HONG KONG BIRD REPORT

1998

香 港 鳥 類 報 告

HONG KONG BIRD WATCHING SOCIETY
香港觀鳥會

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序

《香港鳥類名錄》終於在2001年底出版。這部書的編寫，動員了本會大量人力，以致《香港鳥類年報1998》出版工作未能如期進行。名錄的作者之一，Geoff Carey擔任本年報編輯已有六年，現已退任。本會對於他在任期間對本港鳥類學的貢獻，致以衷心感謝。戴尚禮曾參與九七年年報編輯工作，亦已退任。

年報未能如期出版，雖云無可避免，不過我們仍是十分抱歉的。讓年報準時於每年年底後十二個月內出版，最能促進觀察者準時遞交觀鳥紀錄，亦讓觀察所得的情況盡快廣為傳播。一方面我們希望觀鳥者能繼續盡早提交觀鳥紀錄，另一方面，我們會盡力於未來幾年內，將年報恢復至上述的目標出版時間。就此我們需要所有投稿者的合作。這將會決定編輯小組能否於短時間內回復年報原有出版時間的目標。

年報延遲出版的其中一個原因是《香港鳥類名錄》決定將1998年12月31日前的資料涵蓋在內，所以1998年較重要的情況已在《香港鳥類名錄》發表，但1998年年報內的分類總覽和每月簡報仍有更詳細的資料。此外，年報刊載了定期的報告例如每年進行的水禽普查，而香港環志工作的報告將會順延至下期年報刊登。這一年，是多年以來首次香港沒有新增鳥種，但我們保証下一期就會繼續有香港新鳥種的報告。

最後，Geoff Carey協助我們接收年報編輯的工作，我們謹向他致謝，我們亦要多謝所有贊助商和刊登廣告的商號的支持，使我們得以刊登眾多的彩色照片。各攝影者提供高質素的相片，我們向他們致謝。還有我們要多謝張浩輝、方健華、E.M.S. Kilburn、林超英、M. Leven、黃亞萍和余日東提供寶貴意見及協助年報的製作工作。

年報編輯
Mike Turnbull、馬嘉慧

二〇〇二年二月

紀錄委員會報告

G.J. Carey

《香港鳥類名錄》(*The Avifauna of Hong Kong* (Carey *et al.* 2001))的出版，標誌著香港鳥類紀錄的新紀元，全面審核香港各種鳥類的狀況。名錄內的名單、分類學排序、命名法和數字排列進行了革新，今後的年報將會採納這項改變。

值得一提的是，名錄將香港的鳥類類別和定義重新歸納，計算至1998年底，香港共錄得448種鳥類。從前的D類(鳥種看似是野生的狀況，但不能排除非天然來源的可能性)改列為B類。由於從前的B類，在香港沒有明顯的生態意義，所以已被取消。C類和D類的鳥種，包含被認為源自籠養鳥而在香港建立繁殖種群的鳥類，牠們的分別是，C類可能在香港大規模生態環境轉變前已經存在。E類的定義仍然維持不變：來自非然因素的鳥類，而且未在香港建立繁殖種群。

A類：曾在香港錄得的野生鳥種；
B類：在香港被認為是野生鳥種，但不排除該鳥種是逃逸或放生鳥種；
C類：在華南地區繁殖，在香港大規模生境變化前，似乎曾經生存過，近年由於人類放生或從籠中逃逸，在香港再次建立野生種群。

1 Red-billed Starling *Sturnus sericeus*
Lin Barn Tsuen, Hong Kong, 12 November 2000 *Ho-fai Cheung*

D類：遠離正敍分佈地域，從前被人類引入香港，已經野化並在不增加引進情況下維持穩定種群。

E類：香港從前曾有紀錄，不過認為是逃逸或放生的鳥種。

F類：香港從前曾有紀錄，情況可疑，相信可能是辨認錯誤。

此外，紀錄委員會將A類至D類的鳥種合併成為單項名錄，反映每種鳥類都是香港鳥類穩定和同等重要的部份。鳥類名錄的出版，並不表示我們的工作已經完成，這部書祇是收集了香港全面鳥類紀錄的其中一步。我們鼓勵各會員在每次觀鳥後，積極提交觀鳥紀錄。會員可以EXCEL試算表方式或觀鳥紀錄咭遞交紀錄。

1998全年，A類至D類共錄得341種鳥類，比較1993至1997年，當時介乎於350至370之間。自1963以來，第一次全年沒有A至D類新增鳥種，不過，一隻極北柳鶯亞種 *Phylloscopus borealis xanthodryas* 第一次被接納。E類方面，1998年委員會收到了斑點亞馬遜鸚哥 *Amazona farinosa* 和藍喉擬啄木鳥 *Megalaima asiatica* (1997年首次錄得) 這兩個新紀錄。今年新種較少的原因，可能是野外觀察活動較少。

其他較突出的紀錄包括第二次錄得白眼潛鴨 *Aythya nyroca*、長嘴鴴 *Charadrius placidus*、斑啄木鳥 *Picumnus innominatus*、棕腹啄木鳥 *Dendrocopos hyperythrus* 和靴篤鶯 *Hippolais caligata*，還有第二次和第三次錄得鈍翅葦鶯 *Acrocephalus concinens*。

《香港鳥類名錄》的工作，進一步加深了我們對各種香港鳥類狀況的理解，尤其是有一些鳥種特別值得留意：紀錄委員會根據近期的研究資料，已將黃胸柳鶯 *Phylloscopus ricketti* 在香港鳥類名錄中剔除 (Leader and Carey in prep.)，原因是從遺傳基因的分析結果、南中國的野外研究、以及與海外專家交流意見後發現，以前錄得的鳥在分類學上大概屬 *Phylloscopus reguloides goodsoni*，即是冠紋柳鶯的亞種。這個亞種現已被委員會接納，列入香港鳥類名錄，黃胸柳鶯也許可在香港出現，不過目前沒有足夠的確定紀錄。

還有，Alström and Olsson (1999, 2000) 有關分類學上的文獻指出，從前的金眶鷦鶯 *Seicercus burkii* 已經被分為多個鳥種，而香港方面，已有的資料顯示香港有其中兩個鳥種的紀錄，包括灰冠鷦鶯 *Seicercus tephrocephalus* 和比氏鷦鶯 *Seicercus valentini*。可是，目前的知識，尚未足夠憑野外觀察作

鳥種辨識。紀錄委員會歡迎會員提交「金眶鷦鶯」的紀錄，如要判別鳥種，則需要提交詳細的觀察紀錄。

最後，灰腳柳鶯 *P. tenellipes* 已被分為兩個鳥種，包括灰腳柳鶯 *P. tenellipes* 和庫頁島柳鶯 *P. borealoides* (Martens 1988)。同樣地，雖然現時在手中鑑辨技巧大大提升 (Leader and Shigeta in prep.)，但是野外直接鑑辨還是十分困難。

紀錄委員會多年來獲Michael Chalmers的帶領和服務，尤其是作為委員會的主席和本會的紀錄主任。他離任後，Geoff Carey接替他的工作，委員會其他成員為張浩輝、Paul Leader、Mike Leven和Richard Lewthwaite。

本報告的分類總覽由下列人士編寫：G.J. Carey (002A-058A, 105A-189A, B, C, D和E類及所有罕見鳥種)、D.A. Diskin (254A-275A和281A-308A)、R.W. Lewthwaite (63A-87A和191A-253A) 和M. Turnbull (88A-104A, 277A-279A和309A-448A) 編寫。

本會感謝以下人士提交紀錄，加入本報告：

A. Brown, J. Bryant、S. Buckton、G.J. Carey、M.L. Chalmers、張浩輝、周智良、T.D. Dahmer、D.A. Diskin、M. Hale、A. Hardacre、J.G.& J. Holmes、P.J. Hopkin、E.M.S. Kilburn、V. Konrad、郭漢佳、F. Lambert、P.J. Leader、M.R. Leven、R.W. Lewthwaite、C. McGuigan、D.S. Melville、R.P. Morris、伍耀成、D. Philippe、V.B. Picken、蘇毅雄、M. Turnbull、黃振宇、黃亞萍、黃倫昌、T.J. Woodward、英克勁、W. Young、余日東、W. Yung。

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As a result of the considerable efforts that went into the production of *The Avifauna of Hong Kong*, published by the Society in late 2001, publication of this Report on birds in Hong Kong in 1998 has been considerably delayed. Geoff Carey, who was the lead author of *The Avifauna*, has relinquished the position of Report Editor after six years of sterling service. His contribution to the development of the Report has been an immense one, for which everyone connected with ornithology in Hong Kong would wish to register their gratitude. S.L. Tai, who assisted Geoff as Editor in 1997, has also stepped down.

The breakdown in regular publication of the Report is regrettable, however unavoidable it may have been. Regular publication of the Report, preferably within around twelve months of the end of the year with which it deals, clearly plays an important part in encouraging observers to submit records promptly, and also results in the patterns that emerge from observations becoming more widely known at the earliest possible opportunity. It is hoped therefore that, on the one hand, observers will continue to submit their records as soon as possible, while, on the other, that it will prove possible over the next couple of years or so to get back on course towards the kind of target publication date referred to above. This depends very much on the co-operation of everybody involved in contributing to the Report. That, more than anything, will determine whether or not the new Editorial team can achieve their aim of a resumption of prompt publication of the Hong Kong Bird Report within the shortest time span possible.

One of the direct reasons for the ongoing delay in publication of this Report was the decision to extend the period covered by *The Avifauna* up to 31 December 1998. As a result, the more salient findings from that year have already been published. However, the Systematic List and Monthly Summaries present much more detail. Other regular features include a report on the findings from Waterbird counts carried out during the year. One regular feature absent this year is the Ringing Report, which has unfortunately had to be held over until the next Report. Also, for the first time in many years, no new species were added to the Hong Kong List during 1998, though readers may rest assured that this is a feature which will resume in subsequent reports.

Finally, we would like to thank Geoff Carey again for his help as we have taken over the editorial reins, and all the sponsors and advertisers who enable us, amongst other things, to include so many colour photographs. The standard of photographs submitted continues to rise, and to those photographers too must go our thanks. Others who have assisted us in producing this Report include H.F. Cheung, F. Fong, E.M.S. Kilburn, C.Y. Lam, M.R. Leven, J. Wong and Y. T. Yu.

M. Turnbull and K.W. Ma, Editors.

REPORT ON THE BIRDS 1998

RECORDS COMMITTEE REPORT

G.J. Carey

The publication of *The Avifauna of Hong Kong* (Carey *et al.* 2001) marked a new phase in bird recording in Hong Kong, and provided a comprehensive review of the birds of Hong Kong. The composition of the List, and the taxonomic order, nomenclature and numbering adopted differs from those previously used, and these changes will be reflected in this and future issues of the Hong Kong Bird Report.

Of particular significance is the redefinition of the categories used in the Hong Kong List, which, as of the end of 1998, stood at 448 species. The former Category D (comprising species that are probably of natural occurrence, but for which the possibility of non-natural origin cannot satisfactorily be ruled out) has become Category B. The former Category B is dissolved, as it is considered to have no ecological significance in Hong Kong. Both Category C and Category D now comprise breeding species that are considered to have derived from captive stock, with the difference being that Category C species are considered to have probably occurred in Hong Kong prior to large-scale anthropogenic habitat changes. Category E remains unchanged: species of non-natural occurrence that have not established breeding populations. Definitions of the categories now in use are thus as follows:

Category A: Species that have been recorded in an apparently wild state in Hong Kong.

Category B: Species that are considered to have probably occurred in Hong Kong in a wild state, but for which the possibility of escape or release from captivity cannot be satisfactorily excluded.

Category C: Southeast China breeding species, the established or formerly established Hong Kong population of which is considered to be derived from captive stock, but which probably occurred in Hong Kong prior to anthropogenic habitat changes.

Category D: Extralimital species originally introduced to Hong Kong by man that maintain, or did maintain, a regular feral breeding stock without necessary recourse to further introduction.

Category E: Species for which all published Hong Kong records are considered likely to relate to birds that have escaped or have been released from captivity.

Category F: Species for which all published Hong Kong records must be regarded as doubtful because of the possibility of mistaken identification.

In addition, the Records Committee decided to merge Categories A to D into a single list of the birds of Hong Kong to reflect the fact that all species are

an established and equally important part of the Hong Kong avifauna. Members of the Society are encouraged to submit records of their birdwatching activities, as the publication of *The Avifauna* marks not an end but merely a stepping stone in the process of gathering comprehensive information on the birds of Hong Kong. Although the Records Committee prefers to receive records entered into an Excel file, submission via record cards is also perfectly acceptable.

During 1998 the number of species recorded was 341 in Categories A to D, which compares with between 350 and 370 for the years 1993-97. For the first year since 1963 there were no additions to Categories A to D. However, a record of an Arctic Warbler of the taxon *Phylloscopus borealis xanthodryas* was accepted for the first time. In Category E, the first records of Mealy Amazon *Amazona farinosa* and Blue-throated Barbet *Megalaima asiatica* (recorded first in 1997) were received. This paucity of new species was probably due to a relative lack of observer activity, as much as anything else.

Other notable records during the year included the second records of Ferruginous Duck *Aythya nyroca*, Long-billed Plover *Charadrius placidus*, Speckled Piculet *Picumnus innominatus*, Rufous-bellied Woodpecker *Dendrocopos hyperythrus* and Booted Warbler *Hippolais caligata*, and the second and third records of Blunt-winged Warbler *Acrocephalus concinens*

Work during preparation of *The Avifauna* threw up a number of changes to our appreciation of the status of species on the Hong Kong List, some of which are particularly noteworthy. Research carried out recently by members of the Records Committee has seen the removal of Sulphur-breasted Warbler *Phylloscopus ricketti* from the Hong Kong List (Leader and Carey in prep.). This is because DNA analysis, fieldwork in south China and correspondence with overseas experts indicate that records of birds previously identified as this species probably refer to the taxon *goodsoni*, at present regarded as a taxon of Blyth's Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus reguloides*. This taxon is now accepted to the Hong Kong List, and while Sulphur-breasted Warbler could well occur, there are no adequately substantiated records as yet.

In addition, with the publication of Alström and Olsson (1999, 2000), it has been possible to separate what was previously regarded as a single species, Golden-spectacled Warbler *Seicercus burkii*, into a number of species. It has been possible to identify two past Hong Kong records to two species: Grey-crowned Warbler *Seicercus tephrocephalus* and Bianchi's Warbler *Seicercus valentini*. Unfortunately, the field separation of this group of species is far from straightforward, and it is unlikely on present knowledge that the majority of birds seen in Hong Kong can be identified to species level. Records of 'Golden-spectacled Warbler' are still welcomed by the Records Committee, though claims of any of the species of the complex should be supported by details.

Finally, Pale-legged Leaf Warbler *P. tenellipes* has been split into two species, *P. tenellipes* and Sakhalin Leaf Warbler *P. borealoides* (Martens 1988). Again, field separation of these two species is extremely difficult, although ongoing research has made significant progress regarding in-hand identification (Leader and Shigeta in prep.).

Records Committee membership changed during the year with Michael Chalmers standing down after many years of valuable and dedicated service, especially in his capacity of Chairman and Recorder. With his departure, Geoff Carey took on these posts. In addition, the Records Committee comprised Cheung Ho Fai, Paul Leader, Mike Leven and Richard Lewthwaite.

The Systematic List was compiled by G.J. Carey (002A-058A, 105A-189A, Categories B, C, D and E and all rarities), D.A. Diskin (254A-275A and 281A-308A), R.W. Lewthwaite (63A-87A and 191A-253A), and M. Turnbull (88A-104A, 277A-279A and 309A-448A).

Thanks are due to the following observers, who submitted records for inclusion in this report.

A. Brown, J. Bryant, S. Buckton, G.J. Carey, M.L. Chalmers, H.F. Cheung, A. Chow, T.D. Dahmer, D.A. Diskin, M. Hale, A. Hardacre, J.G. and J. Holmes, P.J. Hopkin, E.M.S. Kilburn, V. Konrad, H.K. Kwok, F. Lambert, P.J. Leader, M.R. Leven, R.W. Lewthwaite, C. McGuigan, D.S. Melville, R.P. Morris, K. Ng, D. Philippe, V.B. Picken, S.H. So, M. Turnbull, C.Y. Wong, J. Wong, LC. Wong, T.J. Woodward, H.K. Ying, W. Young, Y.T. Yu, W. Yung.

2 Common Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*
Long Valley, Hong Kong, 3 May 2000 *Karl Y. S. Ng*

MONTHLY SUMMARIES

M. Turnbull and C.Y. Lam

January

Overall this month was slightly warmer than normal. However, three cold fronts, which reached Hong Kong on 4th, 14th and 23rd, brought appreciable temperature falls, and weaker fronts or surges of the monsoon arrived on 1st, 9th, 11th, 17th and 28th.

On 1st the first Styan's Grasshopper Warbler ever to be seen away from Deep Bay was found at Mui Wo, an Eagle Owl was seen at Chau Tau and two Plain Flowerpeckers were present at Mount Davis. On 3rd there was a Baer's Pochard at Mai Po and on 4th the only Eurasian Siskin of the year was seen at Tsim Bei Tsui. A Speckled Piculet, noted in a bird wave at Tai Po Kau on 11th, was only the second record for Hong Kong. Other interesting reports around the middle of the month included a Brown Fish Owl near Sai Kung on 13th, and a Citrine Wagtail at Long Valley on 18th, while there was a strong passage of swifts - up to 2000 Little and 800 Pacific Swifts were reported over the Mai Po fish ponds around this time.

The month had begun with what was to be the highest count of Black-faced Spoonbills for the first winter period - 110 on 1st - and by 31st the Dalmatian Pelican flock, which had numbered 17 at the beginning of the year, had grown to 24, at which level it subsequently remained throughout February. The January waterbird count produced a total of 47,542 birds; these included a count of 7235 Northern Pintail, the second highest count ever. Towards the end of the month, the annual passage of large gulls got under way, and a record six Slaty-backed Gulls, as well as the only Pallas's Gull of the year, were recorded at the Mai Po boardwalk on 21st. The arrival of cooler weather during the last ten days in January also coincided with an influx of Red-flanked Bluetails, as well as other chats, especially from around 24th, and this period also saw a record count of 2045 Pied Avocets, made in Deep Bay on 26th, and Hong Kong's second Long-billed Plover, at Pak Nai on 30th.

February

This was a warmer and wetter month than normal, with about three times the average rainfall recorded. Cold fronts which arrived on 4th and 20th brought appreciable temperature drops. Other cold fronts arrived on 14th and 17th, the latter bringing heavy showers and hail also. The end of the month was marked by a surge of easterly winds.

The effects of the cooler weather at the end of January appeared to continue into early February: on 2nd, Hong Kong's second Blunt-winged Warbler was trapped at Mai Po, a Rufous-gorgeted Flycatcher was seen at Ng Tung Chai and a Common Ringed Plover was noted from the Mai Po boardwalk.

Three days later, on 5th, the joint highest ever count of Kentish Plovers (4000) was made in Deep Bay. Single Ruddy-breasted Crakes, the only ones seen during the early part of the year, were seen at Long Valley on 2 February and at Lok Ma Chau on 14 February. Also around this time, at 49,459, the total number of birds counted in the February waterbird count unusually exceeded that of the January count, and highest counts to date of Tufted Ducks (560) and Great Crested Grebes (354) were made in Deep Bay. The Tufted Duck flock also included three Pochards and two Greater Scaups, and the only Gadwall of the first winter period was also present at Tsim Bei Tsui. On 11th the only Eurasian Black Vulture of the year was seen at San Tin, on 15th Hong Kong's second Rufous-bellied Woodpecker was found at Shing Mun, on 16th the only Brown-headed Gull of the year was seen in Deep Bay and on 24th the only Plumbeous Redstart of the year was recorded at Chuen Lung. Another feature of the month was the discovery of higher numbers of Great Bitterns than had previously been suspected at Mai Po; between 14th and 21st, up to seven were seen over Pond 3 at dusk.

March

Both cloudier and slightly warmer than normal, this month was characterised by two cold fronts, which arrived on 10th and 20th. Both were preceded by spells of fog.

Up to two male Gould's Sunbirds were seen at Kadoorie FBG between 1 and 4 March, but there were suggestions of a captive origin for these birds. A Common Ringed Plover was again seen in Deep Bay on 1st and 2nd (as well as later on 13th and 14th), and a Paddyfield Warbler was seen at Lin Barn Tsuen on 1st. The only other notable report in the first part of the month was of a Black-winged Kite at San Tin on 5th; this was the first record since November 1996.

Around the middle of the month there were, as usual, signs that spring passage was getting underway, with an increase in the number of Oriental Pratincoles encountered from 13th onwards, and first records for the year of Curlew Sandpipers on 13th, Greater Sand Plovers on 14th, Terek Sandpipers on 21st and Sharp-tailed Sandpipers on 22nd. Also on 22nd there was a Himalayan Swiftlet at Mai Po, and a Yellow-browed Bunting was seen at Lut Chau on 27th, when a record 13 Great Bitterns were noted at Mai Po, and the first Nordmann's Greenshanks of the year (three) were seen. In what turned out to be a very poor year for spring migration of landbirds, half of the entire passage of Silver-backed Needletails (four) were noted at Kadoorie FBG on 28th, but the occurrence of single Pallas's Grasshopper Warblers at Lin Barn Tsuen and San Tin, on 27th and 29th respectively, was unusual. Wader passage continued to gather pace and the 29th saw the first of twelve Spoon-billed Sandpipers to pass through Deep Bay on northward migration over the following seven weeks. At Chek Lap Kok a Buff-bellied Pipit was seen on 30th, while on 31st three Oriental Plovers were present there; these were to be the only ones noted on spring passage in 1998.

April

This was the warmest April since records began in 1884, with only one weak cold front, which arrived on 2nd. Significant late-season cold surges were absent. A trough of low pressure brought thundery showers on 12th, while the first spell of sustained southwesterlies of the year occurred from 22nd to 24th. Another trough brought three days of heavy rain from 25th to 27th.

The first Asian Dowitcher of the spring was seen at Mai Po on 1st, and on 4th a Long-billed Dowitcher was found there; this was just the fourth adequately documented record for Hong Kong. Another scarce wader, a Pectoral Sandpiper, was found at Mai Po on 11th, and in a month which was characterised by an almost complete absence of landbird passage, as fine weather predominated, it was waders that continued to grab attention: there was a new high of 2134 Red-necked Stints on 20th, a peak count for the year of 5152 Curlew Sandpipers also on 20th, and up to three Little Stints between 19th and 25th. Late April has emerged as the peak time for the spring passage of jaegers through the region and 26 Long-tailed Jaegers were seen south of Cheung Chau on 21st. A Greater Crested Tern was also seen in the same area that day, and seven Aleutian Terns, seen in nearby waters south of Hong Kong Island, also on 21st, were the only ones reported during the spring passage period. Finally, on 27th a Hodgson's Hawk-cuckoo was found at Hok Tau and a Pechora Pipit, the only one of the year, was trapped at Mai Po.

May

This month was also warmer than normal. Troughs of low pressure brought heavy showers on 2nd and 15th. A cold front arrived on 24th, accompanied by heavy rain and flooding in many places. An easterly surge prevailed on 30th and 31st.

The first week of the month produced several interesting records: on 3rd a Blue-tailed Bee-eater at Tsim Bei Tsui and a Swinhoe's Minivet at Po Toi were in each case the only records of the spring, on 4th a record nine Swinhoe's Egrets were present at Mai Po, and on 5th Hong Kong's third Barred Cuckoo-dove was found at Cape D'Aguilar. A Styan's Grasshopper Warbler at Mai Po on 12th was one of very few interesting reports thereafter, until the last few days of the month, when Hong Kong's first Arctic Warbler of the race *xanthodryas* was trapped at Wong Chuk Yeung on 26th, and the first Schrenck's Bitterns of the year were found on 27th and 31st at Lut Chau and Luk Keng respectively.

June

More than double the normal rainfall amount fell during this month, and the daily rainfall of 411.3 mm on 9th was the highest on record for June. A trough of low pressure crossed Hong Kong from north to south on 2nd and later returned on 9th. Other events of note were the spell of strong easterlies on 5th and the close approach of a trough of low pressure from the north on 26th and 27th.

The only Watercock seen during the early part of the year was reported from San Tin on 3rd and there was continued passage of smaller bitterns; another Schrenck's Bittern was found at Long Valley on 7th, a Cinnamon Bittern was at Fanling Golf Course on 8th, and Black Bitterns were present at Long Valley on 2nd and at Tap Mun on the rather late date of 20th. Also, Slaty-legged Crakes continued to be heard, at Kadoorie ARC on 4th and near Shek O Quarry on 18th. Two Pied Avocets seen in Deep Bay on 8th represented a new late date for this species, and a range of passage waders could be seen at Mai Po during the early part of the month. Small numbers of Oriental Pratincoles were noted at both Kai Tak and Chek Lap Kok around that time and a Nordmann's Greenshank seen at Mai Po on 14th proved to be the final one of the year. An adult Slaty-backed Forktail seen at Tai Po Kau on 27 June may have been a parent of the single juvenile that was later observed regularly at the same site between 30 August and 22 December.

July

The by now clearly established trend for 1998 of higher than average temperatures continued. Troughs of low pressure over the northern part of the South China Sea brought generally showery weather in the first half of the month. The rest of the month was mostly sunny and hot.

Overall this was a typically quiet month in terms of bird activity, and attention focussed on the terns breeding in Mirs Bay. Small numbers of recently fledged juveniles - 17 Roseates and six Black-naped-were noted on 16th and a new high count of Roseate Terns - 130 - was made on 21st. Around 100 Black-naped and up to 250 Bridled Terns were also present in the second half of the month. Towards the end of the month, the first Asian Dowitchers of the autumn were seen at Mai Po on 26th, and a Cinnamon Bittern was seen there on 27th.

3 Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava taivana*
San Tin, Hong Kong, April 2001 *Martin Hale*

August

This was the hottest August on record. Four spells of rain were noted, viz. 6th-7th, 10th-12th, 22nd-23rd and 27th-31st. They were respectively associated with Typhoon Otto dissipating inland, Severe Tropical Storm Penny passing nearby, a tropical depression and a trough of low pressure.

Up to two Asian Dowitchers continued to be noted at Mai Po and a boat trip in Mirs Bay on 15th produced counts of 250 Bridled Terns, 30 Roseate Terns and 30 Black-naped Terns. The only other record of note was a Black Bittern seen near Mai Po on 27th.

September

Yet another month which was hotter than normal, September saw troughs of low pressure yield significant rain on 1st, 6th and 10th. A tropical depression came close and resulted in rain from 12th to 14th. The first spell of continental air of the winter arrived in Hong Kong from the north on 19th. Another spell of northeasterly winds began on 27th.

In Mirs Bay observations of the regularly occurring species of tern continued into September, with two Aleutian Terns also noted on 2nd, the only report of the autumn. On 3rd another Black Bittern was seen in Long Valley. Hong Kong's second Booted Warbler was also found there on 14th and was still present the following day. Also on 14th, the only Oriental Plover of the autumn was seen at Chek Lap Kok. A Pheasant-tailed Jacana was seen at San Tin on 19th and a record count of 1269 Common Greenshanks was made at Mai Po that day. Earlier in the month, on 10th, a record count of 1221 Wood Sandpipers had also been made. The final ten days of the month saw several interesting records at Mai Po: the fifth and final Black Bittern of the year, this time a second year male, trapped on 20th; a juvenile Yellow-legged Button-quail also trapped on 20th; a juvenile Pied Harrier on 21st (a rather early date); a Watercock at Pond 20 on 22nd; and a first winter male Siberian Blue Robin on 27th, the only record of the year.

October

The third hottest October on record, October 1998 featured just two strong surges of the northeast monsoon from 3rd to 5th, reinforced by a tropical depression to the south and on 25th and 26th, as Typhoon Babs approached from the southeast. Weak pulses of the monsoon arrived on 9th, 15th and 20th.

One of the highlights of an interesting month was the presence of up to 13 Swinhoe's Minivets in the Deep Bay area between 1st and 8th. Such an influx was unprecedented and represented the first autumn records for Hong Kong. Also seen at Mai Po during this period were a Little Curlew on 3rd and a Blue-tailed Bee-eater on 9th, and there were reports of single Black-winged Kites (possibly all relating to the same individual) there and at Tsim Bei Tsui on 1st and 11th. Other interesting raptors noted included a Crested Honey Buzzard, also at Tsim

Bei Tsui on 11th, another juvenile Pied Harrier at Mai Po on 21st, a Black-winged Kite (again possibly the same bird) at Lut Chau on 22nd, and a Eurasian Sparrowhawk at Long Valley on 31st. In addition, the first Imperial Eagle was noted at Mai Po on 17th and the first Greater Spotted Eagle on 20th. As in previous years, and in addition to the Eurasian Sparrowhawk mentioned already, Long Valley produced several interesting reports, particularly during the second half of the month: a Pheasant-tailed Jacana and a Citrine Wagtail on 15th, a Watercock on 24th and a Baillon's Crake and the only Lanceolated Warbler of the year on 27th. Also during the final ten days of the month, another Pheasant-tailed Jacana was at Ngau Hom Sha on 21st, a Common Ringed Plover was seen from the Mai Po boardwalk on 22nd, when the only Spoon-billed Sandpiper of the autumn was also present, a Little Curlew was seen at Chek Lap Kok on 24th (and again on 30th), a Ruddy-breasted Crake was at Wo Shang Wai on 24th and 25th and a Barred Button-quail was seen at Cloudy Hill during the evening of 26th. The morning of 26th had witnessed the close passage of Typhoon Babs; this produced a passage of over 170 jaegers past Cape D'Aguilar, of which 47 were identified as Pomarine and 37 as Long-tailed - only three Pomarines had been recorded in Hong Kong prior to this, and previously the highest count of Long-taileds was 26

November

This was the warmest November since records began. The only cold front of note arrived on 17th followed by a day of somewhat stronger easterlies. The northeast monsoon also strengthened on 25th and 26th as Tropical Storm Elvis passed to the south of Hong Kong.

Oriental Scops Owls, which now appear to be of much more regular occurrence in Hong Kong than had previously been suspected, were seen in the evening at Robin's Nest on 1st and at Cloudy Hill on 3rd, while Eurasian Eagle Owls were found at Tseung Kwan O on 5th and at Tin Shui Wai on 10th. In Long Valley single Ruddy-breasted Crakes were seen on 5 and 22 November. Unusual passerines recorded during the month included three scarce warblers trapped at Mai Po: a Blunt-winged Warbler (the second of the year, but still only the third for Hong Kong), a Pale-footed Bush Warbler and a Yellow-streaked Warbler, on 3rd, 8th and 17th respectively. Also a Japanese Robin was trapped at Kadoorie FBG on 20th and a Eurasian Sparrowhawk was seen there on 18th. An immature male Greater Scaup was found in Deep Bay on 22nd. The last week of the month saw good numbers of Eurasian Woodcocks, with a count of seven at Cloudy Hill on 25th, when a Yellow-legged Button-quail was seen at Long Valley.

December

This month was also very much on the warm side. The winter monsoon was steady but weak throughout the month, and a cold front crossed the coast on 3rd. The only other event of note was a northerly surge on 14th, bringing a fall in both temperature and relative humidity.

On 3rd four Ferruginous Ducks were found at Mai Po. This was the second record for Hong Kong and the birds remained into 1999. Numbers of Tufted Duck, which had built up during November, surpassed the former record count made in February, with 654 counted on 15th; numbers continued to grow thereafter, reaching 786 on 22nd. Scarcer ducks which arrived in the Mai Po/ Deep Bay area during the month included a pair of Common Pochard, present from 7th to the end of the year, a male Baikal Teal on 13th and a female on 24th, an immature male Greater Scaup seen again on 15th and joined by a female on 20th, and a Baer's Pochard and two Falcated Ducks on 22nd. From 5th to 12th Long Valley held a Water Rail and a Ruddy-breasted Crake was also present there on the latter date; another was at Mai Po on 31st. Three Dalmatian Pelicans returned to Deep Bay on 17th and another had joined them ten days later, while by 22nd the Black-faced Spoonbill flock had grown to 152, a new high count. The only scarce passerines reported during the month were seen at Ng Tung Chai on 6th, when two Siberian Thrushes and a Rufous-gorgeted Flycatcher were present.

SYSTEMATIC LIST
分類總覽

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In the interests of brevity, records for species that are generally common and widespread in suitable habitat throughout the year are not listed unless significant reports were received. Researchers should note that this systematic list provides a summary of the ornithological year in Hong Kong, and not a complete picture. Species listed in BirdLife International (2000) are indicated by the following abbreviations (placed after the scientific name), which indicate which category of conservation concern the species is placed in: C - critical, EN - endangered, VU - vulnerable, CD - conservation dependent, N - near-threatened. Other abbreviations used within the text of species accounts are: CP - Country Park, HKU - Hong Kong University, Kadoorie ARC - Kadoorie Agricultural Research Centre, Kadoorie FBG - Kadoorie Farm and Botanical Gardens, NT - New Territories, ZBG - Zoological and Botanical Gardens. The order, categorisation and nomenclature follow Carey *et al.* (2001).

The dates of the Deep Bay waterbird counts referred to were: 17 January, 14 February, 14 March, 14 June, 12 July, 16 August, 19 September, 18 October, 22 November and 20 December. No complete counts were carried out in April and May, while a dash in the individual species tables indicates that the species concerned was not recorded. It should be noted that these waterbird totals might include counts made up to a week either side of the actual count date.

CATEGORIES A-D

002A Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis* 小鸊鷉

Totals recorded in the Deep Bay area waterbird counts were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
47	71	75	nc	nc	41	32	24	53	50	97	134

In the Deep Bay area, adults on nests were noted on 4 April and 8 June, and a juvenile was noted on 5 August. Away from the Deep Bay area, Little Grebes were recorded at Kau Sai Chau, Lai Chi Wo, Pak Tam Chung, High Island Reservoir and Kam Tin, with a juvenile noted at the first-named locality on 2 October.

003A Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus* 鳳頭鸊鷉

Totals recorded in the Deep Bay area waterbird counts were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
49	354	30	nc	nc	-	-	-	-	-	19	306

The February count was a new high for Hong Kong. The latest record of the first winter period was that during the March waterbird count on 14th, and the earliest in the second part of the year was that during the November waterbird count on 18th.

007A Dalmatian Pelican *Pelecanus crispus* **CD** 卷羽鵜鶘

In the early part of the year, numbers increased to 22 on 17 January and 24 on 31 January. This number remained until at least 6 March, after which date the number present fell to 13 on 14 March, with one remaining from 20 to 28 March. The peak count of 24 is the highest recorded during the 1990s. A record of three on 17 December was the earliest in the second part of the year; the highest subsequent count was four on 27th.

009A Brown Booby *Sula leucogaster* 褐鰹鳥

1997: One was seen at Cape D'Aguilar on 3 August (PJL) during the close approach of Typhoon Victor. This is the second Hong Kong record.

