

THE HONG KONG BIRD REPORT 1975



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THE HONG KONG BIRD WATCHING SOCIETY

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THE HONG KONG BIRD REPORT 1975

SOCIETY NEWS

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Published in 1976 by the

HONG KONG BIRD WATCHING SOCIETY

c/o Zoology Department, University of Hong Kong

(A registered society under the Societies Ordinance)

Records compiled by C. A. Viney

OFFICERS OF THE SOCIETY

Chairman	M. A. Webster
Hon. Secretary	C. R. Payne
Hon. Treasurer	M. A. Webster
Hon. Recorder	C. A. Viney

During 1975, membership rose to a record high level, with a total of 134 members at the end of the year, of whom 35 were overseas members.

At the Annual General Meeting in April, Mr. F. O. P. Hechtel resigned from the post of Chairman, due to pressure of work. Mr. Hechtel has been on the committee of the Society for many years, and in particular was its representative on the Provisional Council for the Use and Conservation of the Countryside in 1968. He has been known for many years as an active conservationist, and a thorn in the side of unimaginative and time-serving Government officials. Apart from his work for conservation, he conducted an active ringing programme from 1965-67. Fortunately he is remaining in Hong Kong, and will, we hope, continue to help with outings, and on anything connected with conservation.

Another keen member who left during the year was Dick Isherwood, to whom we are grateful for looking after the sales of Annual Reports and Checklists.

The following outings were held in 1975, the majority of them so well attended that the Committee is concerned as to the future planning of field meetings; while everybody is welcome, too many people mean too few birds!

1st January	Sek Kong Woods
19th January	Mai Po marshes
11th February	Mong Tseng
2nd March	Mai Po marshes
29th March	Sek Kong Woods
21st April	Mai Po marshes
11th May	Mai Po marshes
14th June	Tai Mo Shan/Fanling
25th August	Mai Po marshes
22nd September	Mai Po marshes
19th October	Mai Po marshes
16th November	Mai Po marshes
7th December	Tsim Bei Tsui/Mong Tseng
26th December	Sek Kong Woods

An indoor meeting, during which we showed three RSPB films, was held on 28th August, in the Shell Theatre in Shell House. This, regrettably, was a failure, in that only 13 members attended, less than half the number we usually get on outings.

One successful innovation during the year was the appointment of a Transport Officer. Under this impressive title, Ida Garland has helped a number of members without cars to get lifts to outings. This has helped to make it possible for some of our local members, and also younger members, to attend outings which they could not possibly have reached on public transport.

The library moved to its new home at the Zoology Department of the University of Hong Kong last spring. This has meant, as it is rather out of the way, that it is less used than formerly, but it has provided much-needed security for the more valuable books, and is at least a permanent home, far better, from every point of view, than the temporary lodgings in which it has been lurking for the past few years. Our official address also changed to c/o the Zoology Dept., University of Hong Kong.

One of the events of the year was the publication, at long last, of Ben King and Ed Dickinson's Field Guide to the Birds of South-East Asia. Both authors are members of long standing, and we wish their book every success. It is already a regular attendant on outings, and will no doubt help to improve the standard of field identification here.

Your own Society published a third edition of the Annotated Checklist of the Birds of Hong Kong, a copy of which was distributed free to members in January 1976. This edition covers all birds recorded up to the end of 1974, together with all new species recorded between then and June 1975. The opportunity has been taken to divide the list into six categories, as follows:—

- A. Species which have been recorded in an apparently wild state in Hong Kong within the last fifty years.
- B. Species which have been recorded in an apparently wild state in Hong Kong, but not within the last fifty years.
- C. Species which, although originally introduced by man, have now established a regular feral breeding stock which apparently maintains itself without necessary recourse to further introduction.
- D. Species introduced by man, of which the feral populations may or may not be self-supporting.
- E. Species of which all published records are suspected of being of birds escaped or released from captivity.
- F. Species of which all published records must be regarded as doubtful because of the possibility of mistaken identification.

This categorisation is based on the B.O.U.'s British list, with the addition of the last two categories, which are made necessary by

the vast bird trade in Hong Kong, and the transitory nature of most birdwatchers. In particular, previously published records now considered doubtful are not scrapped completely; reasons for doubting them are given, and in some cases (e.g. Roseate Tern) the old records may be of use for purposes of comparison when some future watchers get the local situation straightened out.

The housing estate at Tai Shang Wai, on the Deep Bay Marshes, and bordering the Mai Po Marshes, was given approval by Government in June 1975, despite vigorous protests by your Society, backed up by international conservationist groups throughout the world. The outgoing Chairman gave his views in last year's report; there is no need to repeat them. Much of the marsh, which could be turned into an invaluable recreational and educational area for the people of Hong Kong, is to be alienated to provide tiny boxlike houses for persons unknown (one has to call them that, because nobody has yet successfully defined the clientele for whom these structures are being erected). Some site formation has taken place, but fortunately nothing more as yet; there are strong rumours that the scheme is coming apart at the seams, which would indeed gratify your Committee, who have been its strongest critics. The strong partisan backing given to the Tai Shang Wai scheme by His Excellency the Governor and the Secretary for the Environment looks more obviously misguided as time goes on; if the scheme is really running into trouble, we would not be surprised to see a rescue operation mounted by Government, not because the scheme is good for Hong Kong (because nobody has been able to produce a single argument for that), but to save face for the officials who have backed it. It is on this kind of political expediency that conservation in Hong Kong depends.

We were allowed every opportunity to express our views, and we thank the Press for the publicity they gave the issue. Your past and present Chairman were granted an interview by the Governor, on which, since it was off the record, we cannot comment. But at no time did we ever receive an answer to any of our objections; in true Hong Kong Government style, they were sidestepped where possible, and ignored where it was not.

That the Hong Kong Government, for all its outward imperturbability, was sensitive to the criticism, was openly revealed by the sudden declaration that the Mai Po Marshes were a Restricted Area under Section 7 of the Wild Birds and Wild Mammals Protection Ordinance. We understand from many different sources that the Director of Agriculture and Fisheries assured the Governor of his department's ability to warden the area satisfactorily. While the Director and his staff have gone out of their way to help our members, and others, to obtain permits to visit the area, wardening has been inadequate, and the assurance given has not been fulfilled. In

general, wardens have only been on duty from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. (netting and illegal hunting generally takes place at night or at dawn and dusk); as permits had to be issued to local residents, the restriction on entry only applied to Europeans, at least until December 1975. Chinese visitors, even if accompanied by Europeans, could go in without even being asked what they were doing, while their companions had to produce permits! While, as conservationists, we have no objections to the permit system, we expect it to be made effective; at present, it is a joke.

Discussions have also taken place within Government for the conversion of the marsh into a wildfowl park cum nature reserve, roughly as suggested in the 1974 Report. We support this fully, but at present it does not look likely to get past the drawing-board; the stumbling-block is finance, of which so small an amount is required that its unavailability is a clear indication that Government is not really serious in its approach to wildlife conservation.

However critical one may feel of Government's appalling lack of recognition of any values beyond the dollar, one can only hope that the account given above will be proved, openly and publicly, to be wrong. Unlike the senior civil servants involved, we have no vested interest in not being proved wrong; there is nothing we would like better.

M. A. Webster

REPORT ON THE BIRDS 1975

Hon. Recorder: C. A. Viney

The most noteworthy ornithological event in Hong Kong in 1975 was the publication of the completely revised Check-List by M. A. Webster, shortly to be followed by his comprehensive 'A New Guide to the Birds of Hong Kong' which I am sure will prove an invaluable addition to the scant literature on the birds of Hong Kong.

As far as records go 1975 was not an exceptional year with barely 250 species being recorded, disregarding those which have apparently escaped from captivity. A factor affecting this figure may well have been that the number of enthusiastic field observers was fewer than in previous years. Not only the birds are migratory in Hong Kong.

However, three new species were added to the Hong Kong list during the year. One of these, the European Spoonbill, may well become a regular as it was most likely overlooked in the past. The Ancient Auk will certainly remain a vagrant for years to come and the third species, the Reed Bunting, highlighted an exceptional year for buntings. Another bunting, the Yellow-browed Bunting, was recorded for the first time with good field notes. This species had the dubious distinction of being removed from the Hong Kong List at the beginning of 1975 and being reinstated at the end of that year. Another bunting, the Rustic Bunting, was recorded for the first time but in view of the locality and the preponderance of this species in the local bird shops at the time it could only make category E in the new Check-List.

Again, thanks to Government's Bird Strike Unit, we have a series of very interesting gull and tern records. In particular, the second Hong Kong record of a Common Gull, continued sightings of Brown-headed Gulls and two exceptional records of a Glaucous or Glaucous-backed Gull and a Kittiwake. Kai Tak produced a good crop of rare waders and the Small Skylarks have continued to breed there.

The Deep Bay area was generally disappointing but good records included Baer's Pochard, Australian Curlew, Asiatic Dowitcher, Great Black-headed Gull, Hoopoe and a fine flock of 50 Avocets in December.

The 1975/76 winter proved to be good for thrushes, most species of which arrived a week earlier than usual. The number of flycatchers seen was better than in most previous years but did not

compare with the numbers seen in the late fifties and early sixties. A bright note was the rediscovery of the David's Hill Warbler at the summit area of Tai Mo Shan.

On the debit side, no records were submitted for Large Hawk-cuckoo, Broad-billed Roller, Ashy Drongo, Pale-legged Willow-warbler and either species of Paradise Flycatcher. Also, the Rufous Turtle-dove, Lesser Coucal and Brown Shrike were remarkably scarce.

The Systematic List incorporates records from the following observers:—

~~H. Heckford~~ Maj. G. D. Birch
E. Anderson, Dr. R. J. Barnes, E. A. Barnes, C. P. Barnes, D. Bradford, P. Branwhite, Sqdn. Ldr. J. H. Brown, J. A. Campbell, D. P. Carthy, M. L. Chalmers, K. K. Chiu, G. C. H. Cooper, R. Ferguson, T. H. Fisher, Supt. D. J. Galloway, T. P. Garland, I. W. Harris, F. O. P. Hechtel, A. J. Holcolme, ~~R. J. Isherwood, Mrs. H. D. Lunt, R. R. Mason, D. S. Melville, K. Oldfield, C. R. Payne, A. Proud, K. R. S. Proud, P. A. Reed, Sqdn. Ldr. E. H. Roberts, J. M. Rowlands, H. C. Ryker, H. D. Stead, R. P. Tipper, C. A. Viney, M. A. Webster and B. D. Wilson.~~

Brig. J. Chapple

Dr. D. S. Hill

J. A. Irving

SYSTEMATIC LIST FOR 1975

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

2. Great Crested Grebe (*Podiceps cristatus*)

Up to eight in the Deep Bay area until 28 March. A full-plumaged bird was seen on a fishpond at Mai Po during late April and remained until 4 May. Three at Tai Po on 24 November.

4. Little Grebe (*Podiceps ruficollis*)

Recorded in small numbers on the Deep Bay Marshes until 2 July where breeding definitely occurred—three separate broods being noted. Not recorded again from this area until 9 November when up to 14 were regularly seen until the end of the year. Odd birds were recorded at Long Valley, Lam Tsuen Valley, Shing Mun and Kowloon Reservoirs during the winter months.

7. Dalmatian Pelican (*Pelecanus crispus*)

All records are from the Deep Bay area. Flocks of up to 84 (26 February) were seen until 30 March and up to 25 from 21 December. All specifically identified pelicans were of this species but flocks seen on 19 January and 26 February possibly contained a few Spotted-billed Pelicans (*P. philippensis*). The possibility of mixed flocks occurring must serve as a warning to observers positively identifying distant flocks of pelicans at rest as all of one species on the basis of one or two birds on which the appropriate field marks are just discernable.

8. Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax carbo*)

Up to 300 in the Deep Bay area until 6 April and up to 250 there from 19 October. Maximum numbers were recorded in January, February and December. Many of these birds may roost on Tree Island off the Castle Peak Peninsula. Also noted at Stonecutters Island (up to 35), Hei Ling Chau (roost of c.35), Lamma Island, Chi Ma Wan (up to five) and Plover Cove in the winter months.

9/10. Frigate-bird sp. (*Fregata* sp.)

Frigate birds not specifically identified were seen over Deep Bay on 4 May and the West Lamma Channel on 25 November.

12. Yellow Bittern (*Ixobrychus sinensis*)

All records are from the Deep Bay Marshes. Up to 50 recorded between mid-April and mid-October which is fewer than in most recent years. Up to four during both winters.

13. Chestnut Bittern (*Ixobrychus cinnamomeus*)

Up to three at Mai Po between 25 May and 26 June. One at Lok Ma Chau on 4 August. Two north of Saikung on 5 September. A female found dead at Kai Tak on 11 November.

16. Bittern (*Botaurus stellaris*)

Single birds were regularly seen at Mai Po until 6 April and one or two were seen there again from 29 November. One at Ma Tso Ling (northeast of Lok Ma Chau) on 17 December.

17. Night Heron (*Nycticorax nycticorax*)

At least four at Yim Tso Ha Egrettry between 27 April and 26 June. One was seen on a nest there on 7 June and an adult was seen there with three juveniles on 8 June. A juvenile at Mai Po on 16 July and two adults there on 17 August and 7 September—six there on 12 October.

18. Chinese Pond Heron (*Ardeola bacchus*)

Present throughout the year in the northern New Territories and occasionally in the Saikung area. Also odd reports of single birds in urban Kowloon and Kai Tak usually during the migrations. Bred in good numbers at the Yim Tso Ha Egrettry where 17+ were picked up dead on 7 June after heavy rain.

19. Cattle Egret (*Bubulcus ibis*)

Common in the northern New Territories, particularly in the summer but good numbers were recorded in the winter months at Lok Ma Chau, Lau Fau Shan, Long Valley and Yuen Long. Elsewhere, recorded in small numbers from Stonecutters Island (8), Saikung and Kai Tak during the spring passage and in the autumn at Saikung and Pui O (Lantau). Bred in good numbers at the Yim Tso Ha Egrettry.

20. Little Green Heron (*Butorides striatus*)

Up to eight at Mai Po between 26 April and 12 October and one there on 21 December. Two at Ho Chung on 10 May and 30 August. Single birds at Saikung and Tai Mong Tsai between 24 May and 18 October, Kai Tak on 8 October and Sek Kong on 26 December.

