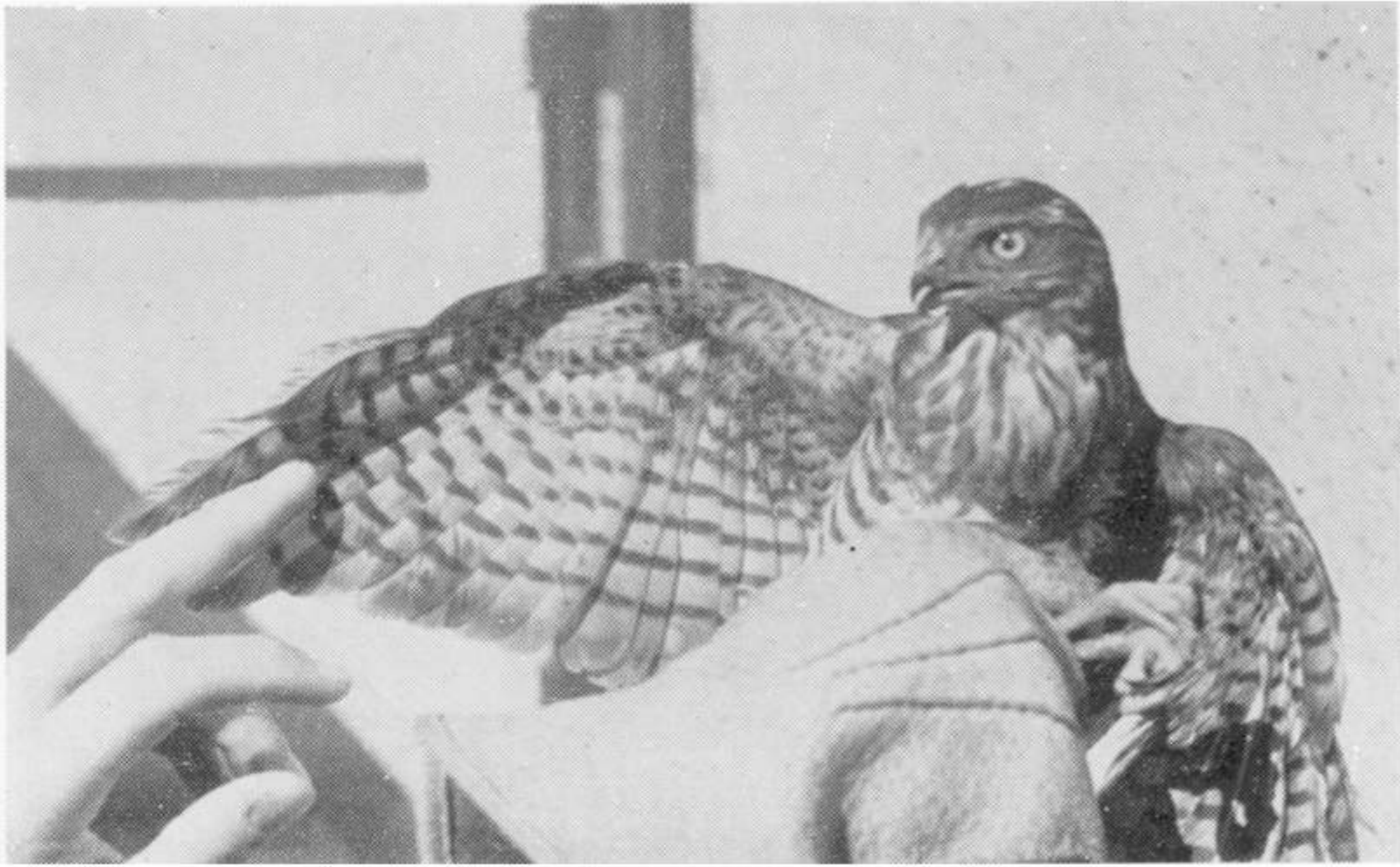
**Serpent Eagle
(Spilornis Cheela)
Photo by
A. H. Hill and
Dr. P. M. Marshall**



←
**Maura Benham and
Juvenile Kite
Photo by F.O.P.H.**



**Serpent Eagle (Spilornis Cheela)
Photo by A. H. Hill & Dr. P. M. Marshall**



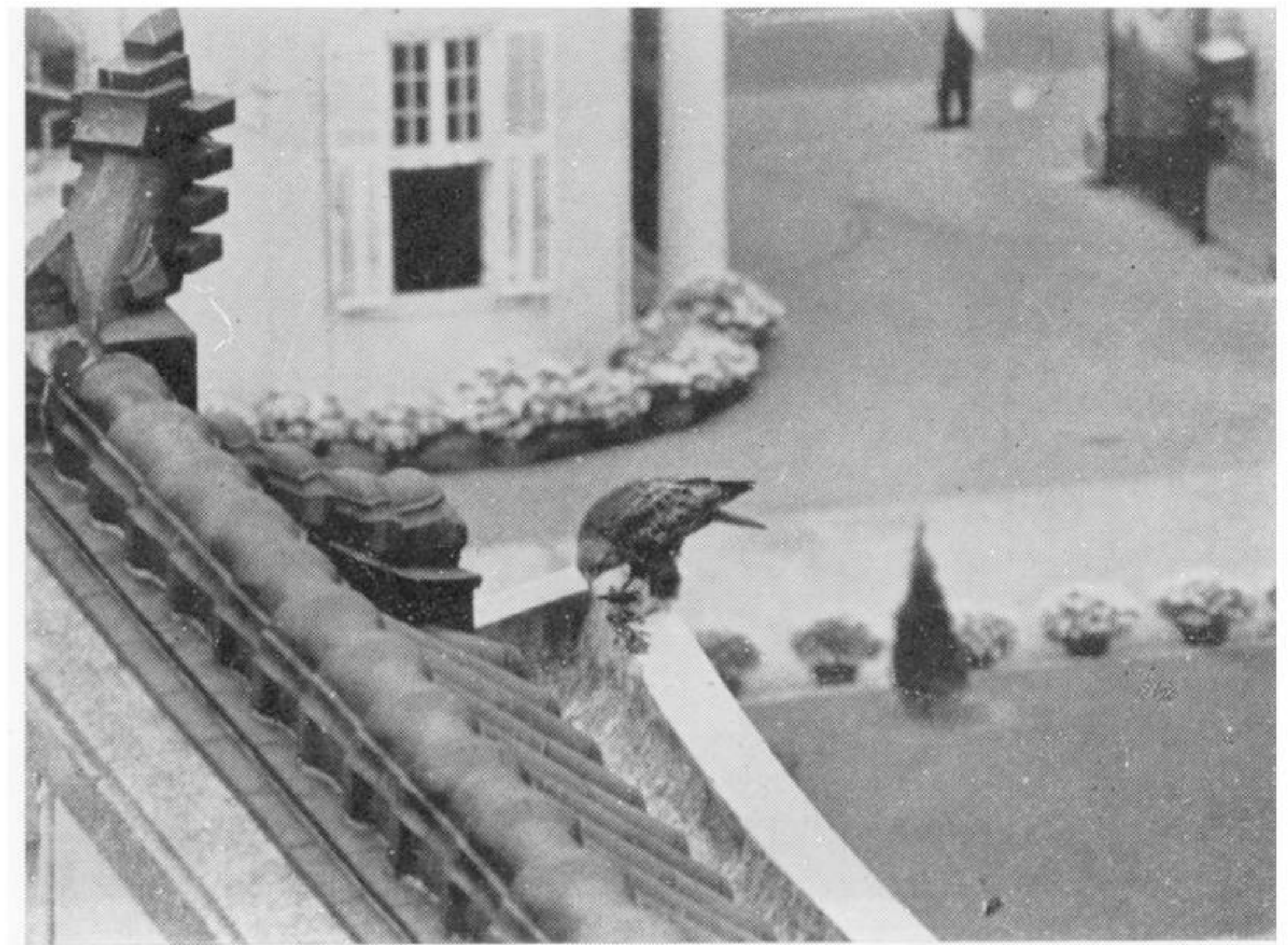
**Japanese Sparrowhawk
(Accipiter Gularis)
Immature female**



Government House tower: April



**Photos by F.O.P.H. and E.L.H.
See Page 46**



**Photos by Miss N. Vincent
What is this bird? A Kite with spats?**



Camp at Pak Hok Chau, Mai Po marshes



F.O.P.H. and Robert Morales
The Hong Kong Bird Ringing Project

See Page 45

GENUS AQUILA

60. Golden Eagle (*A. chrysaetos*)

Range in China:— south to the Yangtze valley (Vaurie, *Non passeriformes* p. 192)
(La Touche II. 156)

Field characteristics:— adult— golden-brown crown and nape

immature— white tail with dark terminal band; white patch at base of primaries.