010A Great Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo* 鸕鷀

Totals recorded in the Deep Bay area waterbird counts were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
6033	4941	4334	nc	nc	-	-	-	-	356	2454	4990

One at Mai Po on 6 April was the latest recorded in the first winter period, while the earliest record in the second part of the year was of six there on 29 September. Away from Deep Bay, 120 were recorded at Starling Inlet in December, a maximum of 300 was recorded at Shuen Wan on 3 March, and a sighting of 200 in Tolo Harbour very early on the morning of 14 March raised the possibility of a previously unknown roost being present in the eastern NT. This was confirmed when 800 were found roosting at a site near Tap Mun in December. One at Kowloon Park on 1 November was unusual.

014A Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea* 蒼鷺

Totals recorded in the Deep Bay area waterbird counts were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
1011	992	676	nc	nc	10	7	23	148	240	812	1022

Elsewhere, Grey Herons were reported from Cape D'Aguilar (one on 26 October), Kam Tin (six on 6 December), Long Valley from 22 August (maximum

three on 15 October), Starling Inlet (maximum 132 on 13 January), Shuen Wan (maximum 48 on 2 January) and Tai Po Kau Village (one on 28 April and 7 May).

015A Purple Heron *Ardea purpurea* 草鷺

During the first winter period, the maximum count was three during the February waterbird count. Spring passage peaked at four birds on 30 March, and the latest record at this time was of two on 30 May. One on 19 August was the first record of the autumn passage period, the highest count at that time being four on 10 October. The highest count in the second winter period was three on 19 December. All records were from the Deep Bay area. An unremarkable year for this species, with no suggestion of breeding.

016A Great Egret *Egretta alba* 大白鷺

Totals recorded in the Deep Bay and Starling Inlet areas during the monthly waterbird counts were as follows:

	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
DB	374	277	357	nc	nc	247	510	268	297	180	573	615
SI	191	185	225	nc	nc	nc	81	118	173	nc	290	203

At Shuen Wan, the highest counts in the two winter periods were 75 in January and 102 in December. Breeding was recorded at the following egretries: Tsim Bei Tsui (33 probable nesting pairs), A Chau (30 nests) and Penfold Park (two pairs). Elsewhere, two at Long Valley on 22 November, with one there on 6 December, were unusual.

017A Intermediate Egret *Egretta intermedia* 中白鷺

Totals recorded in the Deep Bay area waterbird counts were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
5	7	5	nc	nc	5	8	2	9	14	10	5

Away from the Deep Bay area, Intermediate Egrets were recorded at Shuen Wan (singles from 8 January to 2 February and on 13 November), Starling Inlet (maximum count of seven on 6 February) and Luk Keng (one record of three on 30 January).

018A Little Egret *Egretta garzetta* 小白鷺

Totals recorded in the Deep Bay area waterbird counts were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
946	897	1373	nc	nc	398	896	841	572	634	782	1495

Breeding was noted at the following egretries: Mai Po Village (38 nests), Tsim Bei Tsui (44 probable nesting pairs), Pak Nai (five pairs), Ngau Hom Shek (two pairs), Ho Pui (eight pairs), A Chau (40 nests) and Penfold Park. Other records of interest during the year were a total of 109 in Victoria Harbour flying toward Stonecutters on 25 July, and 110 at the site of the Tai Po KCR egretry on 5 September.

019A Swinhoe's Egret *Egretta eulophotes* **VU** 黃嘴白鷺

During spring passage from 4 April to 8 May, a total of 25 individuals (nearly 1% of the world population) were recorded in Deep Bay (mainly from the boardwalk), with a maximum of nine on 4 May (GJC,PJL), the highest single day count in Hong Kong. Passage of this species through Hong Kong appears to be swift, with apparently only a small proportion remaining for any length of time.

020A Pacific Reef Egret *Egretta sacra* 岩鷺

Records were received for Lantau (the north coast from Tai O to Tai Ho Wan), Lamma, Cape D'Aguilar, Sandy Bay, Po Toi, Tung Lung Chau, Ap Lei Chau and Kau Sai Chau. The highest count was five at Tung Lung Chau.

021A Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis* 牛背鷺

Totals recorded in the Deep Bay area waterbird counts were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
32	2	40	nc	nc	115	224	179	145	11	38	46

Breeding was noted at the following egretries: Mai Po Village (16 nests), Tsim Bei Tsui (12 probable nesting pairs), Ho Pui (13 nests) and A Chau (40 nests). Away from the Deep Bay and Starling Inlet areas, Cattle Egrets were recorded at Long Valley/Ho Sheung Heung, Fanling Golf Course, Lai Chi Wo, Yung Shue O, Kau Sai Chau, Penfold Park, Mui Wo, Chek Lap Kok, Kai Tak, Po Toi, Tap Mun and Shek O. The highest counts at these sites were 50 at Lai Chi Wo and 45 at Mui Wo.

022A Chinese Pond Heron *Ardeola bacchus* 池鷺

Totals recorded in the Deep Bay area waterbird counts were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
194	70	134	nc	nc	178	207	141	160	92	154	183

Breeding birds were recorded at the following egretries: Mai Po Village (34 nests), Pak Nai (52 pairs), Ngau Hom Shek (four nests), Ho Pui (13 nests), Ma On Kong (four nests), A Chau (two nests), and Penfold Park (at least one pair). At Fanling Golf Course, where surveys were carried out regularly during the year, numbers were typically between 15 and 30 during the winter months,

falling to 10-15 during April, May and June, and peaking in late July and August with a maximum of 44 on both 27 July and 10 August.

023A Striated Heron *Butorides striatus* 綠鷺

In Deep Bay, where the great majority of records were from Mai Po NR, Striated Herons were recorded from 4 April to 19 December, with the highest count being 11 on 14 June. Away from Deep Bay, singles (unless stated) were at Nam Chung from 25 to 29 January (with two on the latter date), Sha Lo Tung on 28 January, Mui Wo on 29 January, Tai Po Kau on 4 April and 5 and 11 October, Hok Tau on 28 April, Green Island on 15 May, Tai Ho Wan (Lantau) on 12 June, Kuk Po on 29 June, 29 July and 27 August (all juveniles), Lai Chi Wo on 29 June and 29 July, Tung Chung on 2 July, Double Haven on 20 July, Chek Keng on 21 July, Tai Lam Chung on 11 September, Tai Po Kau Village on 16 September, 11 November and 23 December, Kowloon Hills on 28 October, and Lok Lo Ha (Fo Tan) on 20 and 22 December; up to two were noted at Chung Mei during the December waterbird count. In addition, what was presumed to be the same immature was present at Shuen Wan all year, with a second bird on 17 October.

024A Black-crowned Night Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax* 夜鷺

The highest Deep Bay count of the year was 163 in the February waterbird count. At the Mai Po Village egretry, 45 nests were counted, while at Tsim Bei Tsui egretry 35 probable nesting pairs were noted. At Starling Inlet, which generally supports the largest concentration of birds during the summer months, 180 nests were counted on A Chau and a maximum of 347 birds was recorded there on 6 May. At Penfold Park an adult was seen carrying food to the egretry, and at Hong Kong Park four birds were recorded on 31 May.

026A Yellow Bittern *Ixobrychus sinensis* 黃葦鳽

The only winter records were of singles at Mai Po on 26 February and at Fung Lok Wai on 9 March. The earliest spring record was on 2 April, though this was the only record in the first half of that month. Only singles were recorded between 16 April and 10 May, apart from two on 29 April. Subsequently, up to 6 September, daily totals of up to five birds (though generally three or fewer) were recorded, followed by up to two birds on six dates to 21 October. Most records were from the Deep Bay area (mainly Mai Po NR), with others from Nam Chung, Sha Tau Kok, Lai Chi Wo, Kau Sai Chau, Lung Kwu Tan and Hong Kong Park.

027A Schrenck's Bittern *Ixobrychus eurythmus* 紫背葦鳽

There were three records, all singles in spring, at Lut Chau on 27 May, Luk Keng on 31 May and Long Valley on 7 June.

028A Cinnamon Bittern *Ixobrychus cinnamomeus* 栗葦鳽

There were only three records from the Deep Bay area: singles on 29 April, 23 July and 1 September. Elsewhere, singles were present at Mui Wo on 29 January and 12 May, at Lai Chi Wo on 29 May, at Fanling Golf Course on

8 June and at Kam Tin on 10 September. The only subsequent record was of a male found dead at Chek Lap Kok on 27 October.

029A Black Bittern *Dupetor flavicollis* 黑鳽

In a good year for this species, singles were noted at Long Valley on 2 June (VBP), Tap Mun on 20 June (YYT), near Mai Po on 27 August (SB), at Long Valley on 3 September (PJL,SB) and at Mai Po on 20 September, when a second calendar-year male was trapped (MRL).

030A Great Bittern *Botaurus stellaris* 大麻鳽

At Mai Po up to seven were recorded between 14 and 21 February. No more than three were recorded during March, until 26th when 11 were present, with 13 on the following day (SB); the latter is a new high. Seven were still present on 30 March, and one on 3 April was the final spring record. In the second part of the year, one was present from 20 October to 12 November, followed by three from 12 December to the end of the year. Away from Mai Po, singles were recorded at Mui Wo on 29 January and on 8 and 15 March (the first record for Lantau), and at Nam Sang Wai on 16 March.

033A Black-headed Ibis *Threskiornis melanocephalus* **N** 白鷺

A single adult was present in Deep Bay from the beginning of the year until 5 April. This terse statement serves as a reminder of how much this species has declined in Hong Kong.

035A Eurasian Spoonbill *Platalea leucorodia* 白琵鷺

Two birds were present in the first winter period until 28 March, with one remaining until 18 April. In the second part of the year, the first record came on 30 October, when a single was present. However, there were no further reports until 5 December, from which date one was again present, with two noted on 22 December. All records were from the Deep Bay area.

036A Black-faced Spoonbill *Platalea minor* **EN** 黑臉琵鷺

A count of 110 on 1 January was the highest in the first winter period. Of these, 103 remained on 25 March, but numbers declined thereafter, with 66 present at the end of the month. By the middle of April no more than 38 were present, this figure falling to 11 by 3 May, the last date on which it was recorded in the spring. However, five birds apparently over-summered, with records from 12 July to the end of September. What is presumed to have been the first winter arrival occurred on 6 October, when six were seen, and numbers subsequently increased to 20 on 23 October, 78 on 4 November, 128 on 17 November and 152 on 22 December (RWL), a new high for Hong Kong. All records were from the Deep Bay area.

040A Common Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna* 翹鼻麻鴨

The highest count of the year was that of 1291 recorded during the January waterbird count. A total of 1079 were recorded in February, and 321 remained on 16 March. Numbers declined to 35 on 28 March, nine on 2 April

and, finally, one on 19 April. The first record of the second winter period occurred on 7 November. This was thus the first record of a winter arrival any earlier than 27 November since 1989 (cf. Carey *et al.* 2001). In the December waterbird count 1280 were recorded. Except for one present on the reserve at Mai Po during the April waterbird count, all records were from the intertidal areas of Deep Bay.

4 Black-faced Spoonbill *Platalea minor*
Mai Po, Hong Kong, April 1998 *Martin Hale*

[042A Mandarin *Aix galericulata* 鴛鴦

Away from the waterfowl collection, three female/immatures were seen on the reserve at Mai Po on 21 July, and the same birds plus one male were seen 23 August. However, these birds are considered to have originated in the waterfowl collection.]

043A Eurasian Wigeon *Anas penelope* 赤頸鴨

In the first part of the year, 1798 were recorded in the January waterbird count, with 1783 in the February count. A total of 1160 were still present during the March count, with numbers falling to 289 on 3 April, nine on 4 May and, finally, one on 16 May. The first record in the second part of the year concerned two on 23 September, with numbers rising to 1762 in the November waterbird count and 2748 in the December count. The only records away from the Deep Bay area concerned one at Long Valley on 22 November and 17 there on 11 December.

A hybrid male wigeon *A. penelope* x *A. americana* was reported from Mai Po on 3 April (GJC), and a hybrid duck that appeared to be derived from Eurasian Wigeon was at Mai Po on 30 December. Observers are requested to take detailed notes or photographs of all hybrid ducks seen in Hong Kong, and to submit details to the Society for possible future analysis.

044A Falcated Duck *Anas falcata* 羅紋鴨

The count of 48 birds during the January waterbird count, although a slight improvement on the previous winter's figure of 39, nevertheless continues the general downward trend in the numbers of this species recorded in Hong Kong. Eight were recorded on 28 January, but there were no further records until 18 April when two females, presumably migrants, were seen at Mai Po. The only records in the latter part of the year concerned up to two birds noted from 22 December.

045A Gadwall *Anas strepera* 赤膀鴨

In a very poor year for this species, and continuing the run of indifferent years since the mid 1990s, only three records were received: one at Tsim Bei Tsui on 14 February, and a male at Mai Po on 10 November and 7 December.

046A Baikal Teal *Anas formosa* **VU** 花臉鴨

A male was on pond 20 at Mai Po on 13 December, and a female was there on 24 December.

047A Common Teal *Anas crecca* 綠翅鴨

Totals recorded in the Deep Bay area waterbird counts were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
3499	3932	2509	nc	nc	-	-	10	15	176	860	2634

The latest spring record was of 200 at Mai Po on 6 April, and the earliest autumn record was of 100 on 6 October. Away from the Deep Bay area, 20 were at Kam Tin on 15 December, 23 were at Long Valley on 24 January, with singles there on 15 October and 15 November, two were at Nam Chung on 23 January,

5 Common Teal *Anas crecca*
Mai Po, Hong Kong, January 2001 *Martin Hale*

up to four were at Yim Tso Ha from 19 February to 3 April, up to 20 were at Shuen Wan from 8 January to 28 March, six were at Sai Kung on 17 January and one was at Penfold Park on 15 January. Two were at Kowloon Park on 1 November with one there on 3 May, though the late date of the latter casts doubt over the natural occurrence of all these birds at that site.

049A Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos* 綠頭鴨

The highest count in the first winter period was of eight birds during the February waterbird count; this is the lowest peak winter count since the late 1980s. Four on 20 February was the latest record at this time. One on 8 November was the earliest record in the second part of the year, with numbers later peaking at seven.

A hybrid Mallard x Spot-billed Duck, as described in Melville (1999), was at Mai Po from 28 November to 20 December.

050A Spot-billed Duck *Anas poecilorhyncha* 斑嘴鴨

Observers are reminded of the importance of separately recording the two taxa involved in this species. In particular, breeding season counts and observations of both taxa, and counts of *A.p. haringtoni* at all times of year are very welcome.

A.p. zonorhyncha

Totals recorded in the Deep Bay area waterbird counts were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
92	76	38	nc	nc	-	-	-	9	1	32	41

The latter half of the 1990s have witnessed lower numbers than at any time since the early 1980s, when counts may have been artificially low due to the then recently-effected ban on hunting.

A.p. haringtoni

No more than three birds were recorded on any one date until 23 September when four were present. Thereafter, until at least 18 October higher numbers were present, with the peak count at this time being 13 in the October waterbird count. November and December again saw no more than two birds on any one date.

051A Northern Pintail *Anas acuta* 針尾鴨

The peak count in the first winter period was 7235 birds during the January waterbird count, the second highest on record in Hong Kong. In the February count, a total of 3579 were recorded, followed by 57 during the March count. Two on 31 March was the latest spring record. In the second winter period, the earliest recorded were eight on 6 October. Numbers increased to 3206 in the November waterbird count, and 6105 in the December count. A male at Starling Inlet on 28 December was the only record away from the Deep Bay area.

052A Garganey *Anas querquedula* 白眉鴨

The peak count in the first winter period was 30 in the January waterbird count. Spring passage seems to have commenced in early March, and 75 were counted in the March waterbird count; the only other significant spring count was of 55 on 6 April, and the latest record concerned a male on 7 May. Two birds appear to have over-summered, being seen on 14 June and 12 July. Southward passage was first noted on 23 September, and numbers subsequently built up to 180 on 6 October and 240 on 19 October. The November waterbird count recorded 33 birds, and the December count 17.

053A Northern Shoveler *Anas clypeata* 琵嘴鴨

The highest count in the first winter period was 6615 in the January waterbird count. At the time of the March waterbird count 1066 were still present, though numbers subsequently fell sharply to 160 on 26 March, and eight on 3 April were the last recorded during the first half of the year. The first recorded in the latter half of the year was one on a fish pond at Nim Wan (a rather unusual locality) on 18 November, though some birds were undoubtedly present earlier than this. The November waterbird count recorded 3060, and the December count 4629; in addition, a total of 4960 were counted on 20 December. The only record away from the Deep Bay area was of a male at Penfold Park on 15 December, though the origins of this bird are perhaps suspect.

054A Common Pochard *Aythya ferina* 紅頭潛鴨

Up to three were present in Deep Bay between 7 and 14 February, and a male and a female were there from 7 to 31 December.

055A Baer's Pochard *Aythya baeri* **VU** 青頭潛鴨

One at Mai Po on 3 January and a female there on 22 December were the only records considered to relate to wild birds.

056A Ferruginous Duck *Aythya nyroca* **N** 白眼潛鴨

Up to four birds, including at least one male, were at Mai Po from 3 December to at least 14 January 1999 (RWL,GJC *et al.*). This is the second Hong Kong record.

057A Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula* 鳳頭潛鴨

Numbers in the first part of the year built up from 260 on 11 January to 560 on 7 and 9 February. No records were subsequently received for the first winter period. In the second part of the year, the first record was of 280 on 10 November, followed by 314 on 22 November, 654 on 15 December, and 786 seven days later on 22nd (RWL). The latter count was a new high for the species, with the previous highest having been the 560 recorded earlier in the year. All records were from the Deep Bay area.

058A Greater Scaup *Aythya marila* 斑背潛鴨

The only record in the first winter period was of a male and a female on 7 February. In the second part of the year, an immature male was recorded on

22 November and 15 December, and this was joined by a female on 20 December. All records were from Tsim Bei Tsui.

063A Osprey *Pandion haliaetus* 鶚 (魚鷹)

Based on data from co-ordinated monthly counts and other reports, peak monthly counts in Deep Bay were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
8	4	5	1	2	1	1	1	1	2	7	7

Although this was one of very few years in which birds were noted in each month in Deep Bay, a decrease is evident compared to the previous year, when up to 12 were logged in similar counts. Away from Deep Bay, one flew over Long Valley on 15 September, one was riding thermals approximately 2 km inland at Kau To Shan on 17 October and up to three were reported in winter in the Starling Inlet area and at Crooked Harbour, Lai Chi Wo, Yung Shue Au, Plover Cove, Shuen Wan, Sai Kung, Yung Shue O, Mui Wo and The Brothers. Single birds at Yung Shue O on 6 June and Sha Tau Kok on 17 July were the only summer records outside Deep Bay.

064A Black Baza *Aviceda leuphotes* 黑冠鵑隼

In spring and summer, up to two were regularly reported in the Nam Chung-Luk Keng area between 15 April and 21 May, and at Fanling Golf Course between 20 April and 31 July, where one was seen carrying sticks on 26 May. Other spring sightings were at Tsim Bei Tsui, Shui Tau Tsuen and Queen's Hill Camp between 28 April and 5 May. In autumn, up to five were noted at Nam Chung, Fanling Golf Course, Mong Tseng and Beas River on just six dates between 16 August and 17 October. A rather meagre set of records making this one of the poorest years since 1988.

065A Crested Honey Buzzard *Pernis ptilorhyncus* 鳳頭蜂鷹

One was at Mong Tseng on 11 October (DAD).

066A Black-winged Kite *Elanus caeruleus* 黑翅鳶

One at San Tin on 5 March, the first reported since November 1996, was followed by a series of sightings of single birds in October at Mai Po on 1st and 11th, at Tsim Bei Tsui also on 11th (all unaged) and at Lut Chau on 22nd (an adult).

067A Black Kite *Milvus migrans* 黑鳶 (麻鷹)

During co-ordinated monthly counts in Deep Bay, 40 were recorded in January, none in February, 90 in March, 74 in November and 78 in December. With the exception of the March count, which was almost double the previous highest for that month, counts were low compared to previous years. The only other noteworthy reports were of five with Grey-faced Buzzards *Butastur indicus*,

apparently migrating, at Wong Chuk Yeung on 25 March and 50 at Mai Po on 20 September, the first sizeable autumn count there.

069A White-bellied Sea Eagle *Haliaeetus leucogaster* 白腹海鵰

Recorded as usual throughout the year, mainly from coastal sites or islands. Apart from two adults and three juveniles together at Pak Tam Chung in March and at least three adults in the Tai Long Wan area on 2 May, all reports referred to one or two birds. Most individuals aged were adults, but juveniles in their first calendar year were noted at Sam A Chung in June and Shuen Wan in July. Inland sightings involved single adults over Wong Chuk Yeung in April and over Tai Po Kau, Sha Tin Racecourse and Kadoorie FBG in September-October. Most other reports were from coastal localities, in Mirs Bay and Tolo Harbour (Lai Chi Wo, Plover Cove, Yung Shue O, Tap Mun), on the southern side of Hong Kong Island (Cape d'Aguilar, and Po Toi and Beaufort Islands), on the northern side of Lantau, including Sha Chau Island, and also Green Island.

070A Eurasian Black Vulture *Aegypius monachus* **N** 禿鷲

One was at San Tin on 11 February.

071A Crested Serpent Eagle *Spilornis cheela* 蛇鵰

One or two birds were reported in all months except June, but mainly during March-May and September-November, as has been the pattern in recent years. Most sightings were at Tai Po Kau, including in mid-summer and mid-winter, but birds were also regularly reported at Lai Chi Wo and Nam Chung and in the Mong Tseng area, and, on one or two dates, at Mai Po, Long Valley, Queen's Hill, Ho Pui, Kap Lung, Kadoorie FBG, Lam Tsuen Valley, Sha Lo Tung, Fo Tan, Wong Chuk Yuen, Sai Kung and Liu Pok, near Ma Tso Lung. All individuals aged were adults. Vocalizations were noted in January, March, May and September.

072A Grey-faced Buzzard *Butastur indicus* 灰臉鵟鷹

All records were in spring. Following 28 over the Tsing Ma bridge on 17 March, up to six were at Braemar Hill and Pok Fu Lam on 24 March, 11 moved north-east over Mui Wo on 3 April and one was seen resting in a pine tree at Mong Tseng the next day.

073A Pied Harrier *Circus melanoleucos* 鵲鶆

Single juveniles were seen at Mai Po on 21 September and 21 October (YYT).

074A Eastern Marsh Harrier *Circus spilonotus* 白腹鶆 (澤鶆)

Up to three were regularly reported in Deep Bay from the start of the year to the middle of March, with slightly lower numbers through to the middle of April, after which females on 27 and 28 April (two) were the latest in spring. A count of six in a co-ordinated monthly count on 14 March was the highest for the first winter period. An adult male on 19 September was the earliest of the autumn, after which birds were regularly reported to the end of the year, the highest count

being five at Mai Po on 1 November. As usual, most reports referred to females, but at least two different males were reported in each winter period.

075A Crested Goshawk *Accipiter trivirgatus* 鳳頭鷹

Recorded from widespread localities throughout the year. Apart from three near Fanling Golf Course on 1 February and four at Kap Lung on 18 November, all other reports refer to one or two birds with most sightings at Tai Po Kau and Fanling Golf Course. Other localities were Mong Tseng, Kam Tin, Hang Tau Tsuen, Long Valley, Ma Tso Lung, Sha Tau Kok, Kuk Po, So Lo Pun, Mui Tsz Lam, Sha Lo Tung, Kap Lung, Lam Tsuen, Shing Mun, Kowloon Hills catchwater, Wong Chuk Yeung, ZBG, Pok Fu Lam, Mount Davis, Green Island, Mui Wo and Tai O. Aerial display flights were noted in each month between October and March. One predated a Collared Scops Owl *Otus bakkamoena* at Shing Mun on 24 February.

076A Chinese Goshawk *Accipiter soloensis* 赤腹鷹

In a poor year, the only spring records involved singles at Mount Davis, Lai Chi Wo, Nam Chung and Shuen Wan between 16 and 23 April, and seven at Tsim Bei Tsui on 18 April, while the only autumn record was of an adult at Mai Po on 10 November.

077A Japanese Sparrowhawk *Accipiter gularis* 日本松雀鷹

A male at Mai Po on 5 April and one at Luk Keng on 15 April were the only reports in the first part of the year. Following one at Pak Nai on 14 October, the first of the autumn, up to nine individuals were reported at Mai Po between 17 October and 13 December. Reports from elsewhere in October were of a female at Cheung Shu Tan on 18th and two at Mong Tseng on 27th, while in November singles were recorded at Kadoorie FBG on 8th and Ping Shan Chai on 15th.

078A Besra *Accipiter virgatus* 松雀鷹

Recorded from widespread areas in all months, mainly in January and between March and May. Apart from two at Mui Wo on 29 January, all reports were of single birds, with most sightings at Tai Po Kau and Mai Po. Other localities were Mong Tseng, Shuen Wan, Hok Tau, Lam Tsuen, Yung Shue O, Silverstrand and Dong Ping Chau. Aerial display flights were noted in January, April, May and November. A female re-trapped at Mai Po on 10 December had been found injured there in July 1997 and released later that month at Kadoorie FBG after treatment.

079A Eurasian Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus* 雀鷹

Singles were at Long Valley on 31 October (CHF) and at Kadoorie FBG on 18 November (PJL).

Sparrowhawk sp. *Accipiter gularis/virgatus/nisus*

Records of unidentified accipiters, comprising one to three birds, were widespread. The number of birds reported in each month was:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
3	5	2	6	2	-	-	-	3	9	4	3

080A Common Buzzard *Buteo buteo* 普通鵟

In the first winter period, recorded from widespread sites up to 24 March. Most reports were from Deep Bay and involved up to four birds, though six were noted in a co-ordinated count on 14 March and eight, a new high count, were present at Mai Po on 16 February. In the second winter period, recorded from 1 October to the end of the year, again from widespread sites, but mostly in the Deep Bay area, where up to four were noted. Other localities where it was noted included Tai Po Kau, Penfold Park, Kowloon Reservoir, Cheung Sha Wan, Pok Fu Lam, Mui Wo, Pak Kok, Ma Wan and Green Island.

081A Greater Spotted Eagle *Aquila clanga* **VU** 烏鵰

Regularly recorded in the Deep Bay area, its hinterland and adjacent hills until 1 March, and again from 20 October. Most reports were from the Mai Po area, but birds were also noted at Tsim Bei Tsui, Fung Lok Wai, Lut Chau, Long Valley, Crest Hill and Kam Tin. Four at Mai Po on 17 January was the highest count. Peak monthly counts were:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
4	3	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	2	3

Two juveniles on a drained fish pond near Mai Po on 7 December were disputing the head of a large carp with an Imperial Eagle *A. heliaca*.

082A Imperial Eagle *Aquila heliaca* **VU** 白肩鵰

Noted regularly in the Deep Bay area, its hinterland and adjacent hills up to 31 March and from 17 October. As with the previous species, most reports were from the Mai Po area. It was also reported at Tsim Bei Tsui and adjacent hills, Fung Lok Wai, Kam Tin, Lut Chau, San Tin, Ho Sheung Heung, Crest Hill and Ma Tso Lung. The only report outside the Deep Bay area involved one at Tai Mo Shan on 21 November. Totals of six were logged in Deep Bay during co-ordinated counts on 17 January, 16 February and 22 November and peak monthly counts were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
6	6	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	6	4

083A Bonelli's Eagle *Hieraaetus fasciatus* 白腹山鵰

Reported throughout the year from widespread areas. Pairs were noted at Silverstrand, Hok Tau and, regularly, around a 45-storey urban block at Kwai Chung on the edge of Shing Mun CP. As usual, nearly all sightings at Mai Po in autumn and winter involved juveniles or immatures, apart from one in near-adult

plumage on 19 October. On 17 January, an immature at Mai Po repeatedly tried to take an injured Great Cormorant, while on 2 August an unaged bird at Tap Mun predated a tern, either Black-naped or Roseate. Elsewhere, up to three were noted at Tsim Bei Tsui, the border hills, Long Valley, Nam Chung, Luk Keng, Tai Long Wan and Mui Wo.

085A Common Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus* 紅隼

Up to two were regularly reported until 10 April and from 2 October from widespread areas in the NT, including Chek Lap Kok. Elsewhere, singles were noted in west Kowloon on 13 February and 2 October. Three at Mai Po on 7 November was the highest count. The number of birds reported in each month was as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
15	7	11	3	-	-	-	-	-	13	10	8

086A Eurasian Hobby *Falco subbuteo* 燕隼

In spring, single birds were noted on nine occasions between 13 April and 1 May in the Mai Po area and at Nim Wan, Lut Chau, Chau Tau and Starling Inlet. There were no further reports until August, when a juvenile was at Mai Po on 6th and one was at Tsim Bei Tsui on 11th. Following five further reports in September at Mai Po and Long Valley, in October a minimum of 20 individuals were noted in the NT up to 22nd, including four at Sha Lo Tung on 11th and three juveniles at Tsim Bei Tsui on 14th. The only report after that date came from Long Valley where one was noted on 1 November.

087A Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus* 遊隼

Up to two recorded from widespread areas until 19 April and from 11 October. Outside this period, single birds at Mai Po on 1 May and at Ha Tsuen on 10 July and 4 August were the only reports. A pale adult was noted roosting at the southern end of Mai Po on several dates between 14 January and 18 April. Other individuals thought to show characters of northern forms were reported in Deep Bay on 6 April, 22 October and 8 November, the bird on the latter date predating a shorebird *Tringa*. Elsewhere this species was noted at Ha Tsuen, Mong Tseng, Tsim Bei Tsui, Lut Chau, Liu Pok, Long Valley, Nam Chung, Luk Keng, Lai Chi Wo, Crooked Harbour, Shuen Wan, Kau Sai Chau, Mount Davis, HKU, Victoria Harbour, Causeway Bay, Cape d'Aguilar, The Brothers and Green Island.

088A Chinese Francolin *Francolinus pintadeanus* 鷓鴣

Apart from a count of 12 on Kau Sai Chau on 30 March, most records were of one to three birds, heard calling at widespread locations in central, northern and eastern parts of the NT. On Lantau, heard at Chek Lap Kok on four dates between 24 March and 18 July, while on Hong Kong Island the only record was of one heard at Cape d'Aguilar on 5 May. All records were in the period 13 March to 18 July, apart from one heard at Hok Tau on 10 October.

089A Japanese Quail *Coturnix japonica* 鵪鶉

Four were at Long Valley on 18 January and one was nearby at Ho Sheung Heung on 22nd. There were no further records until 14 March, so two at Long Valley on that date may have been spring migrants, as may one at Mai Po on 26 March, two at Kau Sai Chau on 29 March, seven at Long Valley on 14 April and two there on 18 April. First recorded in the autumn at Long Valley on 18 October, when one was seen. Singles were subsequently recorded there on 24 October and 5 December. The only other record came from Liu Pok on 9 November.

090A Yellow-legged Button-quail *Turnix tanki* 黃腳三趾鶉

A juvenile male was trapped at Mai Po on 20 September (MRL), and another (unaged and unsexed) was seen at Long Valley on 25 November (MH).

091A Barred Button-quail *Turnix suscitator* 棕三趾鶉

One was at Cloudy Hill on 26 October (MH) (plate 6).

[Button-quail sp.

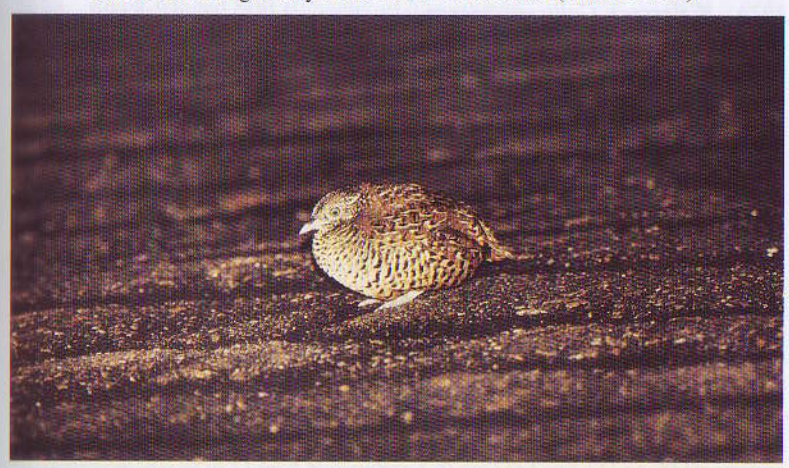
One was at Wong Chuk Yeung on 26 January (MRL).]

093A Slaty-breasted Rail *Gallirallus striatus* 藍胸秧雞

Rather surprisingly, prior to 25 May, when up to three were heard at Mai Po, the only reports were of singles at Luk Keng on 14 January and at Mui Wo on 31 January. From 19 September one or two were reported on several dates from Mai Po and Tsim Bei Tsui: these records included one of a juvenile on 18 October at Mai Po. One was also reported from Luk Keng on 28 October.

094A Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus* 普通秧雞

One was at Long Valley from 5 to 12 December (EMSK *et al.*).



6 Barred Button-quail *Turnix suscitator*
Cloudy Hill, Hong Kong, 26 October 1998 *Martin Hale*

095A Slaty-legged Crake *Rallina eurizonoides* 白喉斑秧雞

In April, up to six were at Yung Shue O between 4th and 17th, and singles were at Shuen Wan, Kadoorie ARC and Kadoorie FBG on 17th, Hok Tau on 28th, Tai Mei Tuk on 29th and 30th, and Ting Kok on 30th (RWL *et al.*). Subsequently, singles were at Lung Fu Shan, Pok Fu Lam on 5 May (MRL), Yung Shue O on 9 and 11 May (CHF,GJC), Kadoorie ARC on 4 June (MRL), and in the SSSI adjacent to Shek O Quarry on 18 June (GJC). All birds were identified by call. A comparison of sonograms with known Slaty-legged Crakes from Japan has confirmed the identity of birds calling in Hong Kong (Carey in prep.).

098A Baillon's Crake *Porzana pusilla* 小田雞

An adult was at Long Valley on 27 October (PJL).

099A Ruddy-breasted Crake *Porzana fusca* 紅胸田雞

There were two records in the early part of the year: singles were seen at Long Valley on 2 February and at Lok Ma Chau on 14 February. In the later part of the year, singles were noted at Wo Shang Wai on 24 and 25 October, Long Valley on 5 and 22 November and 12 December, and at Mai Po on 31 December. The probable presence of at least five different individuals during the year makes 1998 jointly with 1994 the best ever year for records of this species in Hong Kong.

101A White-breasted Waterhen *Amaurornis phoenicurus* 白胸苦惡鳥

Breeding occurred at Penfold Park and up to three were noted on several dates at Kowloon Park. Other records came from widespread sites in the NT, including Kau Sai Chau. The only report from Hong Kong Island was of a single at Cape d'Aguilar on 1 February.

102A Watercock *Gallicrex cinerea* 董雞

One was at San Tin on 3 June. Not recorded again until 22 September, when one was on Pond 20 at Mai Po. Thereafter, one was at Long Valley on 24 October, one was again seen at Mai Po on 5 November, and one was at Ngau Hom Sha on the rather late date of 18 November. All these records involved brown-plumaged birds, presumed to be females or immatures.

The reference in Carey *et al.* (2001) to one during 1-8 December 1998 is in error.