21. Little Egret (*Egretta garzetta*)

Common throughout the year in the northern New Territories. Elsewhere, recorded in small numbers from Kai Tak and Saikung during the spring passage and in the autumn at Saikung and Pui O (Lantau). Bred in good numbers at Yim Tso Ha Egrettry and also bred at Mai Po Village, where 250 were seen roosting on 31 March. A 'grey phase bird', similar to that recorded in 1973 and 1974, was seen again at Mai Po on 22 September.

22. Lesser Egret (*Egretta intermedia*)

Two at Mai Po on 13 January and four there on 26 January. One at Kai Tak on 24 October and up to six at Mai Po between 1 and 30 November. These birds were identified by their intermediate size between Little and Great Egrets (*E. garzetta* and *E. alba*), usually by direct comparison, short yellow bill with dark tip and in some cases darkish base.

23. Swinhoe's Egret (*Egretta eulophotes*)

Recorded at the Yim Tso Ha Egrettry between 31 March and 26 June. On 27 April at least two pairs present with two occupied nests.

24. Reef Egret (*Egretta sacra*)

Recorded in small numbers along the rocky coastline throughout the year. Regularly recorded from Kai Tak with up to six being seen. Up to four regularly at Aberdeen. Four at the Soko Islands on 1 June and eight at Stanley on 21 June. One seen feeding from a timber raft being towed off Ma Wan. A possible white phase bird at Saikung on 27 September.

25. Great Egret (*Egretta alba*)

Up to 30 on the Deep Bay marshes until 4 May and up to 40 there from 25 August—two there on 14 June. Elsewhere, four at Long Valley on 13 January, an adult in full plumage at Yim Tso Ha Egrettry on 27 April, three at Pui O (Lantau) on 29 October and one at Starling Inlet on 10 November.

26. Grey Heron (*Ardea cinerea*)

Up to 150 recorded from the Deep Bay area until 4 May and from 25 August, apart from odd birds seen there on 7 June and 6 July. One at Kai Tak on 28 November.

27. Purple Heron (*Ardea purpurea*)

Up to five at Mai Po until 27 April. Six there on 7 June, four on 26 June, 13+ on 6 July and up to 15 there from 25 August. One flying over the West Lamma Channel on 29 October.

29. Black Stork (*Ciconia nigra*)

One at Long Valley on 1 January.

30. White Ibis (*Threskiornis melanocephalus*)

Up to three regularly in the Deep Bay area until 13 April and one or two seen there on three occasions from 3 September.

31. European Spoonbill (*Platalea leucorodia*)

One at Mai Po on 31 March (DB). Two at Deep Bay on 7 September (DB). Ten at Mai Po on 27 December and recorded there again on 29 December (DPC). This is a new species for Hong Kong although it may have previously been overlooked. The

bird recorded on 31 March was seen in a flock of five adult and one immature Lesser Spoonbills (*P. minor*) so that a direct comparison could be made. The bird was noted as slightly larger than *P. minor*. General plumage colouration creamy-white as opposed to greyish-white of *P. minor*, bill black with prominent yellow spoon (*P. minor* had all black bills). Black on face confined to a wedge shaped area between bill and eye (*P. minor* had a more extensive black area on the face extending vertically above and below the eye). The world-wide distribution of this species is southern Europe, North Africa and Asia east to Mongolia and south to Ceylon.

32. Lesser Spoonbill (*Platalea minor*)

Up to six quite regularly recorded in the Deep Bay area until 4 May. Seven at Mai Po on 30 November and two there on 21 December. Several records of spoonbills not specifically identified, including a flock of 14 on 20 December, were submitted.

33. Mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*)

Three including a drake at Mai Po on 23 March. A drake and two females at Mai Po on 16 November and four there on 21 December. A drake (free flying and different shape) with domestic ducks at Ma Tso Ling (north-east of Lok Ma Chau) on 17 December (DSM).

34. Yellow-nib Duck (*Anas poecilorhyncha*)

All records are from the Deep Bay area. One on 19 January. Two or three seen regularly between 23 March and 17 April. One on 7 June. Up to 15 (apart from a flock of 40 on 16 November) regularly from 17 August.

35. Gadwall (*Anas strepera*)

Three at Deep Bay on 19 January.

36. Falcated Teal (*Anas falcata*)

All records are from the Deep Bay area. Eight on 1 January, 40 on 19 January. Two drakes and two females at Mai Po on 6 and 13 April. Eight at Mai Po on 30 November and two there on 6 December.

37. Teal (*Anas crecca*)

Common in the Deep Bay area until 6 April and from 19 October. Up to 500 and 600 recorded in January and November with a maximum estimate of 1000 present on 21 December (DB).

39. Garganey (*Anas querquedula*)

Up to 60 in the Deep Bay area between 2 March and 3 May. An eclipse male there on 12 June. Up to 200 in the same area between 21 August and 19 October. Five at Kai Tak on 15 October.

40. Wigeon (*Anas penelope*)

Regularly recorded in the Deep Bay area where up to eight were seen until 4 May and up to 30 from 5 November. Two at Sek Kong Feeder Reservoir on 19 October.

41. Pintail (*Anas acuta*)

40 in Deep Bay on 1 January. Four at Mai Po on 4 January and six there on 19 January. A drake at Nim Wan on 26 January. Five at Mai Po on 16 November and two there on 6 December. A flock of 27 at Tai Po on 24 November and another flock of over 60 in Deep Bay on 26 December.

42. Shoveler (*Anas clypeata*)

Regularly recorded in the Deep Bay area until 6 April with several flocks of c 30 being seen but flocks of 90 and 95 were seen on 23 February and 20 March respectively. Up to four at Mai Po on 21 and 22 September and five there on 16 November. A flock of 25 in Deep Bay on 21 December.

45. Baer's Pochard (*Aythya baeri*)

Two males and two females at Mai Po on 30 November (DB). This flock of four were generally the size and shape of Tufted Ducks (*A. fuligula*) and were swimming and diving on a large fishpond. The description taken of the males was: "blackish-green head, chocolate brown back, brown breast, flanks broadly barred chestnut-buff, belly and under tail coverts off white, pale yellow eye and grey bill with whitish ring towards the nib. The females resembled the males but had chocolate brown heads and a buff patch at the base of their bills." This is only the second record for Hong Kong.

49. Red-breasted Merganser (*Mergus serrator*)

Up to five in the Deep Bay area until 31 March. Five in Castle Peak Bay on 2 March. A female remained on a fishpond at Mai Po from 26 April until 4 May.

50. Shelduck (*Tadorna tadorna*)

Flocks of 60 to 80 in the Deep Bay area until 15 March and up to 50 there from 25 November. At least ten at Tai Po on 24 November.

55. Black-eared Kite (*Milvus migrans*)

Common and widespread but with an increase in numbers outside the summer months. Pairs nested at Stonecutters Island and Little Green Island (three young). Full details and synopsis of the counts made in the 1975/76 winter can be found elsewhere in this report.

- 57. Buzzard** (*Buteo buteo*)
Quite common and widespread during both winters. Usually seen singly but up to four seen together. Records of birds being mobbed by a Peregrine Falcon (*Falco peregrinus*) at Happy Valley and Jungle Crows (*Corvus macrorhynchus*) at the Shing Mun Plantations. Extreme dates were until 5 April and from 3 September.
- 58. Sparrowhawk** (*Accipiter nisus*)
Single birds in the Tai Tam/Shek O area on 2 January and 17 April. Two at Victoria Peak on 16 March. Several widespread sightings of one or two between 12 October and 7 December. An adult male at Tai Po Kau on 24 December. One at Route Twisk on 27 December.
- 60. Goshawk** (*Accipiter gentilis*)
One at Severn Road, Victoria Peak on 28 March. This bird was seen over a period of several weeks and was even reported to have returned at the end of the year but was only specifically noted on the above date.
- 63. Imperial Eagle** (*Aquila heliaca*)
Up to two adults and an immature in the Long Valley/Lok Ma Chau area until 9 March and at least one there from 17 December. An immature at Kai Tak on 17 February.
- 64. Steppe Eagle** (*Aquila rapax*)
An immature at Long Valley on 1 January.
- 66. Bonelli's Eagle** (*Hieraaëtus fasciatus*)
Regularly recorded throughout the year from widespread areas. Usually seen in pairs. On 26 June two pairs plus another two adults were seen in the Sha Tau Kok area.
- 67. White-bellied Sea-Eagle** (*Haliaeetus leucogaster*)
Recorded principally from south-eastern Hong Kong Island and the West Lamma Channel but also seen in the vicinity of Victoria Harbour, Tolo Harbour and Mai Po. Up to four seen together including adults with immatures. No records for the period 22 May to 16 September.
- 69. Serpent Eagle** (*Spilornis cheela*)
One in the Lam Tsuen Valley on 27 April.
- 70. Marsh Harrier** (*Circus aeruginosus*)
Up to four, including an adult male, on the Deep Bay Marshes until 21 April and up to six, again including an adult male, there from 21 September. One or two occasionally seen at Ma Tso Ling north-east of Lok Ma Chau).
- 71. Pied Harrier** (*Circus melanoleucos*)
A male at Mai Po on 19 January.
- 73. Black Vulture** (*Aegypius monachus*)
Single birds recorded at Long Valley until 26 January and on 9 March.
- 74. Osprey** (*Pandion haliaetus*)
One or two recorded regularly from the Deep Bay area until 4 May. An immature at Lok Ma Chau on 4 August. Up to three again seen regularly in the Deep Bay area from 12 October.
- 75. Hobby** (*Falco subbuteo*)
One or two in the Lau Fau Shan area on 22 and 27 October.
- 76. Peregrine Falcon** (*Falco peregrinus*)
Single birds in the urban area throughout the year. Single birds seen in the Deep Bay area in the winter months. One at Sek Kong on 29 March and one at Lantau on 10 December.
- 78. Kestrel** (*Falco tinnunculus*)
Widespread during both winters but scarcer than in some years. Up to five at Long Valley on 27 December. Extreme dates were until 1 April and from 2 October.
- 79. Chinese Francolin** (*Francolinus pintadeanus*)
Recorded in widespread areas of the New Territories and Hong Kong Island. Probably commoner than records indicate.
- 80. Japanese Quail** (*Coturnix japonica*)
An unusual set of records from the Hung Hom Reclamation in Kowloon of three on 10 January, one on 23 March, three on 5 April, one on 12 April, one on 26 October and two on 28 December. Single birds at Shek O on 27 January, Mount Davis on 9 and 10 February, Pui O (Lantau) on 16 November and Mong Tseng on 7 December. More regularly recorded than in most recent years.
- 84. Water Rail** (*Rallus aquaticus*)
One at San Tin on 20 April. One found in a garden at Tai Po Kau on 27 October and for its own protection kept in an aviary overnight and released the following day apparently unharmed.
- 85. Banded Rail** (*Rallus striatus*)
Irregularly recorded at Mai Po where up to three were seen in most months. Single birds at Starling Inlet on 7 June and 19 December. One at Lau Fau Shan on 17 May. One near Tai Po on 28 September.

- 89. White-breasted Waterhen** (*Amaurornis phoenicurus*)
Quite common and widespread in the New Territories and occasionally recorded on Hong Kong Island.
- 90. Moorhen** (*Gallinula chloropus*)
Present on the Deep Bay Marshes throughout the year, usually in small numbers but over 30 counted on 21 April. One at Ho Chung on 20 April. One picked up dead at Kai Tak on 19 November. One at Long Valley on 21 December.
- 91. Watercock** (*Gallicrex cinerea*)
Single males at Mai Po on 22 June and Lok Ma Chau on 4 and 5 August.
- 92. Coot** (*Fulica atra*)
Up to 14 at Mai Po until 2 July and a few there from 12 October with numbers increasing to 30 in mid-December. Good numbers at Lok Ma Chau from 21 December when 350 were counted. Up to five at Plover Cove in January, two there on 8 June and at least five nearby at Shuen Wan on 27 December. 125 counted at Tai Po on 16 December and up to ten there from 20 December. Two at Starling Inlet on 19 December.
- 93. Pheasant-tailed Jacana** (*Hydrophasianus chirurgus*)
Four adults at Mai Po on 25 May and one there on 17 November. An adult and a juvenile at Lok Ma Chau on 3 October and a single adult there on 12 October.
- 94. Painted Snipe** (*Rostratula benghalensis*)
Two at Kai Tak on both 10 and 31 October.
- 96. Lapwing** (*Vanellus vanellus*)
Three at Tai Po on 22 November. Up to 21 at Long Valley from 21 December. Nine at Mai Po on 21 December.
- 97. Grey-headed Lapwing** (*Vanellus cinereus*)
Seven remained at Long Valley until 2 March and up to ten returned there from 26 November. Single juveniles at Kai Tak on 24 September and 6 October and an adult there on 18 November. Two at Mai Po on 19 October.
- 99. Little Ringed Plover** (*Charadrius dubius*)
Regularly recorded from the Deep Bay area, Long Valley, Kai Tak and Saikung until 27 May and from 1 August. Usually only a few seen together but large numbers of first-year birds were at Lok Ma Chau in early November with a maximum count of 220 on 5 November.
- 100. Kentish Plover** (*Charadrius alexandrinus*)
Regularly recorded from the Deep Bay area, Kai Tak, Sha Tau

Kok and Saikung, plus one record from Tai Tam, until 6 May and from 1 August. Large flocks of 250+ at Nim Wan on 26 January, 100 at Kai Tak on 10 March, 430 and 300+ at Mai Po on 20 and 28 March respectively. Roosts of over 500 with Dunlin (*Calidris alpina*) on bunds at Mai Po at high tide on 1 November, 7 and 21 December.

- 101. Greater Sand-plover** (*Charadrius leschenaultii*)

- 102. Mongolian Sand-plover** (*Charadrius mongolus*)

Apart from five *C. leschenaultii* at Nim Wan on 26 January all records of Sand-plovers sp. fall between 1 March and 4 June and 1 August and 28 November. Sand-plovers were regularly recorded from the Deep Bay area, Kai Tak, Saikung and once from Sha Tau Kok. Of the specifically identified records *C. leschenaultii* considerably outnumber *C. mongolus*. Maximum numbers recorded were 90 (not specifically identified) at Lok Ma Chau on 5 November, and 30 *C. leschenaultii* at Mai Po on 26 April. Only small flocks of up to four *C. mongolus* were recorded during both migrations.

- 103. Oriental Plover** (*Charadrius veredus*)

All records are from Kai Tak. One or two regularly recorded between 17 March and 6 May including one found dead on 4 April. Single birds there on 10 and 16 October.