61. Imperial Eagle (*A. heliaca*)

Range in China:— in winter, S.E. China from the Yangtze valley to Northern Indochina (Vaurie p. 189)

Fukien, Shensi, Chihli, "Central Provinces"
(La Touche II. 158)

Field characteristics:— adult— pale yellowish (sometimes almost white) crown and nape. Usually some white on scapulars; most oriental specimens show white patches on the shoulders, sometimes giving the impression of a white leading edge; this impression is accentuated by the white bases to the primaries.

Immature:— crown yellowish-brown; whole plumage light buffish-brown with a diffuse white patch on the back (not to be confused with the sharply-marked white rump and upper tail-coverts of *clanga*). Can also show two pale wing-bars.

62. Steppe Eagle (*A. rapax*).

Range in China:— China south to the Yangtze and N.W. Yunnan (Vaurie p. 186)

Chihli, Central China, N.W. Yunnan, Lower Yangtze (?) (La Touche II. 159) (measurements and description given by La Touche appear to refer to *clanga*).

Field characteristics:— adult — rusty - yellow patch on nape

immature — two pale wing-bars; indistinguishable from some individuals of *clanga*.

63. Spotted Eagle (*A. clanga*)

Range in China:— winters in S. China (Vaurie p. 187)

Kwangtung, Fukien (winter) (La Touche II. 160)

Field characteristics:— adult — white upper tail-coverts and vent (some specimens lack this, and are generally indistinguishable from ad. *rapax*).

first winter — white upper tail-coverts and vent (some lack this); two pale wingbars (as *rapax*); upperparts splashed with white (this can also occur on *rapax* of all ages but perhaps only in the paler African subspecies, a.r. *belisarius*?)

immature — as first-winter, but less white on upperparts.

M. A. W.

A VAGRANT RETURNS TO HONG KONG

When I left the Colony in October 1960, at the end of a three year tour, I never really believed that I should ever be lucky enough to return. However in December 1965 I did come back, though only for nine months, and this short article is an attempt to sum up the changes that I noticed which seem to have affected the bird-life of Hong Kong.

Let me say at once that the changes have not all been for the worse. However, there is no doubt that the noise, dust and pace of expansion in the cities of Victoria and Kowloon have had an increasingly adverse effect on their birds. Although there is much vegetation in and around Victoria still, the Great Barbet has finally given up the struggle and the Black-naped Oriole has considerably decreased. The Rose-ringed Parakeet may have been driven away by the 'escapees', the Sulphur-crested Cockatoos, but at any rate is now extremely rare on the Island. The disappearance of the Chinese Starling over the years from the cities may be because of the increase in modern-style office blocks which offer few nesting sites. On the other hand, the Blackeared Kite seems to have increased as a summer bird, maybe as a result of the excessive strain placed on the resources of the U.S.D. by a growing population.

Kowloon always was and still is a bird desert to those who have no time to find its few oases. As the city expands to link with Tsun Wan and spreads past Kai Tak, it will get worse and bird-watchers might as well give up. However, once the city is left behind as you travel into the New Territories, the prospect is much brighter and I will deal with three areas in turn.

The Sai Kung peninsula has been very much opened up since I last saw it yet there is still a large unspoilt area which has many birds and which is well worth visiting. Much of the approach road passes through country which wasn't good for birds anyway and a lot of dull walking is saved thereby.

The Central Area, dominated by Tai Mo Shan, is still largely unspoilt, although I feel that already some harm has been done by the increase in motor traffic up the mountain road to the RAF station, as well as by the spread of buildings and installations down from the mountain top. I could not find the Chinese Babax or David's Hill-warbler this time, despite a thorough search. However, the gem of this area, the Tai Po Kau Forestry Reserve has become increasingly the Mecca of lovers of woodland birds and has a long list of species which are its special attractions:— the breeding Hainan Blue Flycatchers, Fork-tailed Sunbirds, Scarlet-backed Flowerpeckers, Jungle Crows, Great Barbets and Black-naped Orioles as well as the occasional and winter visitors

which seem to be found there more often than elsewhere— Chestnut and White-headed Black Bulbuls, Treepies, to name a few. This place, at least, can only improve with time.

And now, the Deep Bay marshes. How many hours have I spent tramping up and down and across, seeing so many rare and beautiful birds. Yet these perhaps have changed more than any other part of the Colony. Firstly, because of the decreased outflow from the Shum Chun River, it seems that the outgoing tide reveals far more mud than it did, thus attracting wading birds far out of sight. Secondly, the loss due to typhoon damage of the wonderful egrettries at Yuen Long has definitely reduced the numbers of egrets and herons to be seen feeding on the marshes, especially in summer. Thirdly, the increase in the numbers of fish and duck-ponds, with no shallow water or vegetation to attract birds other than insect-eaters, has certainly contributed also to the decrease in egrets, as has the marked change-over from rice to vegetables. On the other hand, for no apparent reason at all, three species of wet-land birds were found in unprecedented numbers in the summer of 1966:— the Little Grebe, Moorhen and Water-cock. The first two certainly bred successfully and the third most probably did. Whether this was their first good year or whether they had secretly built up numbers over several seasons will probably never be known. Let us hope that they can now maintain their position.

Finally, I should like to draw attention to one of the biggest changes of all; the astonishing growing tendency of young people from the cities to visit the countryside of the New Territories by car, coach or lorry and almost literally saturate an area with their presence. Picnicking, walking, singing, playing games and depositing rubbish by the ton, they may be well on the way to ruining the countryside they come to enjoy. This is of course a phenomenon not unknown in the Western world also. But such temporary disturbance at regular intervals, particularly during the nesting season, can be almost as harmful as permanent destruction of habitat. Besides which, it can certainly ruin a bird-watcher's day out!

A third tour in Hong Kong for me would be something of a miracle. However, I have enough happy memories already of the birds **and** the bird-watchers of the Colony to last me a life-time. I can only hope that whatever the future of the Colony may be, no change will be so great as to destroy all the pleasures that await those vagrant bird-watchers still to come.

A. M. Macfarlane

A GALLERY OF GARDENS

Birds in my garden—Tai Po Kau

It was the sight of a Rubythroat hopping around and around the tomato beds, and finally having a bath in the raindrops on the mint leaves, that made me count the range of birds that we have seen in (or from) our garden. It now tops 50 but there are certainly more to add from those heard and not yet seen, such as a presumed Collared Scops Owl which keeps to the night, and from the unidentified which include a probable Robin Flycatcher.

The garden is on a long, narrow ridge near to Tai Po Kau railway station and half a mile from the bridge at the foot of the Forest Reserve. To the north, the ground drops to the railway at the waters' edge, and across Tolo Harbour stand the Pat Sin mountains, their colours changing with every change in the weather. To the south, at the back of the house, there is a small but steep-sided gully which is filled with trees except for my banana patch; a stream runs through a concreted nullah at the bottom, and the far side is densely covered with bushes and trees at the bottom and with scrub higher up.