103A Common Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus* 黑水雞

Up to 15 were recorded at Kam Tin, Shuen Wan, Tsim Bei Tsui, Kau Sai Chau and Mai Po up to 30 May, with successful breeding noted at the latter site in early April. From 2 October reported from Tsim Bei Tsui, Tin Shui Wai, Mai Po, Long Valley, with concentrations of 29 at Tsim Bei Tsui on 20 December and 38 at Mai Po on 27 December.

104A Eurasian Coot *Fulica atra* 白骨頂

High counts in the early part of the year involved 660 at Tsim Bei Tsui on 17 January, 160 off the Mai Po boardwalk on 3 February and about 200 at Tsim Bei Tsui on 8 February. Two were regularly seen at Shuen Wan up to 17 February. Small numbers, perhaps eventually as few as two, were still present at Mai Po in late July, though there were no further reports until 18 October. By 10 November, numbers present off Tsim Bei Tsui had again grown to about 300, and 620 were counted there on 22 November. By 20 December, 762 were present at that location. One was also seen at Shuen Wan on 29 November.

105A Pheasant-tailed Jacana *Hydrophasianus chirurgus* 水雉

All records were in the autumn and all involved single birds, at San Tin on 19 September, Long Valley on 15 October and 5 November (both juveniles and thus perhaps the same bird), at Ngau Hom Sha on 21 October, at Tai O on 22 October and again at San Tin on 9 and 11 November (juvenile).

106A Greater Painted-snipe *Rostratula benghalensis* 彩鷸

Apart from three records of up to five birds at Wo Shang Wai from 25 October to 4 November, all records were from Long Valley and Kam Tin. At Kam Tin, a record of 15 on 25 January was the only one during the first winter period. A nest with three eggs was found at the same location on 18 April, and another with four eggs was found on 14 May. Also at Kam Tin, counts of 23 were made on 28 July and 4 September, though the highest count was of 30 on 15 December. At Long Valley one pair was recorded as being present between 6 and 18 April, though it is not clear if all records related to the same pair. There were no midsummer records from Long Valley, and the highest counts at this site in the remainder of the year were nine on 17 November and ten on 25 December.

107A Black-winged Stilt *Himantopus himantopus* 黑翅長腳鷸

One at Mai Po fish ponds on 16 March was the first record of the year, and subsequent spring passage numbers reached 28 on 5 April and 50 on 28 April. One on 23 May was the latest spring record. Autumn passage was first noted on 31 July, when six were at Fung Lok Wai. Numbers subsequently increased to 68 on 10 September, 124 on 19 September and 151 on 8 October. The highest count in the remainder of the year was 200 at Sam Po Shue on 5 December.

108A Pied Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta* 反嘴鷸

The highest count in the first part of the year was of 2045 birds on 26 January (PJL), a new high for Hong Kong. A total of 1054 were still present on 26 March, and numbers subsequently declined to 405 on 3 April, 281 on 12th, 191 on 21st, 112 on 1 May, 43 on 3rd, 33 on 12th, four on 23rd and, finally, two on 8 June (GJC), the latest on record in Hong Kong (contra Carey *et al.* 2001). The first of the second winter period was seen on 21 October, and numbers thereafter increased to 11 on 4 November, 170 on 22nd and 434 on 20 December. Three at Luk Keng on 6 December represented only the second record away from Deep Bay.

7 Greater Painted-snipe *Rostratula benghalensis*
Luk Keng, Hong Kong, 29 May 2001 *Martin Hale*

8 Black-winged Stilt *Himantopus himantopus*
Mai Po, Hong Kong, 29 October 2001 *Ho-fai Cheung*

109A Oriental Pratincole *Glareola maldivarum* 燕鴴

In what proved to be a mediocre spring for this species, one at Lut Chau on 16 February was the first evidence of spring passage. Subsequently, there were three records between 20 and 27 February, five records between 13 and 31 March, and 11 records in April, the latest being of four at Chek Lap Kok on 30th. In addition, one was at Kai Tak on 9 June and four were at Chek Lap Kok the following day. There were two autumn records: one at Lut Chau on 13 October,

and three at Mai Po two days later. All records were from the two airfields of Kai Tak and Chek Lap Kok or the Deep Bay area.

110A Northern Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus* 鳳頭麥雞

There were three spring records, all in March: two at Mai Po on 7th, one at Chek Lap Kok on 9th and one at Kai Tak on 23rd. In the second part of the year, four were at Chek Lap Kok from 31 October to 11 November, with five there on 19 November, and one was present at Long Valley from 23 November to 12 December.

111A Grey-headed Lapwing *Vanellus cinereus* 灰頭麥雞

In the first part of the year, wintering birds were recorded at Kam Tin, where 18 on 25 January was the highest count, and Tsim Bei Tsui, where one was present. At Kam Tin, numbers declined to six on 24 March and three on 18 April. Elsewhere, the only spring migrant noted was at Chek Lap Kok on 30 April. The record of five on 4 September at Kam Tin (PJL) is the earliest in autumn in Hong Kong. These were presumably passage migrants, as the next record there concerned seven on 23 October; subsequently, numbers peaked at 16 on 20 December. Elsewhere, a passage migrant was at Mai Po on 19 and 20 October, with possibly the same bird present on 6 November. Other records comprised one on 14 November at Long Valley, one on the Kam Tin river at Ko Po Tsuen on 3 December and one at Tsim Bei Tsui on 5 December.

112A Pacific Golden Plover *Pluvialis fulva* 太平洋金斑鴴

The highest count in the first winter period was of 100 in both the January and February waterbird counts. Spring passage was first noted on 22 March, when 121 were counted, and numbers rose to 200 six days later. Subsequently, numbers increased to 247 on 13 April and 269 on 19 April. There were no three-figure counts after 28 April, with numbers falling to 50 on 1 May, four on 12th and, finally, one on 23 May. The only summer record concerned three on 12 July. Autumn passage was noted from 19 August when 32 were present, and numbers peaked at 49 during the period from 25 August to 10 September. Wintering birds seem to have first been noted on 19 September when 124 were recorded. Away from the Deep Bay area, up to five were recorded on three occasions at Chek Lap Kok between 24 March and 30 April, two were at Long Valley on 14 April and one was at Shuen Wan on 24 April.

113A Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola* 灰斑鴴

Deep Bay waterbird counts in the first part of the year recorded totals of 557 in January, 300 in February and 99 in March. Numbers declined to 29 by 4 April, 19 on 25 April, 13 on 23 May, with a summering population thereafter of up to four birds; it appears that one of these remained until 8 August. Autumn migrants were first recorded on 19 September, when two were present, and numbers subsequently increased to 26 on 22 October, 60 in the November waterbird count and 250 on 5 December. Away from Deep Bay, 27 were at Starling Inlet on 6 March, with eight on 3 April and two on 4 May. One bird remained there during

June and July, and a single bird was recorded on 29 August and 19 December.

114A Common Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula* 劍鴴

An adult was seen from the boardwalk at Mai Po on 2 and 26 February, 1 and 2 March and 13 and14 March (GJC,PJL,VBP). What was possibly the same bird returning was seen on 22 and 23 October (GJC,YYT).

115A Long-billed Plover *Charadrius placidus* 長嘴鴴

One at Pak Nai on 30 January (MLC) constitutes the second record for Hong Kong (plate 9).

9 Long-billed Plover *Charadrius placidus*
Pak Nai, Hong Kong, 30 January 1998 Mike Chalmers

116A Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius* 金眶鴴(黑領鴴)

Totals recorded in the Deep Bay area waterbird counts were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
67	190	2	nc	nc	4	19	3	68	76	69	188

Away from Deep Bay, three to five pairs bred at Chek Lap Kok, and it was also recorded at Kam Tin (peak count 42 on 23 October), Kau Sai Chau (two birds on three dates in March, June and October), Long Valley (peak count seven on 4 December), and Shuen Wan (peak count 51 on 2 February).

117A Kentish Plover *Charadrius alexandrinus* 環頸鴴

Deep Bay waterbird counts in the first part of the year recorded totals of 1800 in January, 1140 in February and 1000 in March; however, the peak count

was 4000 on 5 February (RWL), equalling the highest ever previous count in Hong Kong, which was made in the waterbird count of 12 and 13 December 1992. After the March count, numbers declined to 540 on 26 March, 170 on 2 April and 32 on 4 April; no more than 19 were recorded during the rest of the month. Up to three birds were then recorded up to 17 May. In the second part of the year, the earliest record was at Chek Lap Kok on 4 September when four were present, while in Deep Bay the earliest record was on 17 September. Numbers in Deep Bay increased to 679 on 19 October, 1500 on 4 November and 2504 in the December waterbird count. Away from Deep Bay, up to 72 were recorded in the first winter period at Chek Lap Kok, while the second winter period brought a peak count of 200 on 11 November. At Shuen Wan up to 46 were recorded in the first part of the year, with 20 in the second part.

118A Lesser Sand Plover *Charadrius mongolus* 蒙古沙鴴

Deep Bay waterbird counts in the first part of the year recorded 12 in January, one in February and two in March, while 30 were recorded on 1 March. Spring passage was evident from at least 26 March when eight were present, and numbers increased to 25 on 3 April, 136 on 20 April and 156 on 23 April. A second influx in May peaked at 47 on 23rd, and the final record of the spring involved eight on 8 June. A record of three on 19 August was the first of the autumn, and numbers peaked at eight on 19 September. The final record of the year was of 20 on 22 October, birds which were probably winter visitors.

119A Greater Sand Plover *Charadrius leschenaultii* 鐵嘴沙鴴

The first spring record was of nine birds in Deep Bay on 14 March. Numbers in Deep Bay subsequently built up to 540 on 26 March and 1040 on 3 April, declining thereafter to 270 on 18 April, and 48 on 28 April. A second influx brought a peak of 120 on 10 May. After 38 on 8 June, the only summer record was of five on 28 June. Return passage was noted from 21 July, and numbers peaked at 99 on 8 August, two on 19 September being the final record of the autumn in Deep Bay. Away from Deep Bay, two were at Chek Lap Kok on 24 March, with five there on 29 April, six on 30 April, and two on 14 October, the latest record of the year. Also, three were noted over the sea south of Hong Kong on 21 April.

120A Oriental Plover *Charadrius veredus* 紅胸鴴

The only records were from Chek Lap Kok: three on 31 March and one on 14 September.

121A Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa* 黑尾塍鷸

The maximum Deep Bay count in the first winter period was 316, made during the February waterbird count. In what was a relatively weak spring passage for this species, the peak count was 361 on 13 April. Numbers subsequently fell to 46 on 4 May, after which no more than nine were recorded during the rest of that month, though at least three birds appear to have remained in Deep Bay during the summer. Autumn passage was weak for much of August,

with no more than nine birds recorded on any date up to 25th, when 30 were noted. This appears to have marked the arrival of the first birds of the wintering flock, as there was then a gradual increase in numbers to 258 on 22 October. The November waterbird count recorded 291, and the December count 250. All records were from the Deep Bay area.

122A Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica* 斑尾塍鷸

One on 31 January was the only record received for the first winter period. The first spring record occurred on 21 March, with numbers subsequently increasing to 11 on 4 April, and the peak spring count of 42 (of which four bore yellow leg flags from northwest Australia) was made on 10 April. What was presumably another influx was noted on 19 April when 33 were recorded. Single-figure counts only were made after 18 April, with up to five present towards the end of the month and up to two from 2 to 4 May. One on 8 June was the final spring record. Autumn passage brought up to seven birds from 6 to 24 September, and what was presumably a wintering bird was present on 6 November. One at Starling Inlet on 20 April was the only report away from the Deep Bay area for the year, and only the seventh ever.

123A Little Curlew *Numenius minutus* 小杓鷸

There were two records during the year, both in October: one at Mai Po on 3rd and one at Chek Lap Kok on 24th and 29th (GJC). The latter is the latest on record in Hong Kong.

124A Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus* 中杓鷸

First recorded on 13 April. By 20 April, 90 were present, though numbers fell to 20 by the end of the month. There then appears to have been another influx in early May, with 37 present on 2nd; after 4th, no more than six were recorded, with the final record being on 30 May. In addition, a flock of 65 were seen over the sea in southern waters on 21 April. First noted in autumn on 19 August when 34 were present; numbers peaked at 135 on 6 September. A count of 104 was made on 24 September, but thereafter numbers present declined to 64 on 10 October and the final record of four on 22 October. One at Long Valley on 3 September was the first for that locality. All records bar the two exceptions mentioned were from the Deep Bay area.

125A Eurasian Curlew *Numenius arquata* 白腰杓鷸

Deep Bay waterbird counts in the first part of the year recorded totals of 602 in January, 540 in February and 128 in March. By the end of March only single-figure counts were being made, with as few as eight in April and three in May. Two birds appear to have over-summered, and autumn passage was first noted on 21 July when seven were present. Numbers subsequently increased very gradually to 20 by the end of August and 57 on 19 September, with, apparently, a slight fall in numbers in late October. The November and December waterbird counts recorded 88 and 103 respectively.

126A Far Eastern Curlew *Numenius madagascariensis* **N** 紅腰杓鷸

The first winter period saw one bird present up to 1 March. Spring passage was noted from 23 when three were recorded; a count of seven on 21 April was the only subsequent higher one. Early May brought another small influx of four birds, and three on 8 May were the last of the spring. Autumn passage comprised one bird which was present from 10 to 19 September. All records were from the Deep Bay area, though the September bird was recorded foraging near Pak Nai and Nim Wan.

127A Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus* 鶴鷸

Deep Bay waterbird counts in the first part of the year produced totals of 550 in January, 370 in February and 1354 in March. The highest spring count was 1630 on 21 March, and most counts during the first three weeks of April were over 1100. Numbers appear to have fallen in the last days of April, but then seem to have increased in early May, the peak count at that time being 1023 on 4th. Another fall in numbers then occurred, with 464 on 10 May, 18 on 16th and ten on 17th, the final record of the spring. One on 21 July was the first record in the second part of the year, but no more than two were recorded until 10 September when five were present. Numbers remained low, with no more than 31 recorded up to 4 November when 105 were noted. However, subsequently numbers increased to 126 during the November waterbird count and 200 on 27 December. The only records away from the Deep Bay area both came from Long Valley: one on 12 January and two on 22 November.

128A Common Redshank *Tringa totanus* 紅腳鷸

Deep Bay waterbird counts in the first part of the year recorded totals of 135 in January, five in February and 93 in March. Numbers in Deep Bay then increased from 180 on 27 March to 636 on 3 April, 1391 on 13 April and a peak of 1490 on 28 April. Subsequently, they declined fairly rapidly, though 475 remained in the middle of May. Lowest numbers, as usual, occurred in June, with no more than eight recorded in that month. In July, 117 were counted on 12th and a peak count of 684 was made on 26th. Thereafter numbers gradually declined, with approximately 145 remaining throughout much of September and into early October, 75 present during the November waterbird count and only two recorded in the December count. Away from Deep Bay, singles were recorded at Chek Lap Kok on 27 February, 30 March and 14 April, and at Shuen Wan on 2 and 10 August; in addition, at Starling Inlet, there were two on 3 June, seven on 18 July and one on 16 August.

129A Marsh Sandpiper *Tringa stagnatilis* 澤鷸

Deep Bay waterbird counts in the first part of the year recorded totals of 750 in January and 910 in March. Spring passage peaked at 1360 on 26 March, with up to 1110 also present during the first ten days of April. Numbers then fell rapidly during the next ten days, and 180 remained on 22nd; thereafter, no more than 40 were recorded up to 4 May. During the rest of May, no more than three were recorded, and the final spring record occurred on 30 May. The first record in

the second part of the year occurred on 12 July, and numbers then gradually increased to 181 on 10 September, and then to 735 on 8 October.

130A Common Greenshank *Tringa nebularia* 青腳鷸

Deep Bay waterbird counts in the first part of the year produced totals of 130 in January, 210 in February and 367 in March, and a similar number remained until mid April. Thereafter, 587 were counted on 17 April and 637 on 4 May, the highest count of the spring. The second half of May saw no more than 74 present, and up to 27 remained during the summer. Autumn numbers increased to 342 on 8 August and 600 on 2 September, and peaked at 1269 on 19 September (GJC), the highest ever autumn count in Hong Kong. A total of 1185 remained on 8 October, but numbers subsequently declined to 387 on 19 October, 120 during the November waterbird count and 50 in the December count. Away from the Deep Bay area, one was at Chek Lap Kok on 30 April, two were at Long Valley on 22 November, with one on several subsequent dates to 11 December, one was at Starling Inlet on 4 February and up to two were at Shuen Wan between 19 and 28 April.

131A Nordmann's Greenshank *Tringa guttifer* **EN** 小青腳鷸

The first spring record was of three on 27 March, and the spring peak was seven on 4 April. During the rest of April no more than four were recorded, and the usual early to mid May influx of first-summer birds failed to materialise, the only record that month being of four birds on 30th and 31st. One on 14 June was the final record of the year. A very poor year for this species, the poorest indeed since its field characters became better known in the late 1980s.

133A Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus* 白腰草鷸

Totals recorded in the Deep Bay area waterbird counts were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
15	14	12	nc	nc	-	2	8	4	8	13	41

Away from the Deep Bay area, recorded at Kam Tin (max. five), Kau Sai Chau (one bird), Long Valley (max. six), Nam Chung (one bird) and Starling Inlet (max. two).

134A Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola* 林鷸

The highest Deep Bay area counts each month were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
8	9	19	250	2	-	4	355	1221	345	35	31

The count of 1221 occurred on 10 September (GJC) and is the highest ever count in Hong Kong. Away from the Deep Bay area, reported from Chek Lap Kok (singles between 26 February and 15 April), Kam Tin (max. 80 on 10

September), Kau Sai Chau (one on 28 March), Long Valley (up to 35 in February, and up to 60 in the second part of the year), and Shuen Wan (up to five from 16 March to 28 April, and one on 10 August).

10 Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola*
Long Valley, Hong Kong, 11 November 2000 *Kar-man Lo*

135A Terek Sandpiper *Xenus cinereus* 翹嘴鷸

Three on 21 March was the first record of the spring, only one day later than the earliest ever. During April, influxes resulted in 15 being present in the first few days of that month, as well as 53 on 10th, and 438 on 24th. In May, 291, presumably including many first-summer birds, were noted on 23rd. Up to 54 birds were recorded during midsummer, with these birds possibly remaining to the end of July. Autumn passage peaked at 51 on 6 September, and one on 4 November was the last of the year. Singles on fish ponds at Fung Lok Wai on 20 April and Lut Chau on 12 May were unusual. Away from the Deep Bay area, there were two at Starling Inlet on 6 April, three noted on 3 May, five on 3 June and one on 31 July. The latter represents only the fourth autumn record away from the Deep Bay area.

136A Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos* 磯鷸

Totals recorded in the Deep Bay area waterbird counts were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
27	25	30	nc	nc	3	36	21	41	28	39	79

As usual this species was also reported from many widespread sites throughout Hong Kong: these sites included Chek Lap Kok, The Brothers, Dong Ping Chau and Star Ferry, Central.

137A Grey-tailed Tattler *Heteroscelus brevipes* 灰尾鷸

In Deep Bay the first record of the year was of seven birds on 20 April, slightly later than usual. A second influx brought 22 on 27 April, and a further one saw 39 present on 2 May. Numbers increased to 55 on 10 May, and peaked at 90 on 23 May. Three on 28 June were the last of the spring. Return passage was first noted on 16 August, when one was present at Starling Inlet; six were noted there on 29 August. There were only two autumn records in Deep Bay: six on 6 September and one four days later on 10th.

138A Ruddy Turnstone *Arenaria interpres* 翻石鷸

First reported on 4 April, when two were noted at Mai Po. Numbers subsequently increased to peak at 44 on 23 April, and declined to no more than five during the first two days of May. There then appears to have been a second influx, as 45 were recorded on 8 May, though it is possible that this included at least some of the birds counted on 23 April. The latest spring record concerned 12 on 23 May. There were no records during the remainder of the year.

139A Red-necked Phalarope *Phalaropus lobatus* 紅頸瓣蹼鷸

Apart from one off Lut Chau on 2 March, spring passage occurred from 19 March to 4 May, though only very small numbers were recorded, and the peak Deep Bay count was six on 5 April, while in sea areas the peak counts were a mere five, with this number counted north of Lantau on 19 March and in southern waters on 21 April. There were no autumn reports.

141A Eurasian Woodcock *Scolopax rusticola* 丘鷸

A total of 22 records were received for the periods up to 28 March and from 16 October to the year end at the following localities (single birds, unless stated): Chau Tau (one on 28 December), Cloudy Hill (up to two between 16 and 27 October, and up to seven between 25 November and 26 December), Fung Luk Yuen (27 November), Fung Yuen (28 January), Kam Tin (23 October), Lam Tsuen (10 January), Ma On Shan Village (28 March), Ming Tak Court, near Sheung Shui (28 November), Mount Davis (24 February), Ngong Ping (4 January), Robin's Nest (1 November), Tai Mo Shan (23 February) and Tai Po Kau (11 January, 1 February). The peak count of seven at Cloudy Hill on 25 November (JGH, MH) is a new high for Hong Kong.

[142A/143A Pintail/Swinhoe's Snipe
Gallinago stenura/megala 針尾 / 大沙錐

Due to serious and hitherto underestimated difficulties in the field identification of these two species, arising out of very considerable overlap in plumage and structure (Leader and Carey in prep.), the Records Committee has decided that it is at present unwise to rely on the previously widely accepted field identification characters. Consequently, apart from trapped birds, for the time being all records of these two species will be regarded as 'either/or'.

Winter records of singles at Mui Wo, Penfold Park and Long Valley, and of ten at Lok Ma Chau, all during January and February, are presumed to refer

mainly or entirely to Pintail Snipe, as only one Swinhoe's has ever been trapped at this time. The specific identity of the birds involved in subsequent spring records up to 30 April is far less certain, however; in any event, the peak count was 30 at Long Valley on 14 April. In autumn - when trapping data similarly suggest either species could be involved - the first record was of six at Long Valley on 22 August, and numbers subsequently increased in September to 50 on 3rd and 79 on 14th. The only subsequent double-figure counts concerned 20 on 5 October and 15 on 15 October, and the final record of the year occurred on 5 December. Away from localities already mentioned and low-lying areas of the northern NT, snipe of one of these two species were also recorded at Chek Lap Kok, Penfold Park and the Hong Kong Sports Institute, Sha Tin.]

144A Common Snipe *Gallinago gallinago* 扇尾沙錐

Wintering birds were reported from Mui Wo, Lok Ma Chau and Long Valley, with the highest count being 13 at the latter locality on 26 February. Passage birds appear to have been present from 13 March, with the peak counts being eight at Long Valley on 14 April and seven at Mai Po on 25 April. The latest spring record was of two at Luk Keng on 6 May. The first autumn record was of one at Mai Po on 19 August (GJC), a new early date for Hong Kong. No more than six were recorded at any one site until 14 October, when 20 were present at Long Valley. There were no higher autumn counts, and a count of 35 at Long Valley on 5 December, the highest in the second winter period, is presumed to have involved wintering birds. Long Valley was the favoured site for much of the year, with other low-lying marshy areas also frequented in winter. During passage, a significant increase in the number of records in fish pond areas occurred.

145A Long-billed Dowitcher *Limnodromus scolopaceus* 長嘴半蹼鷸

One was at Mai Po from 4 to 17 April (GJC, PJL). This is the fourth Hong Kong record.

146A Asian Dowitcher *Limnodromus semipalmatus* **N** 半蹼鷸

Noted in spring from 1 April to 12 May, with numbers building up gradually from one on the former date to 25 on 17 April and 137 on 22 April; thereafter numbers fell to 52 on 28 April, three on 4 May and three on 12 May, the final record of the spring. The first autumn record came on 26 July; however, only low numbers ensued, with no more than two juveniles recorded on any date up to 25 August. The only record subsequent to that was of a non-juvenile on 19 September.

147A Red Knot *Calidris canutus* 紅腹濱鷸

A single wintering bird was reported on two occasions in the first winter period up to 28 February. Northward passage was reported from 2 April to 3 June. Up to 18 April, there were only three records of up to six birds, though 15 were noted on 19 April. Subsequently, until 3 May, all records were of up to five birds. Numbers then increased to 27 on 4 May and 47 on 10 May, the peak spring count. Recorded in autumn from 25 August to 19 October, with the highest counts being six on 6 September and five on 10 October.

148A Great Knot *Calidris tenuirostris* 大濱鷸

Up to three wintering birds appear to have remained to 16 March, with passage birds first recorded on 21 March. Spring numbers peaked at 182 on 4 April, falling to 72 on 9 April. Further influxes brought 42 on 20 April and 14 on 16 May, with the final spring record of three on 8 June. Southward passage was noted from 2 September to 19 October, with the peak count being 54 on 19 September. The second winter period saw up to four birds present from 5 December.

149A Sanderling *Calidris alba* 三趾濱鷸

The first spring record was of three on 3 April, and numbers increased to six on 13 April, with five noted on 19 and 20 April and seven on 8 May. One on 31 May was the latest spring record. In autumn, one was present from 22 to 24 October, and two were noted on 20 November; this was just one day earlier than the latest on record in Hong Kong.

150A Red-necked Stint *Calidris ruficollis* 紅胸濱鷸

Up to 49 - the highest ever winter count, made on 21 January - were present in the first winter period, and passage birds were noted in spring from at least 16 March. Subsequent higher spring counts included 920 on 3 April, 2134 on 20 April (GJC, PJL, RWL - a new high for Hong Kong) and 600 on 10 May. The last three-figure count was 330 on 16 May, and the last of the spring was a single bird noted on 8 June. Thirty-four on 8 August were the first of the autumn; this proved to be the highest count of the early autumn period, though subsequent counts included 19 on 25 August and 20 on 19 September. A count of 70 made on 22 October could have involved late migrants or winter visitors, but a record of just five on 6 November was followed by a count of only one during the December waterbird count. Records away from the Deep Bay area were as follows (all singles unless stated): at Chek Lap Kok on 23 March, 15 April and 30 April (three birds), Shuen Wan on 19 April and 28 April (nine birds), Starling Inlet on 4 May (three birds), and Long Valley on 12 September.

151A Little Stint *Calidris minuta* 小濱鷸

All records were from Mai Po and all fell in a seven-day period between 19 and 25 April; three were present on 20th and one or two on four other dates.

152A Temminck's Stint *Calidris temminckii* 青腳濱鷸

Deep Bay waterbird counts in the first part of the year recorded totals of 47 in January, 41 in February and one in March. Five on the intertidal mudflats at Mai Po on 1 March was an unusual record of a species that in Hong Kong is almost exclusively found in drained fish ponds or within Mai Po Nature Reserve. Spring passage numbers were, as usual, lower than wintering numbers, with 16 at Mai Po on 13 April being the highest count. Two at Lin Barn Tsuen on 14 April were the last of the spring. The first of the autumn were two at Mai Po on 19 September. Subsequently, there were six more records up to the end of the year, with 11 at Tsim Bei Tsui on 15 December being the highest count. Four at Starling Inlet on 6 April represented the only record away from the Deep Bay area.

153A Long-toed Stint *Calidris subminuta* 長趾濱鷸

The highest count in the first winter period was only five, on 21 February. Passage birds were noted from 11 April to 23 May, with 28 on 14 April, 55 on 20 April and 18 on 25 April being the highest counts. The first autumn passage birds were noted on 25 July, and the highest counts were 11 on 5 and 8 August, and ten on 10 October. After one was recorded on 19 October, one seen during the December waterbird count was the only subsequent record. Away from the Deep Bay area, there was one at Chek Lap Kok on 15 April and up to six on 29 and 30 April, one at Long Valley on 19 September, and four at Shuen Wan on 19 April, with two there on 12 April and three on 28 April.

154A Pectoral Sandpiper *Calidris melanotos* 斑胸濱鷸

One was at Mai Po on 11 and 18 April (GJC,PJL,RWL).

155A Sharp-tailed Sandpiper *Calidris acuminata* 尖尾濱鷸

The first of the spring was on 22 March. Subsequently numbers increased to 25 on 2 April, 38 on 11 April and 41 on 27 April, while a further influx in May peaked at 87 on 12 May. Two on 30 May were the last of the spring. There were two autumn records: nine on 6 September (GJC) and one on 10 October, with the former constituting the highest autumn count in Hong Kong. One at Shuen Wan on 31 March was the only record away from the Deep Bay area.

156A Dunlin *Calidris alpina* 黑腹濱鷸

Deep Bay waterbird counts in the first part of the year produced totals of 2950 in January, 905 in February and five in March. Subsequently, up to two birds were recorded up to 9 April, and singles were noted from 23 to 27 April and from 7 to 10 May. The first of the autumn was noted on 19 September. Up to 28 birds were recorded thereafter, until numbers increased more significantly to 221 on 19 October and 600 on 4 November. The December waterbird count recorded a total of 2391 birds. All records were from the Deep Bay area.

157A Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea* 彎嘴濱鷸

Two birds were recorded in the first winter period, with northward migration noted from 13 March. Numbers subsequently increased to 2501 on 14 April and 5152 on 20th; 5148 were still present on 25th. Thereafter, numbers fell; there were 2458 on 1 May, 1105 on 3 May, 592 on 10 May, 73 on 23 May and 35 on 8 June. One bird was recorded on 28 June, but what was apparently the first autumn migrant occurred on 26 July. Southward passage peaked at 20 on 19 August, with the final early autumn record being ten on 10 September. There was only one subsequent record: one on 18 October. All records were from Mai Po.

158A Spoon-billed Sandpiper *Eurynorhynchus pygmeus* **VU** 勺嘴鷸

Twelve birds, rather more than in recent years, appear to have passed through on northward migration between 29 March and 17 May. One was recorded from 29 March to 2 April, up to two were present between 9 and 14 April, seven individuals occurred between 21 and 27 April, and further birds

occurred from 8 to 10 May and 12 to 17 May. The only other record concerned a juvenile present from 22 to 24 October. All records were from Mai Po.

159A Broad-billed Sandpiper *Limicola falcinellus* 闊嘴鷸

One bird was recorded on a number of dates up to the end of February. In early March up to four were noted, and six were present on 16 March. Northward migration began in earnest on 26 March when 20 were recorded. Subsequently, influxes brought 62 on 2 April, 128 on 20 April and 35 on 8 May. Three on 8 June marked the end of the spring passage. Return passage was noted from 25 August, with numbers peaking at 20 on 10 September. The final record of the year was on 6 November, when three were noted. All records were from Mai Po.

160A Ruff *Philomachus pugnax* 流蘇鷸

In the first part of the year, singles were recorded on 20 February, from 17 to 28 March (a male), and from 15 to 25 April. In autumn, a juvenile male was present on 10 and 12 September, and singles were recorded on 19 October and on 3 and 4 November. All records were from Mai Po.

161A Pomarine Jaeger *Stercorarius pomarinus* 中賊鷗

A total of 47 were seen from Cape D'Aguilar during the close approach of Typhoon Babs on 26 October (PJL, MRL). This is the fourth Hong Kong record.

162A Long-tailed Jaeger *Stercorarius longicaudus* 長尾賊鷗

A total of 26 were seen south of Cheung Chau on 21 April (GJC, PJL, VBP), and 37 were seen from Cape D'Aguilar during the close approach of Typhoon Babs on 26 October (PJL, MRL).

[Skua sp. *Stercorarius longicaudus/parasiticus/pomarinus*

A total of 93 were seen from Cape D'Aguilar during the close approach of Typhoon Babs on 26 October (PJL, MRL).]

163A Black-tailed Gull *Larus crassirostris* 黑尾鷗

In the first winter period recorded from the Mai Po boardwalk between 22 January and 26 March, with generally one to three birds noted in a day. However, nine were noted on 20 February. An adult at sea north of Lantau on 5 March was the only record away from the Deep Bay area. There were no records in the second winter period.

164A Mew Gull *Larus canus* 海鷗

A first-winter of the taxon *kamschatschensis* was seen in front of the boardwalk at Mai Po from 21 January to 3 February, and also on 26 February (GJC, MRL, AB). Documentation supporting the earlier dates was not processed in time for inclusion in Carey *et al.* (2001).

165A Heuglin's Gull *Larus heuglini* 烏灰銀鷗

Numbers in the first winter period peaked at 470 on 5 February. The

latest three-figure count was of 108 on 5 March, and numbers subsequently declined to 86 on 14 March, 77 on 22 March, 33 on 26 March and two on 1 April. The only subsequent spring record was of a first-winter on 24 April. In the second part of the year, first noted on 22 November; the highest count in this period was ten on 5 December. All records were from the Deep Bay area or the sea north of Lantau.

166A Yellow-legged Gull *Larus cachinnans* 黃腳銀鷗

In the first winter period noted between 22 January and 31 March. Though the true figure which occurred is likely to be higher, at least 13 different individuals were recorded, comprising four first-winters, one second-year and eight adults. The highest counts occurred during February, with the highest day count being eight adults on 16 February.

167A Slaty-backed Gull *Larus schistisagus* 灰背鷗

Recorded between 21 January and 3 March, with six on the first date representing the highest ever count in Hong Kong (GJC). Most occurred between 21 January and 5 February, with only three records subsequent to the latter date.

170A Pallas's Gull *Larus ichthyaetus* 魚鷗

An adult was seen from the boardwalk at Mai Po on 21 January.

171A Brown-headed Gull *Larus brunnicephalus* 棕頭鷗

An adult was seen from the boardwalk at Mai Po on 16 February.

173A Black-headed Gull *Larus ridibundus* 紅嘴鷗

Deep Bay waterbird counts in the first part of the year produced totals of 12,265 in January, 10,394 in February and 259 in March. Subsequently, two first years and an adult were recorded there from 27 March to 4 April, and the last of the spring was a breeding plumage adult seen on 12 April. First recorded in the second part of the year on 20 September, though not again until 22 October. Thereafter, there were counts of 117 on 6 November, 1516 in the November waterbird count and 8248 in the December waterbird count. Away from the Deep Bay area, up to 240 were recorded at sea north of Lantau between 27 January and 19 March, up to 30 were noted at Shuen Wan during the first winter period and 21 were at Starling Inlet on 14 January. It is likely that these figures for the northeast NT do not fully reflect the true numbers present in such coastal areas.

176A Saunders's Gull *Larus saundersi* **VU** 黑嘴鷗

In the first winter period, numbers peaked at 91 on 3 February, subsequently falling to 78 on 21 February, 56 on 4 March, 21 on 13 March, seven on 20 March and, finally, two on 4 April. First recorded in the second winter period on 6 November, with the highest count in that period being 48 on 5 December. All records were from Deep Bay.

11 Saunders's Gull *Larus saundersi*
Mai Po Boardwalk, Hong Kong, March 1998 *Martin Hale*

178A Whiskered Tern *Chlidonias hybridus* 鬚浮鷗

In a very poor year for this species there were only six records: two on 1 April, three on 23 April, one on 28 April, nine on 8 June, 12 on 15 September and one, a juvenile, on 20 October. All records were from the Deep Bay area.

179A White-winged Tern *Chlidonias leucopterus* 白翅浮鷗

As with *C. hybridus*, this was a very poor year, with only four records: 80 at Long Valley on 15 May, two at Mai Po on 17 May, 11 at Mai Po on 21 May, and a juvenile at Luk Keng on 28 October.

In addition, an unidentified marsh tern *Chlidonias* was at Tap Mun on 20 June.