- 104. Grey Plover** (*Pluvialis squatarola*)

Single birds quite regularly recorded at Kai Tak during both winters. At Mai Po up to four in mid-January, up to three in late April, one on 25 August and up to 11 from 19 October until 6 December. Elsewhere, odd birds at Nim Wan on 26 January, Saikung on 20 April and 3 May and Tai Po on 30 August. Extreme dates were until 3 May and from 25 August.

- 105. Asiatic Golden Plover** (*Pluvialis dominicus*)

Quite regularly recorded at Kai Tak with single birds being seen on 7 and 10 February and 27 March, up to four between 2 and 22 May, up to 16 between 26 August and 25 October, one on 18 December and five on 29 December. Two at Mai Po on 24 April and 25 August. Three at Tai Po on 26 September. Odd birds at the Hung Hom Reclamation on 9 October and at Little Sai Wan on 15 October.

- 106. Turnstone** (*Arenaria interpres*)

All records are for the spring passage. Up to 15 on the Deep Bay Marshes on 21 and 24 April. Up to nine at Kai Tak between 25 April and 13 May. Up to five at Sai Kung between 10 May and 24 May.

107. Fantail Snipe (*Gallinago gallinago*)

108. Pintail Snipe (*Gallinago stenura*)

109. Swinhoe's Snipe (*Gallinago megala*)

Snipe sp. were regularly recorded, usually in small numbers, during both winters from the Deep Bay area, Long Valley and Kai Tak with odd records from Saikung, Mount Collinson and Sha Tau Kok. Of the specifically identified records *G. gallinago* easily predominated but there were definite records of *G. stenura* from Long Valley and Sha Tau Kok. *G. megala* was not identified. Extreme dates for snipe sp. were until 10 May and from 26 August.

112. Woodcock (*Scolopax rusticola*)

One at the Hung Hom Reclamation on 18 December. Single birds at Sek Kong on 21 and 26 December.

113. Curlew (*Numenius arquata*)

Up to 17 at Mai Po between 23 March and 27 April and up to 30 there from 7 September until the end of the year. Two at Tai Po on 23 August and two at Pak Nai (near Lau Fau Shan) on 31 August. Single birds at Sha Tau Kok on 7 September and Kai Tak on 6 October.

114. Australian Curlew (*Numenius madagascariensis*)

Eight at Mai Po on 13 April and one there on 21 April (DB).

115. Whimbrel (*Numenius phaeopus*)

During the spring passage a flock of 80 was seen at Mai Po on 27 April and usually one or two birds were seen there between 28 March and 27 April. Single birds were seen at Kai Tak on 15 April, 8 May and 20 June. Much commoner during the autumn passage when up to 15 were regularly recorded in the Deep Bay area between 17 August and 19 October with a straggler being recorded on 1 November. At Tai Po 48 were counted on 23 August and up to 15 were regularly seen between 30 August and 3 November. Up to 15 regularly at Kai Tak between 26 August and 27 October with peak numbers being reached towards the end of September. Two at Sha Tau Kok on 14 September.

116. Little Whimbrel (*Numenius minutus*)

Single birds at Kai Tak on 2 and 6 May and 3 and 6 October (DSM).

117. Black-tailed Godwit (*Limosa limosa*)

Up to 18 recorded from the Deep Bay area between 29 March and 26 April with peak numbers at Lok Ma Chau in mid-April. One at Mai Po on 29 September and one or two there in November.

118. Bar-tailed Godwit (*Limosa lapponica*)

One or two in the Deep Bay area on 13 and 21 April. Up to eight there between 7 and 22 September. Four at Tai Po between 23 September and 15 October.

119. Asiatic Dowitcher (*Limnodromus semipalmatus*)

Up to eight at Mai Po between 12 and 21 April and one there on 22 September. Four at Lok Ma Chau on 13 April and five there on 24 April.

120. Green Sandpiper (*Tringa ochropus*)

Widespread throughout the New Territories being recorded until 13 January, between 20 March and 26 April and from 25 August until the end of the year. Usually in ones and twos but small flocks of up to ten at Lok Ma Chau and Long Valley.

121. Wood Sandpiper (*Tringa glareola*)

At Mai Po/Lok Ma Chau up to 60 were recorded until 3 May, six on 29 July and up to 75 regularly from 17 August until the end of the year, but exceptionally 215 counted at Lok Ma Chau on 29 September. Elsewhere only recorded during the passages. Two at Long Valley and one at Lau Fau Shan on 26 April. One at Kai Tak on 6 May and up to five there regularly from 26 August until 31 October, but a flock of 34 recorded there on 15 October. Five at Little Sai Wan on 15 October. Four at Sek Kong on 26 December.

122. Redshank (*Tringa totanus*)

Up to 200 at Mai Po/Lok Ma Chau between 28 March and 26 April (maximum numbers on 13 April). Up to seven at Kai Tak between 18 April and 23 May. One at Tai Po on 15 May. One at Mai Po on 26 June. Up to ten at Mai Po/Lok Ma Chau between 17 August and 11 November. One at Kai Tak on 8 August. Two at Tai Po on 25 August and 20+ there on 4 September.

123. Spotted Redshank (*Tringa erythropus*)

All records are from Mai Po/Lok Ma Chau of up to 250 until 26 April and up to 295 from 19 October. High counts at Lok Ma Chau of 295 on 10 December and 270 on 17 December.

124. Greenshank (*Tringa nebularia*)

In the Deep Bay area up to 25 regularly seen between 10 March and 4 May and up to 14 from 25 August until the end of the year, but exceptionally a flock of 35 seen on 29 November. One at Sha Tau Kok on 20 March and one or two at Kai Tak on 7 May, 29 August, 10 October and 7 November.

126. Marsh Sandpiper (*Tringa stagnatilis*)

At Mai Po/Lok Ma Chau, two on 9 February and up to 40 between 2 March and 26 April (maximum numbers during April) and up to nine between 25 August and 21 December. Five at Kai Tak on 15 October.

127. Common Sandpiper (*Actitis hypoleucos*)

Common and widespread until late May and from early August although recorded at Kai Tak until 2 June and from 11 July.

128. Grey-rumped Sandpiper (*Heteroscelus brevipes*)

During the spring passage up to ten at Saikung between 20 April and 4 June, up to six at Kai Tak between 25 April and 30 May, two at Ho Chung on 10 May and five at Tai Po on 15 May. In the autumn two at Kai Tak on 1 August and up to five there between 12 September and 24 October, five at Tai Po on 23 August, ten on 25 August and one on 26 September, two at Sha Tau Kok on 7 September and single birds at Saikung on 27 September and Ho Chung on 8 November.

129. Terek Sandpiper (*Xenus cinereus*)

Up to ten at Mai Po/Lok Ma Chau between 28 March and 26 April, two there on 18 August and one on 7 September. Up to 17 at Kai Tak between 18 April and 8 May. Up to four at Saikung between 20 April and 4 June.

130. Knot (*Calidris canutus*)

Eight at Mai Po on 4 May and one at Kai Tak on 29 May.

131. Great Knot (*Calidris tenuirostris*)

Six at Mai Po on 7 September.

132. Eastern Little Stint (*Calidris ruficollis*)

Up to 500 at Mai Po/Lok Ma Chau between 20 March and 26 April (maximum number on 24 April). Up to six at Saikung between 20 April and 24 May. 65 at Kai Tak on 8 May. For the latter part of the year, a few records from Mai Po/Lok Ma Chau of up to ten between 17 August and 16 November, up to five at Kai Tak on 15 and 16 October and one at Nim Wan on 5 November. A partially albino stint sp. was seen at Kai Tak on 4 February.

133. Long-toed Stint (*Calidris subminuta*)

At Mai Po/Lok Ma Chau up to five between 9 March and 21 April and up to 34 from 25 August until 13 December (maximum number on 5 November). Most sightings were at Lok Ma Chau. One at Kai Tak on 15 October.

134. Temminck's Stint (*Calidris temminckii*)

Most records were from Lok Ma Chau but also a few from Mai Po. Up to eight from 19 January until 28 March and up to 30 from 21 September until 6 December (maximum number on 1 November).

135. Sharp-tailed Sandpiper (*Calidris acuminata*)

At Mai Po/Lok Ma Chau up to 13 between 28 March and 26 April. One or two at Saikung between 20 April and 24 May. One or two at Kai Tak between 6 and 27 May. One at Kai Tak on 16 October could possibly have been *C. melanotos* (Pectoral Sandpiper).

136. Dunlin (*Calidris alpina*)

In the Deep Bay area, 250 on 13 January, 50 on 19 January, three on 20 March and up to 300 from 19 October onwards (maximum numbers on 30 November and 7 December). This species was noted roosting with Kentish Plovers (*Charadrius alexandrinus*) in large numbers on 21 December at Mai Po. One at Kai Tak on 3 January and six on 15 October and one the following day. One or two at Tai Po on 26 and 28 September.

137. Curlew Sandpiper (*Calidris ferruginea*)

Up to 200 at Mai Po/Lok Ma Chau between 20 March and 26 April (peak numbers mid-April). Single birds at Saikung on 10 and 13 May. One at Mai Po on 17 August.

138. Sanderling (*Crocethia alba*)

Single birds at Kai Tak between 4 and 29 April. One at Tai Po on 28 September, two at Kai Tak on 6 October, one at Nim Wan on 5 November and one at Lok Ma Chau on 16 November.

139. Spoon-billed Sandpiper (*Eurynorhynchus pygmeus*)

One at Mai Po on 23, 26 and 28 March.

140. Broad-billed Sandpiper (*Limicola falcinellus*)

Up to four at Mai Po/Lok Ma Chau between 13 and 24 April, one at Kai Tak on 29 April and three there on 6 May. One at Saikung on 10 May.

141. Ruff (*Philomachus pugnax*)

All records are of single birds at Lok Ma Chau on 9 and 28 March, 21, 22 and 29 September, 12 October and 6, 7, 10 and 21 December.

142. Red-necked Phalarope (*Phalaropus lobatus*)

From 18 March until 21 April small flocks of up to 15 were recorded from the East and West Lamma Channels, Victoria Harbour and Lok Ma Chau. In the autumn small flocks of up to ten were

recorded from Lok Ma Chau, Tai Po, Victoria Harbour and Little Sai Wan from 27 September until 17 October.

143. Black-winged Stilt (*Himantopus himantopus*)

Up to ten at Mai Po/Lok Ma Chau from 18 September until 29 December. One at Ho Chung on 28 October.

144. Avocet (*Recurvirostra avosetta*)

Up to 50 in the Deep Bay area from 25 November.

145. Oriental Pratincole (*Glareola maldivarum*)

Up to 12 regularly at Kai Tak between 5 March and 6 June with two adults and two juveniles being seen on the last date. 12 at Mai Po on 6 April. One at Saikung on 13 May. In the autumn up to four regularly at Kai Tak between 6 October and 10 December but a flock of 70 seen there on 15 October. Up to 120 at Mai Po from 11 November until 10 December (maximum numbers in early December). Up to six at Long Valley on 3 and 6 December.

146. Herring Gull (*Larus argentatus*)

Regularly recorded during both winters from Victoria Harbour, Western Approaches, Deep Bay, Castle Peak Bay, Tai Po and occasionally at Saikung. The maximum count was c 400 roosting in the West Lamma Channel on 23 January. Extreme dates were until 5 April and from 12 November.

147. Common Gull (*Larus canus*)

A first-year bird was seen at Kai Tak on 14, 20 and 21 February. The bird was seen with Black-headed (*L. ridibundus*), Herring (*L. argentatus*) and up to three sub-adult Black-tailed Gulls (*L. crassirostris*). "At first the bird appeared similar to a pale sub-adult Black-tailed Gull, however the pale underparts and conspicuous grey scapulars and coverts distinguished the bird from that species. The colouring of the bill was similar to a sub-adult Black-tailed Gull as was the colour of the legs and feet, however the bill was not as heavy. In flight the upper tail was white and the dark sub-terminal tail band was narrower than in the Black-tailed Gull. When perched the bird was slightly but noticeably smaller than a Black-tailed Gull" (DSM). This is the second record for Hong Kong.

149. Glaucous Gull/Glaucous-winged Gull
(*Larus hyperboreus/Larus glaucescens*)

During February and March a large pale sub-adult gull of one of these species was occasionally seen at Kai Tak. Its appearance always coincided with rough weather and good enough views to satisfactorily identify the species were not obtained (DSM).

150. Great Black-headed Gull (*Larus ichthyaetus*)

An adult at Deep Bay on 23 February (DB) was presumably the same bird seen four miles to the south on 26 December 1974.

151. Brown-headed Gull (*Larus brunnicephalus*)

An adult off Tsing Yi Island on 5 January (TPG). Single adults in Castle Peak Bay on 19 January (DB), 31 January (EA) and 9 February (DB). An adult at Mai Po on 21 December (FOPH).

152. Black-tailed Gull (*Larus crassirostris*)

Up to ten including two adults at Castle Peak Bay until 9 March. Up to seven in the Deep Bay area until 26 February. Up to 75 in the Tai Po/Tolo Harbour area from 19 January until 20 March with the maximum count on 19 February. Also recorded from the West Lamma Channel on 23 January and 3 March (eight). At Kai Tak up to 15 recorded from 28 January to 14 March with the maximum count on 5 March. One at Deep Bay on 16 November, up to five at Kai Tak on 15 and 16 December and four in the West Lamma Channel on the latter date. One at Tai Po on 27 December.

153. Black-headed Gull (*Larus ridibundus*)

Common during both winters in Victoria Harbour and approaches, Deep Bay, Tai Po/Tolo Harbour (up to 550), Castle Peak Bay and occasionally at Saikung. A roost of c 6500 in the West Lamma Channel on 23 January. One observer (MC) noted (during October)—"that throughout the day gulls were moving east past Ma Wan in large and small flocks at a rate of about 2000 per hour — a conservative estimate would be at least 10,000 birds". A leucistic bird was seen at Pak Nai on 20 March. Extreme dates were until 5 April and from 19 October.

154. Saunders' Gull (*Larus saundersi*)

In the Deep Bay area up to 40 (including ten adults) from 26 January until 28 March and a first-year bird there on 20 April (DSM). One at Tai Po on 20 March and a first-year bird at Kai Tak on 29 April (DSM) were the first definite records of the species away from the Deep Bay area. Up to 29 (including ten adults) at Deep Bay from 16 November until 21 December.