Pride of place among the residents must go to the bulbuls, through weight of numbers. There are always some Crested and many Chinese Bulbuls in the trees around the house. It's a pity that they are so fond of White Cabbage and other leafy vegetables. Chinese Bulbuls have nested in the creeper in front of the house, and were able to make us feel intruders in our own garden when we inadvertently sat too near their flight-path. The Red-vented Bulbul is quite common in the neighbourhood but does not often come into the garden. Sparrows are next after bulbuls, and there are frequently one or two Spotted Doves. White-eyes are around throughout the year but there are more in winter when they descend on a tree like a little cloud. Black-faced Laughing-thrushes in a party of 6 or 8 are usually somewhere nearby, but despite the clamour they make when disturbed, they can be very silent when scratching among fallen leaves. There is usually a Rufous-backed Shrike around, a handsome bird indeed with an extraordinary vocabulary which still sometimes fools me into looking for something unknown. I have heard it imitating a Plaintive Cuckoo with fair accuracy. The shrike is often still calling when other birds are roosting. There is frequently a pair of Great Tits in winter, but they are not so evident in summer. Long-tailed Tailor Birds, on the other hand, seem to be more frequent in summer; but this may be because they don't call in winter. Crested Mynahs are to be seen throughout the year, and Black-necked Starlings have occasionally in-

spected the lawn; they are quite often to be seen in the fields across the road. Magpies are common, but Blue Magpies are infrequent; their weird selection of calls from the gully sometimes seems more appropriate to a donkey than to a bird. Jungle Crows come into the trees from time to time, and recently we had Collared Crow for the first time. The call of Crow-Pheasants is very common from late January onwards. (This is a month before the date Herklots gives). Although shy, we often see the birds perched on top of bushes, and occasionally see them scrambling clumsily in a tree. When making the common 'poom, poom' call, the beak is pointed vertically down and at each 'poom', the back of the neck rises as if the bird has hiccups. A large, uniformly barred brown and white bird in one of the trees near the house was a puzzle until we realised that it was a young crow-pheasant. Next on the frequency list come Magpie-Robins, which visit us in small parties from time to time, and stay for a week or so. It may be four or six months before we hear their attractive whistling song again. The 'squeaking gate' call of the Violet Whistling Thrush is heard quite often, but the bird is shy and easily disturbed. Its haunt is the nullah and the adjacent scratching-ground for thrushes and laughing-thrushes among the dry leaves; but last year in October, one bird came on to the lawn regularly at sunrise, although it wasn't seen later in the day. Both the Common and White-Breasted Kingfishers visit the garden from time to time, sitting on the telephone wires and calling rather monotonously. We have seen Fork-tailed Sunbirds on a few occasions and heard them more often. They like the flower of *Bauhinia blakeana* and of Firecracker creeper, *Bignonia venusta*, from December to January and in February respectively. To complete this part of the list, Kites are often overhead and occasionally perch near the sea.

Passage migrants which we have seen include Ashy Minivets on the electricity wires, a Philippine Brown Shrike, a pair of Black-winged Cuckoo-Shrikes and a Broad-billed Roller. The roller stayed for three days last September, and was never far from the house as if looking for company.

The winter visitors form a large but generally rather quiet group. I am hesitant to name the warblers, but what I take to be the Yellow-browed is common, with occasional Dusky Warblers. We very frequently see a Red-flanked Bluetail on the lawn, and beside the nullah, and along the road, and down in the station yard; but I have never seen two together, and assume that each has its own territory. I think that there are either two or three birds, all females. The whiteness of the 'bib' varies slightly, as does the russet on the sides. This friendly little bird is very reminiscent of the British robin as it flies to a stake and then twitches its tail; although its soft call 'chak, chak, chak' is different. But the Brown Flycatcher which is also usually

Beginners' Luck?

A new broom sweeps well but when a new member begins to identify birds it may well be a different matter.

Two years or so prior to joining the Society, my two sons aged 8 and 6, and I, took to birdwatching. Armed with Herklots' Hong Kong Birds, provided by a close friend, and Maura Benham's more recent Introduction to Birds of Hong Kong, we set off to various parts of the New Territories at every opportunity. However, we were almost always too close to the main roads so that we had to be content with an occasional Eastern Grey Wagtail, Crested Bunting, White breasted Kingfisher and the like. Once a large red-winged mystery bird plunged into the thickets along a stream near Shatin Reservoir and was occasion for long discussions and consultations with "Herklots." In retrospect it was, of course, a Crow-Pheasant.

At Cliffside, King's Park, Kowloon, we were more fortunate as the hillside overlooking Nathan Road is thickly forested. Here a pair of Magpie Robins and Chinese Magpies reared their young, a family of 4 Hwameis sing to their hearts content in summer and show themselves to be more audacious than the books imply. A Rufous-backed Shrike scolds for all to hear atop a pine next to the Magpie nest. Pied Wagtails are always around in winter and Yellow-browed Warblers in season are not infrequently seen. A migrant shrike of dull brown hue was seen almost every morning during the winter of 1965 perched on some favourite low bush. No voice was heard. Other interesting sightings at Cliffside include Japanese Brown Shrike, Red-bellied Rock Thrush, Blue Rock Thrush, Rufous Turtle Doves, Wryneck, Grey-backed Thrush, Chinese Starling, House Martin, Daurian Redstart (female) and Peregrine Falcon. The latter sits unperturbed for 1 or 2 hours on a high perch.

Common birds such as Crested Mynahs, Spotted necked Doves, Bulbuls (Chinese, Crested and Red-vented), White-eyes, Tailor-birds and swallows complete the list.

In October 1966 I felt that the time had come to take the plunge, and the Hong Kong Bird Watching Society was approached and membership duly approved. Thereafter the joy of my sons, now 10 and 8 years of age, knew no bounds. New species were added at every Society Outing. More books were purchased for pleasure as well as for identification of species, but the latter became almost redundant as consultants were at hand.

It is now 5 months since joining the Society and for the sake of easy reference I have grouped the Hong Kong birds into 4 classes—common, fairly common, scarce and rare. "Common"

around, has a call almost identical to the robin's 'tik, tik, tik'. At least one pair each of Grey and Greybacked Thrushes stay around the area, and we see them scratching in the leaves down in the gully. Last year they came to the vegetable garden, alongside the house, in the early morning regularly; but this year we haven't seen them there once. Both species were in evidence as they stripped the fruit from the wild trees, dark-leaved *Vitex Quinata* in early December and a redberried holly, one of the several local species of *Ilex*, after Christmas. We have also seen an Eyebrowed Thrush and a Pale Thrush, the latter recognisable from above by the white on the end of its tail. Daurian Redstarts are unfortunately not regular visitors, but this year a female has frequently been around since its appearance on 14th November while a male has been seen since Christmas on a number of occasions in a different area. Pied and Grey Wagtails and on occasion, Indian Tree Pipits pass by and sometimes stop briefly on the lawn. Little Buntings occasionally visit the trees and bushes, and we have watched Masked Buntings feeding on grass seedheads. Next, as a bird seen rather than a garden bird, is the occasional Buzzard. But returning to ground level, for the last three weeks we have had a party of White-headed Black Bulbuls. Their calls, like ill-tempered cats, followed often by scolding, are very distinctive once recognised, but the birds tend to keep out of sight. They have been feeding on "Hong Kong Ivy" *Schefflera octaphylla*, a common shrub or small tree whose fruit ripens in February. Finally in this part of the list come the Rubythroat already mentioned, and one sighting of a Treepie, calling rather raucously as it flew from tree to tree in the gully.

After the list of winter visitors, it came as a surprise to realise the small number of species which come for the summer. There are the swallows and the two swifts; but it is the Plaintive Cuckoo, Koel, and Black-naped Oriole that we are most aware of, for they fill the garden with their calls. We first heard the Plaintive Cuckoo on 11 March 1964, and 3rd April 1965. The 1966 date is irritatingly mislaid, but the bird perched on a Flamboyant branch above me as I was planting some Pine seedlings, and was very obviously out of practice for its calls; but it settled down to its 'bouncing ping pong ball' in a day or two. The Koel was first heard on March 12th in both 1964 and 1965 at Sheung Shui—the Experimental Farm seems to be a favourite place for them—and here a day or two later. Their 'ku wa oo' call carries well, but last year we heard it less than previously. Finally, the Oriole; a pair is almost constantly around the house throughout the summer, as they nest in the garden. One arrives first and the dates are very consistent—9th April 1965, 8th April 1966. From then on, we are woken by their melodious calls in the morning, and see streaks of gold as first the pair, and then the family of five or six fly around.