180A Gull-billed Tern *Sterna nilotica* 鷗嘴噪鷗

Recorded in spring from 27 March to 8 June. Numbers in Deep Bay peaked at the relatively low figure of 48 on 21 April, with 44 present on 13 April. Further influxes brought 25 birds on 28 April and 23 birds on 4 May. Five on 8 June were the last of the spring, while twenty in Mirs Bay on 13 April represented the only record away from Deep Bay.

181A Caspian Tern *Sterna caspia* 紅嘴巨鷗

First recorded in spring on 19 March. Numbers peaked at the relatively low figure of 22 on the relatively early date of 27 March. Sixteen on 4 April was the last double-figure count of the spring and indeed the year, and after the middle of April no more than three birds were recorded up to the final spring record on 26 May. Autumn brought only two records: singles on 6, 22 and 23 November. Apart from three at Starling Inlet on 14 May, all records were from the Deep Bay area.

182A Common Tern *Sterna hirundo* 普通燕鷗

A single bird of the taxon *longipennis* seen from the boardwalk at Mai Po on the relatively early date of 4 April was one of only two spring records, the other involving 18 birds seen in southern waters on 21 April; these latter birds were mainly of one of the red-billed taxa, either *tibetana* or *minussensis*. The only other records for the year were of one between Tap Mun and Wong Shek on 20 and 27 June and 121 seen from Cape D'Aguilar during Typhoon Babs on 26 October. Due to age or viewing conditions, these birds were not assigned to any taxon.

183A Roseate Tern *Sterna dougallii* 粉紅燕鷗

Recorded at or near the Mirs Bay breeding area between 20 June and 15 August, with the peak count being 130 near Shek Ngau Chau on 21 July (RWL); this is a new high count for Hong Kong, not specifically noted in Carey *et al.* (2001). On 16 July, 17 fledged juveniles were counted there.

184A Black-naped Tern *Sterna sumatrana* 黑枕燕鷗

First noted on 21 April when eight were seen in southern waters. Subsequently, the only records were from the Mirs Bay breeding areas between 13 June and 2 September. The highest count was 104 on 27 June, and 100 were present on 16 July. Six juveniles were noted twice, on 16 July and 15 August.

185A Aleutian Tern *Sterna aleutica* 白腰燕鷗

Seven were present in southern waters on 21 April, and two were in Mirs Bay on 2 September.

186A Bridled Tern *Sterna anaethetus* 褐翅燕鷗

All records were from the Mirs Bay breeding areas between 1 July and 2 September. The highest counts were 300 on 2 September, 250 on 15 August and 220-250 on 21 July. Only one fledged juvenile was reported. The lack of tropical storms in Hong Kong during the autumn passage period of this species is reflected in the concentration of records in Mirs Bay in July and August.

188A Little Tern *Sterna albifrons* 白額燕鷗

Only recorded in spring, between 27 March and 8 June. Up to seven were present in Deep Bay up to 5 April, and these were followed by two on 23 and 24 April, three on 8 May and three on 8 June. Away from Deep Bay, one was seen in southern waters on 21 April.

189A Greater Crested *Tern Sterna bergii* 大鳳頭燕鷗

One was south of Cheung Chau on 21 April (PJL, GJC, VBP).

191D Rock Dove *Columba livia* 原鴿

No significant reports.

192A Oriental Turtle Dove *Streptopelia orientalis* 山斑鳩

Recorded in the first winter period from widespread localities, mainly in the NT and on Hong Kong Island, the highest count being 75 at Liu Pok on 15 January. Of note were seven at Chek Lap Kok on 10 June and three there on 11th (GJC), by one day the latest spring date for this species. Following one at Mai Po on 24 August, the first of the autumn, there were no further reports until 1 October when single birds were noted at Kam Tin and Mong Tseng. Subsequently, birds were reported from widespread parts of the NT to the end of the year, the highest count being 90 at Lai Chi Wo on 1 December.

193A Red Turtle Dove *Streptopelia tranquebarica* 火斑鳩

In the early part of the year, the over-wintering flock noted in the latter part of 1997 remained at Mong Tseng: up to 60 were present throughout January and there were still 22 on 24 February and 24 on 4 April, the final date on which it was recorded in spring. Up to five at Mai Po between 2 and 22 March were the only other records in the first winter period. Eight at Mong Tseng on 19 September were the first of the autumn. Subsequently, flocks of 40 and 30 were noted there on 1 and 27 October respectively. Elsewhere, single birds were at Kowloon Park, Penfold Park, Wu Kau Tang and Chek Lap Kok between 19 September and 15 October, and ten were at Mai Po on 19 December.

194A Spotted Dove *Streptopelia chinensis* 珠頸斑鳩

No significant reports.

195A Barred Cuckoo Dove *Macropygia unchall* 斑尾鵑鳩

One was at Cape D'Aguilar on 5 May (MRL). This is the third Hong Kong record, and the first since 1989. The pattern of occurrence in southern China supports the validity of this spring record.

196A Emerald Dove *Chalcophaps indica* 綠背金鳩

In a good year, recorded in most months and at 16 localities, mainly in the central and eastern NT. Apart from two at Hok Tau on 10 May and 15 November, all records were of single birds. New localities for this species were Fanling Golf Course, Lai Tau Shek, Shan Mei Au and Kau Sai Chau.

199D Yellow-crested Cockatoo *Cacatua sulphurea* **C** 小葵花鳳頭鸚鵡

Birds from the feral population were reported from Happy Valley, Hong Kong Park and Pak Nai.

200D Rose-ringed Parakeet *Psittacula krameri* 紅領綠鸚鵡

Birds from the feral population were reported from Long Valley, Penfold Park, Kowloon Park and Ocean Park.

201A Chestnut-winged Cuckoo *Clamator coromandus* 紅翅鳳頭鵑

Following one singing at Shuen Wan on 25 March, up to two birds were recorded at a total of 19 sites, mainly in the eastern and central NT, up to 21 June,

with peak numbers between 26 April and 5 May. The pattern and distribution of sightings indicate the presence of long-staying birds at only three localities: Tai Po Kau (up to two from 2 April to 21 June, including a juvenile on 27 May), Kadoorie ARC (one from 10 April to 4 June) and Fanling Golf Course (up to two from 4 to 20 May).

202A Large Hawk Cuckoo *Hierococcyx sparverioides* 鷹鵑

One near Kwai Chung on 4 March was the first of the spring. Subsequently up to three were recorded at approximately 40 localities, mainly in the eastern and central NT, up to 2 July. Records included apparently long-staying birds at or near Long Valley, Fanling Golf Course, the Starling Inlet area, Plover Cove, Tai Mei Tuk, Ting Kok, Shuen Wan, Sha Lo Tung, Yung Shue O, Kadoorie ARC, Kadoorie FBG, Shing Mun CP, Fo Tan, the Chinese University campus, Tai Po Kau and Chai Wan.

203A Hodgson's Hawk Cuckoo *Hierococcyx fugax* 棕腹杜鵑

A first-summer male of the race *nisicolor* was at Hok Tau from 27 to 29 April and on 6 May (RWL *et al.*). This is the eighth Hong Kong record.

204A Indian Cuckoo *Cuculus micropterus* 四聲杜鵑

Recorded between 9 April and 23 June, when single birds were singing at Mai Po village and Fanling Golf Course respectively. Most reports referred to one or two birds, but at least three were occasionally noted singing at both Mai Po and Fanling Golf Course in April, May and June. Elsewhere, apparently long-staying birds were recorded at only two other sites, Luk Keng and Shuen Wan, though there were occasional reports from a further 20 sites, mainly in the NT, but also including Hong Kong, Lantau, Po Toi and Dong Ping Chau islands.

205A Oriental Cuckoo *Cuculus saturatus* 中杜鵑

Spring reports, all of which came in a ten-day period in April, involved one at Tsim Bei Tsui on 18th, two at Mai Po on 19th, one there from 23rd to 25th and four at Fanling Golf Course on 27th. The latter is a new high count. In autumn, single birds at Tsim Bei Tsui and Long Valley on 6 October were the only records.

206A Asian Lesser Cuckoo *Cuculus poliocephalus* 小杜鵑

1997: one was on Green Island on 14 October (PJL). This is the second record for Hong Kong.

207A Plaintive Cuckoo *Cacomantis merulinus* 八聲杜鵑

One or two birds recorded between 9 January and 30 November, mainly from mid March to mid May, at widespread localities, including one at Mui Wo on 28 March, the only report away from the NT mainland. In the first half of the year apparently long-staying individuals were reported at Mong Tseng, Mai Po, Long Valley, Fanling Golf Course, Lam Tsuen and Shuen Wan, and birds were occasionally noted at a further 14 sites. Much scarcer in the second part of the

year when a total of nine birds were reported at Mong Tseng, Fung Lok Wai, Kam Tin, Long Valley and Fanling Golf Course.

12 Chestnut-winged Cuckoo *Clamator coromandus*
Wu Kau Tang, Hong Kong, 11 May 2001 *Martin Hale*

208A Common Koel *Eudynamys scolopacea* 噪鵑

As in 1997, vocalizations were reported in all months of the year, with earliest bouts of intense singing noted this year from mid February. In January and November-December up to five were reported at Shuen Wan and Fanling Golf Course and smaller numbers at a further ten localities, mainly in the NT, but also including Kowloon Park, Hong Kong Observatory and Lamma Island. As usual, birds were reported from more widespread areas and in much greater numbers in spring and summer, the peak count being 14 at Fanling Golf Course on 11 May. Courtship feeding, in the form of a male feeding dates to a female, was also observed at the latter site on the same date. Up to five birds together were observed visiting a fruiting Superb Fig *Ficus superba* at Shuen Wan in November and December.

209A Greater Coucal *Centropus sinensis* 褐翅鴉鵑

One was noted carrying a White-lipped Pit Viper *Trimeresurus albolabris* approximately 60 cm in length at Mong Tseng on 8 October.

210A Lesser Coucal *Centropus bengalensis* 小鴉鵑

A young bird noted at Long Valley - an unusual locality for this species - on 27 October was the only significant report.

212A Oriental Scops Owl *Otus sunia* 紅角鴞

Singles were at Robin's Nest on 1 November (JJH,VBP) and Cloudy Hill on 3 November (MH).

213A Collared Scops Owl *Otus bakkamoena* 領角鴞

Up to three were recorded throughout the year at nine sites, all in the NT. Though mainly detected through their vocalizations, birds were also seen on at least four dates during October-December at Cloudy Hill. Other localities were Fanling Golf Course, Queen's Hill, Hok Tau, Shuen Wan, Tai Mei Tuk, Yung Shue O, Fo Tan and Shing Mun. One was taken by a Crested Goshawk at the latter site on 24 February.

214A Eurasian Eagle Owl *Bubo bubo* 鵰鴞

Singles were at Chau Tau on 1 January (MH), Tseung Kwan O on 5 November (KHK) and at Tin Shui Wai on 10 November (MH).

1990: one was found dead at Ma Po Ping, Lantau on 15 June (SL).

215A Brown Fish Owl *Ketupa zeylonensis* 褐魚鴞

One was at Three Fathoms Cove on 13 January (MH).

216A Asian Barred Owlet *Glaucidium cuculoides* 斑頭鴷鶹

Recorded in most months of the year and at widespread sites, all in the NT and all single birds apart from two at Ho Chung in April. New localities were Queen's Hill camp (January), Pak Nai (February), Wu Kau Tang (March) and Nam Sang Wai (March and April). Other localities were Mong Tseng, Mai Po, Shek Wu Wai, Chau Tau, Hang Tau Tsuen, Fanling Golf Course, Shuen Wan, Yung Shue O and Shing Mun CP.

219A Grey Nightjar *Caprimulgus indicus* 普通夜鷹

Singles were at Yung Shue O on 4, 14 and 17 April, and 11 May, with three there on 5 April (RWL, MRL), and one was at Cloudy Hill on 5 November (MH).

1994: one was at Discovery Bay on 22 October (JB).

220A Savanna Nightjar *Caprimulgus affinis* 林夜鷹

Recorded at four sites: single birds at Cloudy Hill from 3 to 9 January and 20 November to 26 December, up to three, including two singing males, at Chau Tau between 13 February and 18 April, one at Kap Shui Mun on 21 April and up to three at Tin Shui Wai reclamation between 25 September and 29 November.

221A Himalayan Swiftlet *Collocalia brevirostris* 短嘴金絲燕

One was at Mai Po fish ponds on 22 March (GJC). This is the eighth Hong Kong record.

223A Silver-backed Needletail *Hirundapus cochinchinensis* 灰喉針尾雨燕

In the poorest year since 1987, the only reports were of four at Kadoorie FBG on 28 March, two at Mai Po the following day and two at Tai Po Kau on 6 April.

225A Pacific Swift *Apus pacificus* 白腰雨燕

In an unremarkable year, the first report - 800 near Mai Po on 19 January, during a period when high numbers of Little Swifts *A. affinis* were also noted - was also by far the highest of the year. Subsequently, though birds were occasionally reported from widespread sites in Deep Bay or on the coast until early August, no more than 10 were noted at any site.

226A Little Swift *Apus affinis* 小白腰雨燕

As usual, all large passage flocks were noted in the Deep Bay area, especially over the Mai Po fish ponds. Strongest passage was detected relatively early in the year, with up to 2000 at the latter site from 14 to 17 January and up to 1000 there on 23 and 24 January and on 3, 7 and 13 February. Subsequently, the only significant counts were 500 on 21 February and 300 from 2 to 5 March. In a disappointing April, 100 at Mai Po on 20th was the largest flock reported. The highest count of the second half of the year was 80 at Yuen Long on 1 November, which probably involved entirely local breeding birds.

227A Crested Kingfisher *Ceryle lugubris* 冠魚狗

In a very good year, recorded in the northeast NT on eight dates to the end of April and once in November. On 14 January, two were noted at both Lai Chi Wo and Kuk Po, localities separated by approximately 5 km. The same month, a male was released unharmed after being found entangled in a fishing net at Nam Chung on 25th, and single birds were seen there and at Chung Mei on 29th. One was again seen at Nam Chung on 5 April. Further reports from Lai Chi Wo involved single birds on 30 March, 19 and 29 April, and 1 November. The bird on 19 April, a female, was observed entering a possible nest-hole.

228A Pied Kingfisher *Ceryle rudis* 斑魚狗

Recorded throughout the year. From May, this species was included for the first time in co-ordinated monthly counts in Deep Bay, for which data are as follows:

May	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
5	4	6	3	3	8	4	9

The total of nine logged on 20 December is the highest on record, the previous highest count being eight seen at the former Ping Shan marshes on 30 March 1970. In the Deep Bay hinterland, up to two were at Kam Tin and Long Valley in winter. Elsewhere, most reports were from the eastern NT, especially Shuen Wan, Lai Chi Wo and Starling Inlet. At the latter site the peak count was five on 13 January and copulation was noted on 23 January. One was at Penfold Park, an unusual locality, on 26 May.

229A Common Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis* 普通翠鳥

Recorded throughout the year, but mainly until mid April and again from

mid July. This species was included in co-ordinated monthly counts in Deep Bay for the first time from May of this year. Data from these counts are as follows:

May	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
9	5	22	50	44	38	25	39

The count of 50 on 16 August is the highest yet for the species. Previously, 35 at Mai Po on 1 January 1977 represented the highest count made. Outside of Deep Bay, most reports were from the eastern NT, especially coastal sites, including Shuen Wan and Starling Inlet throughout the year, the peak count at the latter site being nine on 19 September. Also of note is a June report from Lai Chi Wo. Elsewhere, birds were occasionally reported at Long Valley, Ping Kong, Kowloon Hills catchwater, Penfold Park, Tai Po Kau, Tap Mun, Middle Island and Chek Lap Kok.

230A White-throated Kingfisher *Halcyon smyrnensis* 白胸翡翠

Recorded in all months, though mainly in autumn and winter. From May this species was included for the first time in co-ordinated monthly counts in Deep Bay. Data from these indicate that it still occurs in good numbers there in autumn and winter:

May	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec
1	-	16	17	9	10	16	19

The total of 19 logged on 20 December is a new high count for this species, the previous highest being 18 at the former Ping Shan marshes on 14 November 1966. Elsewhere in autumn and winter, birds were reported from widespread areas,

13 White-throated Kingfisher *Halcyon smyrnensis*
Mai Po, Hong Kong, 15 October 2000 *Ho-fai Cheung*

mainly from coastal areas of the NT, though in autumn also from Hong Kong Island, Tap Mun and Chek Lap Kok. The highest counts outside Deep Bay were seven at Starling Inlet on 18 July and four at Long Valley on 1 November.

Breeding activities were again noted at Shuen Wan between March and May, the carrying of food towards possible nest-sites was observed at Long Valley and Tai Mei Tuk in April, and a family party of four was seen at Tung Chung on 3 July. Other summer (May-June) records involved up to three at Starling Inlet, nearby at Yung Shue Au and Lai Chi Wo, and at Middle Island.

231A Black-capped Kingfisher *Halcyon pileata* 藍翡翠

Recorded until 17 April and again from 3 August, apart from two at Yung Shue O on 6 June and one in Deep Bay on 12 July. As with other wetland-dependent kingfishers, from May this species was included for the first time in co-ordinated monthly counts in Deep Bay. Whereas peak numbers in previous years have generally been reported in October, data from co-ordinated counts showed highest numbers in December and relatively low numbers throughout the autumn:

May	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
-	-	1	2	1	3	5	12

Outside of Deep Bay, it was regularly noted in autumn and winter at Shuen Wan and Starling Inlet, including ten at the latter site on 19 February, and in winter at Kuk Po and Mui Wo. Other localities were Long Valley, Yung Shue Au, Lai Chi Wo, Pak Tam Chung and Ham Tin.

234A Blue-tailed Bee-eater *Merops philippinus* 栗喉蜂虎

Single birds at Tsim Bei Tsui on 3 May and at Mai Po on 9 October were the only records.

235A Dollarbird *Eurystomus orientalis* 三寶鳥

In a poor year, single birds were recorded at six sites as follows: Fei Ngo Shan, Dong Ping Chau and Green Island during 13-15 April and Lai Chi Wo on 29 April, Clearwater Bay on 6 September - by three days the earliest autumn date - and Tsim Bei Tsui on 2 and 5 October.

236A Eurasian Hoopoe *Upupa epops* 戴勝

The bird noted in Penfold Park in December 1997 was again present there on 6 and 15 January. The only other reports were of single birds at Tsim Bei Tsui on 17 January, Fung Lok Wai on 20 March and San Tin on 11 November. The bird at Fung Lok Wai was initially feeding beside a fish pond but then flew onto the roof of a nearby house and called repeatedly for about 10 minutes. This species is only rarely heard in Hong Kong.

237A Great Barbet *Megalaima virens* 大擬啄木鳥

No significant reports.

238A Eurasian Wryneck *Jynx torquilla* 蟻鴷

Single birds were recorded up to 4 April and between 13 September and 28 November, mainly in the Deep Bay area. In the first winter period, noted in January at Kam Tin on 25th and at Ho Chung on 27th, in February at Mai Po on 2nd and Yim Tso Ha on 13th, in March at Fung Lok Wai on 20th and at Mai Po fish ponds on 29th, and at Nam Sang Wai on 4 April. Later in the year, noted at Mai Po on 13 and 23 September, Lut Chau on 17 October and Long Valley on 27 and 28 October.

239A Speckled Piculet *Picumnus innominatus* 斑啄木鳥

One was at Tai Po Kau on 11 January (RDES). This is the second record for Hong Kong, the first having been on 25 July 1996.

240A Rufous-bellied Woodpecker *Dendrocopos hyperythrus* 棕腹啄木鳥

An adult male was at Shing Mun on 15 February (YHK, HMF). This is only the second record for Hong Kong, the first having been present at Tai Po Kau from 13 November 1990 to 26 January 1991.

248A Oriental Skylark *Alauda gulgula* 小雲雀

Up to five were noted at Chek Lap Kok on three dates between 23 January and 26 February and four were at Fung Lok Wai on 12 March. There were no spring or summer reports. In autumn, up to six were noted at Tin Shui Wai landfill on four dates between 1 August and 17 October.

250A Sand Martin *Riparia riparia* 灰沙燕

The only report in winter was of two at Mai Po fish ponds on 1 January. In spring, up to seven were noted in the Deep Bay area on nine dates between 28 March and 3 May. In autumn, four were at Mai Po on 31 October and three at Fung Lok Wai on 9 November.

251A Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica* 家燕

Recorded in each month of the year. Up to 35 in the Mai Po area in the first three weeks of January were presumably the over-wintering flock noted at Mai Po in December 1997. The first definite spring migrants were 100 at Mai Po fish ponds on 24 January. Subsequently, spring passage was relatively weak, peak counts being up to 300 on 21 February, up to 700 on 21 March and 250 on 9 April, all at Mai Po fish ponds. Elsewhere, in March, 100 were noted at Fung Lok Wai on 14th and at Chek Lap Kok on 23rd. Gatherings of up to 40 were reported from widespread sites between May and September and flocks of 100 were again noted in the Mai Po area on 10 October and 8 November, indicating autumn passage. Twenty were present in the latter area in mid December. Recently-fledged juveniles were reported from 14 March and into May at a number of sites and also on 6 December at Fung Lok Wai.

252A Red-rumped Swallow *Hirundo daurica* 金腰燕

Recorded between 12 March and 26 April and between 19 September and 21 December, with greatest numbers in March and December. Apart from one at Fanling Golf Course on 5 October, all reports were from the Deep Bay area. In spring, all sightings were of up to five birds, except on 22 March, when at least 60 were in the Mai Po area. In the second winter period, parties of up to seven were intermittently noted up to the end of November. Larger counts in December involved 19 at San Tin on 3rd and also at Lut Chau on 4th, 60 migrating over Long Valley on 4th, 10 at Mai Po on 7th, 56 heading west there on 18th and 20 at Ma Tso Lung on 20th.

253A Asian House Martin *Delichon dasypus* 煙腹毛腳燕

In spring, passage began with one at Long Valley on 27 February, and peaked from 12 to 14 March, with 40 at Fung Lok Wai and 12 at Nam Chung on 12th, 20 at Tai Mo Shan on 13th and 10 at Pok Fu Lam on 14th. Subsequently, two were reported at Mai Po on 15, 22 and 23 March. In autumn, one at Pak Nai on 30 October and two at Kadoorie ARC on 18 November were the only records.

254A Forest Wagtail *Dendronanthus indicus* 林鶺鴒

In winter, a single bird was present at Lut Chau on 10 and 16 February and two were reported from Chuen Lung on 24 February. There were no spring records. In autumn there were five reports of single birds: at Clearwater Bay on 6 September, Mai Po on 12 September, Pok Fu Lam on 28 October, Shing Mun on 31 October and Tai Po Kau on 1 November.

255A Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava* 黃鶺鴒

The common wintering form *M.f. taivana* was reported from several sites in the northwest NT during the first winter period, high counts being 70 at Lin Barn Tsuen on 18 January, 35 on a drained pond at Mai Po on 20 February, and 140 at Mai Po fish ponds and 50 near San Tin on 16 March. Passage in April was apparently very light, the highest count being 25 at Lin Barn Tsuen on 14 April. However, at Mai Po a flock of 500 birds, not ascribed to race, was disturbed from reeds at dusk by a Great Bittern *Botaurus stellaris* on 3 April. Given the established pattern of occurrence of the three forms of *M. flava* in Hong Kong, it is probable that these birds were of the race *taivana*. The last definite report of *taivana* in spring was of 10 at Chek Lap Kok on 30 April. In the second half of the year, two were trapped at Long Valley on 6 September, after which there were 15 at Tin Shui Wai reclamation on 20 September, 20 at Long Valley on 15 October, 60 at Kam Tin on 23 October and 20 at Lin Barn Tsuen on 13 December.

In spring, a single bird of the migrant form *M.f. simillima* was recorded from Mai Po on 16 April and there were high counts of 200 at Chek Lap Kok on 30 April, 50 at Tsim Bei Tsui on 5 May and 100 at Mai Po on 8 May. The final record was of 45 at Long Valley on 15 May. On the same date 15 birds not ascribed to race were reported from Kam Tin; in all probability these too were *simillima*. The small number of autumn records involved five at Mai Po on

25 August, 15 at Chek Lap Kok and 60 at Long Valley on 3 September and a single bird at the latter site on 15 October.

There were two winter records of the relatively scarce form *M.f. macronyx*. One was at Lin Barn Tsuen on 18 January and five were on a drained pond at Mai Po with 35 *taivana* wagtails on 20 February. Passage in spring consisted of 12 at Mai Po on 12 April, 35 at Lin Barn Tsuen on 14 April and at least one bird at Yin Kong on 10 May. In autumn it was only recorded from Long Valley in October: several were present there on 6th, with two on 15th and a single bird on 31st.

There were regular reports from Long Valley in the second part of the year of birds not ascribed to race: 60 on 6 September, 80 on 14 September, 40 on 27 September, 40 on 31 October, 40 on 15 November, and 20 on 22 November, with smaller numbers after that until 11 December. The highest count of unascribed birds, however, was of 154 at Chek Lap Kok on 19 November.

256A Citrine Wagtail *Motacilla citreola* 黃頭鶺鴒

A female was at Long Valley on 18 and 24 January, and a first-winter bird was reported from the same site on 15 October.

257A Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea* 灰鶺鴒

Up to four were reported from several sites during the first winter period. The only significant indication of movement in spring was of 15 in the Mai Po/San Tin area on 16 March and 20 flying over Mai Po towards Lut Chau at dusk on 26 April. Single birds were reported from four locations in May, the last being from Kowloon Hills catchwater on 16th. The first autumn record was one at Tai Po Kau on 29 August. Thereafter it was reported from several sites until the end of the year, the most at a single site being five at Kowloon Hills catchwater on 29 November.

258A White Wagtail *Motacilla alba* 白鶺鴒

Birds of the form *M.a. leucopsis* were present at widespread sites during the first winter period, high counts being 150 at Mai Po fish ponds on 18 January, during a surge of the winter monsoon, and 100 in the Mai Po/San Tin area on 16 March. As usual, small numbers were present at several sites during the summer months and juveniles were noted at Chek Lap Kok, Penfold Park, Kam Tin, Long Valley and Tung Chung. No more than twenty were reported from any one site in the second part of the year.

During the first part of the year the form *M.a. ocularis* was only reported from six sites in the NT. High counts of 15 at Mai Po fish ponds on 18 January and at Mai Po/San Tin on 16 March coincided with the peak counts of *M.a. leucopsis* referred to above. Ten were at Mai Po fish ponds on 3 April and at Penfold Park, where birds were regularly present, the highest count was of eight on 24 February. The latest record in the spring involved two at Penfold Park on 21 April. The only reports during the second part of the year were of two at Penfold

Park on 20 October, with three there on 15 December, and one at Mai Po on 8 November. It is likely, however, that this form is being under-reported.

There was one report of *M.a. lugens*: one was seen on Lamma on 24 January.

259A Richard's Pipit *Anthus richardi* 田鷚

Away from Chek Lap Kok, the migrant race *A.r. richardi* was recorded in small numbers at several sites from the beginning of the year until mid May, high counts being 11 on The Brothers on 9 February, 15 at the same location on 19 March, and 12 at Long Valley on 26 February. The last record of the spring was a single at Long Valley on 15 May. In autumn, five were at Tin Shui Wai and one was at Long Valley on 6 September. Thereafter, recorded at several sites in small numbers until the year end, most regularly at Long Valley; however, the only double-figure counts came in October with 10 at Kam Tin on 1st, and 25 at Long Valley on 14th, and 20 there on 15th.

At Chek Lap Kok, the species was recorded regularly from 23 January to 10 June, and again from 15 October to 7 December. Peak counts in each of the first three months of the year were 12 on 23 January, 20 on 26 February and 28 on 9 March; all of these birds were considered to be of the race *A.r. richardi*. However, counts of up to 20 between 30 March and 29 April, with 30 on 30 April, three on 14 May and six on 10 June most probably involved the race *A.r. sinensis*. Birds record there in the autumn were considered to be *A r. richardi*; the peak count was 29 on 30 October, falling to 17 on 10 November and five on 7 December.

The only other reports involving the race *A.r. sinensis* were of one singing at Tai Mo Shan on 5 April and of three there on 11 July.

14 Richard's Pipit *Anthus richardi*
Long Valley, Hong Kong, 4 November 2000 *Ho-fai Cheung*

260A Olive-backed Pipit *Anthus hodgsoni* 樹鷚

The highest counts in the first winter period all occurred in January: 19 at Ping Kong, near Sheung Shui on 1st, 30 at Lin Barn Tsuen on 15th, 18 at Fanling Golf Course on 20th and 19 at Tai Po Kau on 24th. The highest count during February was 16 at Long Valley on 24th. No more than six were recorded from a single site in March and April apart from 35 on passage at San Tin fish ponds on 2 April. The final record of the spring was of one at Hok Tau on 2 May. The first autumn record was of 13 flying over Tsim Bei Tsui on 14 October. Visible migration was also evident over Kadoorie FBG on 29 October when 35 birds were counted. After that, small numbers were recorded from widespread sites until the end of the year, high counts being 20 on the Wu Kau Tang-Lai Chi Wo circuit on 1 December and at Long Valley on 6 December.

261A Red-throated Pipit *Anthus cervinus* 紅喉鷚

Reported regularly from the northwest NT and Chek Lap Kok during the first winter period, with high counts of 30 at Lin Barn Tsuen on 15 January, 30 at Chek Lap Kok on 11 February, 30 at Long Valley on 26 February, 30 at Mai Po fish ponds on 16 March and 50 at San Tin on 16 March. Passage was very light in early April, with nine at Penfold Park on 2 April being the highest count from a single locality until 14 April. On that date there was a marked influx and counts involved 70 at Chek Lap Kok, 40 at Lin Barn Tsuen and 80 at Long Valley. The last record of the spring was of a single bird at Chek Lap Kok on 30 April. Two at Long Valley on 2 October were the first of the autumn and birds were reported from there until 11 December with a peak count of 70 on 18 October. The only report away from Long Valley was of 20 at Chek Lap Kok on 15 October.

262A Pechora Pipit *Anthus gustavi* 北鷚

One was trapped at Mai Po on 27 April (DSM).

263A Buff-bellied Pipit *Anthus rubescens* 黃腹鷚

One was at Chek Lap Kok on 30 March (GJC).

264A Upland Pipit *Anthus sylvanus* 山鷚

Up to two birds were reported from Tai Mo Shan between 28 March and 11 April, with display noted on the latter date. The only other report was of one heard at Fei Ngo Shan on 28 June.

265A Black-winged Cuckoo-shrike *Coracina melaschistos* 暗灰鵙鳥

During the first part of the year single birds were seen at Ma Kwu Lam on 1 January, Tai Po Kau between 9 January and 14 February - though two were noted there on 7 February - Kowloon Park on 4 February, Kowloon Hills catchwater on 7 February, and Fanling Golf Course on 8 March. Also, two were at Shing Mun on 15 February, with one there on 24 February. The final record in the spring was of a single bird at Tai Po Kau on 24 March. The first autumn record came from Nim Wan on 19 September, after which one was at Mai Po on 20 and 23 September and 8 October, one was at Sok Kwu Wan, Lamma on 22 September,

two were at Tai Po Kau on 23 September and 7 November, with regular sightings of single birds there until 27 December, one was at Mong Tseng Hills on 11 October, one was at Kowloon Park on 1 November and 6 December, and one was at Kowloon Hills catchwater on 5 December.

15 Upland Pipit *Anthus sylvanus*
Tai Mo Shan, Hong Kong, 23 July 2000 *Ho-fai Cheung*

266A Swinhoe's Minivet *Pericrocotus cantonensis* 小灰山椒鳥

One was at Po Toi on 3 May (RWL, DAD), up to 13 were at Tsim Bei Tsui from 1 to 7 October (CHF, MRL, VBP) and two, possibly from the Tsim Bei Tsui group of birds, were at Mai Po on 6 and 8 October (YYT, MRL).

267A Ashy Minivet *Pericrocotus divaricatus* 灰山椒鳥

One was at Green Island on 1 April and sightings of single birds, possibly referring to the same individual, came from Mai Po on 4, 12 and 13 April. The last record of the spring was of one at Mount Davis on 23 April. In autumn there were three reports, all of single birds: at Mai Po on 25 October, at Kadoorie FBG on 29 October and at Tsim Bei Tsui on 1 November.

268A Grey-chinned Minivet *Pericrocotus solaris* 灰喉山椒鳥

High counts at Tai Po Kau involved 70 on 13 February and 80 on 7 November. Nest-building and courtship feeding were noted on 24 March. Elsewhere, recorded as follows: ten at Shing Mun on 1 January, with two there on 6 September, two on the Kap Lung-Ho Pui trail on 20 September, one at Kadoorie FBG on 29 October, four at Kowloon Hills catchwater on 29 November, with five there on 5 December, and one at Ng Tung Chai on 9 December.

269A Scarlet Minivet *Pericrocotus flammeus* 赤紅山椒鳥

In the first half of the year a male and a female were reported from Shing

Mun on 1 January and one was heard at Kowloon Hills catchwater on 7 February. A female-plumaged bird was singing persistently at Tai Po Kau on 5 May. In the second half of the year a male and a female were at Shing Mun on 6 September, three were at Kowloon Hills catchwater on 29 November, and two there on 5 December, while at Tai Po Kau this species was reported from 12 September to 6 December, high counts being 20 on 12 September and 10 on 7 November. The general paucity of submitted records, from Tai Po Kau in particular, suggests that this species is being under-reported.

270A Red-whiskered Bulbul *Pycnonotus jocosus* 紅耳鵯

The highest count from a single site during the year was 200 at Ping Shan Chai on 15 November.

271A Chinese Bulbul *Pycnonotus sinensis* 白頭鵯

As with the preceding species, a count of 200 was made at Ping Shan Chai on 15 November.

272A Sooty-headed Bulbul *Pycnonotus aurigaster* 白喉紅臀鵯

No significant reports.

273A Chestnut Bulbul *Hypsipetes castanonotus* 栗背短腳鵯

High counts during the first part of the year from established sites in the NT included 30 at Tai Po Kau on 11 and 14 January, with 16 there on 23 February, and 15 at Ho Chung on 29 January. Small numbers were reported from Tai Po Kau, Kadoorie FBG, and Kowloon Hills catchwater during the summer months but no reports of juveniles were received. The second part of the year witnessed a marked influx into Hong Kong, with birds reaching Hong Kong Island, where it is rare: seven were at Mai Po on 19 November - only the second record from the reserve - with two there on 22 November, 30 at Tai Mo Shan on 21 November and several groups in the Tai Tam Reservoir/Mount Parker area on the same date, 40 at Tsim Bei Tsui on 22 November, at least 50 on the Wu Kau Tang-Lai Chi Wo circuit on 1 December, 30 at Ng Tung Chai on 9 December and 60 there on 26 December, ten at Quarry Bay and at Tai Tam Tuk Reservoir on 19 December, and 30 at Wong Chuk Yeung on 23 December.

274A Black Bulbul *Hypsipetes leucocephalus* 黑短腳鵯

Six at Tai Po Kau on 1 January and nine there on 5 January were part of the small influx that occurred at the end of 1997. Records of 20 at Ho Chung on 29 January, at least six different birds at Tsim Bei Tsui between 31 January and 14 February, two at Ng Tung Chai on 8 February and four at Kadoorie FBG on 12 February indicate that more birds arrived during the first winter period. In spring, single birds were at Harlech Road on 20 March and at Mai Po on 21 April, and two were seen at Po Toi on 23 April with a further two at Mui Wo on the same date. The only autumn record - one at Mong Tseng on 1 October - was considered by the observer to be probably an escaped or released bird.