(810) Black-legged Kittiwake/Red-legged Kittiwake
(*Rissa tridactyla/Rissa brevirostris*)

An adult Kittiwake in non-breeding plumage was seen resting on the sea with a group of about 600 Black-headed Gulls (*L. ridibundus*) at Kai Tak on 20 February. "The bird first attracted attention by its vigorous bathing behaviour as it dipped its head under the water and wing-flapped. As the bird flapped its wings the solid black wing tips, with no sign of a white mirror, were very con-

spicuous. The bird appeared to be intermediate in size between a Black-headed Gull and a Common Gull (*L. canus*). The wings and back were grey (somewhat darker than a Black-headed Gull). The tail and underparts were white, as was the head apart from the back of the crown and nape which were washed with grey (darker than the back). The bill was light yellow and in relation to the size of the head was typical of the Black-legged Kittiwake (*R. tridactyla* (Linnaeus)) with which the observer is familiar. The legs and feet were not seen and the colour of the underwing not recorded". The bird was not observed flying. The description does not entirely rule out the possibility that the bird was the Red-legged Kittiwake (*R. brevirostris* Bruch); however this species is restricted to the Bering Sea area and is most unlikely to be recorded so far south. It has never been recorded in Japan where the Black-legged Kittiwake is a 'regular pelagic visitor south to Central Honshu' (Ornithological Society of Japan 1974) (DSM).

156. White-winged Black Tern (*Chlidonias leucoptera*)

In the Deep Bay area five were seen on 26 April, 17 on 4 May, 50+ on 17 May and five adults of this species were identified in a flock of 100 immature 'marsh terns' on 7 June. Eight in Victoria Harbour on 8 May. One at Kai Tak on the 19 November. Flocks of up to 80 'marsh terns', which may have been this or the next species, were seen off Lamma Island on 17 September and at Kai Tak between 15 and 31 October.

157. Whiskered Tern (*Chlidonias hybrida*)

At Mai Po/Lok Ma Chau, three on 5 January, two on 19 January and one on 2 February, two on 22 May and up to 13 between 25 August and 22 September. At Kai Tak, one on 28 and 29 August, 19 on 19 September and three on 8 October. 26 at Tai Po on 16 September.

158. Gull-billed Tern (*Gelochelidon nilotica*)

Up to 30 in the Deep Bay area from 31 March until 11 May. One there in non-breeding plumage on 2 July. 40+ in Tolo Harbour on 11 September. Three at Kai Tak on 19 September.

159. Caspian Tern

Up to 42 in the Deep Bay area until 16 July, two at Lok Ma Chau on 4 August and up to 50 in the Deep Bay area again from 11 November. Five at Tai Po on 20 November.

160. Common Tern (*Sterna hirundo*)

Following very unsettled weather three were seen at Kai Tak on 22 and 23 May (DSM and KKC). The following description was taken of one of the birds—"Obviously a 'commic' tern and in flight had a relatively short tail. When it settled on the grass it was noted that the bird had a thin black bill, unlike Gull-billed tern

(*Gelochelidon nilotica*), legs dark—head still in non-breeding plumage with a white forehead, crown and upper nape black. Rest of plumage grey/white except for darker patch on the carpal joint. Size intermediate between a Little Tern (*Sterna albifrons*) and a Gull-billed Tern. When at rest the wing tips protruded beyond the end of the tail. The plumage was not in very good condition". Four adult 'commic' terns at Deep Bay on 4 May were probably this species but the field description was incomplete as the carpal joint marking was not noted. A flock of 50 'commic' terns in the West Lamma Channel on 12 September.

162. Little Tern (*Sterna albifrons*)

Up to 12 in the Deep Bay area from 6 to 27 April.

164. Ancient Auk (*Synthliboramphus antiquus*)

One in breeding plumage seen swimming off the north coast of Kat O Chau, Mirs Bay on 18 May (RJI). This is a new species for Hong Kong. The description noted was—"Considerably smaller than a Little Grebe (*Podiceps ruficollis*). Black cap, face, throat, breast and cheek stripe. Elongated white patch on face above cheek stripe. Back grey tinged brown and barred darker brown on flanks. Belly under-tail and sides of neck white. Very short bill. Small upturned tail" (This description is accompanied by a good sketch). This species is usually confined to the north Pacific.

166. Rufous Turtle-dove (*Streptopelia orientalis*)

Only three records. One on the Hung Hom Reclamation on 23 November, six at Mai Po on 21 December and one at the Hong Kong University on 29 December.

167. Spotted Dove (*Streptopelia chinensis*)

Common and widespread. Up to 50 resident in a garden at Tai Po where nest building was noted in late February and incubation from late March.

168. Red Turtle-dove (*Streptopelia tranquebarica*)

42 at Lau Fau Shan on 3 October. Three on the Hung Hom Reclamation on 10 October and one there on 16 October.

169/170. Cuckoo/Himalayan Cuckoo (*Cuculus canorus/Cuculus saturatus*)

Hepatic females of one of these species at Long Valley on 30 November and at Mai Po on 17 December.

170. Himalayan Cuckoo (*Cuculus saturatus*)

One at She Shan on 6 April (DB).

171. Indian Cuckoo (*Cuculus micropterus*)

Regularly recorded from several localities in the Saikung area and at Fanling Golf Course, where up to four were seen. Also

noted at Lok Ma Chau and Plover Cove. Extreme dates were from 21 April until 30 July.

174. Plaintive Cuckoo (*Cacomantis merulinus*)

Quite common and widespread. Mostly recorded between 2 February and 22 September but outside of these dates two were seen, including a hepatic female, at Mai Po on 1 January and single birds at She Shan on 26 December and at Sek Kong Woods on 31 December.

177. Koel (*Eudynamis scolopacea*)

Quite common and widespread in the New Territories between 11 February and 14 June.

178. Greater Coucal (*Centropus sinensis*)

Common and widespread.

179. Lesser Coucal (*Centropus bengalensis*)

Scarce, being recorded from only a few widespread localities in the New Territories.

182. Collared Scops Owl (*Otus bakkamoena*)

One heard at Mount Davis from mid-February to mid-March. One at Sek Kong on 12 October. A probable at Sek Kong on 29 March. A disused Magpie's (*Pica pica*) nest, constructed on a pylon, being used as a nest by this species and containing three eggs was found near Aberdeen Reservoir on 7th April (DSM).

188. Japanese Nightjar (*Caprimulgus indicus*)

A dead female found at Kai Tak on 29 September.

189. Savannah Nightjar (*Caprimulgus affinis*)

A male at Kai Tak on 30 May and females there on 22 and 26 August and 28 November. A male at Route Twisk on 26 December. A nightjar, not specifically identified, was seen at Saikung on 30 October.

190. Large White-rumped Swift (*Apus pacificus*)

Recorded in small numbers from widespread areas in all months except December.

191. House Swift (*Apus affinis*)

Recorded throughout the year from widespread areas, usually in small numbers, but up to 50 at Happy Valley and 63 at Mid-Levels (15 August).

192. Pied Kingfisher (*Ceryle rudis*)

One or two sporadically recorded on the Deep Bay Marshes throughout the year. Single birds at Chi Ma Wan (26 January), Sha Tau Kok (24 May and 15 November) and Saikung (15 May).

194. Common Kingfisher (*Alcedo atthis*)

Locally common and widespread until early May and from mid-August. Scarce in the summer months but recorded from the Saikung area, Tolo Harbour area and Sha Tau Kok.

195. White-breasted Kingfisher (*Halcyon smyrnensis*)

Common and widespread until late April and from mid-August. Much scarcer in the summer months but recorded from Stonecutters' Island, where two or three pairs probably bred, the Saikung area, Tolo Harbour area, Deep Bay Marshes and Sha Tau Kok. Occasionally seen in the urban areas in the winter months—notably Kai Tak during November and December.

196. Black-capped Kingfisher (*Halcyon pileata*)

One or two recorded from widespread areas in the winter months with a maximum of six being counted in the Tsim Bei Tsui area on 30 November. In the summer recorded from Shing Mun Reservoir, Plover Cove, Tai Po Kau, Fanling and Route Twisk. Unusual records of single birds at Happy Valley on 8 April and Kai Tak on 7 November.

199. Hoopoe (*Upupa epops*)

One at Lok Ma Chau on 25 August.

200. Great Barbet (*Megalaima virens*)

Up to five in the Tai Po Kau Forestry Reserve throughout the year. Up to four or five in the Lam Tsuen Valley until late March. Also recorded at Three Fathoms Cove (11 February), Chinese University at Shatin (3 March) and Saikung (two seen calling together on 3 May).

203. Wryneck (*Jynx torquilla*)

One remained on the Hung Hom Reclamation until 1 February. Single birds at Ho Man Tin on 25 January and at Mai Po on 2 March. One at Mong Tseng on 7 and 26 December. One or two in Kowloon Park from 17 December.

205. Small Skylark (*Alauda gulgula*)

Recorded throughout the year at Kai Tak with peak numbers of 37 on 5 March and 41 on 15 December. At least one pair bred there. Nearby, at the Hung Hom Reclamation up to eight remained until 30 March and up to four returned between 9 October and 26 November, but this area is now being built on and it is highly unlikely that this species will be recorded there again. Two at Mai Po on 16 November.

206. Swallow (*Hirundo rustica*)

Common and widespread between March and August but also recorded in small numbers outside this period.

- 207. Red-rumped Swallow** (*Hirundo daurica*)
 Four at Lau Fau Shan on 19 January. One at Mid-Levels on 5 May. Three at Sek Kong Woods on 19 October. Quite regular at Mai Po/Lok Ma Chau from 29 November until 21 December, usually only a few but a flock of 50 on 10 December. A flock of over 20 at Starling Inlet on 13 December.
- 209. Sand Martin** (*Riparia riparia*)
 Two at Mai Po on 16 November and one at Lok Ma Chau on 21 December.
- 211. Rufous-backed Shrike** (*Lanius schach*)
 Common and widespread but generally avoiding urban areas. As usual, a number of melanistic Dusky Shrikes were noted.
- 213. Brown Shrike** (*Lanius cristatus*)
 Scarce. One or two seen in widespread areas between 5 March and 8 May and between 22 August and 4 October. Additionally, two winter records for late December.
- 214. Black-naped Oriole** (*Oriolus chinensis*)
 A pair successfully raised two young in a garden at Tai Po. Up to five seen at Fanling Golf Course but numbers here were considered down by one observer (GCHC). A male at Stonecutters Island on 23 May and two immatures at the Tai Po Kau Forestry Reserve on 28 September. Apart from a male at Sek Kong on 21 December all records fall between 10 April and 7 October.
- 215. Black Drongo** (*Dicrurus macrocercus*)
 Quite common and widespread from mid-April until late October, but odd birds also recorded from widespread areas in the winter months. Notable concentrations of 50+ at Stonecutters Island on 2 and 3 May, ten at Kat O Chau on 1 July and many at Fanling Golf Course in the summer.
- 217. Hair-crested Drongo** (*Dicrurus hottentottus*)
 Pairs with young were seen at Tai Po Kau and Mong Tseng in mid-June. Also recorded from the Lam Tsuen Valley in March and April, Brides Pool in May and two odd records from Mai Po and Happy Valley in April. Two winter records of single birds at Mong Tseng on 30 November and Kowloon Peak on 27 December.
- 218. Chinese Starling** (*Sturnus sinensis*)
 Quite regularly seen in the Kowloon area during both winters in small flocks of up to 15. Elsewhere, quite common in the Deep Bay area in the winter months, again, usually in small flocks but 100 at Lok Ma Chau on 21 December. An adult with two juveniles at Tai Po on 27 May and odd birds seen there in August and September. An adult with two young at Saikung on 6 September. Also occasionally recorded from other widespread areas. Winter records easily predominated with no records at all being submitted for the months of June and July.
- 219. Silky Starling** (*Sturnus sericeus*)
 Quite common and widespread during both winters including records from urban Kowloon. Usually seen in flocks with a maximum count of over 350 seen leaving the mangroves at Tai Po on 6 March. Extreme dates were until 29 March and from 3 November.
- 220. Grey Starling** (*Sturnus cineraceus*)
 Single birds at Mong Tseng on 12 January and 23 March and two there on 7 December. Single birds at Lok Ma Chau on 16 November and at Pat Heung on 28 December.
- 221. Common Starling** (*Sturnus vulgaris*)
 Three remained at Lok Ma Chau until 2 February and one or two were recorded there from 11 November.
- 222. Black-necked Starling** (*Sturnus nigricollis*)
 Locally common in the New Territories throughout the year. Up to 50 at the roost on Fanling Golf Course in mid-June.
- 223. Crested Mynah** (*Acridotheres cristatellus*)
 Common and widespread.
- 224. Jay** (*Garrulus glandarius*)
 A pair at Shing Mun Plantation on 23 May and 10 December. Three at the Tai Po Kau Forestry Reserve on 11 November and one there on 27 December.
- 225. Blue Magpie** (*Urocissa erythrorhyncha*)
 Common on Hong Kong Island but only locally common in the New Territories.
- 226. Magpie** (*Pica pica*)
 Common and widespread. Noted as regularly nesting in electricity pylons.
- 228. Jungle Crow** (*Corvus macrorhynchos*)
 Locally common in the New Territories and on Hong Kong Island. Large numbers regularly seen on the mud at Tai Po with maximum counts of 51 on 22 January and 71 on 3 December. Ten at Victoria Peak on 21 January.
- 229. Collared Crow** (*Corvus torquatus*)
 Regularly recorded throughout the year from the Deep Bay area (up to 16), the Tai Po/Plover Cove area (up to five), the Saikung Peninsula and Stonecutters Island.

230. Black-winged Cuckoo-shrike (*Coracina melaschistos*)

One at Sek Kong until 5 January. Quite widespread in small numbers from 29 March until 16 April. Two at Sek Kong on 12 October. Single birds recorded at Lam Tsuen Valley, Tai Po and Sek Kong at the end of December.

233. Ashy Minivet (*Pericrocotus divaricatus*)

One in the Lam Tsuen Valley on 29 March.

235. Scarlet Minivet (*Pericrocotus flammeus*)

A pair were seen displaying at the Tai Po Kau Forestry Reserve on 27 May and birds were seen there again on 8 June. It seems probable that this species is now breeding there or at least attempting to do so. A flock of eight were seen in the same area on 5 August and 8 October—up to 30 (including an adult male) were present there from 16 November onwards. Elsewhere, recorded from Sek Kong, Lam Tsuen Valley and Tai Po in February and December.

237. Black Bulbul (*Hypsipetes madagascariensis*)

Three at Hong Kong University on 30 December.

238. Crested Bulbul (*Pycnonotus jocosus*)

Common and widespread. Nest building activity noted from 23 February with the first young out of the nest on 4 April.