R. R. Mason

includes residents and those seen practically all the year round, "fairly common" are the migrants or visitors which almost always make their appearance some time of the year, "scarce" include the occasional migrants and visitors and "rare" include vagrants and birds which have not been seen for some years (Check List of H.K. Birds 1966).

The following table shows the numbers in each group. The species seen at Cliffside and at Society Outings are listed separately for comparison.

	Common	Fairly Common	Scarce	Rare
Hong Kong Check List 1966	32	153	86	89
Cliffside 1965-67	14	12	3	—
Society Outings (seven)	18	55	13	3

The advantage of the Society outings can be seen immediately.

The thirteen scarce species were Crested Kingfisher, Scarlet Minivet (female), Verditer Flycatcher, Grey Bushchat, Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler, Pheasant-tailed Jacana, Pale Thrush, Black-naped Monarch Flycatcher, Dusky Thrush, Common Rose-Finch, White-headed Black Bulbul and Fork-tailed Sunbird. The three rare species were Common Crane, Three-coloured Munia and Roughlegged Buzzard. Is this beginners' luck? or is it the efficient service of the Society?

R. J. B.

Highlights in 1966 for a rather sedentary bird watcher

Many express surprise when I tell them that there really are birds to be watched on Hong Kong Island and so it may be worth recording that in 1966 I positively identified in or from my garden in Barker Road 38 different species. Others have been added this year.

The following more unusual records may deserve mention:—

1. **White-cheeked Laughing Thrush** (*Garrulax sannio*)

I had a good view of two of these babblers in the scrub behind my garden on 10th April—their fifth recorded appearance in Hong Kong. They were silent and kept low down in the undergrowth. This species is noticeably smaller than *G. perspicillatus*.

2. **Peregrine Falcon** (*Falco peregrinus*)

At about 6.30 p.m. on 30th April I was on my lawn hopefully looking through my binoculars when two birds dashed by and disappeared round the corner of the house. I ran after them but they appeared to have vanished into thin air. I was standing rather mystified when out of the corner of my eye I detected movement inside the house. The mystery was solved: a peregrine had flown through the open window of my study and was now beating vainly against the glass of the closed second window. As I watched it from the garden my steward entered the room by the door and at once seized the bird by the wings as though it were a chicken, evincing no alarm and little surprise. I quickly checked the bird's identity with the books and ordered its release before either party sustained an injury. This done I returned to the study to find the peregrine's prey cowering in the bottom shelf of the bookcase—a domestic pigeon. Released through the window it immediately returned to the shelter of the bookcase. Released again in the garden it flew straight into the nearest open window in the house next door—not without reason a very scared bird.

3. **Grey Bushchat** (*Saxicola ferrea*)

I saw a Bushchat in the garden on 4th October—a considerably earlier date than previously recorded—but I have no doubt about the identity of the bird.

4. **Brahminy Kite** (*Haliastur indus*)

At about 9.45 a.m. on 16th October I watched a Brahminy Kite circling round my house for ten minutes or so before it disappeared in the direction of Branksome Towers not to be seen again.

5. **Verditer Flycatcher** (*Muscicapa thalassina*)

I saw single males in the garden on 20th February, 13th March and 26th November. On 27th November I saw another flycatcher and just as I was concluding it was a female Verditer—my first—the male arrived to perch beside her and settle the issue. Eventually they flew off together. There seem to be few records of these Flycatchers being seen except singly in their winter quarters.

M. D. I. G.

Birds of Government House Garden

In the 1963 Hong Kong Bird Report there was an article on the birds of Government House Garden. That edition is now "sold out" and a number of new birds have been seen while some of the regulars have left the club.

The garden is still a nice quiet sanctuary in a busy area, with plenty of trees and shrubs and lawns to suit all tastes. As more and more buildings go up in the neighbourhood, more and more birds seem to find food and shelter in the garden.

Crested Mynahs, Sparrows and Bulbuls are always about in force and the Spotted Doves are on the increase. Although protected, as are all birds on the Island, the doves have very guilty consciences; one stare and they are away. I have only once seen a Red-vented Bulbul. Tailor Birds and Magpie Robins sing regularly for their supper but the White-eyes and Great Tits come and go like sons with latchkeys. For weeks on end there are no Blue Magpies to be seen, then come twelve at a time, chasing each other in long glides, honking and braying and flicking their elegant tails. Black-faced Laughing Thrushes are now more common but I have not even heard a Hwamei.

Sadly missed are the Rose-ringed Paroquets which used to flash past twice a day with clockwork regularity, but have not appeared for many months. Perhaps they have been warned off by a flock of five Sulphur-crested Cockatoos, released for a fly-round each morning by a lady who lives near the Church Guest House.

The Pied Wagtails are as faithful as ever and arrive now in October. One pair takes possession of the back lawn and another of the carriage sweep. When there is too much competition from V.I.P. cars and the resident Pekingese they retire to the side lawns among the azalea bushes. They leave soon after 21st April; perhaps the garden party is too much for them. Only once or twice has a Grey Wagtail been observed.

The winter is the best time for surprises and that of '66 to '67 has been a great winter for thrushes. Until then an occasional Grey Thrush and Greybacked Thrush had been seen and up to six Blackbirds were present for three and a half months at a stretch. They never got tame and trailed off through the trees with wild and mournful cries. But in January 1967, a Pale Thrush appeared in the shrubberies above Lower Albert Road and stayed until at least 7th April; sometimes two were present. When disturbed, it gave a nervous twitch and showed its identity by displaying the white petals each side of the tail. More exotic was a White's Thrush which took up residence in the back garden and fed in the calmest way on the Garden Party lawn in close view of the dining room windows; if peered at it flitted into an azalea bush but became quite tame. It stayed from 26th January until just after the end of March. A Dusky Thrush was on the side

lawn for about seven weeks, sometimes keeping company with a Greybacked or with the Pale Thrush, and a Red-bellied Rock Thrush was seen on 15th and 26th February looking very bright in the first sunshine we had had for weeks. A Brown Shrike which may be a Japanese but is too young to make up its mind, is sharing the same plot as the White's Thrush. A Rufous-backed Shrike is seen occasionally but does not live here.

One winter a Snipe became entangled in a net over a flowerbed and fled from the arms of the law into the telephone exchange. It was discharged with a caution.

At the beginning of last winter, a Brown Flycatcher was seen daily in a large Chinese Hackberry, a tree which also attracts Flowerpeckers and Tree Pipits and an occasional Hawfinch. The few times that a Flowerpecker has been caught in binoculars, it has been a female Fire-breasted. A male Fire-breasted has been seen several times in the large banyan abreast the bus stop and a female Scarlet-backed flying about the grounds. The only other Flycatcher recorded besides a Brown was a Red-breasted, one November.

Overhead, single Buzzards and Kestrels are often seen in the winter. One and sometimes two Kites perch on the roof of the tower, but the Kestrel goes one better and clutches the very top of the lightning conductor. Only not during a thunderstorm.

At Easter 1966, a Gold-fronted Chloropsis was seen feeding on the fruits of a Rose Apple tree and reappeared for a month next winter in the Chinese Hackberry. This was certainly an escape as it is a very common cagebird and the books say that the wild birds get no nearer Hong Kong than Yunnan. Two Java Sparrows (11/65) and a Peking Robin (3/66) may have been countrybred. A young Red Avadavat seen morning and afternoon one day was so tame that it must surely have been an escape.