275A Orange-bellied Leafbird *Chloropsis hardwickii* 橙腹葉鵯

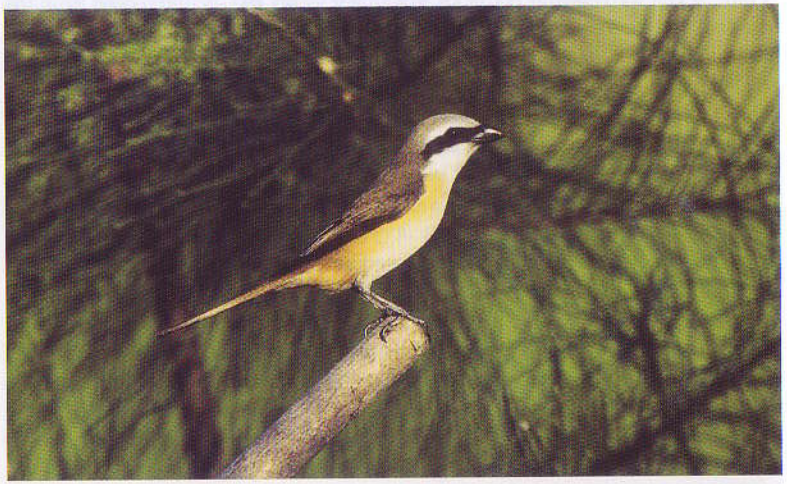
Up to five birds were reported from Tai Po Kau between 1 January and 15 February, one was there on 5 May and up to three were noted between 26 September and 4 December. Other reports involved one singing at Kadoorie ARC on 23 and 28 March, one at Green Island on 1 April, two at Shing Mun on 4 October and two at Ng Tung Chai on 26 December.

277A Bull-headed Shrike *Lanius bucephalus* 牛頭伯勞

The female which had been present in the orchard area at Tai Po Kau from 13 December 1997 remained there until 24 March (AC, WLY), and what was presumably the same individual was present again at the same location from 23 November (EMSK).

278A Brown Shrike *Lanius cristatus* 紅尾伯勞

During the first winter period what was presumably the same single adult female of the race *lucionensis* was noted at Penfold Park on five dates up to 26 March. A first winter bird was also noted there on three dates up to 2 April. Also during January-March, singles were reported from Tsim Sha Tsui East, North District Park Fanling, Long Valley and Lam Tsuen Valley. Two at Po Toi on 23 April heralded the beginning of spring passage, and a further two were noted at Long Valley on 25 April. As is often the case, May saw an upsurge in records and approximately 45% of all records came in that month. Sites at which up to two were noted in the first week included Cape d'Aguilar, Hok Tau Reservoir and Sha Lo Tung, while during a period of more marked passage around 25 to 27 May reports of up to three were received from Fanling Golf Course, Fung Lok Wai, Penfold Park and Tai Po Kau. Records in the remainder of the year all fell between 6 September and 20 October, and all involved singles at widespread



16 Brown Shrike *Lanius cristatus*
San Tin, Hong Kong, 5 May 2000 *Martin Hale*

locations. One at Kowloon Park was reported as showing some characters of the nominate race *L.c. cristatus*, though it should be noted no race other than *L.c. lucionensis* is now recognised as having occurred in Hong Kong (Carey *et al.* 2001). A fairly typical set of records of this species in terms of dates, but not in terms of numbers of passage migrants, which were much reduced compared to many years. Specifically there was an absence of any marked 'falls' of this species, which are often a feature of spring passage and, to a lesser extent, autumn passage.

279A Long-tailed Shrike *Lanius schach* 棕背伯勞

Reported throughout the year, mostly in ones and twos from very widespread sites in the NT. However, the only breeding records involved a juvenile begging for food on So Lo Pun (near Crooked Harbour) on 29 June and an adult carrying food at Mai Po on 27 April.

281A Japanese Robin *Erithacus akahige* 日本歌鴝

A first-winter was trapped at Kadoorie ARC on 20 November (PJL).

282A Rufous-tailed Robin *Luscinia sibilans* 紅尾歌鴝

Between 11 January and 7 February single birds were reported from Tai Po Kau, Clearwater Bay, Fanling Golf Course, Kowloon Park, the Luk Keng - Lai Chi Wo area and Shuen Wan, and there were three birds at Ho Chung on 25 January. Thereafter, one was at Mai Po on 15 March, and single birds in song were noted at Chek Lap Kok on 24 and 31 March. The first record in autumn involved one at Kadoorie FBG on 7 November, after which at least 25 birds were recorded from nine sites in the NT. High counts were four at Kadoorie FBG on 20 November, ten at Kowloon Hills catchwater on 29 November and four at Ng Tung Chai on 9 December. The poorest year for this species since 1991.

283A Siberian Rubythroat *Luscinia calliope* 紅喉歌鴝 (紅點頦)

In the first half of the year at least 52 birds were recorded from 18 widespread sites in the NT, including Lantau and Po Toi. Most reports were of single birds but up to six were at Mui Wo during January, five were singing at Lin Barn Tsuen on 1 March and 20, presumably passage birds, were at Ma Wan on 16 March. The last record in spring was of two singing at Po Toi on 23 April. One at Long Valley on 27 October was the first autumn record. Thereafter at least 28 birds were recorded from ten sites, all in the NT. No more than three birds were reported from any one site apart from Mai Po, where at least ten birds were present between 8 and 19 November, with eight there on 8 December.

284A Siberian Blue Robin *Luscinia cyane* 藍歌鴝

The only record was of a first-winter male at Mai Po on 27 September. The poorest year for this species since 1990.

285A Bluethroat *Luscinia svecica* 藍喉歌鴝 (藍點頦)

Recorded at Long Valley from 24 January until 14 April, the highest counts being three on 25 February and nine on 6 April. Single birds were at Lin Barn

Tsuen on 7 February, with two there on 3 March, at Mai Po fish ponds on 13 February, at Lut Chau on 14 February, at Shuen Wan on 17 February and at Ma Tso Lung on 14 March. In the second part of the year the only reports came from Long Valley: two were first reported on 31 October and birds were present until the end of the year, the maximum count being three on 5 December.

286A Red-flanked Bluetail *Tarsiger cyanurus* 紅脇藍尾鴝

Widespread from the beginning of the year until early March, with a minimum of 129 individual birds recorded from 27 sites. There was evidence of an influx towards the end of January: 11 were at Kowloon Hills catchwater and Tai Po Kau on 24th, with numbers rising to 15 at the latter site on 28th, 12 were in the Wu Kau Tang-Lai Chi Wo area on 29th and ten were at Shing Mun on 30th. Eleven remained at Kowloon Hills catchwater and eight were at Tai Po Kau on 7 February, and five were seen at Ng Tung Chai on 8 February. Smaller numbers were noted elsewhere until the final record of a single bird at Fanling Golf Course on 8 March. The first records of the autumn involved two birds at Tai Mo Shan on 10 November, after which it was again widespread with a minimum total of 53 birds at 15 sites, the highest count being eight at Tai Po Kau on 22 December.

287A Oriental Magpie Robin *Copsychus saularis* 鵲鴝

Fifteen were counted at Ping Kong on 1 January, and regular observations at Fanling Golf Course during the summer months produced counts of 14 on 11 May, 17 on 29 June and 12 on 27 July.

17 Red-flanked Bluetail *Tarsiger cyanurus*
Mai Po, Hong Kong, 15 January 1999 *Henry T. H. Lui*

289A Daurian Redstart *Phoenicurus auroreus* 北紅尾鴝

Up to three birds were recorded from widespread sites during January and February. The only counts of note, indicative of an influx, were of 12 in the Luk Keng-Lai Chi Wo area on 28 January and ten in the Wu Kau Tang-Lai Chi

Wo area on 29 January. There were three March records of single birds at Mai Po on 1st, Mount Cameron on 12th and Pok Fu Lam Reservoir on 24th. The first autumn record was of a male at Mai Po on 24 October, after which it was again recorded from widespread sites until the end of the year, with high counts of six at Tai Mo Shan on 10 November and four at Mai Po on 17 November.

290A Plumbeous Redstart *Rhyacornis fuliginosus* 紅尾水鴝

A male was seen at Chuen Lung on 24 February.

291A Slaty-backed Forktail *Enicurus schistaceus* 灰背燕尾

An adult was seen at Tai Po Kau on 27 June and a single juvenile was observed regularly at the same site between 30 August and 22 December (Plate 18). Another juvenile was at Shing Mun on 4 October and what may have been the same bird was present there on 6 December: these Shing Mun records were not included in the account in Carey *et al.* (2001). The only reports received from Ng Tung Chai were of single birds on 8 February, 20 November and 26 December.

292A Common Stonechat *Saxicola torquata* 黑喉石鴝

Reported from seven sites in the NT during January, although the only double-figure counts came from Long Valley: 13 were noted there on 18th, with ten on 26th and 25 on 31st. The only reports received for February were of one near Nam Sang Wai on 3rd and ten at Sha Lo Tung on 15th. In spring ten were at Ma Tso Lung on 14 and 20 March, two were at Lin Barn Tsuen on 31 March and the final record was of an adult male at Penfold Park on 2 April. Penfold Park also provided the first record of the autumn, a single on 17 September, after which reports came from 12 sites in the NT. Again, the only double-figure counts were from Long Valley, where there were 16 on 27 October, 15 on 5 November and ten on 5 December.

293A Grey Bushchat *Saxicola ferrea* 灰林鴝

Two were at Ping Kong on 1 January and one was near Nam Sang Wai on 3 February. In autumn, single birds were present at Tsim Bei Tsui on 6 and 14 October, and at Mong Tseng on 22 and 25 November.

297A Blue Rock Thrush *Monticola solitarius* 藍磯鶇

There were only three reports during the first two months of the year: one was at Po Toi on 4 January, three were at Chek Lap Kok on 22 January and one was at Tai Mo Shan on 23 February. In spring, at least three different birds were recorded from Chek Lap Kok between 24 March and 8 April. There were also single birds at Tai Mo Shan on 28 March and 10 April and at Fei Ngo Shan on 12 April, and two were at Po Toi on 23 April. The final bird of the spring was at Ping Chau on 26 April. Most reports were not ascribed to race, but those males that were, were all of the race *M. s. philippensis*. This species was even scarcer in the second part of the year: singles were at Fei Ngo Shan on 2 October, Cape D'Aguilar on 26 October, Tseung Kwan O on 5 November, Ap Lei Chau - a male *M.s. philippensis* - on 6 November, and Ham Tin on 29 November.

18 Slaty-backed Forktail *Enicurus schistaceus*
Tai Po Kau, Hong Kong, 18 November 1998 *Martin Hale*

298A Blue Whistling Thrush *Myophonus caeruleus* 紫嘯鶇

A pair bred on the external part of an air-conditioner on the first floor of a village house at Lok Lo Ha for the fourth year in succession. Young were heard in the nest in May.

The scientific name used in Carey *et al.* (2001) is in error.

299A Orange-headed Thrush *Zoothera citrina* 橙頭地鶇

In the first winter period single birds were reported from Kowloon Hills catchwater on 7 and 12 February, and from Tai Po Kau on 8, 15 and 23 February. In spring, one was seen and photographed at Mount Austin on 8 April. The only report in the second part of the year was of one at Tai Po Kau on 9 November. These records are all additional to those noted in Carey *et al.* (2001).

300A Siberian Thrush *Zoothera sibirica* 白眉地鶇

The only report was of a male and female at Ng Tung Chai on 6 December.

301A Scaly Thrush *Zoothera dauma* 虎斑地鶇

Recorded from 11 widespread sites in the NT, and also from Mount Davis, between 9 January and 23 February. Typically, most sightings were of single birds, apart from two at Shing Mun on 3 January, three at Bride's Pool on 30 January, three at Tai Po Kau on 7 February and two at Plover Cove on 23 February. The only spring report was of one at Mount Davis on 26 and 31 March. The first autumn record was of one at Mai Po on 25 October.

Thereafter there were reports from ten sites, again all in the NT, until the end of the year, with no more than two birds being recorded at any one site.

302A Japanese Thrush *Turdus cardis* 烏灰鶇

Between 12 January and 8 February a minimum of 19 birds were recorded from ten widespread sites, with no more than three birds at any one site, apart from five and seven at Ho Chung Woods on 25 and 28 January respectively. The next report was not until 7 March when three females were seen at Cape D'Aguilar, with a single female there the following day. Spring passage was very light, consisting of a single bird at Tai Po Kau on 21 March and two at Mai Po on 28 and 29 March, with a final bird at the latter site on 10 April. In the second winter period at least 24 birds were seen at nine widespread locations in the NT between 7 November and 11 December, the highest counts being six at Kadoorie FBG on 7 November and five at Tai Po Kau on 20 November.

303A Common Blackbird *Turdus merula* 烏鶇

In January and the first week of February, this species was particularly widespread in small numbers, although the highest counts only involved ten birds at Mui Wo on 1 and 29 January, and at Ho Chung on 24 January. After the first week of February, however, only reported from a small number of sites with no more than two birds involved in these sightings. The last record was of one at Po Toi on 23 April. As in 1997, no over-summering or breeding birds were reported. In autumn, the first records were of singles at Long Valley and Mai Po on 15 October and there were several other October sightings, including 13 at Hang Tau Tsuen on 31 October. During November and the first week of December reported almost daily, with a total of at least 252 birds being recorded from 21 different sites. Records in November included 48 at Ping Kong on 9th and 15th, 45 at Fanling Golf Course on 17th, 40 at Ho Sheung Heung on 23rd and 34 at Shuen Wan on 27th. Numbers were much reduced during the final weeks of the year and no more than six birds were reported from any one site.

304A Brown-headed Thrush *Turdus chrysolaus* 赤腹鶇

One was at Kowloon Hills catchwater on 24 January and 7 February, and one was at Tai Po Kau on 14 February.

305A Grey-backed Thrush *Turdus hortulorum* 灰背鶇

Up to three birds were recorded from widespread sites during the first three weeks of January. There was evidence of an influx from 24 January onwards with high counts of ten at Shing Mun on 24th, 15 at Pak Tam Chung and ten at Ho Chung on 25th, and ten in the Luk Keng-Lai Chi Wo area on 28th and at Mui Wo on 31st. Smaller numbers were then recorded up until 24 February, the most seen being eight at Kowloon Park on 4 February, and there were two March records of single birds at Braemar Hill on 24th and Mai Po on 28th. A single bird at Tai Mo Shan on 10 November was the first of the autumn, after which it was again recorded at widespread sites until the end of the year. The only double-figure count, however, was of 12 at Pak Kok, Lamma on 5 December.

306A Pale Thrush *Turdus pallidus* 白腹鶇

In the first winter period there were three at Jardine's Lookout on 18 January, one at Ho Chung on 25 January, with two there on 28 January, singles at Fung Yuen and Tai Po Kau on 28 January, Bride's Pool on 30 January, Mount Davis on 3 February, Kadoorie ARC on 6 February, Penfold Park on 6 and 24 February, Tai Mo Shan on 7 February, two at Ngong Ping on 8 February and one at Kowloon Park on 9 February. The only spring record was of one at Tai Po Kau on 24 March. In the second part of the year there were no reports until 5 December when five were seen at Pak Kok on Lamma Island, after which it was only recorded at three other sites: at Mai Po between 10 and 26 December, at Fung Lok Wai on 16 December and in Tai Po Kau on 22 December. Apart from three at Mai Po on 18 December, all sightings were of single birds.

307A Eyebrowed Thrush *Turdus obscurus* 白眉鶇

Single birds near Nam Sang Wai on 3 February and at Shing Mun on 16 February and 8 March were the only records during the first winter period. There was one spring record of a single bird at Kadoorie FBG on 26 April. In autumn, passage birds were in evidence at Kadoorie ARC in November with 96 there on 7th, 15 on 18th and 22 on 20th. In addition, one was seen at Kap Lung on 21 November.

308A Dusky Thrush *Turdus naumanni* 斑鶇

Recorded in the first part of the year as follows: one at Mai Po on 11 January, one at Luk Keng on 14 January, one at Long Valley from 24 January to 28 February, with two there on 27 February, one at Ho Chung on 25 January, two at Mong Tseng on 1 February, up to six at Queen's Hill Camp, Fanling between 5 February and 27 March, one at Lut Chau on 10 February, one on Tai Mo Shan on 23 February, one in Penfold Park on 24 February and 3 March, one at Fung Lok Wai on 20 March, and one at Long Valley on 31 March. In the second part of the year single birds were at Mai Po on 21 and 28 November, and at Long Valley on 12 December. All records were of the race *T.n. eunomus*.

309C Streak-breasted Scimitar Babbler *Pomatorhinus ruficollis* 棕頸鈎嘴鶥

Year-round records from Tai Po Kau, Shing Mun, Kadoorie FBG, Fo Tan, and from Tai Mo Shan itself confirm that this species is currently established all around the slopes of that mountain. Also reported from Ho Chung (up to two in January). However, the only reports from Hong Kong Island were of singles at Mount Davis on 1 January and at Tai Tam Reservoir on 2 October.

310C Rufous-capped Babbler *Stachyris ruficeps* 紅頭穗鶥

Reported from Lok Lo Ha (Fo Tan), Ng Tung Chai, Shing Mun, Tai Po Kau, Tai Mei Tuk and Shuen Wan. This species appears to be spreading gradually.

312A Masked Laughingthrush *Garrulax perspicillatus* 黑臉噪鶥

No significant records

313C Greater Necklaced Laughingthrush *Garrulax pectoralis* 黑領噪鶥

Presumably present year-round, though reports were only received for the period up to the end of May and again from the end of August. Many records involved flocks of five to ten birds, but several counts or estimates of flock sizes exceeded that, including one of 20 birds in Aberdeen CP on 24 January. This was one of only two records from Hong Kong Island, the other involving a flock of between five and ten at the same location on 8 February. All other records were from widespread areas of the NT. Only one report, involving eight birds at Fanling Golf Course on 8 March, referred to birds definitely showing characters of the race *picticollis*, which occurs in South China. Observers are encouraged to confirm the racial identity of birds in reports, whenever views permit.

314C Black-throated Laughingthrush *Garrulax chinensis* 黑喉噪鶥

As usual, a significant proportion of reports of this species came from the more well-wooded areas of Hong Kong Island, from Tai Tam CP west. However, it also continued to be noted at two sites in the NT where it has relatively recently become established, namely Shing Mun and Kowloon Hills. It was also again noted at Ho Chung, in January. One at Chau Tau on 1 August was unusual, however.

315A Hwamei *Garrulax canorus* 畫眉

No significant reports.

316C White-browed Laughingthrush *Garrulax sannio* 白頰噪鶥

Two were reported at Chau Tau on three dates in January and again on 18 April. It was also reported at Shek Wu Wai on 14 January and 21 February, with at least three there on the former date. The only other report was of one at Yung Shue O on 6 June.

317D Silver-eared Mesia *Leothrix argentauris* 銀耳相思鳥

Reported from the Tai Mo Shan massif, at Tai Po Kau, Ng Tung Chai, Shing Mun and Lok Lo Ha (Fo Tan), and also from Kowloon Hills catchwater.

318C Red-billed Leiothrix *Leiothrix lutea* 紅嘴相思鳥

Reported only from Tai Po Kau and Kowloon Hills catchwater, up to 24 March and again from 22 December, with a highest count of 12 (two flocks) at Tai Po Kau on 14 January. While it may that it is simply being under-reported, the paucity of reports suggest that it is now genuinely scarcer in Hong Kong than it was as recently as the early 1990s, for example. It may also be that competition from Silver-eared Mesia *L. argentauris* is one factor in the apparent decline of what may never have been a self-sustaining population.

319D Blue-winged Minla *Minla cyanouroptera* 藍翅希鶥

At this species' stronghold at Tai Po Kau up to ten birds were reported during January to March and September to November. Elsewhere, up to ten were also recorded at Kowloon Hills catchwater during January, February, June,

November and December, and two were recorded on single dates in February at both Shing Mun and Ng Tung Chai.

320A White-bellied Yuhina *Yuhina zantholeuca* 白腹鳳鸝

All records were from Tai Po Kau, Shing Mun and Kowloon Hills catchwater and none involved more than two birds. Although it was the only record between 18 April and 26 September, the presence of one at Shing Mun on 4 July tends to confirm that it is almost certainly merely lack of observer activity in the summer months that accounts for the lack of records at that time.

321A Striated Yuhina *Yuhina castaniceps* 栗頭鳳鸝

Two flocks which had been present in December 1997 were again noted in the early part of the year: twenty were at Kowloon Hills catchwater on 24 January, while up to 40 were at Tai Po Kau on four dates between 10 January and 15 February. Later in the year, one was seen at Wu Kau Tang on 1 November, 50 were at Mai Po on 15 November, 24 of these birds being trapped, and 30 were at Ng Tung Chai on 6 December.

322C Vinous-throated Parrotbill *Paradoxornis webbianus* 棕頭鴉雀

At Tai Mo Shan two were present on 23 February and six were noted on 17 May.

323A Asian Stubtail Warbler *Urosphena squameiceps* 鱗頭樹鶯

In the early part of the year up to four recorded at widespread locations, with the only higher counts coming from Tai Po Kau: five were seen there on 27 January, eight on 28 January and six on 15 February. The final record in this period was of one at Shing Mun on 24 February, considerably earlier than usual. During the autumn first recorded at Kadoorie FBG on 29 October, when three were present. Thereafter regularly recorded throughout November and December, always from fairly well wooded areas in the Central NT, with the exception of two at Pak Kok, Lamma on 5 December. The maximum at any one site during the later part of the year was five, recorded at Tai Po Kau on 22 December.

324A Pale-footed Bush Warbler *Cettia pallidipes* 淡腳樹鶯

A first-winter was trapped at Mai Po on 8 November (PJL). This is the seventh Hong Kong record.

325A Japanese Bush Warbler *Cettia diphone* 日本樹鶯

Records in the early part of the year came from widespread open country locations, but also included one at Boundary Street Rest Garden on 9 February. As early as 11 January birds were in song and the final record in the spring was also the highest count at any one site: six at Mai Po on 22 March. In the autumn, the first record came on the rather late date of 17 November, and the highest count at a single site again came from Mai Po, where ten were recorded on 10 December.

326A Brownish-flanked Bush Warbler *Cettia fortipes* 強腳樹鶯

Only three reports were received: singles at Kadoorie FBG on 29 October and 18 November and at Tsim Bei Tsui on 25 November. This is a rather poor showing: in each of the three previous years a minimum of six and an average of around nine birds were reported, with most records in the winter period (January, February and December), rather than in the autumn.

329A Russet Bush Warbler *Bradypterus mandelli* 高山短翅鶯

In the early part of the year noted in song at Mui Wo on 1 February, at Sha Lo Tung on 15 February, at 600 m asl on Tai Mo Shan on 23 February, at Tai Wai on 27 February and at Mai Po on 28 February and 4 March. In the later part of the year present again from 1 November, when one was at Sha Lo Tung. Recorded at that site on a further four occasions during November and December, and also at Tai Mo Shan on 10 November and at Mai Po on 3 and 11 December.

The adoption of *B. mandelli* as the scientific name for this species follows the publication of Dickinson *et al.* (1998).

330A Large Grass Warbler *Graminicola bengalensis* **N** 大草鶯

In the spring, two were seen near the summit of Ma On Shan on 28 March, two were seen on Tai Mo Shan on 10 April, one was seen carrying food on Fei Ngo Shan on 12 April and another was seen at a different location on the same mountain the following day. Also, one was heard on Tai Mo Shan on 11 July.

19 Large Grass Warbler *Graminicola bengalensis*
Tai Mo Shan, Hong Kong, July 2000 *Martin Hale*

331A Lanceolated Warbler *Locustella lanceolata* 矛紋蝗鶯

The only report received was of one at Long Valley on 27 October. This

follows a total of 22 recorded in 1997 and represents this species' poorest showing since 1989, its most recent blank year.

332A Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler *Locustella certhiola* 小蝗鶯

Spring reports of this species are unusual, with a total of just eight previously, so the occurrence of three is interesting: single birds were seen at Lin Barn Tsuen on 1 March, at San Tin on 27 March and again at Lin Barn Tsuen on 29 March. In the autumn a total of 26 birds were recorded, all but two of which occurred between 1 and 15 September, and all of which occurred at either Tin Shui Wai, Lut Chau, Mai Po or Long Valley. The latter site produced the highest count - seven - on 3 September. This is marginally the lowest peak count at a single site in any year since 1990, and well below those for 1996 and 1997. Outside the main passage period singles were noted at Long Valley on 31 October and 7 November.

334A Styan's Grasshopper Warbler *Locustella pleskei* **VU** 史氏蝗鶯

One at Mui Wo on 1 January (PJH) is the first Hong Kong record away from the Deep Bay, though it was not included in the data set on which the entry in Carey *et al.* (2001) was based. One in the mangroves at the Mai Po boardwalk on 12 May (GJC) is the latest on record.

335A Black-browed Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus bistrigiceps* 黑眉葦鶯

Spring passage occurred between 28 March and 12 May, with a maximum of seven noted at Mai Po on 28 April. Apart from two nearby at Lin Barn Tsuen on 14 April, and two at Shuen Wan on 24 April, all spring records were from Mai Po. Autumn passage was first noted on 6 October, when one was in song at Tin Shui Wai, and small numbers were then noted regularly until 6 December. The great majority of records in the autumn were from Long Valley, where 25 were present on 27 October, though it was also noted at Mai Po on five dates during this period. These records represent a fairly typical pattern of occurrence for this species in terms of both dates and numbers, though in most recent years several birds have also been noted during the winter period. In 1998 there was only one such record: one was trapped at Mai Po on 22 February.

337A Paddyfield Warbler *Acrocephalus agricola* 稻田葦鶯

One was at Lin Barn Tsuen on 1 March (PJH).

338A Blunt-winged Warbler *Acrocephalus concinens* 鈍翅葦鶯

First-winter birds were trapped at Mai Po on 14 February and 5 April (same bird) and on 8 November (both PJL). These are the second and third Hong Kong records.

340A Oriental Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus orientalis* 東方大葦鶯

Apart from one in song at Mai Po on 13 February there were no further reports until 28 March, when one was again present at Mai Po. This would appear to have marked the beginning of a weak spring passage as very small numbers

were then recorded regularly at Mai Po until 9 May, when two were trapped. The only records away from Mai Po came from nearby Lin Barn Tsuen where six, the highest single site count in this period, were reported on 14 April. Recorded again at Mai Po from 1 September. Thereafter there were regular records from several sites in the northwest NT indicating that passage continued until at least 8 November, with the greatest numbers reported between 19 September and 6 October. However, compared to many years passage was in fact far from heavy with only five site counts reaching double figures and none exceeding 15. Outside the main autumn passage period one was seen at Mai Po on 8 and 10 December.

341A Thick-billed Warbler *Acrocephalus aedon* 厚嘴葦鶯

Singles were recorded at Mai Po on 24 October, 1 November and 18 December. The latter is the first December record, though there are previous records for the months of January and February, also from Mai Po.

342A Booted Warbler *Hippolais caligata* 靴篦鶯

A first-winter bird of the taxon *rama* was at Long Valley on 14 and 15 September (PJL *et al.*). This is the second Hong Kong record.

343A Zitting Cisticola *Cisticola juncidis* 棕扇尾鶯

Reported in every month of the year except July, though counts at normally favoured sites rarely matched those of recent years. At Chep Lap Kok, present in small numbers up to at least 10 June, but not reported from there during the later months of the year. At Long Valley, 19 were present on 18 January, 40 (the highest site count of the year) on 26 February, and four on 14 April. Present again at that site from at least 22 August, when four were noted. There were counts of up to 17 at Tin Shui Wai during September and five counts of 10-20 at Long Valley between 8 and 22 November, though the highest count during the later part of the year involved 30 at Long Valley on 6 December. Other sites in the northwest NT from which it was reported were Tsim Bei Tsui, Ma Tso Lung, Mai Po, Ping Kong, and Kam Tin (where one was in song on 25 August). Outside of the northwest NT it was reported from The Brothers, Green Island, Ham Tin, High Junk Peak, Kau Sai Chau, Lai Chi Wo and Shuen Wan.

344A Bright-capped Cisticola *Cisticola exilis* 黃頭扇尾鶯

The only report received was of one at Sha Lo Tung on 8 March.

345A Yellow-bellied Prinia *Prinia flaviventris* 灰頭鷦鶯

No significant reports.

346A Plain Prinia *Prinia inornata* 褐頭鷦鶯

The only record of interest involved its apparent initial colonisation of the runway area at Chek Lap Kok: the first record for the airport platform itself came on 30 March and it was believed to be breeding in grass alongside the runway.

347A Common Tailorbird *Orthotomus sutorius* 長尾縫葉鶯

No significant reports.

349A Dusky Warbler *Phylloscopus fuscatus* 褐柳鶯

Maximum single site counts in each of the first five months were all from Mai Po and were as follows: 20 on 17 January, 14 on 16 February, 16 on 5 March, ten on 6 April, three on 7 and 10 May. In fact there were no reports at all between 6 and 21 April perhaps indicating the departure of the wintering population around the earlier date. From 21 April onwards, however, up to four were regularly reported in song in the mangroves at Mai Po until 17 May, equalling the latest date on which it has been recorded in Hong Kong. During this period the only other record involved a single at Penfold Park on 30 April. Noted again from 27 September when three were at Long Valley. A series of high counts (between 10 and 40 birds) from Mai Po and Long Valley in particular, but also from Kam Tin and Wo Shang Wai, suggest that the main passage through Hong Kong occurred between 15 October and 8 November. Thereafter the only double-figure counts were from Mai Po (15 on 3 December and 20 on 10 December). Numbers reported from Long Valley, which appears to be chiefly frequented by migrants, were much reduced in the later part of November and December. The vast majority of records were from wetland sites in the northwest NT, but records also came from sites such as Penfold Park (where it was regular in small numbers), Shuen Wan, Fo Tan, Nam Chung, Lai Chi Wo, Sam A Tsuen, Plover Cove, Tai Po Waterfront Garden, Ng Tung Chai and Tai Long, Sai Kung.

350A Yellow-streaked Warbler *Phylloscopus armandii* 棕眉柳鶯

One was trapped at Mai Po on 17 November (PJL).

20 Zitting Cisticola *Cisticola juncidis*
Long Valley, Hong Kong, November 1993 *Kar-man Lo*

351A Radde's Warbler *Phylloscopus schwarzi* 巨嘴柳鶯

Only three were recorded. Singles were seen at Aberdeen CP on 8 February, near Tsim Bei Tsui on 15 February and at Mai Po on 19 November. The two reports in the early part of the year, which were not referred to in Carey *et al.* (2001), bring the total of such records to five.

352A Pallas's Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus proregulus* 黃腰柳鶯

In the early part of the year recorded regularly up to 8 March, with a peak site count of 25 at Tai Po Kau on 23 February. Apart from reports of 15 at Ngong Ping on 4 January, ten at Mui Wo on 11 January and one at Mount Davis on 25 February, all were from the central and northern NT. After 8 March there were further records of one in the mangroves at Mai Po on 20 March and of ten at Tai Po Kau on 24 March. Recorded again from 7 November, with a peak site count for that month of ten at Kadoorie FBG on 18th. Numbers reported in December were generally somewhat higher, and counts of ten at Tai Po Kau on 6 December and 15-20 at Ng Tung Chai on 9 December suggest that a further influx probably occurred around that time. December influxes are in fact regular, though tend to occur a little later than this. During the second winter period, nearly all reports were once again from the central and northern NT; the only other reports came from two sites in Sai Kung and from Lamma. However, it is presumably still much more widespread in occurrence than this bias in the source of reports suggests.

354A Yellow-browed Warbler *Phylloscopus inornatus* 黃眉柳鶯

In early January there were counts of 14 from Fanling Golf Course on 3rd and of 15 from Tai Po Kau on 5th. Similar numbers were present in February, with counts of 16 at Tai Po Kau on 15th, 20 at Shing Mun on 16th and 18 at Mai Po also on 16th. The highest site count in March was 12 at Mai Po on 5th, while in April there were 15 at Mai Po on 6th. This site also produced the final report of the spring on 28 April. Present again from 2 October, all double-figure site counts in the later part of the year coming from Fanling Golf Course in mid to late November, with 19 on 17th, 20 on 23rd and 30 on 30th.

356A Arctic Warbler *Phylloscopus borealis* 極北柳鶯

All records received fell between 5 September and 18 October. Reports were all of one to five birds and showed a strong bias towards the central and northern NT, though this must be a reflection of greater observer presence there than elsewhere, for this species has in the past been of very widespread occurrence in Hong Kong. As in 1997, and in contrast to 1996, passage appears to have been very light. The complete absence of spring reports is unique in the 1990s.

An individual of the form *xanthrodryas* was trapped at Wong Chuk Yeung on 26 May (MRL). This is the first acceptable record of this taxon in Hong Kong (Leven in prep).

358A Pale-legged Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus tenellipes* 灰腳樹鶯

One was trapped at Kadoorie Farm on 29 October.

[358A/359A Pale-legged Leaf Warbler/Sakhalin Leaf Warbler

Phylloscopus tenellipes/borealoides 灰腳樹鶯 / 庫頁島柳鶯

Spring passage was as usual very light: whereas a minimum of 37 birds were reported in the autumn, the only reports during what would normally be regarded as the spring passage period were of singles at Tai Mei Tuk on 24 March and at Tai Po Kau on 18 April. However, the former record is noteworthy in that it appears to be the first record of this species pair during the second half of March. Apart from one at Kadoorie FBG on 7 November, autumn passage occurred between 8 September and 18 October. Reports during this period came from widespread locations and were mainly of singles: the only site count exceeding three birds involved six at Twisk Camp Site on 20 September. As in several other recent years, there were a small number of winter records: singles at Fanling Golf Course on 12 January and at Pak Kok, Lamma on 5 December, and two at Shing Mun on 24 February.]

360A Eastern Crowned Warbler *Phylloscopus coronatus* 冕柳鶯

In the spring two were on Dong Ping Chau on 13 April, while in the autumn three were at Tai Po Kau on 20 September and another at Twisk Camp Site on the same day. This represents easily the poorest year for records of this species since 1989.

361A Blyth's Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus reguloides* 冠紋柳鶯

Following the removal of Sulphur-breasted Warbler *P. ricketti* from the Hong Kong List (Carey *et al.* 2001) it is currently considered that two races of Blyth's Leaf Warbler occur in Hong Kong: *P.r. fokiensis* and *P.r. goodsoni*. Birds which have previously been accepted as *P. ricketti*, are now regarded as *P.r. goodsoni*. The occurrences of these two forms were as follows:

P.r. fokiensis At the beginning of the year reported from Tai Po Kau on several dates up to 23 February, when the highest count, eight, was made. As all other reports since the beginning of the year had involved a maximum of just two, it seems likely that some passage may have occurred around that date. One was also seen in the Lai Chi Wo area on 14 and 28 January and two were seen in Aberdeen CP on 8 February. In the autumn first noted in Tai Po Kau on 7 November, when one was present, but only reported once more from there, with two on 11 November. The highest count towards the end of the year involved three at Kowloon Hills catchwater on 5 December. Also, one was at Ng Tung Chai on 9 December.