239. Chinese Bulbul (*Pycnonotus sinensis*)

Common and widespread.

240. Red-vented Bulbul (*Pycnonotus aurigaster*)

Common and widespread but avoiding urban areas.

241. Black-faced Laughing-thrush (*Garrulax perspicillatus*)

Common and widespread. First young out of the nest from 20 March.

242. Black-throated Laughing-thrush (*Garrulax chinensis*)

One or two recorded from various localities on Victoria Peak and at Mid-Levels throughout the year.

243. Hwamei (*Garrulax canorus*)

Quite common on Hong Kong Island and parts of the New Territories, being particularly well recorded from the Tai Po Kau Forestry Reserve. Also regularly recorded in urban Kowloon, but it is likely that these are escaped birds or descendants from such birds.

244. Greater Necklaced Laughing-thrush (*Garrulax pectoralis*)

Up to 30 regularly seen in the Tai Po Kau Forestry Reserve from 11 October until the end of the year.



Common Snipe
Photo: D. J. Galloway



Dusky Thrush
Photo: D. J. Galloway



Red Flanked Bluetail — Young Male
Photo: D. J. Galloway



Pale Thrush
Photo: D. J. Galloway



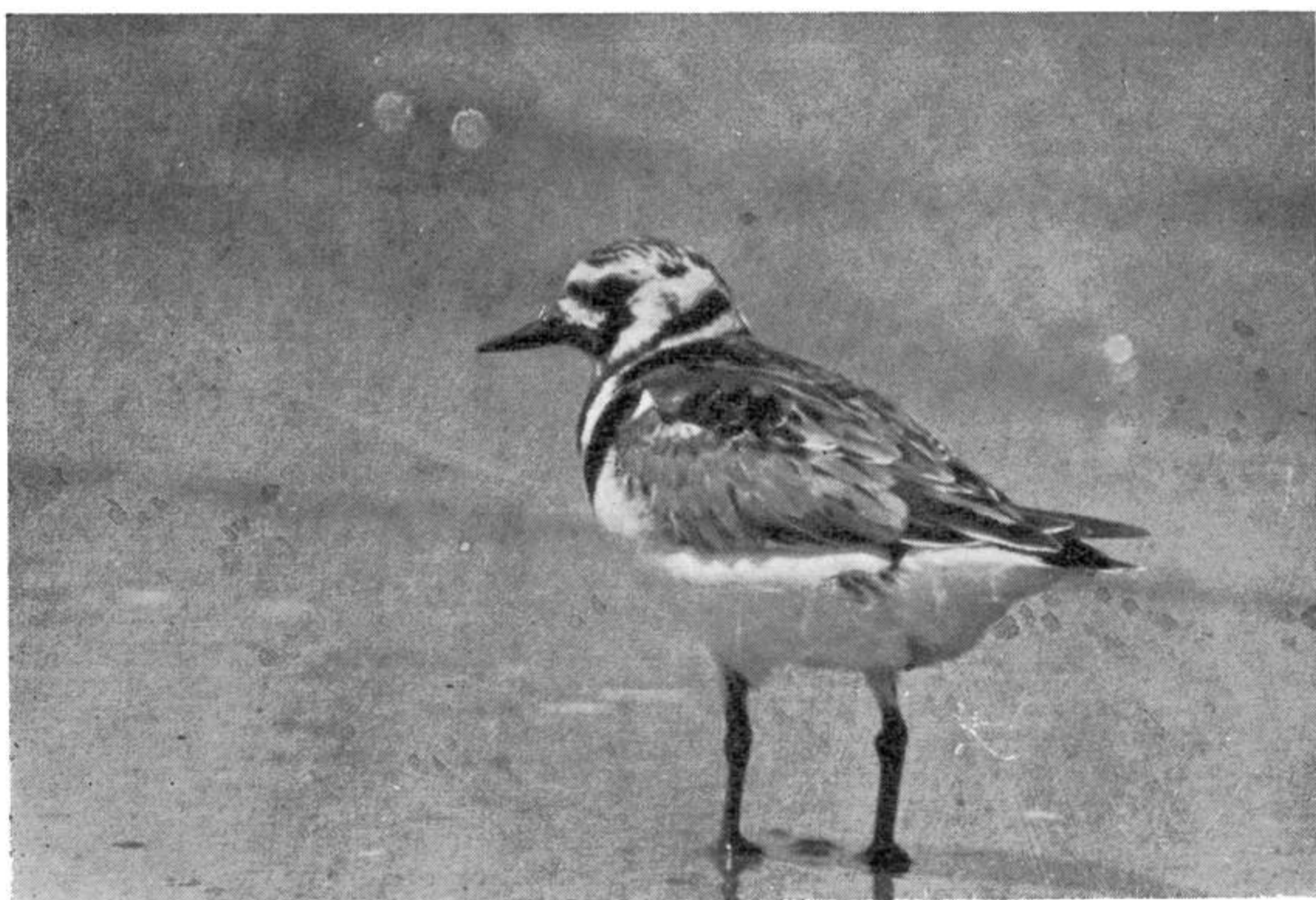
Grey Backed Thrush
Photo: D. J. Galloway



Male Narcissus Flycatcher
Photo: M. Chalmers



Mallard and Yellownib
Photo: T. Shiota



Turnstone
Photo: T. Shiota

- 246. Collared Siva** (*Yuhina castaniceps*)
One in a garden at Tai Po on 26 November. Two or three flocks of up to 30 birds each at the Tai Po Kau Forestry Reserve from 20 December. A flock of 30 in the Lam Tsuen Valley on 26 December.
- 250. Grey-headed Flycatcher** (*Culicicapa ceylonensis*)
One in the Lam Tsuen Valley on 4 January.
- 251. Black-naped Monarch Flycatcher** (*Hypothymis azurea*)
One in the Lam Tsuen Valley on 2 and 11 February. One at Pui O, Lantau on 16 November and one in the Lam Tsuen Valley on 26 December.
- 252. Brown Flycatcher** (*Muscicapa latirostris*)
Quite common and widespread until 4 April and from 11 September, but particularly common during the autumn passage when as many as 15 different birds were counted in the Tai Po Kau Forestry Reserve on 11 September.
- 253. Grey-spotted Flycatcher** (*Muscicapa griseisticta*)
One on Victoria Peak on 25 September and two there on 2 November. One at K.G.V. School, Kowloon on 18 October. Single birds in Sek Kong Woods on 9 and 12 November.
- 255. Ferruginous Flycatcher** (*Muscicapa ferruginea*)
One at Mid-Levels (Po Shan Road) on 28 March.
- 256. Verditer Flycatcher** (*Muscicapa thalassina*)
Single birds at Sek Kong on 9 March, Lam Tsuen Valley on 26 December and a male at Tai Po Kau on 28 December.
- 257. Red-breasted Flycatcher** (*Ficedula parva*)
Single birds at Shing Mun on 19 and 27 January. Single birds at Hong Kong University on 11 October and 30 December, Fanling from 2 November onwards and Sek Kong on 30 December.
- 258. Robin Flycatcher** (*Ficedula mugimaki*)
All records are from the Tai Po Kau Forestry Reserve. Single birds on 11 January and 22 February, a male and two females on 22 November and a female on 22 December.
- 260. Tricolour Flycatcher** (*Ficedula zanthopygia*)
Single birds at She Shan on 22 and 28 September. An unusually late record of a female at Victoria Peak on 29 December.
- 262. Blue and White Flycatcher** (*Cyanoptila cyanomelana*)
Single males at K.G.V. School, Kowloon on 17 March and at She Shan on 6 April.

- 263. Chinese Bush Warbler** (*Cettia diphone*)
Uncommon but widespread until 10 April and from 16 November. (Probably under-recorded).
- 264. Short-tailed Bush Warbler** (*Cettia squameiceps*)
One at K.G.V. School, Kowloon on 10 March. Up to four in the Tai Po Kau Forestry Reserve from 22 November. One at Bowen Road, Mid-Levels on 28 November and single birds at She Shan on 26 and 28 December.
- 267. Von Schrenck's Reed-warbler** (*Acrocephalus bistrigiceps*)
Quite common at Mai Po during the spring passage between 23 March and 4 May, with maximum numbers in late April. Single birds at Kai Tak on 24 March and 2 May. One at Mai Po on 7 September and over 50 there on 12 October. One at Kai Tak on 5 September and six there on 15 September.
- 268. Great Reed-warbler** (*Acrocephalus arundinaceus*)
Up to four at Mai Po between 13 April and 4 May and one at Saikung on 10 May. In the autumn recorded on the Deep Bay Marshes in varying numbers between 25 August and 30 November, with peaks on 21 and 22 September and 12 October when it was numerous. Up to four on the Hung Hom Reclamation between 24 September and 9 October.
- 269. Dusky Warbler** (*Phylloscopus fuscatus*)
Common and widespread until 26 April and from 12 October. Over 50 at Mai Po on 12 October. A partial albino at Sek Kong on 26 December.
- 270. Yellow-browed Warbler** (*Phylloscopus inornatus*)
Common and widespread until 11 April and from 7 September.
- 271. Pallas's Warbler** (*Phylloscopus proregulus*)
Quite common and widespread until 11 April and from 21 November. Over 40 counted in Sek Kong Woods on 1 January. Appeared to be more common than usual during the 1975/76 winter.
- 272. Arctic Warbler** (*Phylloscopus borealis*)
Common and widespread between 13 September and 13 October. Over ten in a garden at Tai Po on 13 September and at least seven in a small clump of bushes on the Hung Hom Reclamation on 24 September.
- 274. Crowned Willow-warbler** (*Phylloscopus coronatus*)
Single birds in the Tai Po Kau Forestry Reserve on 21 September, 25 and 27 December.

- 279. Long-tailed Tailor-bird** (*Orthotomus sutorius*)
Common and widespread.
- 280. David's Hill-warbler** (*Prinia polychroa*)
Rediscovered on the upper slopes of Tai Mo Shan on 4 May when a pair was located. Subsequently, up to three recorded there until 14 June. This is the first record of this species since 1966.
- 281. Brown Wren-warbler** (*Prinia subflava*)
Common on the Deep Bay Marshes. Not recorded elsewhere.
- 282. Yellow-bellied Wren-warbler** (*Prinia flaviventris*)
Common and widespread.
- 283. Fantail Warbler** (*Cisticola juncidis*)
Locally common in the northern New Territories and Saikung area and regularly recorded at Ho Man Tin, Kai Tak, and on Hung Hom reclamation until 21 April and from 20 September. No summer records.
- 285. Red-tailed Robin** (*Erithacus sibilans*)
Single birds in the Tai Po Kau Forestry Reserve on 25 January and 27 December onwards.
- 286. Bluethroat** (*Erithacus svecica*)
Single birds at Mai Po on 13 January, 28 March, and 21 December.
- 288. Rubythroat** (*Erithacus calliope*)
Single birds at Long Valley on 1 January, Mai Po on 31 March and Ho Man Tin on 15 April. Two males on Victoria Peak on 17 April. Quite common and widespread from 16 November. (Probably under-recorded for the first months of the year).
- 289. Red-flanked Bluetail** (*Tarsiger cyanurus*)
Scarce but widespread until 2 March. Common and widespread from 17 November. As usual records of females/immatures easily predominated.
- 290. Magpie-robin** (*Copsychus saularis*)
Common and widespread. Nesting recorded from mid-March with the first young out of the nest on 20 May.
- 291. Daurian Redstart** (*Phoenicurus auroreus*)
Quite common and widespread until 17 April and from 7 November.
- 292. Plumbeous Water-redstart** (*Rhyacornis fuliginosus*)
Single female/immatures at Bride's Pool, Shing Mun, Ho Chung and Conduit Road (Mid-Levels) recorded between 6 January and 23 March. A male and a female at Shing Mun on 10 December.

- 294. Stonechat** (*Saxicola torquata*)
Common and widespread until 5 April and from 7 September.
- 295. Grey Bushchat** (*Saxicola ferrea*)
Pairs at Fanling Golf Course on 1 January and Lin Au (Tai Po) on 26 January. A male at Lamma Island on 16 February. Three at Saikung on 2 November, one at Pat Sin (Tai Po) on 9 November and up to three at Mong Tseng from 7 December.
- 296. Blue Rock-thrush** (*Monticola solitaria*)
Recorded from widespread areas, including urban localities, until 2 May and from 27 September. Two singing males and a female at Lamma Island on 27 September.
- 297. Chestnut-breasted Rock-thrush** (*Monticola rufiventris*)
One at Little Sai Wan on 23 November.
- 298. Violet Whistling Thrush** (*Myiophoneus caeruleus*)
Locally common and widespread. One on Kau Yi Chau on 12 November.
- 299. Pale Thrush** (*Turdus pallidus*)
One at Hong Kong University on 9 January was the only record for the 1974/75 winter. Recorded at Victoria Peak (up to five), Hong Kong University (up to five), Sek Kong (up to three), and Shing Mun from 27 November.
- 300. Eye-browed Thrush** (*Turdus obscurus*)
Single birds at Hong Kong University on 25 November and 4 December.
- 301. Brown Thrush** (*Turdus chrysolaus*)
Two at Chung Hom Kok from 30 November. Up to five at Hong Kong University from 4 December.
- 302. Grey-backed Thrush** (*Turdus hortulorum*)
A few records from widespread areas until 2 April. Quite common and widespread from 11 November.
- 303. Dusky Thrush** (*Turdus naumanni*)
Single birds at Happy Valley on 16 January, Long Valley on 16 February and Kai Tak on 7 April are the only records for the 1974/75 winter. Quite common and widespread in small numbers from 30 November.
- 304. Blackbird** (*Turdus merula*)
Reorded from Sek Kong and Tai Po in small numbers until 20 March. More widespread but uncommon from 21 November onwards.