In the summer, Hair-crested Drongos are seen from time to time and a Golden Oriole still sings occasionally while I am shaving. A male Hawfinch was in full song one year on 15th April; in the early summer of 1965 a Plaintive Cuckoo was heard frequently and seen a few times on a small bauhinia on the back lawn.

A White-breasted Kingfisher has lent a note of colour four or five times, and once we had a Black-capped. One day in the summer, a bittern or small heron flapped across the lawn. It resembled a Pond Heron, but had no white on the wing when it flew—an unsolved mystery.

Altogether about 48 different species (over 50 counting escapes) have been seen in the last ten years, but I am sure there are some others who prefer to remain anonymous.

E. D. W.

Stop Press. On 17th April, a Rose-ringed Paroquet appeared in the garden and was seen the following day. It was told to go away and bring its friends and the next day three were here. Since then, ones and twos have been seen fairly regularly. On 20th May, seven White-backed Munias were feeding on the garden party lawn; the first munias I had seen in the grounds and exceedingly tame ones. I hope they were not just escapes.

A NOTE ON BIRD RINGING IN HONG KONG

(This note is intended very much as a simple introduction to bird ringing and Members whose interest it may arouse will always be welcome to visit me in the field. I will do my best to show them as much as possible, but as with bird watching, there are the disappointing days and visitors must be prepared to take pot luck. I had originally hoped to find among Society Members a number of voluntary helpers who would eventually acquire sufficient experience to work independently, putting up nets when and where they liked. Three or four week-end ringers would contribute a great deal towards extending our coverage of the Colony and thereby increase the chances of recoveries which could indicate local movement. It takes time to teach a novice and anyone who wishes to become a bird ringer must persevere, spending a lot of time working under supervision. Miss M. E. M. Benham spent a great deal of time and energy learning how to deal with birds in mist nets and how to ring them, and her departure just as she was about ready to work on her own has been a great loss to the ringing scheme).

A completely new phase of bird study in Hong Kong began on the 9 December 1965 when the first bird, a Chinese Bulbul, was ringed on the Mong Tseng peninsula. Ringing has been in progress in some countries for many years and it is gradually spreading to the less highly developed parts of the world. One isolated ringing station on its own cannot hope to achieve very much and it is only as part of a larger network that worthwhile results are obtained. Fortunately, bird ringing has started in a number of East Asian countries and in some, Japan for example, birds were being ringed before the Second World War. Apart from Hong Kong and Japan, work is in progress in the U.S.S.R., Korea, Taiwan, the Philippines, Thailand, Malaysia, Australia and New Zealand. There have been many very interesting recoveries and much valuable information on bird migration has been gathered in a relatively short space of time. So far we have not had any of our Hong Kong - ringed birds recovered abroad, nor have we caught any birds with foreign rings; however, we have had a good number of 'returns', mainly winter visitors which have left Hong Kong to breed further north, some as far as Siberia, and which have been retrapped the following winter.

The main object of ringing is to discover more about breeding areas, winter quarters and the migration routes between the two. Also to learn as much as possible about the habits and needs of migrating birds. Birds are particularly vulnerable on their migrations and many species lose vast numbers between their breeding and wintering quarters and much more knowledge is essential if countries are to take effective measures for their protection.

Non-migratory birds are also ringed as we suspect that considerable local movement within a limited area occurs with some species, but much more information will have to be gathered before we can have any idea of the extent of such local movement and the reasons behind it. Also, by trapping birds in one area regularly throughout the seasons, we can learn a great deal about moult, rate of growth, seasonal plumage and life expectancy. The latter of course requires a long period of study and ringing young in the nest or just after leaving it. Again, accurate information on the birds, on their habits and breeding requirements are needed if our efforts at conservation are to be successful.

Since ringing our first Chinese Bulbul in December 1965, my field assistants and I have worked regularly on the Mong Tseng peninsula, on the Mai Po marshes, at Lowu, at Pokfulam and on the Peak. During the summer months, the off season, I work with one full time assistant and during the winter with two and sometimes three. Camp consists of two sleeping tents and a van with a tarpaulin stretched out from it and held up on a framework of poles. This is our 'office' where the birds are ringed, measured and examined for moult.

It takes a couple of hours to set up and organise the camp, after which we start putting up our mist nets. The aim is to have fifteen nets up on the first day adding five, ten or fifteen the following day depending on a number of different conditions. Again depending on various conditions, periods spent at each site vary from three days to two weeks. Soon after we started work in Hong Kong we realised that we would not be able to leave our nets up overnight because we caught too many bats and bats damage nets, biting through the strands and the guides, quite apart from usually becoming badly tangled and being difficult to extricate. Our site on the Mai Po marshes is free of bats, but everywhere else the nets must be furled just after dark and then the next morning we have to get up before sunrise to get them ready again for the early morning catch, which is often the best.

Our main concern is to ring as many birds as possible with the emphasis on the migratory species. Unfortunately in Hong Kong it is virtually impossible to find good areas for ringing which are far away from human habitation. Though there are remote areas, they are mostly bare hillsides or low scrub covered hills where there are always a few birds, but not enough to justify setting up a camp. We are limited to the flat agricultural land near the villages and their fung shui woods. The villagers themselves have always been very friendly and have hardly ever raised any objections to our erecting our nets in their fields. They find it hard to understand what we are up to and when they see us releasing birds they can hardly believe their eyes. The nets have to be watched carefully as there are always some villagers who think the birds in our nets are their fair game.

Very little is known about our birds and the fact we are ringing in virgin territory makes the work so much more exciting and I consider myself most fortunate in having this opportunity of studying birds in Hong Kong so close to.

The short notes which follow describe incidents slightly out of the usual run of events connected with the ringing scheme.

On 2 December 1966 on the Mong Tseng peninsula my field assistant came from the nets with a Rufous-backed Shrike (*Lanius schach*) and a 61 cm long adult Buff-striped Keelback (*Natrix stolata stolata*). Both had been in the third shelf of the net about nine inches apart. The snake, with a bad wound just behind its head, was barely alive. Having ringed the shrike I tried to give him his meal back, but he was too keen to make his get-away to worry about the snake dinner.

My wife returned home from Macdonnell Road on 2 November 1966 holding in the hands an immature female Japanese Sparrow Hawk (*Accipiter gularis*) which had collided with the Peak Tram cable as it swung off the ground. Possibly the hawk had been engrossed at the time in chasing some small bird. Its wing was slightly grazed and probably bruised, but the bird was otherwise undamaged. There was a certain amount of the thick grease from the haulage cable on the injured wing and on the tail. I kept the bird for two weeks, feeding it on freshly killed sparrows which it took readily, usually two a day, and for the first four days my wife and I spent twenty to thirty minutes daily cleaning the grease off its feathers. While I was in the field Dr. P. Marshall of the University of Hong Kong very kindly looked after it for me. I released this hawk on the Peak on 16 November, when it was a great pleasure to see it flying off so strongly in excellent condition. The Japanese Sparrow Hawk is a rare bird here and this is only the third Colony record. The two earlier records are listed under *Accipiter virgatus gularis*, whereas it is now generally accepted that *Accipiter gularis* and *Accipiter virgatus* are two distinct species.

Two very excited assistants returned from their rounds of the nets on the Mong Tseng peninsula on 17 December 1966 with a badly mauled Chinese Francolin (*Francolinus pintadeanus*) in the bag. Approaching one of the nets they had seen a large bird of prey and a francolin in the middle shelf. They ran in an attempt to catch the raptor, but it managed to get out of the net before they got to it. From the trail of francolin feathers it appeared that the bird of prey had struck its quarry about thirty yards from the net and had then flown straight into it carrying the francolin. When my assistants had arrived on the scene it was still trying to extricate its prey from the net. Though the francolin had a nasty wound in its neck and appeared more dead than alive it very shortly made a remarkable recovery

and was duly ringed and released. I was most disappointed at not having had a chance to examine the bird of prey as one of my assistants thought that it was the buzzard which I had pointed out to him several times during the preceding four days. This bird, often seen flying in the vicinity of our camp or perched on a nearby tree, was not The Buzzard (*Buteo buteo*) our common winter visitor. I was never able to decide for certain, but it was either the Rough-legged Buzzard (*Buteo lagopus*) of which we have four previous Colony records, or the Upland Buzzard (*Buteo hemilasius*) which is not yet on the Colony list.