P.r. goodsoni In the early part of the year singles were noted at Tai Po Kau on 25 January and 23 February, at Ho Chung on 28 January and at Shing Mun on 21 February. Another was trapped at Mai Po on 15 March. The only reports in the later part of the year were of singles in Tai Po Kau on 7, 8 and 10 November.

[362A/363A Grey-crowned/Bianchi's Warbler

Seicercus tephrocephalus/valentini 灰冠鵙鶯 / 比氏鵙鶯

All previous records of these two recently split species (Alström and Olson 1999 and 2000, Martens *et al.* 1999) have been published as Golden-spectacled Warbler *Seicercus burkii*, and a paper documenting the known occurrences of each species in Hong Kong is in preparation. The only record for 1998 was submitted as a Golden-spectacled Warbler: it involved one at Mount Davis on the rather late date of 26 March. In each of the years 1994-97 at least four were recorded, so this represents a poor showing.]

367A Grey-streaked Flycatcher *Muscicapa griseisticta* 斑胸鶲

In the spring, three were at Po Toi on 3 May. All autumn records were in the period from 5 to 14 October, and all came from Tsim Bei Tsui, Mong Tseng and Pak Nai. Between four and eight individuals appear to have been involved. A poor year for this species.

368A Dark-sided Flycatcher *Muscicapa sibirica* 烏鶲

First reported on 19 September, the only day on which more than one bird was recorded, with singles at Mai Po, Mong Tseng and Pak Nai. The following day there was also one at Twisk Camp Site. Reported from Tai Po Kau on five dates between 23 September and 2 October, each report involving only a single and all but one being aged as a juvenile or first-winter. There was also a report of a juvenile at Tai Mei Tuk on 29 September, and reports of singles at Mong Tseng on 1 and 8 October. On the latter date the bird involved was aged as a juvenile, though that on 1st was unaged. The final report was of one at Mai Po on 12 October. Passage was lighter than in 1997, when at least 20 individuals were recorded.

369A Asian Brown Flycatcher *Muscicapa dauurica* 北灰鶲

In January singles were seen at Fanling Golf Course on 3rd and 20th and at Tai Po Kau on 5th, with the next records involving singles at Mai Po on 3 and 5 March. Singles were also noted at Mai Po on 17 and 30 April, and at Po Toi on 3 May. Apart from a most unusual record of one at Silverstrand on 1 August, the first in the autumn was noted at Kowloon Hills catchwater on 9 September. Thereafter there were regular reports during the second half of September and throughout October from many sites in the central and northern NT. Peak passage in terms of bird-days occurred during the first week in October, though the highest site counts, five at Pak Nai on 14th and at Mai Po on 24th, occurred outside that period. Six records in November included one at Kowloon Park on 1st, while the last of four December records came from Tai Po Kau on 22nd.

371A Verditer Flycatcher *Eumyias thalassina* 銅藍鶲

In January singles were reported from Tai Po Kau on 1st, Lai Chi Wo on 14th, and Fo Tan on 29th, while in February there was a further report from Tai Po Kau on 7th, as well as singles at Shuen Wan on 2nd and Shing Mun on 15th. In the later part of the year reported only from Tai Po Kau on 23 and 25 November,

though two different individuals may have been involved, as there were reports on 23rd of singles in the orchard and near Tai Po Kau village.

372A Yellow-rumped Flycatcher *Ficedula zanthopygia* 白眉姬鶲

There were four records, involving a total of five birds, all between 13 and 19 September. Two were at Kowloon Park on 13th, with another, apparently a different individual, also there on 19th. A female was at Fanling Golf Course on 16th and an immature male at Tsim Bei Tsui on 19th. As with several other migrant flycatcher species 1998 was an extremely poor year for this species. Interestingly, it was a poor year regardless of whether the species is normally encountered in autumn, such as this one or Mugimaki Flycatcher *F. mugimaki*, or in the spring, such as Blue-and-white Flycatcher *M. cyanomelana*. Indeed for Ferruginous *M. ferruginea* and Narcissus Flycatchers *F. narcissina*, which normally occur in very small numbers in the spring, 1998 was a completely blank year, the first for either species during the 1990s to date.

375A Mugimaki Flycatcher *Ficedula mugimaki* 鴝姬鶲

The only record outside either of the passage periods involved a female at Shing Mun on 3 January, while the only record during the spring passage period involved a male at Mai Po on 13 April. In the autumn, between 24 October and 20 November, there were eight reports, involving a maximum total of thirteen individuals. All reports in this period were from Mai Po, Kadoorie FBG, Tsim Bei Tsui or Hok Tau, with the highest site count being three at Kadoorie FBG on 20 November. As noted above, this was a poor year for this species, as it was for most flycatchers.

376A Rufous-gorgeted Flycatcher *Ficedula strophiata* 橙胸姬鶲

Singles were at Ng Tung Chai on 2 February (MRL,VK) and 6 December (RDES).

377A Red-throated Flycatcher *Ficedula albicilla* 紅喉姬鶲

Reported from widespread sites during January and February, with most records being of singles, but with at least two on three dates at Fanling Golf Course and three there on 28 February. There were also three at Mai Po on 25 January and three at Ma Wan on 3 February. One bird which had been present at Mai Po in February was still present on 14 March and another was at Nam Sang Wai on 18 March, while during the spring passage period there were additional singles at Mai Po on 28 March and 5 April (trapped), and at Penfold Park on 2 April. Two were again present at Fanling Golf Course on 21 September, but from then until the end of the year there were only two further records: singles at Mai Po on 24 November and near Fanling Golf Course on 28 December.

378A Blue-and-white Flycatcher *Cyanoptila cyanomelana* 白腹鶲

There were no spring records at all and the only reports in the autumn involved immature males at Mong Tseng on 18 October and at Tai Mo Shan on the rather late date of 10 November. Considering that this is usually one of the

more plentiful of the migrant flycatchers, especially in the spring, 1998 was a pitifully poor year for it.

380A Hainan Blue Flycatcher *Cyornis hainanus* 海南藍鶲

First recorded at Shing Mun and Tai Po Kau on 18 April. At Shing Mun on that date five were heard in song and at Tai Po Kau two; these latter birds were noted again on 19th and 24th. Thereafter reported from Tai Po Kau on 27 May when at least two and perhaps three were present and on 21 June when a male was seen. Apart from one singing in woodland near A Ma Wat in Plover Cove CP on 25 June, there were no further records until 30 August when one was seen at Mai Po. One was also noted there on 23 September. This pattern of spring/early summer sightings and then a gap until late August/early September is not unusual, though a reduction in observer activity during July and early August may be at least part of the explanation for it.

383A Grey-headed Flycatcher *Culicicapa ceylonensis* 方尾鶲

Recorded up to 8 March and again from 27 October, with all records coming from Tai Po Kau, Shing Mun and Kowloon Hills catchwater, apart from one at Aberdeen CP on 8 February. Counts of five were reported from Tai Po Kau on both 24 and 30 January, and also on 7 and 23 November.

384A Black-naped Monarch *Hypothymis azurea* 黑枕王鶲

Only three reports were received: singles were at Mai Po on 5 March and at Kowloon Hills catchwater on 29 November and 5 December. With possibly as few as two individuals involved, this was a very poor year for this species.

385A Asian Paradise Flycatcher *Terpsiphone paradisi* 壽帶鳥

One seen at Wu Kau Tang on 22 March represented the only spring record. Autumn passage occurred between 27 August and 4 October. After the first, seen at Kuk Po, a further eight birds were reported, from Mai Po, Shing Mun, Tai Po Kau and Kowloon Park.

386A Japanese Paradise Flycatcher *Terpsiphone atrocaudata* **N** 紫壽帶鳥

Spring passage was weak with the only records involving two at Ping Chau on 13 April and one at Mai Po on 30 April. In the autumn, singles were at Twisk Camp Site on 20 September, at Mai Po on 17 and 24 October (trapped on the former date) and at Tai Po Kau on 1 November. This last record is the latest ever by seven days.

387A Chinese Penduline Tit *Remiz consobrinus* 中華攀雀

In January and early February, only small numbers were reported: three at Mai Po on 14 January and three at Lin Barn Tsuen on 7 February. However, after reports of six at Mai Po and seven at Nam Sang Wai on 28 February there was evidence of passage throughout March and into April, with the peak occurring in the second half of March: frequent reports at this time from Mai Po in particular, included 12 there on 14th, 20 on 22nd and 15 on 28th. The last

report in the spring was of one at Mai Po on 3 May. In the autumn, first noted at Mai Po on 8 November, with passage apparently peaking around ten days later: fifteen were noted there on both 17th and 19th. Ten at Mai Po on 10 December were the last reported before the end of the year. There were no reports in 1998 from any locations other than Mai Po, Lin Barn Tsuen and Nam Sang Wai.

389A Great Tit *Parus major* 大山雀

No significant reports.

390C Yellow-cheeked Tit *Parus spilonotus* 黃頰山雀

In January there was one report of ten at Tai Po Kau on 31st. While that figure may indeed represent a rather optimistic estimate of the total population at Tai Po Kau, most reports in that month, and indeed in other months, were of ones and twos. This was also the case with reports from Shing Mun and Kowloon Hills catchwater, the only other locations from which it was reported. There were records for all months except July and August, though it may safely be assumed to have been present in those months.

391D Velvet-fronted Nuthatch *Sitta frontalis* 絨額鳾

Tai Po Kau remains the stronghold of this species, but it was also reported from Shing Mun.

392A Plain Flowerpecker *Dicaeum concolor* 純色啄花鳥

Two at Mount Davis on 1 January (MH) were possibly the same as those recorded there in late 1997.

393A Buff-bellied Flowerpecker *Dicaeum ignipectus* 紅胸啄花鳥

Reported from Tai Po Kau, where two were singing on 18 April and one was seen on 5 May, as well as from A Ma Wat, Kowloon Hills catchwater and also Long Valley, where two were present at Yin Kong Village on 24 January, along with six Scarlet-backed Flowerpeckers *D. cruentatum*.

394A Scarlet-backed Flowerpecker *Dicaeum cruentatum* 朱背啄花鳥

There were again no really significant reports of this fairly widespread breeding species, and the absence of reports from Hong Kong Island, noted in the 1997 Report, continued. However, one was seen at King's Park in south Kowloon on 9 February.

395A Fork-tailed Sunbird *Aethopyga christinae* 叉尾太陽鳥

No significant reports.

396A Chestnut-flanked White-eye *Zosterops erythropleurus* 紅脇繡眼鳥

Single birds were seen at Tai Po Kau on 4 and 27 December.

397A Japanese White-eye *Zosterops japonicus* 暗綠繡眼鳥

No significant reports.

The scientific name used in Carey *et al.* (2001) is in error.

400A Tristram's Bunting *Emberiza tristrami* 白眉鵐

During the first three months of the year up to 11 were regularly reported from Tai Po Kau, with additional records from Kowloon Hills catchwater, Mui Tsz Lam, Fanling Golf Course (three on 23 February), Shing Mun (four on 24 February) and Mui Wo, Lantau. Last reported in the spring on 24 March at Tai Po Kau. The only record at the end of the year was of two at Tai Po Kau on 6 December.

401A Chestnut-eared Bunting *Emberiza fucata* 栗耳鵐

In the spring, singles were at Mai Po fish ponds on 17 March and at Fung Lok Wai on 20 March, while at the end of the year two were at Long Valley on 5 December. The poorest year for this species since 1990, when just one was recorded.

402A Little Bunting *Emberiza pusilla* 小鵐

During January and the early part of February only very small numbers were reported, mainly from the northwest NT. However, from 21 February there was clear evidence of passage being under way: thirty were at Long Valley on that date, with 12 at She Shan and eight at Lin Barn Tsuen. On 26 February, 20 were present at Chek Lap Kok and spring passage peaked around 16-17 March, when at least 100 were present at Mai Po. By 21 March, numbers were clearly down, with just 20 recorded at the same site, yet passage at or around this level of intensity appears to have continued until around 14 April. Thereafter, numbers were much reduced, with three at Penfold Park on 30 April being the last report of the spring, apart from one at Tai Mo Shan on 17 May, a new late date by five days. However, since this bird was recorded in an area where releases of birds have been noted at nearby temples, there must be some doubt about its origins. Noted again from 6 October, when one was present at Tsim Bei Tsui, but not again after that date until 1 November. Thereafter, up to eight were present at various sites, again mainly in the northwest NT, during November and December.

403A Yellow-browed Bunting *Emberiza chrysophrys* 黃眉鵐

A female was at Lut Chau on 27 March (SB). In addition, up to three were seen at Tsim Bei Tsui on 8 and 11 October (YYT,TW), but one showed tail damage; thus, these birds are regarded as being of captive origin.

406A Yellow-breasted Bunting *Emberiza aureola* 黃胸鵐

At the beginning of the year, the only records were of singles at Penfold Park on 6 January, Long Valley on 2 February and at Fung Lok Wai on 9 February, with two at Lin Barn Tsuen on 21 February. Passage would appear to have been under way from around the middle of March: on 16th three were noted in the Mai

Po fish ponds area and 20 were noted near San Tin. Reports of up to ten at various locations mainly in the northwest NT then continued throughout the rest of March and April, with one much higher count of 35 at Lin Barn Tsuen on 14 April. There was also a report of 14 from Chek Lap Kok on 29 April, while in May eight were noted at Lin Barn Tsuen on 5th and one was at Mai Po on the rather late date of 21st. In the autumn, noted from 6 September; on that date four were present at Long Valley, where all the double-figure counts for the remaining part of the year were made: 16 on 15 October, 14 on 18 October, 12 on 27 October and 10 on 7 November. The only records in December were all at Long Valley too: three on 4th, two on 5th and one on 30th.

21 Yellow-breasted Bunting *Emberiza aureola*
Long Valley, Hong Kong, 17 November 2000 *Karl Y.S. Ng*

407A Chestnut Bunting *Emberiza rutila* 栗鵐

A single female at Shing Mun on 30 January was the only report during the first winter period. Spring passage was again very light: two were at Dong Ping Chau on 13 April, one at Fung Lok Wai on 14 April, two at Po Toi on 18 April, and one at Mai Po on 4 May. Apart from two at Mong Tseng on 8 October, all records in the autumn fell between 29 October and 22 November. Out of a total of 72 birds reported at this time, mainly from the central NT, 25 were noted passing overhead at Kadoorie ARC on 29 October, 20 were at the same location on 7 November and 16 were at Tai Po Kau on 16 November. On the whole, not an outstanding year for this species by any means, though a slight improvement on 1997's poor showing.

409A Japanese Yellow Bunting *Emberiza sulphurata* **VU** 硫黃鵐

This was another poor year for this species. Following just five reports in 1997, possibly relating to as few as three individuals, there were just four reports

in 1998, this time possibly again involving just three birds: one was at Mai Po on 28 March, with a male and female there the following day, and another female was at Dong Ping Chau on 18 April. These figures can be contrasted with those for spring 1996 when, with even the most conservative interpretation of the figures, at least 43 birds were recorded.

410A Black-faced Bunting *Emberiza spodocephala* 灰頭鵐

In January and February, only very small numbers were reported from widespread locations, including Penfold Park, Mai Po, Fei Ngo Shan, Lai Chi Wo, Nam Chung and Ho Chung. In March and early April, numbers increased slightly, suggesting the onset of light passage during this period. There was also a marked switch in the origin of reports towards the northwest NT, though this may simply have been the result of the increased observer presence. Spring passage would appear to have peaked around 14 April, when about 50 were at Fung Lok Wai, 20 at Mai Po and ten at Tsim Bei Tsui. Thereafter, records continued to 17 May, though the only double-figure count was of 15 at Mai Po on 27 April, in an influx associated with the passage of a thunderstorm over the area. First noted in the autumn from 8 November, with unremarkable numbers reported up to the end of the year from widespread locations in the NT. Males of the locally less numerous nominate race *spodocephala* were reported from Mai Po on 2 and 28 February, with four there on the latter date. They were also noted at the same location on 6, 13 and 28 April, with eight present on the second of those dates, around the peak of the spring passage for the species as a whole. The only other report of a bird of this race was from Yin Kong on 20 December. A male at Tsim Bei Tsui on 17 May, the latest in spring in 1998, was of the more locally numerous race *sordida*. Observers are requested to indicate as often as possible which race is involved, when they submit records of this species.

413A Common Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus* 蘆鵐

1997: a female was trapped at Mai Po on 27 December (PJL).

415A Grey-capped Greenfinch *Carduelis sinica* 金翅雀

Both records of this species in 1998 came from the Shatin area: four were at Kau To Shan, Fo Tan on 10 January and three were present at the Hong Kong Sports Institute from 14 to 18 April.

416A Eurasian Siskin *Carduelis spinus* 黃雀

The only record was of one at Tsim Bei Tsui on 4 January. This was the third consecutive year in which it was recorded in Hong Kong, after a blank period from 1992-1995.

418A Yellow-billed Grosbeak *Eophona migratoria* 黑尾蠟嘴雀

Three flocks of more than ten birds were recorded during the first winter period: twelve at Tsim Bei Tsui on 4 January, 17 at Kam Tin on 18 January and 25 there on 1 March. Also, up to nine were recorded at Mai Po on five dates between 28 March and 28 April, but the nine referred to, recorded on 5 April, were obvious

escapes, which may have remained in the area, as two were recorded at nearby Mong Tseng on the rather unlikely date of 14 June, the first time this species has been noted in Hong Kong in that month. The only records in the later part of the year were of singles at Mong Tseng on 8 October and at Long Valley on 15 October. The presence of at least one wintering flock was a slight improvement on the serious decline in the numbers of this species occurring in Hong Kong, which the 1997 figures suggested.

420A White-rumped Munia *Lonchura striata* 白腰文鳥

Probable breeding was noted at Shuen Wan, where it had bred in 1997. The largest concentration reported was 50 at Mai Po on 20 September. Kowloon Park held flocks of 20 on 1 November and 15 on 6 December. However, this species was undoubtedly both much more widespread as a breeding species and more generally numerous than is suggested by this summary of the more notable of the 27 reports received.

421A Scaly-breasted Munia *Lonchura punctulata* 斑文鳥

Many reports were of flocks of more than ten birds, with Long Valley, Tin Shui Wai Landfill and Penfold Park the most regular sites. At Long Valley in the autumn a flock of 40 was first noted on 27 September, remaining at around that figure until early November. However, on 15 November a flock of 120 were seen there, though numbers fell away sharply after that and only three were present on 6 December with none noted thereafter. Other sites from which it was reported were Fanling Golf Course, Mong Tseng, Lo Lok Ha, She Shan, Chau Tau and Wu Kau Tang.

[423A Russet Sparrow *Passer rutilans* 山麻雀

Two males and three females were at Che Gong Miu Road Park, Sha Tin, on 15 February (SCYW); based on the number and locality, however, these must be regarded as escapes from captivity.]

424A Eurasian Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus* 樹麻雀

Fifty on Pond 16/17 at Mai Po on 12 July represented the largest single flock reported.

425D Baya Weaver *Ploceus philippinus* 黃胸織布鳥

Up to 30 birds were reported at Mai Po from 17 May to 8 November, with breeding noted.

427A Red-billed Starling *Sturnus sericeus* 絲光椋鳥

In January and February, the only flocks numbering in excess of one hundred were reported from Kam Tin on 30 January (about 200 birds), and from Mai Po on 2 February (100) and 16 February (240), though smaller flocks were noted heading west over Shuen Wan at dusk on 8 January (80), and at Tsim Bei Tsui on 11 January (30), Kam Tin on 25 January (40) Nam Chung on 29 January (35), Long Valley on 31 January (50) and Lok Ma Chau on 14 February (about

40). During March there was evidence of passage, with 350 noted in the Lok Ma Chau-Ma Tso Lung area on 14th and about 100 at San Tin on 20th. However, apart from one with an injured leg noted at Long Valley on 25 April, none were reported in spring after 3 April. There were many more reports in autumn, with the first at Mai Po on 15 October. During the rest of that month flocks of between ten and 70 were noted increasingly in the northwest NT, and by 5 November a flock of 150 was present at Long Valley, growing to 220 by 15 November. On 8 November a flock of 350 was reported from Mai Po, and there was an interesting series of counts in early November from Ping Kong, near Sheung Shui: one on 4th, 27 on 5th, 64 on 9th, between 20 and 30 from 10th to 13th, and finally 128 on 15th. Up to 80 were also present at Shuen Wan in early November and a flock of 110 was seen at Lut Chau on 25th. Finally, in early December several large flocks were noted: 200 at San Tin on 3th, at least 400 at Kam Tin and at least 800 at Mai Po on 6th and 220 in the Lok Ma Chau-Ma Tso Lung area on 20th. Shuen Wan, Penfold Park, Nam Chung and Kuk Po were the only sites away from the northwest NT at which this species was recorded in 1998.

431A Common Starling *Sturnus vulgaris* 紫翅椋鳥

All reports came from Kam Tin, where up to six were noted on nine dates between 18 January, when six were seen together, and 8 March, when two were still present. One was also seen there on 6 December. Though 1997 was a slightly better year, 1998 was nonetheless a better-than-average year for this species in Hong Kong.

432A White-cheeked Starling *Sturnus cineraceus* 灰椋鳥

In the early part of the year up to 14 April, mainly recorded at Mai Po, Long Valley and Kam Tin, with a maximum flock size of 250 at Mai Po on 4 February. However, after 22 March there were only three reports, each involving two birds. Also in the spring one was at the Hong Kong Sports Institute, Shatin on 17 April and four were at Tsim Bei Tsui on the same date. In addition, one was at the same location on the very late date of 17 May: however, the observers reported no obvious cage damage on that bird. In the autumn there was an unusually early record which did involve birds whose plumage condition appeared poor: up to ten were noted at Long Valley between 3 and 16 September. Perhaps significantly there were no further records until the much more usual date of 23 October, though number did not increase very sharply until 6 December when 200 were present at Mai Po and 90 at Kam Tin. There were 170 at the former site by 13 December and 65 in the Lok Ma Chau-Ma Tso Lung area on 20th. In January this species was also noted at Ma Kwu Lam on 1st and at Kau Sai Chau on 17th. These, together with the Sports Institute record, represented the only records away from the northwest NT.

433A Black-collared Starling *Sturnus nigricollis* 黑領椋鳥

Flocks of more than 50 birds were reported from Ho Sheung Heung on 3 January (130), Penfold Park on 3 March (c. 100), Mai Po on 2 August (59), Penfold Park on 15 December (90) and Mai Po on 27 December (c. 75).

22 White-cheeked Starling *Sturnus cineraceus*
Kam Tin, Hong Kong, 19 November 2000 *Ho-fai Cheung*

434A White-shouldered Starling *Sturnus sinensis* 灰背椋鳥

Recorded in every month of the year, at Penfold Park, Chek Lap Kok, Shuen Wan and Po Toi, in addition to the northwest NT, where the overwhelming majority of observations were made. Indeed up to 26 March, when one was at Penfold Park, all records were from the northwest NT, suggesting that a fairly stable wintering population may have been present in that area. However, on 27 March the presence of 15 suggested an influx, and the beginning of spring passage. Two at Po Toi on 18 April were certainly migrants. In fact, the only counts of more than 15 throughout the whole year were of 20 at Fung Lok Wai on 28 July, 65 at Long Valley on 15 September and at least 30 there on 1 November. Singles were noted at Penfold Park on 22 September and at Shuen Wan on 1 November, suggesting movement around these dates, though there were actually very few records in the intervening period. The only record suggesting breeding was of an adult and juvenile seen at Fung Lok Wai on 30 April.

435D Common Myna *Acridotheres tristis* 家八哥

Reported from Long Valley, Kam Tin, Lok Ma Chau, Lin Barn Tsuen, Hung Hom and Po Toi.

436A Crested Myna *Acridotheres cristatellus* 八哥

At Chek Lap Kok, where up to 600 had been noted roosting during September-November 1997, counts of between 340 and 410 were made on four dates between 28 February and 31 March, though by 8 April it was noted that many were paired off and numbers present had fallen to 150. However, 120 were still present there on 30 April. The only other three-figure flock reported was in the early part of the year - 200 near Pak Nai on 7 February - and there were no such reports later in the year. Nesting was reported in a junction box at Nam Sang Wai and in a crevice in a flyover at Waterloo Road, Kowloon Tong.

437A Black-naped Oriole *Oriolus chinensis* 黑枕黃鸝

This was a poor year for this species with none in the spring, no evidence of breeding and only seven recorded in total. All those records were in the period from 19 September to 28 October. On the former date, one was at Pak Nai and two were nearby at Nim Wan. In October, three were in the Tin Shui Wai Pond area on 6th, one was at Mai Po on 12th and a juvenile was at the same location on 28 October.

438A Black Drongo *Dicrurus macrocercus* 黑卷尾

A count of nine at Lin Barn Tsuen on 15 January was noteworthy; the only other reports during the first two months of the year involved two at Tsim Bei Tsui on 9 January and one at Fung Lok Wai on 24 February. During March and April numbers reported were very low, but records of singles at Chek Lap Kok on 15 April and Ho Chung on17 April, two at Po Toi on 3 May, and three at Cape d'Aguilar on 5 and 6 May presumably referred to migrants. Indeed, throughout the entire year the only reports of more than ten were groups of 20 and around 25 at Tsim Bei Tsui on 1 and 6 October. The great majority noted in Hong Kong now appear to fall into the category of migrants and the only report of breeding involved one pair which bred in the casuarinas on the main bund at Mai Po.

23 Black Drongo *Dicrurus macrocercus*
Lamma Island, Hong Kong, July 1994 *Tin-wa Wong*

439A Ashy Drongo *Dicrurus leucophaeus* 灰卷尾

Up to two were noted at Tai Po Kau, Kowloon Hills catchwater, Mong Tseng Hills, Shing Mun and Mount Davis up to 25 February and from 11 October. The former seems an implausible late date compared to earlier years. For example, in 1996 and 1997 the latest dates for this species were 13 April and 16 May

respectively. Among those attributed to either of the two locally occurring races, birds of the race *leucogenys* outnumbered those of the race *salangensis* by two to one.

440A Hair-crested Drongo *Dicrurus hottentottus* 髮冠卷尾

Reported in all months and from widespread locations in the NT, with a few records from Hong Kong Island. The only double-figure counts were made at Fanling Golf Course during 12-16 January (up to 18 birds), at the same location on 27 July (15 birds), at nearby Ping Kong Tsuen on 10 October and at Kap Lung on 21 and 22 November (20 birds)

441A Eurasian Jay *Garrulus glandarius* 松鴉

In May, singles were reported in the Luk Keng-Nam Chung area on 1st and 18th, and at Fanling Golf Course two were seen on 6 July, with a further record of one on 16 September. After an absence of records from Kap Lung in 1997, there were three reports from there in 1998, all in November, on 18th (five), 21st (one) and 22nd (six). There was also one at Mai Po on 26 December.

442A Blue Magpie *Urocissa erythrorhyncha* 紅嘴藍鵲

No significant reports.

443A Grey Treepie *Dendrocitta formosae* 灰樹鵲

Recorded once in each of the first four months of the year: one at Ho Chung on 28 January, at least four at Lai Chi Wo on 1 February, one at Shing Mun on 31 March and one at Tai Po Kau on 24 April. The only other record was of three at Tai Long Wan, Sai Kung on 8 December. For whatever reason, this species appears to have been significantly under-reported in 1998.

444A Common Magpie *Pica pica* 喜鵲

Once again the highest count involved birds preparing to go to roost near the border fence at Mai Po: 50 were noted there on 27 December. The next highest count was a mere 18, at Fanling Golf Course on 6 July.

447A Large-billed Crow *Corvus macrorhynchos* 大嘴烏鴉

A report of 30 at Tai Tam Reservoir on 2 October represented the greatest concentration noted during the year.

448A Collared Crow *Corvus torquatus* 白頸鴉

Reported from Yung Shue Au, Chek Lap Kok, Green Island, Mai Po, Mong Tseng-Tsim Bei Tsui, Long Valley, Shuen Wan and Tai Mei Tuk. The highest count was of 55 on the border fence at Mai Po at dusk on 20 April. The only other high count from the northwest NT involved 25 at Tsim Bei Tsui on 11 October. However, there was a series of reports of 20 or more from Shuen Wan: in July, 28 were counted on 7th and 22 on 28th, and then in September, 20 were counted on 15th and 25 on 29th.

CATEGORY E

708 Purple Swamphen *Porphyrio porphyrio* 紫水雞

An adult was seen at Mai Po on 21 July (MRL). This is assumed to be one of those that is known to have escaped from a collection in Fairview Park.

709 Red Lory *Eos bornea* 紅色吸蜜鸚鵡

One was at Ming Tak Court, near Sheung Shui, on five dates between 19 January and 8 September.

710 Rainbow Lorikeet *Trichoglossus haematodus* 虹彩吸蜜鸚鵡

Singles were noted at Victoria Park on 14 March and Penfold Park on 2 April.

721 Alexandrine Parakeet *Psittacula eupatria* 亞歷山大鸚鵡

Eight were at Long Valley on 16 January, and up to eight were reported from Kowloon Park on several dates. The former report is additional to those referred to in Carey *et al.* (2001)

724 Mealy Amazon *Amazona farinosa* 斑點亞馬遜鸚哥

One was seen at Kowloon Park on 18 April 1998 (DSM). This is the first record for Hong Kong.

725 Asian Emerald Cuckoo *Chrysoccocyx maculatus* 翠金鵑

One was seen in proximity to a large aviary at Hatton Road on 20 March (AH).

728 Blue-throated Barbet *Megalaima asiatica* 藍喉擬啄木鳥

One was singing at Kowloon Hills catchwater on 29 and 30 July 1997, and again from 16 May to 17 July 1998 (DAD). This is the first record for Hong Kong. The location referred to in Carey *et al.* (2001) is in error.

734 Brown-breasted Bulbul *Pycnonotus xanthorrhous* 黃臀鵯

1997: one, probably of the subspecies *andersoni*, was at Sham Chung on 4 February (KHK,TDD).

736 Blue-winged Leafbird *Chloropsis cochinchinensis* 藍翅葉鵯

One was at Tai Po Kau on 24 March. This record is in addition to those included in Carey et al. (2001).

738 Burmese Shrike *Lanius colluroides* 栗背伯勞

1997: One remained on Lamma Island for a week in mid September (WTW).

744 Pied Bushchat *Saxicola caprata* 白斑黑石鵯

Singles were at San Tin and Pak Nai on 4 and 23 March respectively.

755 Grey-cheeked Fulvetta *Alcippe morrisonia* 灰眶雀鸐

One was at Tai Po Kau on 28 January and 7 February, and two were at Shing Mun on 21 February.

759 Small Niltava *Niltava macgrigoriae* 小仙鶲

A first-winter male was at Ho Chung on 23 January (DP). Although the date and age of this bird support its being of natural origin, the species is known to undertake only limited altitudinal movements and is traded.

764 Black-throated Tit *Aegithalos concinnus* 紅頭長尾山雀

Six were seen at Tai Po Kau on 5 January, up to three were at Shing Mun on three dates between 18 January and 28 February, and one was at Kowloon Hills catchwater on 7 February. The only report of breeding came from Kowloon Hills catchwater where a party of four or five including at least two juveniles was observed on 16 May. Three were seen at Shing Mun on 6 September, one was at Pok Fu Lam CP on 29 October, and during the last two months of the year the pattern of reports was similar to that during the first two: up to six at Tai Po Kau, with the only other reports coming from Kowloon Hills catchwater, where a maximum of seven were noted. It was probably merely a coincidence that both these high counts were made on the same date, 14 November.

769 Mrs Gould's Sunbird *Aethopyga gouldiae* 藍喉太陽鳥

Up to two males were at Kadoorie FBG from 1 to 4 March (RWL, MRL). The apparently aberrant moult of at least one of these birds suggests they were of captive origin.

774 Meadow Bunting *Emberiza cioides* 三道眉草鵐

One, of the Japanese taxon *ciopsis*, was at Fung Lok Wai on 29 May, and is regarded as an escape or release from captivity.

776 Yellow-fronted Canary *Serinus mozambicus* 黃額絲雀

No significant reports.

780 Hawfinch *Coccothraustes coccothraustes* 錫嘴雀

One at Tsim Bei Tsui on 7 October is considered to have been an escape or release from captivity (VBP).

792 Vinous-breasted Starling *Sturnus burmannicus* 紅嘴椋鳥

One was at Penfold Park on 26 May.

797 Hill Myna *Gracula religiosa* 鷯哥

One was at Fanling Golf Course on 23 November.

800 Azure-winged Magpie *Cyanopica cyanus* 灰喜鵲

Four adults and three juveniles were at Tung Chung on 2 July, and one was seen on several dates on 5 October.

Records not accepted by the Records Committee

1998

Eurasian Sparrowhawk, Kowloon Park, 13 February; also Long Valley, 15 November; Barred Button-quail, Tin Shui Wai, 1 August; Northern Hobby, Mong Tseng, 17 November; Brown Hawk Owl, Tai Po Kau, 9 May; Brown Bush Warbler, Wong Chuk Yeung, 24 March; Hill Blue Flycatcher, Tai Po Kau, 1 April; Fujian Niltava, Tai Po Kau, 19 November; also, Ng Tung Chai, 12 December; Chestnut-cheeked Starling, Nam Sang Wai, 29 April; Carrion Crow, Long Valley, 8 February; Black/Red-headed Bunting, Long Valley, 4 October.

1994

'Black-backed Wagtail' *Motacilla alba lugens*, Kam Tin, 25 September (previously accepted).

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MAI PO AND INNER DEEP BAY RAMSAR SITE WATERBIRD MONITORING PROGRAMME

WINTER 1998-99 REPORT

G.J. Carey

Introduction

Long-term monitoring of waterbirds in the Mai Po and Inner Deep Bay Ramsar Site is a fundamental aspect of the management strategy for the Site, and provides an indication of the health of the Deep Bay ecosystem. During 1998-99, this programme, which commenced in March 1998, was coordinated by the Hong Kong Bird Watching Society under the auspices of the Conservancy Association, and was funded by the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department of the Hong Kong Government. Monthly counts of waterbirds form one part of this programme, the other components being counts of migrant shorebirds utilising the area and surveys of ardeid nesting colonies. This report concerns the waterbird monitoring component for the winter period from November 1998 to March 1999.

Coordinated mid-monthly counts of wintering waterbirds in Hong Kong were carried out by Society members on 22 November, 20 December, 24 January, 21 February and 21 March. The January count was carried out to coincide with the Asian Waterfowl Census organised by Wetlands International Asia-Pacific. Counts from November to March have been carried out each winter since 1992-93; counts in January were first carried out in 1979.

In accordance with guidelines provided by Wetlands International, other counts, if higher, are included from the one-week period either side of the coordinated count date. It should be noted that for the majority of species this means the single count must be higher than the total number provided by the coordinated count for it to be included. The use of mobile phones at Tsim Bei Tsui and Mai Po boardwalk ensured that once again, as in recent counts, double-counting and, as far as possible, under-counting was avoided for birds in Inner Deep Bay.