- 305. Grey Thrush** (*Turdus cardis*)
A few birds noted from widespread areas until 5 April. More regularly recorded from widespread areas from 20 November but still not particularly common.
- 306. Siberian Thrush** (*Zoothera sibiricus*)
A male at Route Twisk (near Sek Kong) on 27 December (A.J.H.).
- 308. White's Thrush** (*Zoothera dauma*)
One or two birds remained at Tai Po Kau, She Shan and Sek Kong until 8 March. One or two recorded from widespread areas from 16 November.
- 310. Great Tit** (*Parus major*)
Locally common and widespread. Although common in most suitable areas it was surprisingly absent or scarce from other areas where it would normally be expected.
- 313. Richard's Pipit** (*Anthus novaeseelandiae*)
Locally common and widespread until the end of April and from late September although single birds seen at Kai Tak throughout the summer. 52 were counted at Kai Tak on 19 November.
- 314. Indian Tree Pipit** (*Anthus hodgsoni*)
Common and widespread until 24 April and from 16 October.
- 315. Red-throated Pipit** (*Anthus cervinus*)
Quite common in the Deep Bay area until 28 March. Five at Saikung on 22 March. Up to 75 at Kai Tak until 29 April and up to 50 there from 10 October. One at Mai Po on 6 December.
- 318. Upland Pipit** (*Anthus sylvanus*)
Three at Tai Mo Shan on 14 June and one there on 14 September. A pair watched taking food to a nest on Kowloon Peak on 21 June and one seen there on 26 June.
- 319. Forest Wagtail** (*Dendronanthus indicus*)
One or two at Hong Kong University from 23 August to 27 September. Also recorded from the Chinese University, Shatin during September.
- 320. White Wagtail** (*Motacilla alba*)
Common and widespread until 7 May and from 3 October.
- 321. Grey Wagtail** (*Motacilla cinerea*)
Quite common and widespread until 3 May and from 13 September.

322. Yellow Wagtail (*Motacilla flava*)

Quite common in the northern New Territories during both winters and on migration. Elsewhere, reported from widespread areas mainly during the passages. Peaks at Kai Tak were 45 on 29 April and 85 on 6 October. Three resting at 2800 ft. on Tai Mo Shan on 4 May. Extreme dates were until 27 May and from 26 August.

324. Fork-tailed Sunbird (*Aethopyga christinae*)

Recorded from widespread areas including Hong Kong Island, Tai Po Kau Forestry Reserve (up to four), Saikung, Lam Tsuen Valley and Pui O, Lantau. A pair successfully fledged young in a garden at Tai Po Kau.

325. White-eye (*Zosterops japonica*)

Common and widespread.

326. Scarlet-backed Flowerpecker (*Dicaeum cruentatum*)

Recorded from widespread areas including Hong Kong Island, Tai Po Kau Forestry Reserve, Sek Kong, Stonecutters Island, Sha-tin and the Lam Tsuen Valley. A garden in Fanling held up to two pairs for most of the year.

327. Fire-breasted Flowerpecker (*Dicaeum ignipectus*)

An unusual summer record of a male and a female on Victoria Peak on 20 June and an immature seen nearby on the following day. Up to three, including a male, at the Tai Po Kau Forestry Reserve from 15 November until 27 December. Two males and a female at Hong Kong University on 5 December.

328. Black-tailed Hawfinch (*Coccothraustes migratoria*)

Recorded in small flocks of less than ten from widespread areas of the New Territories until 5 April and from 13 November. Three at Mid-Levels on 5 March and five at Happy Valley on 5 April. Two at K.G.V. School, Kowloon on 24 November.

329. Chinese Greenfinch (*Carduelis sinica*)

Uncommon but widespread. Apart from a melanistic bird at Beas River on 14 June this species was not recorded between 13 May and 31 August. Usually seen in small flocks, with a maximum count of 20 at Tai Om on 29 November. Three juveniles at Deep Water Bay Golf Course on 5 September. The status of this species is still unclear.

331. Common Rosefinch (*Carpodacus erythrinus*)

A female at Sek Kong Woods on 9 March. Four female/immatures at Mong Tseng on 26 December.

332. Masked Bunting (*Emberiza spodocephala*)

Common and widespread until 3 May and from 1 November.

332.1 Yellow-browed Bunting (*Emberiza chrysophrys*)

Two seen at the extreme northern end of the Mong Tseng Peninsula on 28th December. A description taken from the field notes is—"Brownish/black head with clearly defined white coronal stripe. Long yellow eyebrows. Brownish cheeks. No particularly noticeable malar stripe. Upper back pale brown, darkly streaked. Dull chestnut primaries. Dirty white underparts. First heard in tall dense hedgerow giving typical bunting tsip tsip call. Eventually flew to rice stubble where they were observed feeding at 30 yards. Very shy." The observer (RF) noted the following differences between this species and *E. tristrami*—very clear long yellow eyebrows noted on both birds, generally paler in appearance particularly below the eye and lacked the bright chestnut rump and sides to tail. This is only the second record for Hong Kong and the first for which field notes exist. The range of this species is normally eastern Siberia.

333. Tristram's Bunting (*Emberiza tristrami*)

Up to 12 remained in the Tai Po Kau Forestry Reserve until 30 March. Three at Shing Mun on 19 January. One at Castle Peak on 26 January and five at She Shan on 2 February. Up to 12 returned to the Tai Po Kau Forestry Reserve from 29 November. Up to five in the Lam Tsuen Valley from 2 December. Single birds on Hong Kong Island, at Bowen Road on 28 November, Victoria Peak on 27 December and Happy Valley on 31 December.

334. Chestnut Bunting (*Emberiza rutila*)

A female/immature at the Colonial Cemetery, Happy Valley on 2 April and up to three there between 2 and 9 October. Six, including two males, at Tai Po Kau on 15 November.

335. Yellow-breasted Bunting (*Emberiza aureola*)

Two at Deep Water Bay Golf Course on 5 September. Ten at Saikung on 20 October. Two on the Hung Hom Reclamation on 29 October. One at Kai Tak on 6 November and five at Mai Po on 21 December.

336. Grey-headed Bunting (*Emberiza fucata*)

Up to four at Mai Po between 9 February and 6 April. Single birds at Mong Tseng on 7 December and Long Valley on 26 December.

337. Little Bunting (*Emberiza pusilla*)

Generally fairly common and widespread in small numbers until 5 April and from 12 November, but very common on the Mai Po Marshes during March. Apparently, commoner and more widespread than in most years.

338. Reed Bunting (*Emberiza schoeniclus*)

A male at Mai Po Marshes on 19 March was a new species for Hong Kong. The field description taken was:— "Entire head black with some very slight traces of greyish flecking on crown and cheeks. Bold white moustachial stripe. Black bib ending in well defined semi-circle on upper breast. Remainder of breast and belly white, some light streaking on flanks; white extending to hind neck. Back and wings earth brown, very heavily streaked blackish-brown. Tail dark brown with white outer tail feathers. Bill grey-black, legs not observed. Size estimated at 5"-6". Typical bunting shape and manner. Feeding from flowering reed-heads in extensive reed-bed which also contained c 30 *E. pusilla*, several male and female *E. spodocephala* and three or four *E. fucata* (males and females). Feathers not abraded. Voice not heard." (PRB). This is a Palearctic species.

339. Crested Bunting (*Melophus lathami*)

A female at Ho Chung on 11 January. Two at Pokfulam on 12 April. In the summer, up to four, including two males, on Tai Mo Shan, a pair at Kowloon Peak and one on the Dragon's Back (Hong Kong Island). A large flock at Saikung on 7 November and elsewhere recorded at Chi Ma Wan, Lamma Island and in the Lam Tsuen Valley during November and December. (Probably under-recorded).

340. Tree Sparrow (*Passer montanus*)

Common and widespread but usually associated with habitations. A flock of 300 on the Hung Hom Reclamation on 24 September.

341. Chestnut Munia (*Lonchura malacca*)

All records except one are of the race *atricapilla*. Recorded from the Mai Po area between 1 April and 3 September, usually only a few but 15 were noted on the last date. Two or three at Happy Valley at the end of the year were almost certainly escapes. One of the race *malacca* at Pak Hok Chau on 1 July.

342. Spotted Munia (*Lonchura punctulata*)

Quite common and widespread, usually in flocks of up to 50. Fewer summer records. One pair nest building at Tai Po on 20 March.

343. White-backed Munia (*Lonchura striata*)

Two at Long Valley on 1 January. Two nest building at Tai Po on 20 March. Up to six at Saikung between 24 May and 4 June. Regularly recorded in small numbers (maximum seven) from the north side of Hong Kong Island from 4 June onwards. Unusually, nest building activity noted at the Hong Kong University on 1 December.

C. SPECIES WHICH, ALTHOUGH ORIGINALLY INTRODUCED BY MAN, HAVE NOW ESTABLISHED A REGULAR FERAL BREEDING STOCK WHICH APPARENTLY MAINTAINS ITSELF WITHOUT NECESSARY RECOURSE TO FURTHER INTRODUCTION.

501. Emerald Dove (*Chalcophaps indica*)

Single birds recorded in the Tai Po Kau Forestry Reserve on 25 January, 11 October and 31 December. One found dead at Tai Po on 26 April. One at Mount Parker, Hong Kong Island on 19 October and one at Shatin on 26 November.

502. Rose-ringed Parakeet (*Psittacula krameri*)

Regularly reported from Hong Kong Island (mainly the northern side) in small flocks of up to 16 and occasionally seen in similar small flocks in Kowloon. A flock of 30 seen at Route Twisk on 1 February. One, obviously an escape (part of chain remaining), seen twice in the Saikung area. A flock of 15 at Lok Ma Chau on 30 December. No records were submitted for the months of June, July and August.

503. Common Mynah (*Acridotheres tristis*)

Two at Luen Tak on 11 February.

504. White-cheeked Laughing-thrush (*Garrulax sannio*)

At least three above Tai Hang Road, Hong Kong Island on 13 June.

505. Red Avadavat (*Amandava amandava*)

Up to four recorded at Mai Po between 12 February and 22 September. One or two at Kai Tak in mid-September. One at the Hung Hom Reclamation on 23 November.

D. SPECIES INTRODUCED BY MAN, OF WHICH THE FERAL POPULATIONS MAY OR MAY NOT BE SELF-SUPPORTING.

601. Sulphur-crested Cockatoo (*Cacatua sulphurea*)

Regularly recorded from Victoria Barracks/Central (daily-maximum 13), Happy Valley (up to 21) and Hong Kong University (up to 21) throughout the year. Up to six recorded at Stonecutters Island in the early part of the year and breeding is strongly suspected at this locality as birds were observed around and in a suitable nesting hole. Odd birds occasionally seen in Kowloon.

602. Indian Grackle (*Gracula religiosa*)

One or two at She Shan on 2 March and 6 April. One at Victoria Barracks on 22 April. One at Ho Man Tin on 20 June.

Two at Stonecutters Island on 1 September. One at Fanling on 24 December.

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

708. Pekin Robin (*Leiothrix lutea*)

One at Victoria Peak on 21 May. Two in the Tai Po Kau Forestry Reserve on 25 December. The latter record was for two birds in excellent condition and showing all the characteristics of wild birds (DB).

710. Java Sparrow (*Padda oryzivora*)

One near Hang Hau (Clearwater Bay) on 16 August.

711. White-headed Munia (*Lonchura maja*)

Single birds at Mai Po on 26 June and 7 September. One at Ho Chung on 21 September.

(715) Budgerigar (*Melopsittacus undulatus*)

Two at Kai Tak during September and October associating with Tree Sparrows (*Passer montanus*). One at Conduit Road on 23 September. One at Happy Valley (Colonial Cemetery) on 2 October.

(718) Gold-fronted Chloropsis (*Chloropsis aurifrons*)

One at Tai Tam Intermediate Reservoir feeding in the tree tops with Chinese and Crested Bulbuls (*Pycnonotus sinensis* and *P. jocosus*) on 14 December.

(721) Rustic Bunting (*Emberiza rustica*)

A male in winter plumage in the Colonial Cemetery, Happy Valley, on 20 November (DB & CAV). (This record has been placed in this category as this species was being held in large numbers in various bird shops at the time, although the species' range could extend to Hong Kong).

(722) Black-headed Greenfinch (*Carduelis ambigua*)

A flock of about ten, including about four males, seen on 31 December in Kowloon Park (MAW).

APPENDIX TO THE SYSTEMATIC LIST FOR 1974 (OLD NUMBERING)

21. Lesser Egret (*Egretta intermedia*)

The two probable records quoted for this species of three on 30 November and five on 1 December at Mai Po are now accepted as definite records.

126. Redshank (*Tringa totanus*)

The entry for this species should have been printed as:—

'Ten at Mai Po on 20 January and eight there on 23 January are exceptional winter records. During the spring passage, one at Kai Tak on 21 March and up to 50 on the Deep Bay Marshes between 13 April and 27 May. In the autumn up to 15 on the Deep Bay Marshes between 3 August and 10 November.'

210. Brown Shrike (*Lanius cristatus*)

Last spring date was 12 May.

246. White-cheeked Laughing-thrush (*Garrulax sannio*)

Single birds at Pokfulam Reservoir on 17 March and 21 April.

256. Grey-spotted Flycatcher (*Muscicapa griseisticta*)

One on Victoria Peak on 29 April.

291. Rubythroat (*Luscinia calliope*)

Last spring date was 19 April.

298. Blue Rock-thrush (*Monticola solitaria*)

Last spring date was 29 April.

303. Brown Thrush (*Turdus chrysolaus*)

One at Deep Water Bay on 8 February.

329. Chinese Greenfinch (*Chloris sinica*)

Highest flock count was 16.

340. Crested Bunting (*Melophus lathamii*)

A single female at Pokfulam from 21 to 28 April.

APPENDIX TO THE SYSTEMATIC LIST FOR 1973 (OLD NUMBERING)

44. Tufted Duck (*Aythya fuligula*)

The record for two females at Lok Ma Chau on 2 December should be deleted.

**APPENDIX TO THE SYSTEMATIC LIST
FOR 1969 (OLD NUMBERING)**

(10. Great Frigate-bird *(Fregata minor)*

Two frigate-birds, not specifically identified, were also seen at Yim Tso Ha Egrettry on 7 and 9 July.)

FIRST APPENDIX TO 'AN ANNOTATED CHECK-LIST OF THE BIRDS OF HONG KONG' BY M. A. WEBSTER, PUBLISHED BY THE HONG KONG BIRD WATCHING SOCIETY 1975. (NUMBERS CORRESPOND WITH THOSE USED IN THE CHECK-LIST)

2. New last spring date 4 May 1975.
10. 'Christmas Island Frigate-bird' should be in bold type.
21. 'Grey phase' bird reported in 1975.
22. Up to five at Mai Po between 30 November 1974 and 26 January 1975. One at Kai Tak on 24 October 1975. Up to six at Mai Po between 1 and 30 November 1975. Delete 'Nine records'.
31. Two at Deep Bay on 7 September 1975. Ten at Mai Po on 27 December 1975 and recorded there again on 29 December 1975. Delete 'One record'.
40. New last spring date 4 May 1975.
42. New first autumn date 21 September 1975.
45. Four at Mai Po on 30 November 1975. Delete 'One record'.
49. New last spring date 4 May 1975.
99. New maximum count of 220 on 5 November 1975 at Lok Ma Chau.
100. New maximum counts of 500+ on 1 November, 7 and 21 December 1975 at Mai Po.
103. Single birds at Kai Tak on 10 and 16 October 1975.
114. Eight at Mai Po on 13 April 1975 and one there on 21 April 1975. Delete 'nine occasions'.
115. New early spring date 28 March 1975 and new late autumn date of 3 November 1975.
116. 'Little Whimbrei' should read 'Little Whimbrel'. Single birds at Kai Tak on 2 and 6 May 1975 and 3 and 6 October 1975. Delete 'Two records'.