F. O. P. H.

AT SEA WITH THE BIRDS!

We looked forward to our sea voyage from Hong Kong to the U.K. as a sort of grand, non-stop bird watching outing, and so, armed with Alexander's "Birds of the Ocean", we boarded our ship, and sailed on 22nd Feb. 1966. We particularly looked forward to seeing many species of sea birds, so sadly lacking from Hong Kong's harbour scene for so many months of the year.

We had in fact, travelled for two days before we saw anything at all, and then, as a sort of sentimental reminder of what we were leaving behind, two Drongos circled the ship a couple of times, and then made off again.

The Malacca Straits provided the first sighting of sea birds, and these were a large flock of what we believed to be Terns. Strangely, the second large flock of sea birds we also considered to be Terns, and they were seen off the west coast of India, likewise at a great distance from the ship. We did not in fact manage positively to identify any Terns, and the only others we saw were a few in the Arabian Sea which we thought to be Common Noddy Terns, and two individuals in Aden harbour, one with black bill and black feet, and another with orange-red bill and black feet. In spite of having a fair description, we were very frustrated when we found we could not identify these latter two.

Just prior to nightfall in the Malacca Straits, two quite small birds flew up to within a short distance of the ship, and then settled on the water, from which point they were rapidly lost to view, and we were left wondering if we had in fact seen two Phalaropes, a bird for which we had scanned Hong Kong's waters for three years without success. Also in these Straits, we had a brief visitor in the shape of a Warbler of 3½ to 4" long, blackish above greyish white below, and with a long clearly defined greyish white eyebrow stripe. We just had time to note these details before the bird disappeared, and we noted at this point that a bird can vanish more completely and quickly on board a ship than it ever could in a wood or hedgerow.

Our next visitor to land on board was another Warbler species (we believe!) This was a bird of about 5" long, which appeared while we were on passage up the Red Sea, and stayed just long enough for us to note that it was olive green in colour, overall, with a faint pale yellow eyebrow stripe. Like the other bird, this one was probably on migration.

On the westward leg from Northern Sumatra across to Ceylon, we saw only two birds, both solitary, and both, we are fairly sure, Red-footed Boobies. Arriving off the Southern tip of Ceylon, which we did in the early morning, we saw our first sea

gulls, and were able to give them a name quite confidently. They were without doubt Indian Black headed Gulls. We were to see this species again in Bombay harbour, where we were able to compare them with Black headed Gulls of the Northern form.

Our most noteworthy sighting occurred while we steamed up the west coast of India, when, on two separate occasions, we saw a solitary very large white bird flying at some height above the water, with comparatively quick wing beats. This must surely have been one of the three species of Tropic Birds, and it provided a most magnificent spectacle, all too soon to be lost in the distance.

Bombay harbour provided our first Black-headed Gulls, and from then on, we saw them in every harbour, and in the English Channel, the numbers increasing as we went further northwards. Bombay harbour, also, provided our first Lesser Black Backed Gulls and these became almost constant companions of travel from here onwards. We found these big birds to be stalwart travellers, and of the great concourse of Gulls that would follow the ship when we left harbour, the Lesser B.B.s would stay with us long after the Black headed Gulls had fallen back. The Lesser B.B.s too were the only Gull we noted which followed the ship when we were really out on the open sea, especially on the leg from Bombay to Aden. They would follow in the ship's wake, obviously foraging for food, and occasionally settling on the water. Some immature birds were noticed in these parties.

Several Blue-faced Boobies appeared briefly in the Arabian Sea, and two or three Brown Boobies were seen in the Red Sea. These birds are a pleasure to watch as they progress rapidly with a sort of weaving and banking glide, very low on the water. I assume that they are riding the updraughts of air created by the wave motion, and, like many other birds in similar natural movements of air, can travel considerable distances without supplying any motive power themselves.

We stayed in Aden harbour only a few hours, but the watching here was excellent and non-stop. The most interesting bird was the Aden gull, which is black headed (or very dark brown) and has very dark upper parts. Numbers of this species followed us when we sailed, and presumably stayed with us during the night, because they were in attendance throughout the whole of the next day, after which we did not see them again.

After the disappearance of the usual gull escort out of Port Said, we saw not a feather in the Eastern Mediterranean, but the Western half provided several Cory's Shearwaters. It also laid on a Force 7 storm, which was no help at all.

The gull population of Gibraltar was enormous, and having collected in clouds around the ship, they stayed with us for a very

long time, in fact, until it became quite dark. Here for the first time we picked out a few Herring Gulls in the throng.

The following day, in Lisbon, provided another highlight, with the sight of a White Stork flying across the harbour with a straw in its bill, and joining its mate atop a tall chimney in the city.

The English Channel was, happily, smooth, and the day sunny. Birds were plentiful, but they seemed not to approach too closely to the ship. We had several "landings-on" by pipits, and a large number of similar birds were flying past the ship for a large part of the day. At one point, two Starlings were observed having a free ride.

Among the gulls, we were now seeing a greater proportion of Herring Gulls than before. We also saw three enormous, unmistakable Greater Black-backed Gulls. Several Gannets circled the ship, and (promise of things to come!) a flock of unidentifiable Geese flew overhead.

Birdwise, the trip was over, and though it may not have been exactly memorable yet in retrospect it had given us many hours of great pleasure, and some moments of intense excitement, and thus it became an item of major importance in our enjoyment of the voyage.

C. & E. Dale

Editor's Note. This article was commissioned before the Dales left Hong Kong in February 1966 to give any of our Members going to the U. K. by sea via Suez an idea of what birds to look for. Can someone write an article of the birds seen crossing the Pacific, and perhaps through the Panama Canal and across the Atlantic?

I.C.B.P. CONFERENCE AT CAMBRIDGE JULY 1966

It was my privilege to represent the Hong Kong National Section at the 14th International Conference of the International Council for Bird Preservation held at Cambridge from 11th to 15th July, 1966 under the very able Chairmanship of Professor Dillon Ripley of the U.S.A. Europe was represented by 17 National Sections, Asia by five (Hong Kong, India, Israel, Japan, Korea), America by two, Africa by two, and Australasia by two — a total of 28 Nations. There were also observers from Indonesia, Singapore, the Philippines, and Ethiopia and representatives from eight international organisations.

The very full programme, which included some social functions, started each day at 9.30 a.m. and ended at 10 p.m. or later. A large number of the most important aspects of Conservation were discussed in general session, on most of which very interesting papers had been distributed beforehand. I do not wish to encumber this short article with lists of all the various subjects discussed and of the numerous Resolutions and Recommendations approved at the final session but will confine myself to those of particular interest to Hong Kong. Our Chairman has the full text of the papers distributed and of the resolutions passed, which interested members can consult. (The Hong Kong Bird Watching Society has the unique distinction and responsibility of being the only bird watching or ornithological society in the world to be at the same time a National Section of the I.C.B.P.).

In some ways the conference was depressing. Colonel Vincent, for instance showed us an enormous red book which he has recently compiled listing the hundreds of species of birds and other wild animals now in very real danger of complete extinction.

Dr. R.T. Peterson (of Field Guide fame) spoke of birds in Central and South America which he had quite often seen on recent visits but which he could not find on his latest visit, including six species of Kingfisher. Out of 2700 species and sub-species of birds in Tropical America 500 have already disappeared. The main reasons for this disastrous loss are the spraying of crops with toxic chemicals from the air and the colonisation of forest areas by the spreading human population. The situation seems to be particularly bad in Tropical America and also, to a lesser extent, in Southern Europe, including much of France. In fact only in Northern Europe and North America do we find countries where public opinion is being aroused to the urgency of conservation. Until public opinion is not only aroused but mobilised very few Governments will take any action.