Results

Coverage of the Ramsar Site was complete in all months. For the Deep Bay Area as a whole the following shortfalls occurred: Tin Shui Wai from December to March, Shenzhen River 'B' and San Tin in November, and Fu Tian in January. At Tin Shui Wai access to the very small number of ponds remaining was not possible due to construction work. However, the number of birds missed was probably very small. The results of the five counts are summarised in Table 1; results in full are provided in Table 2.

During the January count a total of 50,757 waterbirds of 57 species were recorded in the Deep Bay Area; for the Ramsar Site alone this figure is 47,542. However, as it was not possible for Fu Tian to be counted, the figure for the Deep Bay Area does not represent the true total.

However, for the first time the total number of birds counted in January was exceeded by that in February, when 57,285 birds were recorded in the Deep Bay Area and 49,459 birds were recorded in the Ramsar Site. In addition, on the basis of aggregate peak winter (defined as December to February) counts for each species, there was a 12% increase on the 58,544 obtained in winter 1997-98 to 65,923, but this was still 10% below the 1995-96 peak of 72,960.

The divergence between this winter's January count alone and that summing peak counts for each species during December to February is more marked than in the previous six winters, with the January count constituting only 77% of the total winter count, as opposed to between 89.7% and 98.6% previously. However, this does not necessarily imply that the January count recorded a relatively low proportion of the total number of birds that utilised the Deep Bay Area during the winter months, as the reasons for the high count of February are unclear.

Table 1. Waterbird Counts Winter 1998-99: totals by group and site

group	site	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.
Cormorants	Ramsar Site	2204	4440	4600	7031	1690
	Deep Bay Area	2454	4990	5300	7511	2020
	SI/SW	0	109	69	79	0
Ardeids	Ramsar Site	2073	2420	1220	1424	1024
	Deep Bay Area	2500	3729	2545	2807	1842
	SI/SW	765	750	751	542	128
Ducks and grebes	Ramsar Site	12811	17194	21109	17922	2745
	Deep Bay Area	17964	25726	21853	21353	3072
	SI/SW	5	0	3	13	10
Rails, Coot etc.	Ramsar Site	751	994	581	783	127
	Deep Bay Area	775	1080	646	838	180
	SI/SW	8	18	19	16	10
Waders	Ramsar Site	2091	5666	8771	7300	2731
	Deep Bay Area	2305	6517	8939	7657	2871
	SI/SW	92	42	72	64	44
Gulls and terns	Ramsar Site	1554	8110	11261	14999	829
	Deep Bay Area	1554	8364	11474	17119	1131
	SI/SW	51	29	0	0	0
Totals	Ramsar Site	21484	38824	47542	49459	9146
	Deep Bay Area	27552	50406	50757	57285	11116
	SI/SW	921	948	914	714	192

SI=Starling Inlet, SW=Shuen Wan

Species of conservation significance

There are a number of species occurring in the Deep Bay Area which are of conservation significance because (a) they are listed as threatened in Birdlife International (2000), or (b) are species for which Deep Bay supports, or may support, at least 1% of the regional or flyway population as used for implementing the Ramsar Convention criterion 3c. The 1% threshold level has been calculated with reference to Rose and Scott (1997), and the figures quoted below are from that work. The relevant species, which derive from Carey and Young (1999), are listed below; those requiring further detail are referred to the latter work. Comparisons are generally made with the trend since 1992-93, which is when counts for the whole winter period were first carried out.

Great Cormorant: the peak winter count of 7511 was the second highest on record in Hong Kong. It constituted 1.09% of the northern hemisphere population.

Dalmatian Pelican: 23 were present, about 20% of the East Asian population.

Chinese Pond Heron: numbers have trended downward since 1990, and the peak winter count of 208 was only 38% of the peak count of 545 obtained in 1990. This decline is of concern because Chinese Pond Herons, unlike other ardeids present in the Deep Bay area, appear to depend largely on fish ponds (specifically the accumulated perimeter of fish pond bunds) (KK Lee, in prep.). They are not recorded in numbers on the intertidal mudflats or at drained down ponds where they are out-competed by larger species.

Little Egret: the peak winter count of 1495 was higher than all but one made since 1992-93.

Great Egret: the peak winter count was 645, which is the highest winter count since 1992-93.

Grey Heron: the peak winter count was 1022, which is somewhat lower than the average for the period from 1992-93 to 1997-98.

Black-faced Spoonbill: 152 were present in December, the highest count on record in Hong Kong, and approximately 25% of the world population.

Imperial Eagle: the maximum winter count was three, which was somewhat lower than counts in immediately preceding winters.

Common Shelduck: the peak winter count of 1280, which constituted 2.1% of the flyway population, was very similar to the number recorded during the previous winter, but slightly below the average for the period from 1992-93 to 1997-98, which was 1500.

Eurasian Wigeon: the peak winter count of 2748 was about average for counts for the period from 1992-93 to 1997-98 and equated to between 0.27% and 2.7% of the regional population.

Common Teal: at a peak winter count of 5411, numbers of this species remained at the high levels seen in immediately preceding years.

Northern Pintail: the peak winter count of 6103 was slightly below the average since 1992-93 of 6363. It constituted between 0.6% and 6.0% of the regional population.

Northern Shoveler: the peak winter count of 7027 was slightly higher than the average for the period from 1992-93 to 1997-98, which was 6796. It constituted between 0.7% and 7.0% of the regional population.

Eurasian Coot: the peak winter count of 877 was slightly below the average for the period from 1992-93 to 1997-98, which was 1133.

Pied Avocet: the peak winter count of 1295 represented a decrease from the record count of 2045 in February 1998. Numbers of this species increased sharply between 1992-93 and 1997-98, and such a substantial subsequent decline during the winter of 1998-99 was unexpected. The winter's peak count nevertheless constituted a minimum of 5.2% of the regional population.

Kentish Plover: the peak winter count of 2499 was in line with the average for the period from 1992-93 to 1997-98 (though peak winter counts are somewhat variable due to the difficulty in some winters of counting the whole wintering flock), and constituted between 0.25% and 10.0% of the regional population.

Grey Plover: the peak winter count of 347 was distinctly lower than that for the previous winter, and somewhat below the average for the period from 1992-93 to 1997-98, which was 526. It nevertheless constituted between 0.35% and 1.4% of the regional population.

Dunlin: the peak winter count of 2391 was somewhat lower than the average for the period from 1992-93 to 1997-98, which was 3029. It nevertheless constituted between 0.24% and 12.0% of the regional population.

Black-tailed Godwit: the peak winter count of 250 was about average for counts in the period from 1992-93 to 1997-98. The majority of birds of this species utilising Deep Bay pass through on spring passage.

Eurasian Curlew: the peak winter count of 413 was significantly lower than the average for the period from 1992-93 to 1997-98, which was 765. However, it still constituted between 0.4% and 4.0% of the regional population.

Spotted Redshank: the peak winter count of 983 is slightly lower than the average for the period from 1992-93 to 1997-98, which was 1118. It constituted a minimum of 1.1% of the regional population. It should be borne in mind that greater numbers utilise Deep Bay when passing through on spring migration.

Marsh Sandpiper: the peak winter count of 900 constituted 1.0% of the regional population, and was the highest winter count of this species; the average for the period from 1992-93 to 1997-98 was 619.

Common Greenshank: the peak winter count of 338 was somewhat lower than the average for the period from 1992-93 to 1997-98, which was 476. The bulk of birds pass through Hong Kong on spring and autumn passage.

Saunders's Gull: the peak winter count of 73 was made in February. This lies at the lower end of the normal range and was due to the very low numbers of first-winter birds present, possibly indicating a poor breeding season in 1998.

Black-headed Gull: the peak winter count of 16,216 was slightly lower than the average for the period from 1992-93 to 1997-98, which was 16,863. It constituted between 1.6% and 16% of the regional population.

Other notable counts

Falcated Duck: the peak winter count was only nine, which continued the very low numbers of this species recorded in the mid-1990s. Average peak winter counts have declined greatly since winter 1990-91 when 237 were recorded.

Tufted Duck: the count of 1140, made in February, was a new high for Hong Kong.

Other observations

Nets

A notable and disturbing feature of winter 1998-99 was the prolonged use of nets to trap waterbirds in the Bay. On the Fu Tian side of the Shenzhen River, these nets were present permanently; on the Mai Po side nets were set up by hunters from the mainland in the evening and taken down the following morning. It was estimated that the length of netting permanently erected was at least 2km. It is very difficult, without hard evidence, to calculate the number of waterbirds that might be caught by such nets. However, for such a great length of netting, and to make it a worthwhile activity, it would not be unreasonable to suppose a minimum of 100 birds being trapped each night. This would mean that in the peak months of waterbird presence at least 3000 birds might be caught, making 9000 birds during the December to February period, about 15% of the total numbers utilising the Deep Bay Area.

Mudskipper collectors

Illegal mudskipper collectors continued to be seen operating on the mudflats on the Hong Kong side of Deep Bay. However, rather fewer appeared to be present than during 1997-98, though no data on this were collected.

Discussion

On the basis of the January count alone, and given the fact that Fu Tian was also not counted in 1996, it would appear that the post-1996 decline in

waterbird numbers continued apace, to reach a level 27% below the 1996 peak. Moreover, a repeat count of Black-headed Gulls, Northern Shoveler and Northern Pintail two days after the coordinated January count, when the Fu Tian side of the bay could be seen clearly, recorded very similar numbers for these three species which, together, comprised approximately 46% of waterbirds in Deep Bay. However, three factors tend to weigh against such an interpretation namely (i) that the February count was higher than that obtained in January, (ii) that the whole winter count did not show such a drop and (iii) that the January count recorded a relatively low proportion of the total number present during the winter. As a result, the results of waterbird counts during 1998-99 need to be viewed with caution.

It may be the case that the 5000 increase in the number of Black-headed Gulls, which contributed significantly to the higher count in February, was the result of a strong passage of migrants from further south. Studies of gulls in the waters around Chek Lap Kok in the 1990s and in the Victoria and Western Harbour area in the 1970s have revealed that passage of Black-headed and other gulls occurs at this time of year (pers. obs., D.S. Melville pers. comm.). The 1800 increase in the number of Great Cormorants cannot be explained in this way. However, Great Cormorants are known, on some days, to arrive at the roost after dark, and this seems the most likely explanation for the lower count in January.

Conclusion

The most obvious explanation for the peculiarities in the pattern of recorded waterbird numbers during the winter of 1998-99 is that the January count involved a significant under-recording of the number of waterbirds present at the time. The fact that no survey could be carried out at Fu Tian may have had a bearing on this (although was this site not counted in 1996 either). However, as similar numbers of the three most abundant species were recorded shortly afterwards, and as the increase of Black-headed Gulls and Great Cormorants may have been related to migratory or other movements, it is not possible to draw this conclusion firmly.

Table 2. Summary of Waterbird Count January 1999

SPECIES	Shen-zhen River	Mai Po NR	Deep Bay	Nim Wan/ LFS	Nam Sang Wai	Chau Tau	TBT fish ponds	Tam Kon Chau	San Tin	Mai Po San Tsuen	Lut Chau	Tai Sang Wai	DEEP BAY
Little Grebe	6	68			10		26	11	1	9	1	10	142
Great Crested Grebe			309							2			309
Great Cormorant		4600			700						49		5300
Dalmatian Pelican			22										22
Night Heron	18				3								21
Cattle Egret	20					1	10	3		2			36
Chinese Pond Heron	51	10	7	4	9		19	13	1	13	5	11	143
Little Egret	234	35	38	83	26	3	305	11	170	11	3	15	934
Intermediate Egret	2	1					13	2					18
Great Egret	307	57	41	10	14		35	3	13	2	9	1	492
Grey Heron	156	204	192	9	128		39	8		7	21	2	766
Purple Heron		1											1
Eurasian Spoonbill		1											1
Black-faced Spoonbill		110											110
Common Shelduck			1230										1230
Eurasian Wigeon	29	484	1330	340	86		9	12		17		31	2338
Falcated Duck		2								1			3
Common Teal	11	5017	130		154		68	31					5411
Mallard		6											6
Chinese Spotbill	8	47											55
Burmese Spotbill		3											3

Table 2(cont.). Summary of Waterbird Count January 1999

SPECIES	Shen-zhen River	Mai Po NR	Deep Bay	Nim Wan/ LFS	Nam Sang Wai	Chau Tau	TBT fish ponds	Tam Kon Chau	San Tin	Mai Po San Tsuen	Lut Chau	Tai Sang Wai	DEEP BAY
Spot-billed Duck (unsub)		3											3
Northern Pintail	15	57	4970							1			5043
Garganey		11											11
Northern Shoveler		4	6711		10								6725
Common Pochard		4											4
Baer's Pochard			3										3
Tufted Duck			363										363
Ferruginous Duck		4											4
Duck sp.			200										200
White-breasted W'hen	3		1	1		1	9	3	1	2	2	1	24
Common Moorhen	3	23	5		16	5		10	1	2	1		66
Eurasian Coot	1	85	450		20								556
Pied Avocet			850										850
Little Ringed Plover	25			22			172	4		1			224
Kentish Plover			2467	8									2475
Lesser Sand Plover			21										21
Pacific Golden Plover			68										68
Grey Plover			262										262
Great Knot			3										3
Red-necked Stint			7										7

Table 2(cont.). Summary of Waterbird Count January 1999

SPECIES	Shen-zhen River	Mai Po NR	Deep Bay	Nim Wan/ LFS	Nam Sang Wai	Chau Tau	TBT fish ponds	Tam Kon Chau	San Tin	Mai Po San Tsuen	Lut Chau	Tai Sang Wai	DEEP BAY
Temminck's Stint							30						30
Dunlin			2351										2351
Common Snipe	2			4		2	2	1					11
Pintail Snipe						1							1
Black-tailed Godwit			235										235
Bar-tailed Godwit			1										1
Eurasian Curlew			413										413
Whimbrel			1										1
Spotted Redshank		825											825
Common Redshank		145											145
Marsh Sandpiper		420											420
Common Greenshank		338											338
Tringa sp.		100											100
Green Sandpiper	21	1			1	4	10	2	4	2		2	47
Wood Sandpiper	12					6		1					19
Common Sandpiper	34	3		4		1	19	11	3	6	5	6	92
Saunders' Gull			70										70
Black-headed Gull		30	10770	5	120		350				52	4	11331
Black-tailed Gull			4										4
Heuglin's Gull			69										69
TOTAL	958	12699	33594	490	1297	24	1116	126	194	76	99	83	50756

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由一九九八年六月起，香港觀鳥會執行由漁農自然護理署資助、長春社分擔行政工作的「米埔內后海灣國際重濕地水鳥普查」，本會會員在每月中旬執行同步普查工作，而每年一月的數據會提交至濕地國際——亞太組織，成為「亞洲水鳥普查」資料一部份。以一月為例，后海灣的水鳥共57種，總數為50,757隻，國際重要濕地的總數為47,542隻，由於福田保護區未有進行統計，故實際數字可能較高。二月是全年數量的高峰期，后海灣錄得的數量較九七至九八年冬季58,544隻多12%，不過這數字相對九五至九六年72,960隻少10%。后海灣極具保育價值，根據國際鳥盟的標準，部份鳥種更超過整個飛行路線或東亞地區1%的總數，例如鸕鷀(1.09%)、卷羽鵜鶘(20%)、黑臉琵鷺(25%)、翹鼻麻鴨(2.1%)等。這反映后海灣國際重要濕地對水鳥的重要性。

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TAI PO KAU BREEDING BIRD SURVEY, 1998

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Introduction

Located in the central New Territories 0.5 km west of Tolo Harbour and 2.5 km southeast of Tai Po Town, Tai Po Kau Nature Reserve is the largest contiguous forest area in Hong Kong (460 hectares), ranging in elevation from 50 m to 620 m asl. Consisting mainly of natural secondary forest, it has the richest forest bird fauna in Hong Kong, with more than 150 bird species recorded (Kwok 1996).

The objectives of this survey were essentially the same as those stated in Viney (1989): to survey the species present in the reserve between May and August and to identify species which were, or were likely to be, breeding.

Methods

Surveys were carried out by groups of at least two observers between 0730h and 1200h on 30 May (Blue Trail), 21 June (Brown Trail), 19 July (Blue, Red and Brown Trails and Nature Trail) and 23 August 1998 (same trails as in July). The recording method was a simplified version of that of Sharrock (1976). Birds seen were classified according to their behaviour, in line with the criteria listed below (Table 1).

Results and discussion

Thirty-two species were recorded during the surveys (Table 2). The highest numbers of birds and species were recorded in July. However, it should be pointed out that only one trail was covered in the surveys in May and June and that more observers participated in the surveys carried out July and August.

Eleven species were classified as "confirmed breeding" (Table 2). The total number of recorded species was lower than in previous surveys but the number of species confirmed breeding was higher than in 1991 and 1992 (Table 3). However, since the number of observers and sample days in 1998 differed from previous years, the results are not directly comparable.

Japanese White-eye, Great Tit and Chinese Bulbul were found to be the three most abundant species in a recent study of the bird community in the reserve (Kwok and Corlett 1999) and juveniles of all these species were recorded. Among woodland-dependent species, there were signs of breeding for Chestnut Bulbul, but none for Grey-chinned Minivet; five juvenile Chestnut Bulbuls were recorded on the Red and Blue Trails in July. Also, singing male Hainan Blue Flycatchers were recorded on the Blue and Brown Trails and there appeared to be at least five territories in the reserve between May and August 1998. Observations of juvenile Hainan Blue Flycatchers all came from the Brown Trail in June and July. Streak-breasted Scimitar Babblers were heard and seen on the Brown and Red Trails in June (Table 2) but no sign of breeding was observed

during the surveys. However, food-begging juveniles were sighted in early summer (C. O. Wong, pers. comm.), which may be the first breeding record for this species in Tai Po Kau Nature Reserve. Records of birds of prey were few: only Crested Goshawk (one displaying in June) and Crested Serpent Eagle were recorded (Table 2).

The Yellow Trail was not covered in the surveys. This trail passes through several large *Lophostemon conferta* plantations. Future observations from these areas will be particularly useful as a preliminary study has suggested that these plantations are less attractive to both breeding and non-breeding forest birds than natural secondary forest (Kwok and Corlett 2000).

This and previous surveys concentrated mainly on recording which species were breeding, not on the estimation of the abundance of these breeding species. Since quantitative data are more useful for long-term monitoring of a breeding bird community, we propose to incorporate a singing bird survey, which is a widely used census method (e.g., Sauer *et al.* 1994, Wilson and Bart 1985), into future surveys.

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在一九九八年五月至八月期間的大埔滘鳥類繁殖調查，以鳥類行為來辨別繁殖階段。是次調查的主要研究區域位於紅藍路、藍路和啡路，共錄得32種鳥類，其中11種已確認在大埔滘繁殖。今次調查沒有包括黃路，原因是這個區域廣泛種植了百千層，不太吸引鳥類棲息，不過這方面尚待研究確認。是次調查中，記錄到暗綠繡眼鳥、大山雀和白頭鶇的幼鳥，而栗背短腳鶇和海南南鶲均有繁殖的跡象，而後者有超過五個的佔領區域。是次調查亦錄得棕頸鉤嘴鸝幼鳥討食的口述觀察紀錄，相信是這種鳥在大埔滘的首次繁殖紀錄。過往調查主要集中記錄繁殖的種類，未能反映繁殖種群的變化。將來的調查應加入量化的數據，例如鳴叫鳥類的數量，以便確定長周期的繁殖種群的變化。

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Table 1. Criteria used in the 1998 Tai Po Kau Breeding Bird Survey (Sharrock 1976).

Breeding Status	Observations
A. Present	Species observed in breeding season.
B. Possible Breeding	Species observed in breeding season in possible nesting habitat or singing male(s) present (or breeding calls heard) in breeding season or pair(s) of birds observed in suitable nesting habitat in breeding season.
C. Probable Breeding	Nest building, or singing males present on more than one date in same place, or display.
D. Confirmed Breeding	Adult carrying food for juvenile birds or adult feeding juvenile birds or recently fledged juvenile birds or nest found.

Table 2. The abundance and highest breeding status of each species recorded in the surveys between May and August 1998.

Species	Breeding Status	May	June	July	Aug.
Chinese Pond Heron	A	1	1	1	
Crested Serpent Eagle	C			2	
Crested Goshawk	C	2	1		
Spotted Dove	C	2	1	1	1
Little Swift	A			1	2
Great Barbet	C	1		3	
Grey-chinned Minivet	B		1	10	
Scarlet Minivet	C	30	1	2	
Red-whiskered Bulbul	D	3	3	4	
Chinese Bulbul	D	12	62	87	90
Chestnut Bulbul	D	2	7	14	11
Orange-bellied Leafbird	B				1
Oriental Magpie Robin	D	2		1	3
Blue Whistling Thrush	C		1		
Streak-breasted Scimitar Babbler	B		1	2	

Table 2 (cont.). The abundance and highest breeding status of each species recorded in the surveys between May and August 1998.

Species	Breeding Status	May	June	July	Aug.
Masked Laughingthrush	B			1	
Greater Necklaced Laughingthrush	B	1	2	1	5
Hwamei	B		1	1	1
Hainan Blue Flycatcher	D	3	2		2
Common Tailorbird	D	1	10	39	36
Silver-eared Mesia	D	1	5	10	7
Red-billed Leiothrix	B		2	2	1
Blue-winged Minla	D	1	5	18	9
White-bellied Yuhina	D	1			
Great Tit	D	4	12	19	21
Yellow-cheeked Tit	B		1	2	
Velvet-fronted Nuthatch	C		6	1	3
Scarlet-backed Flowerpecker	D		1	6	6
Fork-tailed Sunbird	C	3	4	9	27
Japanese White-eye	D	13	40	73	66
Grey Treepie	B				2
Large-billed Crow	B	1	1		2
Number of species		18	24	26	20
Number of birds		82	172	311	296

Table 3. Comparison with previous surveys.

	1988	1989	1991	1992	1998
Present	5	5	3	5	2
Breeding possible	15	11	16	13	10
Breeding probable	25	14	17	17	8
Breeding confirmed	12	16	10	9	11
Total no. of species	57	46	46	44	32

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A PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT OF THE FOOD HABITS OF NESTING CATTLE EGRETS AND OTHER EGRETS AND HERONS IN THREE HONG KONG EGRETRIES

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Introduction

Studies of the food habits of nesting egrets and herons are important for the conservation management of these birds. By collecting the regurgitated food items from chicks on the nest, their prey during the nesting period, and therefore the prey provided by nearby feeding habitats, can be identified. Although the diet of nesting egrets and herons is well known in many parts of the world (e.g. Mukherjee 1971, Voisin 1991, Fasola *et al.* 1993, McKilligan 1984, Miranda and Collazo 1997), it is still poorly known in Hong Kong, the only study being that of Chinese Pond Herons *Ardeola bacchus* in the Deep Bay area (Young 1993). In this paper, the food habits of nesting Cattle Egrets *Bubulcus ibis*, Great Egrets *Egretta alba*, Little Egrets *Egretta garzetta*, Black-crowned Night Herons *Nycticorax nycticorax* and Chinese Pond Herons from the egretries at A Chau, Mai Po Village and Stonecutters are described.

Study Areas and Methods

Study Areas

The A Chau egretry is situated on a 1.0 ha wooded island at Starling Inlet in the northeast of Hong Kong. A variety of small, fragmented natural and man-made wetland feeding habitats, located along the coast of the inlet, are used by the nesting egrets and herons (Wong *et al.* 1999). These wetland habitats include mangroves, a freshwater marsh, commercial fishponds, abandoned fields and shallow coastal waters. Nesting egrets and herons at Starling Inlet also exploit feeding habitats away from the inlet: these include short grasslands, a landfill area, cultivation, fishponds, a freshwater marsh and abandoned fields. Among the egretries in Hong Kong, that at A Chau has the highest number of breeding pairs and species (see Table 1).

The egretry at Mai Po Village is located in a 1.0 ha *fung shui* wood adjacent to the Mai Po /Inner Deep Bay Ramsar Site. Nesting birds mainly feed in commercial fishponds, but *gei wai*, mangroves, shallow coastal waters and mudflats are also utilised (Wong 1991, Young 1998).

The 1.2 ha Stonecutters egretry is on a wooded peninsula in northwest Victoria Harbour. Stonecutters was an island until connected to the mainland by reclamation in the early 1990s. Nesting egrets and herons were first reported there in 1990 (Young and Cha 1995). Unlike the two egretries described above, access to the Stonecutters egretry is restricted because of a military camp, and the nesting birds are subjected to little disturbance. After more than a century of coastal reclamation, there are no natural shores around the harbour. Nesting egrets and herons generally feed around Stonecutters peninsula, and in some man-made

habitats, such as dockyards though they do also presumably feed around the harbour itself (G. J. Carey, pers. comm.). Black Kites *Milvus migrans* have also nested at the edge of the egretry annually in small numbers, at least since the late 1950s (Humphreys 1959, Chalmers 1986). In winter, the egretry is a roosting site for both egrets and herons, and also Black Kites (Chalmers 1986, Young and Cha 1995).

Field Methods

Visits to the egretries were made at different stages in the breeding cycle. At A Chau, a total of four visits were made, on 28 May, 12 and 28 June, and 4 July 1998, which covered nearly the whole breeding season of Little and Cattle Egrets, and Black-crowned Night Herons, but was after the breeding season of Great Egrets. At Mai Po, the egretry was visited on 8 and 17 July 1998, which is after the breeding period of most egrets and herons, but Black-crowned Night Herons were still breeding in large numbers. Only one visit was made to Stonecutters Island, on 22 May 1998, when only Little Egrets and Black-crowned Night Herons were nesting. In order to minimize any adverse effects on the nestlings, each visit lasted no more than an hour.

Nestlings of egrets and herons often regurgitate spontaneously when alarmed by humans and this method was used to collect samples of prey items from the egretries. The collected samples were placed in an ice-box. After being transported back to the laboratory, these samples were preserved in 5% formalin solution for at least 48 hours. The samples were then placed in 70% alcohol, before identification of the prey items to as low a taxonomic level as possible.

Because of the high nest density, and the vertical arrangement of nests, it was difficult to associate the regurgitates with a particular species, except for Night Herons and Cattle Egrets at A Chau. At this site, individual nests of Night Herons could be approached and the oval-shaped food pellets of the Cattle Egret were easily distinguished (Voisin 1991). For Black-crowned Night Herons, from which most fish regurgitates of known origin came, the lengths of fish were measured. The number of prey items was also counted as far as possible. In the case of semi-digested items, the number of prey items was counted on the basis of the remains of the heads of amphibians and the backbones of fish.

Results

A total of 1542 items of 45 prey species was collected from the three egretries: 1276 items of 20 prey species from nine food pellets of nestling Cattle Egrets (see Table 2), and 266 of 25 species from Great and Little Egrets, Black-crowned Night Herons or Chinese Pond Herons (Table 3, Appendix 1). Diptera larvae were the most important prey category for Cattle Egrets, in terms of number of individuals (Table 2). Other frequent prey were spiders and Orthoptera. Vertebrate prey of Cattle Egrets were mainly frogs. In comparison with other similar studies, fewer orthopterans and amphibians were taken by local Cattle Egrets (Table 4).

The mean prey size of fish eaten by Black-crowned Night Herons at A Chau was 82 mm (N = 34, range 21 - 215 mm). Fish were the main prey items at all egretries and the only prey at Stonecutters (Table 3). Shrimps *Macrobrachium nipponese* were almost as important as fish at Mai Po, while A Chau had the greatest diversity of prey items. Of the prey species, Grey Mullet *Mugil cephalus* was the only one found at all three egretries.

Discussion

Diptera larvae were the numerically dominant prey of Cattle Egrets in this study, but their energetic contribution to nestlings may be low due to their small size. Assessing the biomass of prey items of nestling Cattle Egrets, and other egrets and herons would give a better picture of their relative importance. The origin of these larvae is not known but they may have been taken from a landfill, 8 km from A Chau. In Taiwan, 87% of the food items consumed by nestling Cattle Egrets in Taiwan were Diptera larvae, which may have come from garbage dumping areas (landfills) where Cattle Egrets regularly fed (Yen 1991). Thus, landfills in South China may be important feeding areas for Cattle Egrets, though such areas may be much more disturbed than those in Hong Kong. Consumption of spiders by Cattle Egrets may be associated with the development of feathers, since both feather keratin and spider protein are rich in the sulphur-containing amino acid crysite (van Balen, in Gosler 1993). In Hong Kong, the spiders that are consumed by Cattle Egrets are taxa which can be found in many habitats (C. Wu, pers. comm.). One of the main groups of spiders eaten by Cattle Egrets here was *Lycosidae*, which were also consumed in Australia (Baxter and Fairweather 1989). The wingless forest cockroach *Opisthoplatia orientalis* is common in the litter layer in forests and shrublands, and is preyed upon by many animals, such as civets in Hong Kong (Dudgeon and Corlett 1994). Compared to other places, the low percentage of Orthoptera in local Cattle Egrets' diet is probably due to the lack of large areas of pasture, which are the main feeding habitats of these birds in many other places (Siegfried 1971, Jenni 1973). In Hong Kong there are only limited areas of such habitat, largely abandoned paddy fields grazed by feral cattle.

Among other egret and heron species, there were striking differences between egretries in the dominant prey items. The greater diversity of identified prey at A Chau probably reflects the larger colony size and the longer period over which samples were taken. At A Chau, freshwater cultured fish, such as *Carassius auratus*, were dominant, while *M. nipponese*, which is a common, non-commercial shrimp in fishponds (Young 1993), was the major prey of Black-crowned Night Herons at Mai Po. At Stonecutters, the perchlet *Ambassis sp.* was the major prey item noted during the single visit to this egretry. Fasola (1994) suggested that most egrets and herons are opportunistic feeders and generally exploit whatever suitable prey, in terms of size, are locally abundant.

The habitat use of breeding adults can be traced through examining the prey regurgitated by nestlings. For example, a Koi *Cyprinus carpio*, which is a common species in ornamental ponds in Hong Kong, was taken by a Black-

crowned Night Heron from Stonecutters. The most likely site of origin of this prey item is Kowloon Park (4 km away), where between 20 and 30 Black-crowned Night Herons are regularly seen in the early morning.

At Mai Po, Grey Mullet, a common cultured species, are common prey items of nesting egrets and herons. The nocturnal *M. nipponese* was exclusively taken by Black-crowned Night Herons, perhaps because shrimps are largely nocturnal (Leung 1992). *Oreochromis mossambicus* and the mosquito fish *Gambusia affinis*, which are both introduced, non-commercial fish and can be found in many habitats, such as commercial fishponds and lowland rivers, comprised a low proportion of their diet. In the Camargue, *G.affinis* is a major prey of nesting Little Egrets (Kersten *et al.* 1991). Jenni (1969) also reported that it was the most abundant prey of egrets and herons in Florida. In Puerto Rico, mosquito fish species were the main diet of egrets and herons (Miranda and Collazo 1997).

At A Chau, the Common Catfish *Clarias fuscus* was regularly taken only by Black-crowned Night Herons because they are both nocturnal species. The presence of *Epinephelus bleekeri*, which is a common culture species in fish rafts (K. Rhodes, pers comm.), in Black-crowned Night Heron regurgitates, indicates that they may raid fish culture rafts in Starling Inlet (4 km away). However, the possibility that the fish taken by Black-crowned Night Herons may be discards, since one was infected by parasites, or taken from the raft easily because of their poor condition. Apart from removal of unhealthy fish, the intake of *O. mossambicus* and mosquito fish, which are unwanted fish in most fishponds, may be advantageous to commercial fish production.

Further studies of nestling food habits

A rigorous sampling scheme and numerous samples are required in a detailed study of food habits of nestling egrets and herons in Hong Kong (H. Hafner, pers. comm.). Ideally, these should be collected over several breeding seasons and at different times of the day. Beside the number of food items, the wet or dry weight should also be measured. In addition, the regurgitates should be collected in such a way that those from each nest of egrets and herons can be analysed separately.

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一九九八年五月至七月鷺鳥繁殖季節期間，在鴉洲、米埔村和昂船洲進行了牛背鷺和其他鷺鳥食性的初步調查。調查數據來自收集繁殖時期鷺鳥的反芻物，從辨別反芻物內的殘餘食物，而估計牠們的覓食地點。結果顯示牛背鷺以捕食蠅的幼蟲為主，其次是蜘蛛和蚱蜢，還有蛙科動物。大部份繁殖鷺鳥都以魚類作為主要食糧。此外，是次調查顯示，鷺鳥在米埔以蝦 *Macrobrachium nipponese* 及魚類作為主要食物，而鴉洲方面亦有多樣性的食物資源。是次研究，收集了初步資料，關於繁殖鷺鳥食物的詳細資料，仍有待進一步研究。

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Table 1. Apparently occupied nests recorded at the A Chau, Mai Po, and Stonecutters Island egretries in 1998 (Source: Carey [1998]). [NB. Some nests may have been overlooked in dense vegetation.]

	A Chau	Mai Po	Stonecutters Island
Great Egret	30	-	-
Little Egret	40	38	20
Night Heron	180	45	30
Chinese Pond Heron	2	34	-
Cattle Egret	40	16	-
Total	292	133	50

Table 2. Diet of nestling Cattle Egrets at the A Chau Egretry in 1998.

Prey items	No.	%	Frequency of occurrence in pellets (%)
Orthoptera (Grasshoppers)	86	6.79	77.8
Tettigonioidea			
Conocephalus maculatus	7		11.1
Grylloidea			
Gryllus bimaculatus	34		33.3
Gryllotalpidae	1		11.1
Arcidoidea	38		44.4
Tetrigoidea			
Thoradonta nodulosa	6		22.2
Blattidae (Cockcroaches)	6	0.47	33.3
Blattidae undetermined	1		11.1
Blatella germanica	2		22.2
Opisthoplatia orientalis	3		11.1
Odonata (Dragonflies; all adults)	9	0.71	22.2
Orthetrum sabina	4		11.1
O. luzonicum	5		11.1
Diptera (flies) larvae undetermined	1033	81.53	66.7
Calliphora sp. (adult)	28	2.21	33.3
Araneida (Spiders)	106	8.37	33.3
Araneida undetermined	1		11.1
Araneus sp.	73		11.1
Tetragnatha nitens	7		11.1
Lycosidae	25		11.1
Amphibia (all adults)	7	0.55	33.3
Bufonidae			
Bufo melanostictus	2		22.2
Ranidae			
Rana rugulosa	1		11.1
Microhylidae			
Kaloula pulchra	1		11.1
Microhyla pulchra	3		11.1
Reptilia	1	0.08	11.1
Calotes versicolor	1		11.1
Total	1276	100	

Table 3. Summary of the numerical importance of food categories in the diet of egrets and herons, except Cattle Egrets, at the three egretries in the 1998 breeding season. For species name of prey please refer to Appendix 1.

	A Chau		Mai Po		Stonecutters Island	
	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)
No. of visits	4		2		1	
Dates (1998)	28/5, 12/6, 28/6, 4/7		8/7, 17/7		22/5	
Shrimps	6	(3.3)	15	(40.5)		
Fish	153	(84.0)	21	(56.8)	47	(100.0)
Frogs (adult)	18	(9.9)	1	(2.7)		
Skinks	1	(0.6)				
Rats	4	(2.2)				
Total no. prey items	182		37		47	

Table 4. The percentage of orthoptera, amphibians and spiders by numbers in the diet of Cattle Egret nestlings from various studies.