118. Also recorded at Tai Po, four there between 23 September and 15 October 1975.
119. New early spring date 12 April 1975. Delete 'eight times'.
123. New maximum count of 295 at Lok Ma Chau on 10 December 1975.
126. New late autumn date 21 December 1975. Also recorded at Kai Tak autumn 1975.
130. Also recorded from Kai Tak—one on 29 May 1975.
132. New maximum count of 500 on 24 April 1975.
133. New early autumn date of 25 August 1975. Also recorded at Kai Tak.
137. New early spring date of 20 March 1975.
141. New early spring date of 9 March 1975 and records for 6, 7, 10 and 21 December 1975 of a single bird at Lok Ma Chau.
143. New late date of 29 December 1975.
144. New maximum count of 50 and early date of 25 November 1975.
145. Juveniles at Kai Tak in June 1975. New late autumn date 10 December 1975.
150. An adult at Deep Bay on 23 February 1975 was presumably the same bird.
151. Single adults seen until 9 February 1975 and an adult at Mai Po on 21 December 1975.
152. New early date 16 November 1975.
157. New extreme dates, 2 February 1975 and 22 May 1975.
160. Three at Kai Tak on 22 and 23 May 1975. Delete 'Four records'.
199. One at Lok Ma Chau on 25 August 1975. Delete 'Five records'.
205. New maximum count of 41 at Kai Tak. Breeding proved at Kai Tak in 1975.
228. New maximum count of 71 on 3 December 1975 at Tai Po.
235. A pair (displaying) at the Tai Po Kau Forestry Reserve on 27 May and 8 June 1975 and eight recorded there on 5 August and 8 October 1975.
246. One at Tai Po 26 November 1975. Two or three flocks of c 30 each in Tai Po Kau Forestry Reserve from 20 December 1975. A flock of 30 in the Lam Tsuen Valley on 26 December 1975.
260. One at Victoria Peak on 29 December 1975.

288. 27 December should read 27 September.
299. New early winter date 27 November 1975.
300. New early winter date 25 November 1975.
301. New early winter date 30 November 1975.
303. Recorded during both winters 1975. New early winter date 30 November 1975.
306. One near Sek Kong 27 December 1975. Delete 'six records'.
308. New early winter date 16 November 1975.
319. New early autumn date 23 August 1975.
327. Recorded on 20 and 21 June 1975 at Victoria Peak.
- 332.1 *Emberiza chrysophrys* Pallas Yellow-browed Bunting
E. Siberia.
Vagrant. One record. Two at Mong Tseng on 28 December 1975 (new entry).
(An unsubstantiated record of a party near Tai Po on 30 December 1931)
334. Delete 'sixteen'. New early autumn date 2 October 1975.
335. New early autumn date 5 September 1975.
341. One of the race *malacca* on 1 July 1975.
505. 'reguarly' should read 'regularly'. Also recorded in the summer at Mai Po in 1975.
713. *Trichoglossus ornatus* (Linnaeus) **Ornate Lorikeet**
One remained in the garden of Government House for the first few months of 1965.
714. *Psittacula alexandri* (Linnaeus) **Red-breasted Parakeet**
One in the Mong Tseng/Ping Shan area during October and December 1967 and one seen again at Mong Tseng on 14 November 1970.
715. *Melopsittacus undulatus* (Shaw) **Budgerigar**
Quite commonly seen flying wild, usually single birds or pairs and often seen associating with other species.
716. *Corvus splendens* Vieillot **House Crow**
One at Kowloon Tong during November 1974.
717. *Aegithina viridissima* (Bonaparte) **Green Iora**
One at Hong Kong University December 1970.
718. *Chloropsis aurifrons* (Temminck) **Gold-fronted Chloropsis**
One at Tai Tam Intermediate Reservoir on 14 December 1975.
719. *Leiothrix argentauris* (Hodgson) **Silver-eared Mesia**
One at Hatton Road December 1970.

720. *Fringilla montifringilla* Linnaeus **Brambling**
Two at Mong Tseng December 1968 and one at Hong Kong University December 1970.
721. *Emberiza rustica* Pallas **Rustic Bunting**
One at the Colonial Cemetery, Happy Valley on 20 November 1975.
722. *Carduelis ambigua* (Oustalet) **Black-headed Greenfinch**
A flock of about ten at Kowloon Park on 31 December 1975.
813. More correctly known as *Sterna bernsteini* Schlegel (ref. G.F. Mees *Ardea* 63 (1975) pages 78-86)
822. can now be deleted as this species is now listed in category A.
[Additional species to categories E and F are not listed in systematic order.]

KITE COUNTS 1975/76

David Melville

The Black-eared Kite (*Milvus migrans lineatus*) is present in Hong Kong throughout the year. The summer population is probably about 200, most of which are non-breeding, subadult birds, the breeding population being less than 30 pairs. In the autumn the numbers increase as migrants arrive and boost the wintering population to about 1000. The distribution of Kites in Hong Kong, particularly during the winter months, largely reflects the available food supply—refuse, offal and carrion.

The first recorded roost count of Black-eared Kites in Hong Kong was made on 30th December 1959 (Humphreys 1960). Bovey (1972) then organised four counts during 1970 (March, June, September, December). Current investigations into the birdstrike hazard at Kai Tak Airport have identified the Kite as the most important hazard species, with the majority of Kite/aircraft incidents occurring during the winter month. In this context it was desirable to obtain a reasonably accurate figure for the wintering population of Kites and, with the cooperation of members of the Hong Kong Bird Watching Society, a further five counts were carried out in January 1975 and during the winter 1975/76. The present note gives a brief summary of the results, full details having been circulated to the participants (Melville 1975, 1976).

Details of weather conditions on the count days are given below:

11th January 1975. Sunset 1800 hrs. Dull and overcast, light northerly wind, cloud cover 6/8.

25th October 1975. Sunset 1750 hrs. Fair, visibility 16 km., 10 knot, easterly wind, cloud cover 1/8 at 1800 ft. and 5/8 at 5000 ft.

8th November 1975. Sunset 1745 hrs. Cloudy, visibility 14 km., 9 knot easterly wind, cloud cover 3/8 at 2000 ft. and 7/8 at 8000 ft.

13th December 1975. Sunset 1740 hrs. Overcast, "moderate" rain, visibility 8 km., 4 knot northerly wind, cloud cover 1/8 at 800 ft., 3/8 at 1200 ft. and 8/8 at 2500 ft.

10th January 1976. Sunset 1800 hrs. Fine, visibility 16 km., 4 knot easterly wind, no significant cloud.

Counts started one hour and twenty minutes before sunset and ended twenty minutes after sunset, with each count period lasting for twenty minutes. As far as possible observers were placed so that known roosts and flight paths were covered.

RESULTS

Northern New Territories

During the winter, Kites are widely scattered over the northern New Territories (usually singletons), however small groups (up to 30 birds) are quite frequently recorded from the Mai Po/Mong Tseng area—particularly when there has been high mortality in the fish ponds in the area.

No birds were recorded at Lo Wu on 25.10.75 or 8.11.75 and only a total of three noted at Mai Po Hill during all five counts. 14 moved southwest over Tai Mo Shan on 11.1.75, but none were seen during the other counts.

Castle Peak area

There are usually few Kites in the Castle Peak area, however there is some evidence that Kites are being attracted to the area around Tai Lam Chung Reservoir and Ho Pui to feed on refuse left behind by weekend picnickers.

No birds were seen at Castle Peak Bay Beach on 11.1.75. Up to 24 birds were recorded moving eastwards in the Ting Kau area during the 1975/76 counts.

Tolo Harbour

There is a regular day roost during the winter near Shuen Wan. During the 1974/75 winter up to 50 birds also roosted in the Wu Kai Sha area during the day, however this site was not occupied in 1975/76. Birds from the Tolo Harbour area move southwards in the evening, either moving through Lead Mine Pass or up the Shatin Valley, towards Victoria Harbour.

A maximum of 115+ recorded moving over Tai Po Kau on 11.1.75, 80+ on 8.11.75, and 290+ on 10.1.76.

Sai Kung area

Kites are thinly scattered over the Sai Kung area, however there are occasional reports of groups of 25-30 around High Island. The night roost at Ma Nam Wat was first counted during the 1975/76 winter, however birds were noticed over the site at dusk in early 1968 (C. A. Viney) and it is likely that the site has been in use for a number of years.

A maximum of 230 birds was recorded on 8.11.75 and the total number on 10.1.76 was probably well in excess of 300.

Kowloon area

A certain number of Kites spend the day scavenging around Victoria Harbour and up to 40+ have been recorded around Kai

Tak. At times there is a considerable day roost around Kowloon Reservoirs/Eagle's Nest where over 50 birds have been recorded and there is a small day roost (10-20 birds) in the Kwai Chung area. In the evening there is a movement of birds from Tolo Harbour, over Piper's Hill into the Harbour area. There is also normally a small westerly movement across the Kowloon peninsula towards Stonecutters Island, but movement may be hard to detect as there is often frequent mixing of birds between Hong Kong Island and Stonecutter.

At Piper's Hill 250-300 birds passed over on 11.1.75, 113 on 25.10.75, 109 on 8.11.75, none on 13.12.75 and four on 10.1.76. Small numbers were recorded around Kai Tak, most of which moved off towards Stonecutters or Hong Kong Island, however four birds departed to the northeast in the direction of Ma Nam Wat on 25.10.75. Observations from the Ocean Terminal showed up no marked east-west movements but the interchange of birds between the Peak and Stonecutters was marked e.g. at 1725 hrs. on 18.11.75 a spiral of 175+ was noted over the Harbour between the two.

Stonecutters Island

Stonecutters is a traditional roost used throughout the year, there being two subroosts—one in the centre of the island and the other at the west end. On several occasions birds have been observed arriving from the west and northwest, usually very high, however it is not usually possible to determine the direction of arrivals due to the highly volatile nature of the birds over the site which results in a confused situation.

A total of about 600 roosting on the island on 11.1.75, 405+ on 25.10.75, 300+ on 8.11.75, 510+ on 13.12.75 and 105+ on 11.1.76. It is likely that the real total of birds present on 3.12.75 was between 600 and 700 but the weather prevented an accurate assessment.

Hong Kong Island

There is a traditional night roost on Hong Kong island around Victoria Park/Magazine Gap. There are also reports of a night roost around Tai Tam Reservoirs, however there was no evidence of this site being used during any of the counts. Pre-roost movements around Hong Kong Island are complicated and depend, at least to some extent, on weather conditions.

Total number around the Peak/Magazine Gap area 100-150 on 11.1.75, 240 on 25.10.75, 250+ on 8.11.75, none on 13.12.75 and 3-400 on 10.1.76.

DISCUSSION

Weather conditions for the first three counts were not exceptional and the pre-roosting activities of the Kites were typical. Numbers of birds slowly built up at the roost sites, the majority of birds gliding overhead until sunset when most descended to the trees—a few remaining airborne until at least twenty minutes after sunset.

On 13th December 1975 there was heavy rain for most of the day and the temperature was down to 7°C at 1700 hrs. Observations on Stonecutters in mid-afternoon showed that there were large numbers of Kites perched in trees on the island and many remained perched for the rest of the afternoon, which made estimation of numbers very difficult. The rain stopped at 1730 hrs., by which time it was almost dark due to the totally overcast sky, and a considerable number of Kites took off and circled the island, possibly in an attempt to "dry off" before settling down for the night. The whole of the Peak from about 900 ft. upwards was in thick cloud/fog and only three Kites were seen from Barker Road Peak Tram Station during the entire count. It is unlikely that any birds roosted on the Peak, and Stonecutters probably accommodated the whole 'Harbour' population.

On 10th January 1976 Kites were recorded up to 3000 ft. above the Peak (c.5000 ft. a.s.l.). Such high flying is seldom recorded and it is likely that the disparity between counts of birds leaving Tolo Harbour and moving over Piper's Hill was due to the birds being much higher than usual and thus missed by the observer. On Stonecutters a maximum of ten birds had been seen up to 1800 hrs. but at 1825 hrs. about 25 suddenly flew in at about 150 ft. and disappeared into the darkness. At 1835 hrs. it was just possible to make out at least 105 perched in several trees in the centre of the island.

It is impossible to be sure where these birds came from, however it seems likely that some or all of the birds which had appeared to be settling down to roost in the Magazine Gap area moved to Stonecutters after dark, presumably due to disturbance—Glutz *et al.* (1971) note that, if disturbed from a roost at night, Kites will not return during the same night. Kites appear to have relatively good night vision and Marchant (1963) recorded them migrating at night in Iraq, thus the flight across the Harbour to Stonecutters should not have been difficult, especially considering the amount of artificial light in the area. It is possible that the high flying behaviour in the evening was related to *zugunruhe* (pre-migratory restlessness) as the number of Kites decreases in late January/early February, in which case the move to Stonecutter's would be a little more understandable.

COMPARISON WITH PREVIOUS COUNTS

The results of the latest series of counts are compared with previous counts in Table 1.

	<i>Date</i>	<i>Total</i>
1959	30th December	1300
1970	28th March	200-333
	20th June	201-370
	19th September	135-282
	19th December	640-942
1975	11th January	7-800
	25th October	700+
	8th November	750
	13th December	6-700?
1976	10th January	700

Table 1. Total numbers of Kites recorded during roost counts organised by the Hong Kong Bird Watching Society.

Considering the difficulties involved with counting large numbers of Kites spiralling over roosts in fading light conditions, the general similarity of the results of the winter counts is striking. While the number of Kites breeding locally has probably decreased over the last 15-20 years due to increased urbanisation etc. it appears that the winter population has remained at much the same level.