The greatest threat of all is clearly the dangerous rate at which the human species is proliferating which results, directly or indirectly, in the massive destruction of habitats. The I.C.B.P. as such can do nothing about checking the human birth rate but individual members of the various national sections could make efforts to rouse their fellow citizens to the danger.

The next greatest threat is probably the use in agriculture of persistent types of toxic chemicals—the chlorinated hydrocarbons or organo—chlorine group which includes Aldrin, Dieldrin and D.D.T. These can cause long-lasting contamination of the whole environment. Their use is now being controlled and limited in the U.K. and the U.S.A. but delegates pointed out the probability that manufacturers with large stocks on their hands would be strongly tempted to export them, perhaps under a different brand name, to countries where there is no control of their use. The Conference therefore adopted a Resolution urging all Governments to take immediate action to prohibit the export or import of any pesticides which have been banned in their country of origin.

Other topics discussed were the dangers of the abuse of birdringing and of nylon nets (now widely used in some countries to catch birds for food.) A Resolution was passed recommending that the sale and use of mist nets be restricted to properly qualified persons and organisations and that they should be used only for scientific purposes. Bird-ringing organisations and Governments were urged to ensure that no bird-ringing is allowed except by scientific authorities through a single national organisation; that the ringing of nestlings should be done only by a limited number of trained ornithologists specially licensed; and that efforts should be made to concentrate bird-ringing activities on particular investigations and to avoid ineffective or useless mass ringing and/or ringing which might be a danger to rare species.

Another recommendation of possible interest to Hong Kong was that Governments should consider the issue and sale of wildlife stamps to raise funds for the promotion of wildlife conservation. In the U.S.A. 'duck stamps' have to be put on all gun licences and shooting permits before they become valid. That practice would not raise much money in Hong Kong but the sale of stamps to the public, especially tourists, would be worth considering. There seems at present to be a world-wide craze to buy all new stamps issued anywhere so there is no doubt that they would sell readily.

An informal meeting of the Asian Continental Section was held one afternoon under the chairmanship of Dr. Yamashina (Japan). One suggestion was that the advice of Col. Vincent (I.C.B.P.'s liaison officer with the International Union for the Conservation of Nature) should be obtained about starting an

urgent conservation project in one Asian country which could become a model for similar projects in other countries and which could also be given wide publicity all over Asia. The representative of Israel, Mr. Zahavi, told us about the interesting Israel Field Studies Organisation which is now starting to run hostels in or near Nature Reserves at which tourists and students can stay, and at which field studies courses are given and scientific research carried out. It is a private organisation but manages to get grants from the Government Education Department, the Government Tourist Bureau, commercial tourist agencies, and the World Wildlife Fund.

The main impressions of the Conference which stay in the memory are three: the ever accelerating rate at which habitats are being destroyed by the ever increasing human population; the great efforts being made by groups of very able scientists and amateur conservationists in several international bodies such as the I.C.B.P., the I.U.C.N., and the International Biological Programme; and lastly the very efficient organisation both of the conference and of its permanent secretariat. There is no doubt that the leading conservationists in the world do realise the desperate urgency of the problem and the fact that public opinion has got to be aroused and organised if a large part of the world's wildlife is to be saved from extinction—saved not only for the enjoyment and appreciation of future generations but also for its own sake. There is little time left.

A. St. G. Walton

ON A TRIP TO HONG KONG

When my wife suggested to me that we make use of an airline fare concession to travel from Lybia to Hong Kong by way of the U.S.A. my thoughts turned naturally to the birds I might see. I knew something of the species I might meet in the western United States through the writings of Messrs. Fisher and Peterson in "Wild America" and Peterson in the "Field Guide" but the oriental avifauna was, to me, a mystery. I knew no more when we boarded the Tripoli/London flight on July 14th for I had been unable to find any useful literature. I would have to rely on the bookshops in Hong Kong.

(Editor's Note. Here follows an account of birds seen during a day in San Francisco and a day in Tokyo. A good many species were seen in San Francisco, but Tokyo was rather disappointing).

We went on to Hong Kong the following day. Landfall was made after dark so that I had to wait until the morning for my first Hong Kong species, always providing I could identify it! I could: Tree Sparrows were plentiful in the town as they were in Tokyo.

I was anxious to put the skyscrapers behind me as quickly as possible so the same morning we crossed to the island and headed for the Peak. My bird list began to grow as we travelled, with species which strangely enough I could identify; Black Kites I knew well enough, although they were a different subspecies to the European one; Spotted Doves, White-eyes, and Crested Mynahs, having been introduced into the U.S.A., were pictured in Peterson's field guide. So far so good! But on reaching the Peak I was soon in trouble. Birds I later found out were Bulbuls, Laughing Thrushes, Magpie-robin, etc., I could only sketch roughly and hope to find some book of reference later on.

The next day therefore, while wandering round Kowloon's famed shopping centre, I dived into every bookshop we passed and finally surfaced with a copy of "A Check-list of Hong Kong Birds". Although no help in the problem of identification, it gave me the idea of trying to contact one of the officials of the Hong Kong Bird Watching Society. With the help of the Tourist Association who provided me with the number I was soon on the phone to the Society's chairman, Cdr. Webb. Extremely helpful and friendly, he quickly arranged for me to use the Society's library and the following morning found me ensconced in the British Council Reading Room learning the field characters of the colony's birds.

After totting up my backlog of new species I decided the time was ripe for a full scale field trip and here again Cdr. Webb came to my rescue. Over an excellent dinner

at his home he told me of the best birding spots in the New Territories. During the course of my stay in Hong Kong I visited several of these places but undoubtedly the best was the huge marsh at Mai Po. It was here that I had my best days bird watching while in the colony.

Leaving my wife in Kowloon, with not too much money, of course!, I set forth for the marsh in one of the New Territory taxis. Starting from the fish restaurant, where I resisted the temptation to stop for a cold beer, I headed for the distant reed beds. I was soon on the way to an excellent bird list. Little Egrets, Purple Heron, Osprey and several wader species like Redshank, Curlew, etc. were well known to me, but Cattle Egret and Greater Sand Plover I was seeing for only the second time. My list of new birds was one of the largest I had ever had in a single day. A small flock of Terek Sandpipers realised a two year old wish, for I had been hoping to see this bird in Libya ever since my arrival there in January 1965. Also exciting were the relatively big numbers of "little" Bitterns flying about the area. I had many good views of Yellow Bitterns but I failed satisfactorily to identify a Chestnut Bittern. Perhaps the best behaved bird of the day was a White-breasted Waterhen which stalked about only a few feet from the path and I cursed myself roundly for deciding to travel light and leave my camera behind in Kowloon. In fact, so busy was I looking at the host of new birds to be seen during my stay that I only photographed one. A rather blurred slide of a Chinese Pond Heron now occupies a place in my collection, amidst the pictures of junks, sampans, rickshaws and floating restaurants, a reminder of an excellent day at the heronry near Sha Tau Kok.

The last excursion we made in Hong Kong produced what I consider to be the most outstanding bird of the whole trip. We were on one of the Yaumati Ferry Co.'s round-the-island sailings, just outside Repulse Bay, when it appeared; an immature White-bellied Sea Eagle. I have always had a soft spot for birds of prey and Libya seems to have a dearth of the larger species. Only an occasional Egyptian Vulture comes my way, although I once found an exhausted Lesser Spotted Eagle which lived for a week in the spare room and became so strong that it took two of us wearing thick leather gloves to catch it up prior to release. I could scarcely contain my excitement, therefore, when this magnificent bird wheeled into sight and came sailing overhead, only, it seemed, a few yards away although it must have been nearer fifty. I was so absorbed with the spectacle that I again forgot the camera, this time easily to hand. But I still treasure the memory of that wonderful sight.

When at last the day dawned for us to leave Hong Kong I consulted the Check List with a certain amount of regret. There were so many species I had not seen. Where had the

Blue Magpies, Koels and Chinese Greenfinches been hiding themselves? And the Autumn migration just about to start too. Well, I reflected, you can't see everything.

Back in Libya once again, on the edge of the Sahara, Hong Kong seems as far away as it did before, and the stony wasteland with its Larks and Wheatears bears no comparison to the thick jungle with its Bulbuls and Laughing Thrushes. One day I hope I shall visit the Colony again and renew my acquaintance with its birds. In the meantime the desert must suffice.

John H. Morgan.

Editor's Note: Mr. and Mrs. Morgan who do a lot of bird watching in Libya, spent part of their holiday in Hong Kong. Although it was the hottest part of the summer and very much off season for birds, they saw quite a few species and this account shows what can be done with a little determination.

SHORTER NOTES

Sea Eagles over Lamma Island

On 20th August I saw three White-bellied Sea Eagles (*Haliaeetus Leucogaster*) soaring over the rocky hills at the south-eastern end of Lamma Island. It was dusk and identification not, therefore, entirely certain but confirmation was fairly sure on 10th September when I was able to identify two eagles beyond doubt. I was looking down on them from Severn Road and watched them perched between Peak Road and the Aberdeen Reservoirs for a long time before they flew off across the channel towards Lamma.

M. D. I. G.

Sea Eagles in Mirs Bay

Port Shelter is a wonderful place for sailors and all those interested in aquatic sports but it is also a hunting area of the rarely seen "Sea Eagle". These majestic birds can sometimes be seen gliding gracefully over the picturesque bays and inlets in search of food.

Last September I had the good fortune to be a guest for a week-end aboard the good ship "Coryphaena". This time we travelled much further afield. We sailed near the mouth of Tolo Harbour and Starling Inlet and as far East as Peng Chau Island. While taking a stint at the helm as we approached Peng Chau, I remember seeing two obviously very large birds swooping and gliding high above the cliff which lies at the south-eastern end of the island. Unfortunately they were too far distant to be identified. When we were abeam of the cliff the birds had disappeared but I did notice that high up on the cliff face was a patch of dirty white which looked as though it could have been caused by bird droppings. Just to one side of this white patch, perched on a ledge, was a large bird with a white breast. Unfortunately, again we were too far distant to identify the species.

Later, after we had tied up alongside the jetty on the north side of the island, we went ashore to explore the land and, needless to say, we eventually climbed to the top of the headland overlooking the cliff. We had great hopes of seeing the bird again at closer quarters. We were very disappointed however to find that there was no sign of it. I did however by tenuously clinging to a firmly rooted shrub, manage to peer down the sheer face of the cliff and saw a spread of twigs and straw on a ledge some twenty feet below the summit. This was a rare moment, I think that for the first time in my life I was looking at the nest of an Eagle.

Some day I hope to visit this island again and confirm that this is the home of two of our most magnificent feathered creatures.

J. F. Pickering.

Editors Note. This provides evidence that the White-bellied Sea Eagle ranges the eastern waters of Mirs Bay and may nest on the cliffs of Peng Chau. Here is an opportunity for members with yachts (or yachting connections) to extend our knowledge of this eagle and perhaps add another breeding site beyond the one known on Steep Island at the mouth of Clear-water Bay.

ALL IN TEN MINUTES

After a fairly profitable forenoon between Ping Shan pagoda and Luen Tak causeway, I climbed a little pine-clad hill behind the Mong Tseng temple to enjoy my lunch. It was the 25th September, the weather was sunny and dry and the feathered tourist trade was brisk.

Suddenly over the hill shot a female Kestrel, flying straight and "purposefully" towards Luen Tak. It was the first I had seen that winter.

The little pine trees were full of Brown Flycatchers accompanied by a few small warblers. Earlier in the day I had come across many slightly larger warblers, darting about the lantana bushes with their whole body a-twitch. They had a broad pale eyebrow, greenish head and back and one faint wing-bar; I took them for Arctic Warblers on migration. The smaller warblers in the pine trees had two wing-bars and I thought they must be Pallas' — but the book says "yellow band on the rump". This I can never see, perhaps they cover it with their wings, when not flying so fast that you can't see much anyway.

One sandwich later, there was a movement in some more openwork trees, possibly Persian Lilacs, and out came the most prominent yellow rump I have seen. The bird was on the move but not at all shy and I was able to note down "Olive brown head and back, no eyebrow, white wing-bar, pale yellow breast with off-white below, prominent yellow rump." It turned out to be a female Tricolour Flycatcher, the first I had seen.

While I was following this bird, another somewhat larger appeared in a tree on the left and sat calmly facing me. The rounded black and white tail gave it away as a Black-winged Cuckoo-shrike, which was just as well as it did not stay long. One after the other, two more birds at once alighted in a nearby tree and seemed to be in even more of a hurry. They were female Ashy Minivets. On the rare occasions I have seen these birds they always seem pressed for time and racing to catch the next train for the South.

Finally a female Sparrowhawk circled low overhead, again the first I had seen since the Spring.

Altogether a most exciting and eventful ten minutes.

E. D. W.

A COLLABORATION OF CRANES

On 30th October, the Society Outing had almost completed a tour of Mai Po marshes with enough species in their notebooks to make a GOOD DAY. Two of us were sorting out Golden and Grey Plovers, which refused to take to flight and reveal the diagnostic colour of their axillaries. Meanwhile the others were shouting and bellowing to deaf ears, to alert us to three vast off-white objects sailing overhead from North to South. A first guess made them White Storks.

Fortunately the birds settled in a conspicuous group on a bund between two reedbeds and the Outing set out to stalk them. A telescope was brought into action, but even power 7 glasses showed a cascade of grey feathers over the rump and we were delighted to realise that they must be Cranes.

The books says that Cranes are vigilant and wary birds and do not allow the bird watcher to approach closely, so we expected them to take off at any minute and made frequent halts to use the telescope. Perhaps they were exhausted after a long journey, perhaps they knew what rarities they were—anyway they held their ground, with only an occasional glance of apprehension. First the telescope and then binoculars picked out the red patch on the forehead and the true colours of the bill. At about eighty yards, we had gazed our fill and decided to retire. As if in recognition of this thoughtful move, the "Common" Cranes at once took off and gave a splendid exhibition of flying in tight "V" formation before resuming their Southward journey. The neck was not held quite straight, but with a graceful double bend, and the light grey secondaries (or is it tertiaries?) trailed modestly astern, followed by a pair of long dark grey legs.

Over lunch in the Mai Po wood, we consulted the records. Even the new Check List could give only four previous sightings and the last was in 1931. There seem to be two Common Cranes in the Botanical Gardens and they are still in their paddock.

E. D. W.

RECORDING

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

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

Head each sheet and complete it as follows:-

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

Please do NOT use diary form.

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

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

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

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

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

SIGHT-RECORDS OF RARE BIRDS

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

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

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

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

- Distance of bird from you, whether you were using glasses or not, and nature and direction of light.
- Nature of ground it was on and what other birds (if any) it was associating with.
- Whether you saw it from different angles; whether at rest or in flight; whether from above or below. (The more varied the conditions of observation the better).
- What were its actions and what was the character of its flight compared with other birds.
- Its general form as compared with other birds, and how it differed from other birds at all like it which are known to you.
- Particular points in structure as compared with other birds, such as size and shape of bill, length of legs, shape of wing, length of tail.
- Colour of bill, legs and feet; any distinctive white or coloured patches or markings and their exact position. A rough sketch or diagram is a great help. (Some general anatomy should be learnt so that you can give the colour of wing coverts, under tail-coverts, nape, throat, chin or other parts of the plumage accurately).
- So far as possible, an exact description of the whole plumage of the bird, not only the parts which you think may help in identifying it.
- Any calls or notes, indicating especially the quality of the sound (harsh, rattling, shrill, hoarse, liquid, etc.), and comparison with notes of other species if this assists the description.