Herklots (1967) notes Ma Wan as a night roost, but it was probably not used in 1959 and Bovey (*loc. cit.*) makes no mention of it. The island is now only used as a day roost (M. L. Chalmers and *pers. obs.*)

It appears that, at least during the summer, the roost at Ma Nam Wat, Sai Kung is not used as regularly as Stonecutters or Hong Kong Island. R. R. Mason recorded about 100 over the peninsula at dusk on 27th July 1975, however none were seen during a watch on 19th August. It is thought that the site is occupied more or less regularly during the winter; however there is an interesting observation of 50-60 Kites flying over Kwun Tong from the Sai Kung direction at 1745 hrs. on 30th December 1975 (K. K. Chiu). This site is probably more susceptible to disturbance than Stonecutters or Hong Kong Island as there is a village at the end of the peninsula. It is interesting to note that although this site was only counted on 8th November 1975 and 10th January 1976 the totals for all four 1975/76 counts are similar.

None of the counts undertaken so far have made any attempt to assess the number of birds in the Lantau area, due to a shortage of observers and transport problems. Kites are generally scarce on

Lantau, however up to twenty are often present on Hei Ling Chau during the winter months. Small numbers are also present around Cheung Chau, Lamma and the other 'western' islands. Casual observations suggest that most of these birds move to Hong Kong Island/Stonecutters in the evening, but even if there is a night roost on Hei Ling Chau the numbers are likely to be very small in comparison with the other sites.

CONCLUSIONS

It is considered that the total numbers of Kites recorded during the counts are minimum figures and that the actual total number present in Hong Kong during the five recent counts is in the region of 1000. There appears to have been little or no change in the number of Kites wintering in Hong Kong during the past 15 years.

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GULLS FEEDING IN ASSOCIATION WITH DOLPHINS

David Melville

Feeding associations between seabirds and cetaceans are well known (e.g. Ash 1970, Bourne and Dixon 1974), however there are few observations from Hong Kong.

On 27th January 1976 between 1515 and 1615 hrs. a group of gulls was watched feeding in the West Lamma Channel about one mile west of Yung Shue Wan. The depth of water at this site being about four fathoms. There were about 250 Black-headed Gulls, twelve subadult Black-tailed Gulls (mostly first-year birds) and ten Herring Gulls. About half of the birds present were flying low over the sea and dropping to the water to pick up unidentified food items, the remainder resting on the water. A school of at least twelve Chinese White Dolphins (*Sousa sinensis*) were present in the area and appeared to be actively feeding. When a dolphin surfaced, up to 50 gulls would circle above and drop down to feed on items apparently chased/brought to the surface. It was frequently possible to determine the position of a dolphin swimming near the surface by the cluster of gulls flying above.

On 9th February 1976 at 1610 hrs. two or three Chinese White Dolphins were seen in Deep Bay about quarter of a mile west of Pak Nai (maximum depth three fathoms). They were seen to surface infrequently and after about ten minutes moved off towards Linting Island. One adult Caspian Tern was seen to hover over a dolphin as it swam just below the surface for about one minute, but it did not dive or feed. Although there were some 40 Black-headed Gulls resting on the water nearby they showed no interest in the dolphins.

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MIGRATION AND SURVIVAL OF THE BIRDS OF ASIA, by H. Elliot McClure, 1974. Published by U.S. Army Component, S.E.A.T.O. Medical Research Laboratory, Bangkok, Thailand, from whom copies may be obtained free of charge.

During the first half of the 20th century there was a rapid development in the field of virology, and following World War II there has been an increasing interest in zoonoses (diseases common to both animals and man). The first arbovirus (arthropod borne virus) was found in 1927—that of Yellow Fever. By 1950 about 20 other arboviruses had been discovered and since then research has expanded so that now over 300 are known, many of which have birds as a vertebrate host. Rickettsial diseases are transmitted by mites, which may be transported by birds, and studies of the timing of outbreaks of Japanese Encephalitis suggested a relationship between infections in man and bird migration. 'Thus there was a need of further knowledge concerning the movements of birds and their relationships to these medical problems'.

While the taxonomy of Asian birds was comparatively well studied, knowledge of their ecology was (and in many cases still is) lacking, and very little was known of the parasites which the birds carried. The Migratory Animals Pathological Survey (M.A.P.S.) was developed to learn something of birds and their parasites in Asia.

M.A.P.S. was inaugurated in July 1963 and the project continued for eight years, during which time funds were provided by the U.S. Army. Some of the studies have continued to the present time but are no longer supported by U.S. Funds. Initially it was hoped to study many groups of migratory animals but the lack of trained staff resulted in a concentrated effort on birds and bats. This book is a summary of the ornithological results (the parasitological results are discussed in: McClure H.E., Ratanaworbhan N., et al 1973. *Some Ectoparasites of the Birds of Asia*. U.S. Army Medical Component, S.E.A.T.O., Bangkok, Thailand.).

The book is set in three parts, the first of which gives a general introduction to M.A.P.S. and the study of bird migration in Asia. The second part, which occupies half of the book, is given over to species accounts summarising the recoveries (often with a map) and, where there are sufficient data, giving a table of survival rates. The hard data from which the maps and tables were drawn up are given in part three which is a list of all recoveries for which adequate information was provided (a total of 6200).

Never before had such a large scale ringing project been attempted and the book outlines both the achievements of the ringing teams, who managed to ring over 1,160,000 birds of 1218 species in eight years, and the frustrations—in particular, the fact that there

was only one recovery from mainland China. The scale of the project varied considerably from country to country, thus there were 16 full-time workers in Korea who ringed over 186,000 birds, three in Hong Kong who ringed about 3,000 and one volunteer in Iran who ringed seven.

The House Swallow accounted for 24.2% of all birds ringed and this species provided the only recovery from China. A bird ringed in Thailand in January 1967 was recaptured there in February 1968 bearing a home-made ring marked 'Tientsin'. Other species which contributed more than 1% to the total include Cattle and Little Egrets, Rufous-necked Stint and Pied and Yellow Wagtails. Although over 15,600 Rufous-necked Stints were ringed there was only one recovery away from the area of ringing. A renewed effort to ring wading birds would be particularly useful at the present time since both the Soviet Union and Australia have wader ringing projects under way and we know very little about the routes which these birds use between their summering and wintering grounds. On a more local scale, ringing of waders in the Deep Bay Marshes area would provide very useful information in relation to the conservation of this area.

Much of the manuscript typing was done by typists who could read English but not understand or speak it and the book was hand set by setters who could not read, speak or understand English. Inevitably there are typographical errors but these are few and far between. Many of the recovery maps have small vignettes by Dr. N. Kuroda. The drawing of Curlew Sandpiper has been placed on the recovery map for Little Stint and one of the Pied Wagtail maps has a vignette of a Forest Wagtail. There is one reference quoted in the text which does not occur in the bibliography.

There have been times when M.A.P.S. has been criticised as being a 'cover' for radioactivity fallout sampling and for obtaining information which could be used in bacteriological warfare. Whatever may have been the genuine political and military reasons for channeling considerable sums of money into a ringing project in Asia, the ornithological results have given us a very useful base for further ecological studies in the area. While providing a wealth of information, it also highlights how little we really know about our birds. It can only be hoped that those who read this book will feel stimulated to carry out further research so that the truly international nature of our avifauna can be appreciated. Only then will we be able to support our requests for conservation measures with fact rather than conjecture.

D. S. M.

NOTES FOR APPLICANTS WISHING TO VISIT THE MAI PO MARSHES

The following information has been received from the Agriculture and Fisheries Department:

Individuals

Individual members of the public will normally be granted a 'day permit', however in certain cases permits for a longer period may be issued. Applications should be made *at least two weeks* in advance of the proposed date and must include the following details:

Name in full
Hong Kong Identity Card No. or Passport No.
Date of proposed visit
Point of entry into area: Tam Kon Chau/Tai Shang Wai
Purpose of visit
Other pertinent details e.g. membership of relevant societies etc.

Groups

Group permits will be limited to a maximum of 35 persons per group and will be valid for one day only. Groups will normally be escorted by a Game Warden. To enable the spacing of group visits to prevent excessive disturbance, applications should be made *not less than one month* in advance of the proposed date and should include the following details:—

Name in full and Hong Kong Identity Card No. of group leader(s)
Date of proposed visit
Point of entry into area: Tam Kon Chau/Tai Shang Wai
Purpose of visit
Number in group
Other pertinent details

Please ensure that full details are given with your application, otherwise the issue of a permit may be delayed.

You are advised to apply for permits well in advance of the proposed visiting date.

All applications and enquiries should be addressed to:—

**The Director of Agriculture & Fisheries,
Canton Road Government Offices,
393 Canton Road,
Kowloon.**

RECORDS

Recording

One of the most important functions of the Hong Kong Bird Watching Society is the publication of the Hong Kong Bird Report. The value of this publication depends entirely on members submitting records and all members are encouraged to submit records at the end of each year.

The Society provides 6" x 4" record cards for use by members and it will greatly facilitate analysis and storage if these are used rather than bits of paper or other cards. Cards are available from the Hon. Recorder. Completed cards are stored in a species-indexed filing system at the Zoology Department, Hong Kong University and members wishing to look at past records are asked to contact the Hon. Recorder. It is hoped that the ease with which records can be retrieved will result in interested people analysing migration patterns and population trends—things which have been hampered in the past by the old record storing system.

Records are needed for *all* species. At present we receive very few records for such species as White-eye, Chinese Bulbul and Greater Coucal. The following information about the colony's birds is particularly needed:—

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

a) and b) are best recorded on Nest Record Cards which are available from the Hon. Recorder.

Rarities

While the birds of Hong Kong are better known than those of many other areas of the Far East new species are continually being added to the Hong Kong list and the status of many other species is uncertain. King et al. (1975, A Field Guide to the Birds of South-East Asia) consider that 'no new record should be accepted for any part of S.E. Asia (on any but a hypothetical list) unless supported by a specimen or a recognisable photograph by a reliable observer'. Apart from the ethical arguments concerning collecting specimens, this is prohibited in Hong Kong under the Wild Animals Protection Ordinance, and it is very infrequently that one has a suitably equipped camera available when one sees an unusual bird, thus we continue to rely on sight records.

Field identification techniques for species in the area still need refining and the Society has a Records Committee to assist the Hon. Recorder in the unenviable task of assessing records and ensuring that a high standard of observation is maintained. A list of species considered by the Committee is given as an appendix. The list may seem dauntingly long and to include some 'unmistakeable' species such as Oystercatcher and Hoopoe, however we request all observers who do see 'rare' or unusual birds to submit field descriptions.

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

- a) Date, time, location of sighting.
- b) Power of binoculars/telescope used, distance of bird from observer, weather and light conditions.
- c) Description of habitat and what other birds (if any) it was associated with.
- d) Whether you saw it from different angles; at rest, in flight, swimming etc.; from above or below. (The more varied the conditions the better).
- e) What were its actions and what was the character of its flight compared with other birds.
- f) Its general shape and structure as compared with other birds e.g. size and shape of bill, length of legs, shape of wing, length of tail.
- g) Colour of bill, legs, feet and iris.
- h) So far as possible, an exact description of the whole plumage of the bird, not only those parts which you think may help in identifying it. A rough sketch or diagram is a great help.
- i) Any calls or notes, indicating especially the quality of the sound (harsh, rattling, shrill, hoarse, liquid etc.) and comparison with notes of other species.
- j) Note on previous experience with the species or species with which it may be confused.

If possible try and get someone else to see the bird as two descriptions are better than one. *Make sure that you take full field notes on the spot*—it is all too easy to imagine field marks after consulting a book!

Even if you do not know what the bird is please send in the description as it may be possible for the Committee to identify it for you—providing that it is a good description. It should be remembered that many species of cage birds have been recorded as

escapes in Hong Kong and they may not be included in any of the local books.

The increasing number of field guides on the market often make positive identification appear all too easy, but it must be remembered that there are still many 'difficult' species and groups of birds and it is only by careful painstaking observation that such species can be identified. We must ensure that a high standard is maintained in Hong Kong.

Species considered by the Records Committee

The following list is based on Section A of "An Annotated Check-List of the Birds of Hong Kong (Webster, 1975)", the Committee also requires descriptions of any species not listed in Section A. Records submitted without descriptions cannot be considered.

Red-throated Diver	Red-winged Crested Cuckoo
Red-necked Grebe	Drongo Cuckoo
Swinhoe's Fork-tailed Petrel	All Owls
All Frigatebirds	All Nightjars
Von Schrenk's Little Bittern	Crested Kingfisher
Black Bittern	Blue-tailed Bee-eater
Japanese Night Heron	Hoopoe
Lesser Egret	All Woodpeckers
Swinhoe's Egret (away from Yim Tso Ha)	Chinese Pitta
White Stork	Small Skylark
Gadwall	Chinese Great Grey Shrike
Baikal Teal	Bull-headed Shrike
Mandarin	Great Cuckoo-shrike
Scaup	Oystercatcher
Baer's Pochard	Harting's Ringed Plover
Tufted Duck	Oriental Plover
Common Pochard	Snipe (other than Fantail)
Goldeneye	Little Whimbrel
Lesser Whistling Teal	Collared Siva
Cotton Teal	All Paradise Flycatchers
All Geese	Hainan Blue Flycatcher
Black Baza	Styan's Grasshopper Warbler
Horsfield's Goshawk	Crowned Willow-warbler
Golden Eagle	Yellow-eyed Flycatcher-warbler
Steppe Eagle	Fulvous-faced Flycatcher-warbler
Spotted Eagle	Japanese Robin
Grey-faced Buzzard Eagle	White-capped Redstart
	Siberian Thrush

Pied Harrier	Brown Dipper
Hen Harrier	Red-headed Tit
Common Crane	Water Pipit
Water Rail	Siskin
Baillon's Crake	Reed Bunting
Bar-tailed Godwit	Rosy Minivet
Asiatic Dowitcher	Grey-throated Minivet
Nordmann's Greenshank	Black-throated Laughing Thrush (away from Hong Kong Island)
Spoon-billed Sandpiper	Chinese Babax
Common Gull	White-bellied Yuhina
Slaty-backed Gull	Sooty Flycatcher
Glaucous Gull	Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler
Great Black-headed Gull	Pale-legged Willow-warbler
Brown-headed Gull	Yellow-breasted Willow-warbler
Saunders' Gull	Chestnut-crowned Warbler
Pomarine Skua	David's Hill Warbler
Common Tern	Pallas's Blue Robin
Black-naped Tern	Chestnut-breasted Rock Thrush
Greater Crested Tern	Orange-headed Ground-thrush
Ancient Auk	Yellow-bellied Tit
Bar-tailed Cuckoo Dove	Petchora Pipit
Himalayan Cuckoo	Citrine Wagtail
Large Hawk Cuckoo	Chestnut Bunting
Hodgson's Hawk Cuckoo	