Source	Location	Years	Number of food pellets	Orthoptera (%)	Amphibians (%)	Spiders (%)
Jenni (1969)	Lake Alice, Florida, USA	1958-60	50	87.0	?	5.1
Siegfried (1971)	Stellenbosch, Cape Province, South Africa	late 1960s	98	35.8	2.9	1.4
Jenni (1973)	Florida, USA	1960	200	84.4	6.9	6.0
Vermulen and Spaans (1987)	North Sulawesi, Indonesia	1985-86	26	45.6	0.1	28.1
Yen (1991)	Taiwan	1990	52	3.6	0.3	2.9
Wen and Sun (1993)	Xinyang, Henan, China	1990	20	20.3	6.3	0.0
This study	Hong Kong	1998	9	6.8	0.1	8.4

Appendix I

List of regurgitates of the nesting egrets and herons, except Cattle Egrets, at the three egretries in 1998. (N: Black-crowned Night Herons, G: Great Egrets, L: Little Egrets, C: Chinese Pond Herons and ?: undetermined). All values are the number of individuals of that prey.

	A Chau	Mai Po	Stonecutters Island
No. of visits	4	2	1
Crustacea			
Caridean	2 (N)	2 (N)	
	2 (?)		
Macrobrachium nipponese	2 (?)	13 (N)	
Undetermined fish	14 (?)	6 (?)	2 (?)
Scombridae	2 (?)		
Clupeiformes			
Engraulidae	2 (G)		
Coilia grayi	7 (N)		
Ophichthyidae			
Ophichthys sp.	2 (N)		
Cypriniformes			
Rasborinus sp. (probable)	11 (?)		
Parabramis pekinensis	5 (L)		
Cirrhina molitorella	3 (N)		3 (?)
	6 (?)		
Cyprinus carpio			1 (N)
Carassius auratus	11 (N)	4 (?)	
	11 (?)		
Siluriformes			
Clarias fuscus	20 (N)		
Cyprinodontiformes			
Gambusia affinis	29 (N)	1 (?)	
Mugiliformes			
Mugil cephalus	1 (G)	3 (N)	7 (?)
	1 (N)	1 (C)	
	2 (?)	1 (?)	

Appendix I (cont.)

Perciformes			
Ambassis sp.	4 (?)		29 (?)
Epinephelus bleekeri	1 (N)		
	1 (?)		
Sciaenidae undetermined			1 (?)
Argyrops sp.			1 (?)
Oreochromis mossambica	12 (N)	2 (?)	
	7 (?)		
Gobiidae undetermined			3 (?)
Ctenogobius sp.		1 (L)	
Channa maculata	1 (N)	1 (N)	
		1 (?)	
Amphibia			
Rana limnocharis	5 (N)	1 (?)	
	10 (?)		
Rana guentheri	1 (N)		
	1 (?)		
Kaloula pulchra	1 (N)		
Reptile			
Eumeces chinensis	1 (?)		
Mammals			
Rattus rattus flavipectus	4 (?)		
Total no. of prey items	182	37	47

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ORIENTAL REED WARBLERS AT MAI PO MARSHES NATURE RESERVE, HONG KONG, DURING AUTUMN 1997

Yat-tung Yu

Introduction

Oriental Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus orientalis* was formerly considered a subspecies of Great Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus arundinaceus*, but is now widely regarded as a separate species due to differences in morphology and vocalizations (Shirihai *et al.* 1995). Its breeding grounds include northern and eastern China, Japan, northeast Mongolia and Ussuriland (Cramp 1992, Baker 1997). However, there has been one possible breeding attempt at Mai Po Nature Reserve, Hong Kong (Melville 1988). It winters in Southeast Asia and as far south as Papua New Guinea (Cramp 1992, Baker 1997). Hong Kong is thus a mid-way point between its breeding and wintering grounds and large numbers occur every spring and autumn. The peak passage periods are from mid April to mid May and from early September to late October (Carey *et al.* 2001). The aim of this study was to investigate the pattern of migration of this species at Mai Po in the autumn, with particular reference to (a) the age of birds involved and possible differences in the timing of their migration, (b) changes in weight and variation in duration of stay of individual birds and (c) habitat preference exhibited at this location.

Study Area and Methods

The source of data for the study was trapping activities in the reedbeds at Mai Po Nature Reserve. The two selected study sites were the reedbed in Pond 14 and the bund between Ponds 6 and 7. At each trapping site, a total of six 18-metre nets were used in order to standardize the catch effort. Each net had four panels, and the specific net and panel in which a bird was trapped was recorded. The trapping activities were undertaken approximately twice a week between 20 August and 9 November 1997, and a total of 19 separate trapping sessions were involved.

Wing and tail length of each trapped individual were measured, with the maximum chord used as the wing measurement. Iris colour was used in age determination, on the basis of observations previously made by D.S. Melville, and the presence of tongue spots was used as an additional aid in identifying first year birds.

Results

Altogether, 106 different Oriental Reed Warblers were trapped. Of these, seven birds were trapped again during the course of the study, five on a single further occasion and two on two further occasions. The first birds were caught on 30 August, although one was seen near the trapping site on 27 August. The number of birds trapped remained relatively low throughout the first three weeks and built up dramatically towards the end of September (Figure 1). There were two peaks in numbers of birds trapped: these were 24 September and 1 October

when 23 (21.7% of the total) and 18 (17.0%) new birds were trapped respectively. The number then decreased steadily and the last bird was trapped on 9 November. It is not possible to say for certain that passage ended at that time since no further trapping was undertaken after that date. In addition, some individuals may have gone on to winter in Hong Kong, as is suggested by historical data (Carey *et al.* 2001).

Age composition

All birds trapped were aged as either first-year birds or adults on the bases of iris colour and the presence or absence of tongue spots, as discussed above, and also by observing their moult stage. Oriental Reed Warblers usually complete their moult on the breeding grounds but some birds retain their old first plumage feathers during migration. First-year birds which had not moulted completely were further categorised as juveniles. Fifty-nine birds (55.7% of the total) were aged as first-year birds, of which six (5.7%) were juveniles, while 47 birds (44.3%) were aged as adults. Of the juveniles, all had tongue spots, while of the first-year birds, 22 had tongue spots. Only one adult bird had faint tongue spots. Figure 1 shows the age of birds trapped on each day during the study period.

Both adults and first-year birds were recorded throughout the study period. The median dates for passage of first years and adults were 29 September and 1 October respectively, and the difference in timing of passage of the two different age groups was not statistically significant.

Change in weight

The mean weight of juvenile birds was 21.5 g, that of first year birds was 23.3 g, and that of adult birds 24.8 g, differences which are statistically significant. The lightest juvenile weighed 17.4 g and all birds of this age showed relatively shorter wings and no fat, except for one moulting bird which had stored some fat. The lowest weights of adults and first year birds were 19.2 g and 19.5 g respectively. The heaviest juvenile bird was 24.4 g; this was the bird referred to above, which had some fat and was moulting. The heaviest adult and first year birds were 32.5 g and 32.6 g respectively. The absolute ranges of weight of adults and first year birds were very similar, i.e. 13.3 g and 13.1 g (see Table 1).

Among the seven individuals that were trapped at least twice, one bird (VK53481) was trapped three times within a week and showed a weight increase of 6.8g, or about 32%. On the other hand, another bird (VK53370) showed a drop in weight initially, but had then increased in weight by the time it was trapped for the third time.

The mean weight of both age groups decreased from early September until 24 September. Thereafter, the mean weight of first year birds increased between 27 September and 1 October, before decreasing again (Figure 2). On the other hand, adults showed an increase in mean weight from 4 October and continued to exhibit heavier mean weights than first years until 19 October. After that too few birds were trapped to elucidate the trend.

Length of stay

Only seven birds were recaptured. The interval between first and last capture averaged 9.6 days (n = 7, SD = 4.1, min. of 7 days, max. of 18 days). Four of them were trapped before or during the main passage period, i.e. 24 September and 1 October. One (VK53370) stayed for at least eighteen days, at the end of which its body weight and fat had increased to a very high level. On the other hand, the birds recaptured on rather late dates (VK09842 and VK53609 in mid-October and early November respectively) did not show a large change in weight and may have been individuals which were going to over-winter (Appendix 1).

Habitat selection

Eighty-one birds (75.7%) were trapped at the pond 14 site (reedbed) and only 26 birds (24.3%) were trapped at the ponds 6/7 site (*gei wai* bund), confirming the preference of Oriental Reed Warblers for reed beds. It is in fact possible that the birds caught on bunds of Ponds 6/7 may have been moving from one reedbed to another. However, no significant relationship between the distance from the concrete path and the number of birds trapped was found at either site suggesting that birds may not have been selecting either for or against core areas within the reedbed.

The height of the mist-net panel in which birds were trapped was also recorded, giving data on the vertical distribution of the population. The chi-square test value shows there was no significant difference between the vertical distributions of birds at the two net sites. (chi-square value = 4, df = 3, P = 0.26, Table 2).

There was also no statistically significant difference between the height distributions of adult and first year birds.

Discussion

Although the first individuals were seen and trapped on 27 and 30 August respectively, only very light migration was noted until the end of September. Ringing activity revealed two peaks, on 24 September and 1 October. It has previously been shown that the main passage through the region occurs in that period (Carey *et al.* 2001).

Nisbet and Medway (1972) found that the main passage in Malaysia occurred between late September and the first half of October. Thus, the timing of passage through Hong Kong suggests that the majority of these birds do not go on to form part of the main passage through Malaysia and that they may in fact winter there or further to the north. Very few juveniles were caught in the Malaysian study. Adult and juvenile Oriental Reed Warblers complete their post-breeding and post-juvenile moult before autumn migration or near the breeding grounds (Nisbet and Medway 1972, Cramp 1992, Shirihai *et al.* 1995, Baker 1997). Thus, the juveniles caught may have come from a population which breeds very close to Hong Kong. Alternatively, these juveniles may have suspended or

delayed their moult because of limited food availability, possibly as a result of being offspring from second broods. Urano (1990) suggested that polygynous male Oriental Reed Warblers fed their second brood offspring less than the first brood, but that this did not increase the mortality rate of the second brood.

As noted above, the age-ratio of adult to first year birds was 1:1.26. Since the mean clutch-size in this species is 4.53 (Guo and Lu 1990), the number of first year birds might be expected to be higher; however, fledglings and juvenile birds undoubtedly suffer relatively high mortality from predation and other factors. Nisbet and Medway (1972) have suggested that the survival rate of adults is higher than that of first year birds on the wintering grounds, and this is perhaps even more likely to be true while birds are on migration.

On the basis of the trapping data, the mean time between first and last capture was 9.6 days. Amongst Great Reed Warblers average stopovers of 5.7 days have been reported, with up to 13 days recorded (Cramp 1992). However, it should be borne in mind that trapping data is likely to under-represent the actual stopover period as birds may be present for an unknown period before they are first, or after they are last, trapped.

The recapture rate was surprisingly low (only 7 birds or 6.6%). The high apparent turnover rate may reflect either (1) rapid replenishment of energy stores and departure within 3 - 4 days, (2) dispersal over a wide area to reduce competition after arrival, (3) the avoidance by previously trapped birds of the sites at which they had previously been trapped, or (4) mortality of some birds due to stress resulting from trapping.

24 Oriental Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus orientalis*
Long Valley, Hong Kong, October 2000 *Stanley T. H. Fok*

The mean weight of Oriental Reed Warblers decreased throughout September and started increasing in early October. Normally of course birds would be expected to increase in weight as they utilise stopover sites during migration. Berthold (1996) suggested that an average mass gain for 24 hours for passerines was 2.4% relative to lean body mass and maximum fat deposit rate was 4.3 to 5. 4% per day.

The low recapture rate and decreasing mean weight during the early part of the study may indicate that the turnover rate in Oriental Reed Warblers was very high at this time. Birds may have been refuelling fast and leaving before the subsequent trapping session took place (i.e. within 3 or 4 days). This would be particularly plausible if they were not attempting a non-stop flight across the South China Sea, but were moving a relatively short distance to other stopover sites along the South China coast. Sadly, the paucity of recapture data does not permit more than such a speculative explanation. The suggestion that Oriental Reed Warblers show no strong preference in vertical distribution contrasts with findings for Great Reed Warbler which indicate more frequent ground feeding (Cramp 1992).

Overall, the findings of the study were rather inconclusive due to the relatively small sample size, with the main finding being further confirmation of the duration of the total passage period. More research is required in order attempt to find answers to the questions raised concerning low recapture rate, length of stay and potential flight range following stopover.

Acknowledgement

I would like to thank Dr. Richard Corlett, Department of Ecology and Biodiversity, The University of Hong Kong for giving useful advice and comments; David Melville for providing many useful reference papers and discussions; Paul Leader for providing useful suggestions and discussion, and especially Michael Leven for giving comments on an earlier draft of this study and other assistance. Moreover, they, along with Fox K.O. Wong kindly gave their valuable time to supervise the ringing activities. K.M. Lai, M.L. Kong, K.S. Lee and H.K. Ying generously helped build the wooden path in the reed bed to facilitate trapping of birds.

一九九七年八月至十一月，在米埔自然護理區進行東方大葦鶯 *Acrocephalus orientalis* 的秋季遷徙研究，尤其以鳥齡和遷徙的時間差別、體重改變、逗留時間以及棲地選擇為重點。是項調查以環志方式進行，共網獲了106隻東方大葦鶯，其中約55.7%未成年鳥、5.7%是幼鳥、以及44.3%成鳥。而結果顯示不同年齡的鳥類與遷徙時間沒有明顯差別。體重方面，回收的個體在研究期間約有三成上升趨勢。而逗留時間的數據顯示，有遷徙行為的鳥在離開時體重明顯上升。生境方面，有超過七成的東方大葦鶯在蘆葦床錄得。環志資料反映幼鳥數量較少，可能由於牠們在香港附近地區繁殖，換羽以後才遷徙途經香港，再到南方過冬。此外，這亦可能與其繁殖次數及幼鳥生存比率有關。重被回收的鳥比率遍低，這可能由於牠們停留時間短暫、擴散能力強、以及受到干擾等原因影響。

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Table 1. Weight of different age groups.

Age	Max. (g)	Min. (g)	Range (g)	N	Mean (g)	S.d.
First year	32.6	19.5	13.1	53	23.3	2.75
Adult	32.5	19.2	13.3	47	24.8	3.22
Juvenile	24.4	17.4	7.0	6	21.5	2.51

Table 2. Numbers of birds trapped in each panel in net site 14

Panel No.	Adults	First year birds	Total
1	6 (17.1%)	12 (27.9%)	18
2	15 (42.9%)	13 (30.2%)	28
3	6 (17.1%)	15 (34.9%)	21
4	8 (22.9%)	3 (7.0%)	11

Figure 1. Number of first year and adult birds trapped on each trapping day.

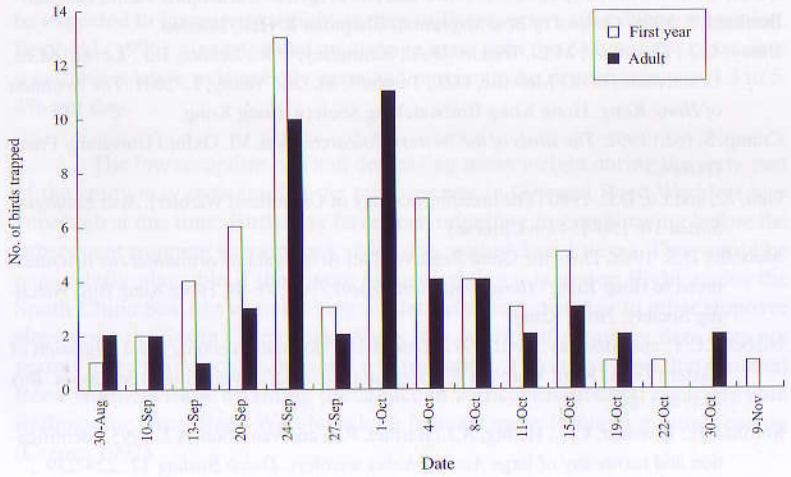
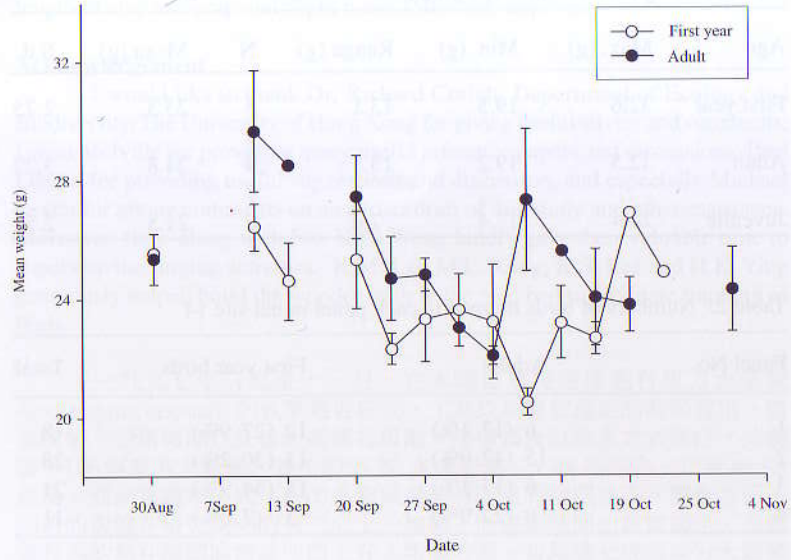


Figure 2. Mean (and + 1 SE) weight changes of both age groups on trapping days.



Appendix 1. Recapture data

Ring no.	Date	Net site	Net no.	Age	Weight (g)
VK09394	24 Sep	14	1	FY	19.5
	1 Oct	14	1	FY	22.2
VK09373	20 Sep	14	4	AD	30.2
	27 Sep	14	A*	AD	28.8
VK09374	20 Sep	14	4	AD	26.0
	27 Sep	14	5	AD	25.6
VK53370	27 Sep	14	2	AD	25.3
	1 Oct	14	1	AD	23.2
	15 Oct	14	1	AD	32.6
VK53481	4 Oct	14	3	AD	21.4
	8 Oct	14	1	AD	24.4
	11 Oct	14	3	AD	28.2
VK09842	19 Oct	14	3	AD	24.6
	30 Oct	14	2	AD	26.4
VK53609	30 Oct	14	2	AD	22.8
	9 Nov	14	1	AD	24.2

A* was an additional net set up 3 m distant from the standard net array at 14.

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A REVIEW OF FRIGATEBIRD RECORDS IN HONG KONG

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Introduction

In response to published advances in identification, and prior to the drafting of the new checklist (Carey *et al.* 2001), a comprehensive review of all frigatebird records in Hong Kong was undertaken by the Records Committee. This has led to reassessments of many of the records prior to 1985, and to significant changes in the previously published status of the species occurring in Hong Kong.

Frigatebirds are a highly distinctive group of large tropical seabirds with long slender wings and deeply forked tails, which pose no problems in identification to family level. Furthermore, adults of all species display sexually dimorphic plumages which are distinctive to each species. However, the specific identification of an individual immature can be very problematic. Frigatebirds moult through several immature plumages or stages, in general probably reaching maturity after four to six years (Harrison 1983), though Great Frigatebirds are suspected of taking seven to eleven years (Nelson 1980). The precise number of years taken to reach maturity, the different distinct plumage stages which individuals pass through and length of time between moults are just some of the areas which are currently poorly understood. As a result, separation of juveniles and immature birds in these intermediate plumages represents one of the most difficult remaining challenges in seabird identification. Unfortunately, almost all frigatebirds recorded in Hong Kong have been in one of these immature plumage stages, with most apparently being juveniles (first stage). Howells (1994) reported that juvenile plumage may be retained until a bird is 18 to 24 months old.

Range and Status of Likely Species

The frigatebird family comprises five species in a single genus. Three species are reported by Harrison (1983) as occurring in the South China Sea, namely Lesser Frigatebird *Fregata ariel*, Great Frigatebird *F. minor* and Christmas Island Frigatebird *F. andrewsi*.

Lesser Frigatebird breeds on the Xisha (Paracel) Islands in the South China Sea and on the coast of Fujian (Cheng 1987). De Schauensee (1984) also mentions its occurrence on the Dongsha Islands (Pratas Islands) in the South China Sea. It is reported to be the most numerous frigatebird in peninsular Malaysia (Wells 1999) and also probably the most numerous in Thai waters (Legakul and Round 1991).

Cheng (1987) reports Great Frigatebird from the coasts of Guangdong (in which he includes Xisha though this archipelago is in fact approximately 300 km south of Hainan and a similar distance from the coast of central Vietnam) and Fujian, and northwards to Jiangsu and even to Hebei. Hsu and Melville (1994) state that this species breeds in the Xisha archipelago but is scarce and has

declined in the last 20 years. De Schauensee (1984) also adds that it breeds in Hainan, as well as on Xisha. Elsewhere, about 3,300 pairs breed at Christmas Island, Indian Ocean (Reville 1993). Wells (1999) described it as a scarce non-breeding visitor to the Thai-Malay Peninsula, with one record in Malaysian waters. Legakul and Round (1991) consider it to be the rarest of the three frigatebirds in Thailand.

Christmas Island Frigatebird is confined as a breeding bird to Christmas Island in the eastern Indian Ocean, where fewer than 2,000 pairs breed (Reville 1993), and is considered to be critically endangered (BirdLife International 2000). Although it would therefore appear to be the least likely to reach Hong Kong, it has been well established that immature Christmas Frigatebirds disperse northwards. Wells (1999) describes it as a non-breeding visitor to Malaysia with apparently greater numbers on the east coast, including reports of it roosting with Lesser Frigatebirds on Pulau Rengis, near Tioman Island. In Thailand it is more frequently recorded than Great and may be present all year (Legakul and Round 1991). De Schauensee (1984) and Cheng (1987) both report it from the coast of Guangdong.

The remaining two species are Magnificant Frigatebird *F. magnificens*, which ranges widely in the Caribbean, along the east and west coasts of tropical America and in the Galapagos Islands, and Ascension Frigatebird *F. aquila*, which only breeds on Ascension Island in the South Atlantic. Both these are considered highly unlikely to occur in Hong Kong and are not considered further, although there are reports of Magnificent Frigatebird up the west coast of North America as far north as Alaska.

In recent years the patterns of occurrence of the three frigatebird species in Hong Kong have changed significantly from the previous patterns due to the improved identification criteria for immatures established by Harrison (1983). It had previously been assumed that Great was the most likely, as it accounted for five out of the six frigatebird records given for Hong Kong by Webster (1975). Chalmers (1986) included both Great and Lesser in Category A of the Hong Kong List. However, he added a cautionary note that the status of Great was uncertain because most records had been of immatures. The single record of Lesser at that time was an adult female found dead after the passage of Typhoon Ellen in 1983. The two previously published records of Christmas Island were relegated to Category F (previously accepted and published records whose identification is in doubt) because of possible confusion with juvenile Great.

Differences between Frigatebird Species

(i) Separation of Lesser Frigatebird from Christmas Island and Great

Since 1985 most of the records of positively identified frigatebirds accepted by the Records Committee for publication in the Hong Kong Bird Report have been juvenile (first stage) Lesser Frigatebirds based on a

combination of the following criteria established by Harrison (1983 &1987):

- Size similar to Black Kite *Milvus migrans*, if available for direct comparison , whereas the two other frigatebird species are around 30% larger on average wingspan. This is illustrated by measurements of wingspan from Cramp and Simmons (1980) and Harrison (1983) in Table 1 below. Note, however, males of each species are smaller than females, and the differences between the largest Lesser and smallest Great or Christmas Island is less than 6%. Thus size alone is not a reliable field character for single birds.
- White axillary spurs extending clearly from upper flanks in line with rear of breast band on to underwing coverts.
- White patch on lower breast and upper belly with pointed boundary against dark lower belly.
- Breast band relatively narrow and more uniform in width compared to other species.
- Overall, white underparts triangular in shape, with the axillary spurs forming the upper two corners of the triangle and the white belly the pointed third corner.

Table 1. Frigatebird Wingspans [mm]

Black Kite [for comparison]	1600-1800
Lesser Frigatebird	1750-1930
Great Frigatebird	2060-2300
Christmas Island Frigatebird	2060-2300

It should be noted that head colour is not a reliable feature as it can vary from rufous or cinnamon to white, apparently as a result of bleaching and wear, in all three species under consideration here. Plate 25 illustrates a first stage juvenile Lesser Frigatebird.

25 Lesser Frigatebird *Fregata ariel*
Mai Po, Hong Kong, 17 March 2001 *John Holmes*

(ii) Separation of Christmas Island from Great

The publication of the above criteria formed the basis of the review by the Records Committee of all frigatebird records submitted since 1958 up to 1997. This confirmed the predominance of Lesser Frigatebird and focussed attention on the remaining records and whether any of these represented valid records of either Great or Christmas Island Frigatebirds.

Initially, the Christmas Island Frigatebirds were tentatively separated in having white axillary spurs, which according to Harrison (1983) should be a reliable feature to separate juveniles from Great. However, subsequent examination of photographs of both Great and Christmas Island Frigatebirds at Christmas Island revealed that this feature needs to be used with care. Immature Great Frigatebirds sometimes appear to have white spurs due to the shape of the dark flanks causing the white underparts to be narrower across the belly than the breast. However, these spurs or blocks usually only extend onto the sides of the breast and not out to the axillaries and underwing coverts, although in some cases this white block is in fact reported to extend onto the axillaries (Howells 1994; Harrison 1987, plate 395). In addition, some Great Frigatebirds of all ages also have white markings in the form of lines, spots or scallops on the axillaries and adjacent underwing areas, as also reported by Howells (1994). In the south-west Pacific, around 30% of Great Frigatebirds are reported to have axillary spurs (D. James pers.comm.), but these are generally not as distinct as the solid white spurs seen in Lesser or Christmas Island Frigatebirds.

Possible differences in shape of breast bands have not helped with the Hong Kong records, as all have been reported to be of constant width. This has stressed the need for the submission of very detailed descriptions of underpart patterns, preferably supported by photographs. In the absence of these, and given the uncertainty over the reliability of the features discussed in separating the two species when they are in similar plumage stages, the specific identity of the Great/ Christmas Island birds remained in doubt. In particular, how reliable was the presence or absence of white axillary spurs? Were any differences in the shape of the breast bands or white underparts diagnostic? Overall, was it credible for Christmas Island to be more frequent than Great in Hong Kong, given the greater distance to its nearest breeding area?

The breakthrough came in 1996 when a juvenile frigatebird was found at Ho Man Tin in urban Kowloon on 17 September and handed in to the RSPCA in Hong Kong. It was subsequently passed to Kadoorie Farm for specialist care and convalescence, and released in good health at Cape D'Aguilar on 2 November. This bird was obviously one of the larger two species and showed all the classic features of a Christmas Island Frigatebird (see Plates 26 & 27). It had a whitish head with traces of tawny colour on the fore-crown, a broadly-based blackish breast band tapering to a point in the centre of the breast but with a tawny upper breast, giving the appearance of a broad parallel-sided breast band at distances where the black and tawny colours would not be separable. It also had a white

lower breast, which extended to the underwing as two well-marked white axillary spurs, and a white belly which extended down beyond the feet to the undertail coverts. The bird showed a pale alar bar on the upperwing coverts, a pinkish-white bill and bluish-grey legs and feet.

Christmas Island and Lesser Frigatebirds are reported as having bluish-white or flesh-white legs and feet at all ages, whereas Great Frigatebirds have pink to reddish legs and feet (Harrison 1983, Howells 1994). This feature may be useful for birds seen at close quarters. Bill colour is not considered to be useful for separating the three species as all appear to have pale bluish-white bills in juvenile plumage which change to black or grey in adult males and mauve or pink in adult females. Measurements of the captive bird compared to publish data on the three species are given in Table 2.

Table 2. Comparison of Frigatebird Measurements [mm]

	Christmas Island [HK]	Christmas Island		Great		Lesser	
Length	850	900-1000		850-1050		700-800	
Wingspan	2400	2050-2300		2050-2300		1750-1950	
		M	F	M	F	M	F
Wing	650	610-616	634-650	528-620	540-648	518-555	534-581
Tail	371	355-418	411-468	297-428	298-444	244-331	278-364
Bill (to feathers)	102	103-111	132,137	92-108	105-123	79-85	86-93
Tarsus	17	25	19	25-29	26-31	22-25	17-26

(Source: Marchant & Higgins 1990 and P.J.Leader pers. comm. for the Hong Kong bird).

The wing length of 650mm and wing span of 2400mm put this bird at or above the top end of the range for Great and Christmas Island Frigatebirds, and well above that of Lesser Frigatebird. The tail and bill were also in the range of the two largest species and again excluded Lesser Frigatebird. Separation from Great Frigatebird was determined by the presence of distinct white axillary spurs, the bluish white legs and feet, and the short tarsus. On wing and tarsus measurements, the bird was apparently a female, which the pink on the lower mandible also favoured.

Following this, further careful examination was made of photographs taken by Hong Kong based bird watchers of the underparts of Great and Christmas Island Frigatebirds from Christmas Island, as well as the published literature and skins in the British Museum at Tring. No consistent differences were found in breast bands. Both species have broad black breast bands whose bases extend

from the leading edge of the wing back for a distance equal to about one third of the wing width. The breast bands taper from both upper and lower edges to a point on the mid-line, and thus appear to have a concave or rounded (not straight) boundary with the white breast. In both species the head and neck appear to be rufous at first and then to wear to whitish, usually leaving a rufous breast patch above the black breast band with its upper edge level with the leading edge of the wings. At a distance the rufous and black cannot be separated and thus appear to form a single broad breast band with a concave lower boundary.

The shape of the black flanks at the sides of the underparts was also examined in both of the larger species but no consistent differences were found. In both species, the white underparts extended on to the flanks immediately below the base of the breast band. In Christmas Island Frigatebird this white area extended on to the axillaries as the underwing spur. However, whilst the white underparts extended all the way to the blackish undertail in Christmas Island, except for black feathering around the tarsi (Plate 27), in Great the white appeared to end in a line across the lower belly in front of the feet, thus giving a more rounded or oval shape to the belly patch (Plates 28 & 29) compared to the more pointed shape extending between the feet in Christmas Island (Plates 30 & 31).

26 Christmas Island Frigatebird *Fregata andrewsi*
Kadoorie Farm, Hong Kong, October 1996 *M. L. Chalmers*

27 Christmas Island Frigatebird *Fregata andrewsi*
Kadoorie Farm, Hong Kong, October 1996 *M. L. Chalmers*

28 Great Frigatebird *Frigata minor*
Christmas Island, Australia *D. S. Melville*

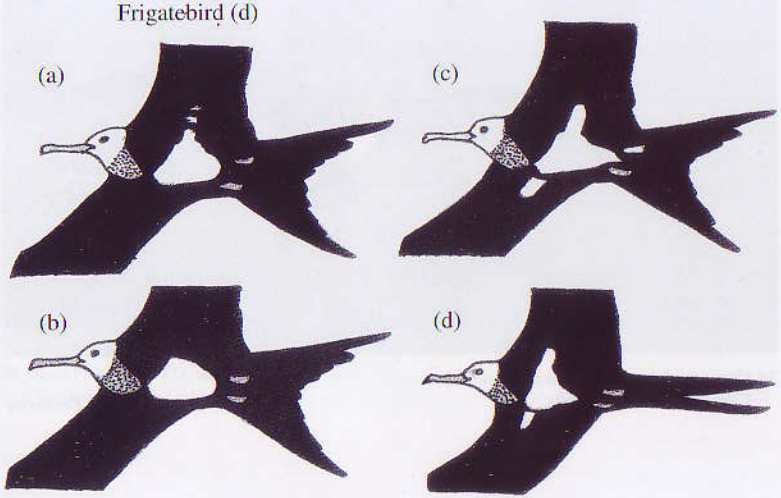
29 Great Frigatebird *Frigata minor*
Christmas Island, Australia *P. R. Kennerley*

30 Christmas Island Frigatebird *Frigata andrewsi*
Christmas Island, Australia *P. R. Kennerley*

31 Christmas Island Frigatebird *Frigata andrewsi*
Christmas Island, Australia *D. S. Melville*

A sketch summarising the different shapes of the white belly patches of juveniles of the three species considered is given in Figure 1. This emphasises the differences whereby in Lesser Frigatebird the narrower breast band results in the axillary spurs and triangular belly patch being further forward than in Christmas Island. The white belly patch in Great is more rounded and does not extend beyond the legs, whereas in Christmas Island it is more pointed at the rear (but this is not always clear because of the black feathering around the legs).

Figure 1. Great Frigatebird (a) and (b); Christmas Island Frigatebird (c); Lesser Frigatebird (d)



Results of Review of Hong Kong Records

Following the positive identification of the September 1996 bird, sight records of single birds at Sha Chau on 6 August 1996 and Mai Po on 10 March 1997, which both fitted the above characters of juvenile Christmas Island Frigatebird, were accepted. A review of the previous records concluded that two were acceptable as Christmas Island and three were acceptable as Great, based on the above criteria.

Whilst the Ho Man Tin bird of 17 September 1996 was confirmed as Christmas Island Frigatebird, doubts remain as to whether it occurred naturally because of its weak condition and unusual location in urban Kowloon. It has not therefore been admitted to the Category A records (wild birds) of the Hong Kong List.

A summary of the results of the review of all records from 1958 to 1997 is given in the Appendix. A separate summary of species totals is given below in Table 3.

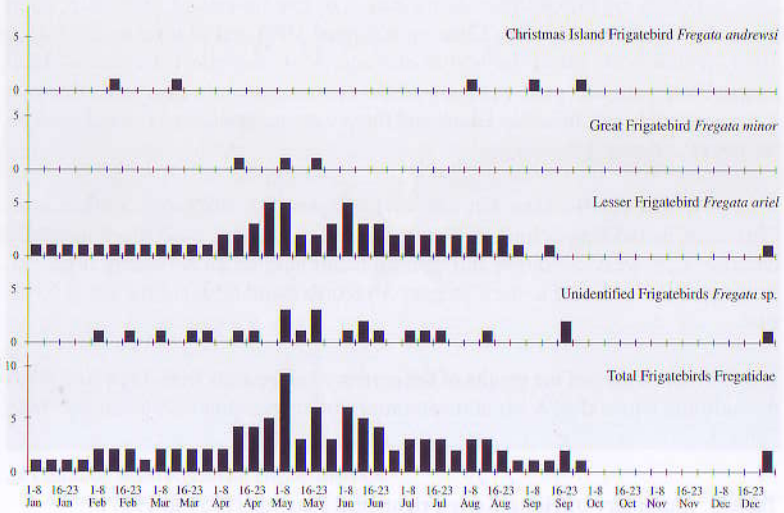
Table 3. Summary of Hong Kong Frigatebird Records [1959 to 1997]

Species	1959 to 1997 [39 years]			1988 to 1997 [10 years]		
Indeterminate	14	[22%]		2	[6%]	
Frigatebird sp.	24	[38%]		11	[34%]	
Lesser Frigatebird	17	[27%]	[68%]*	15	[47%]	[79%]*
Great Frigatebird	3	[5%]	[12%]*	0	[0%]	[0%]*
Christmas Island Frigatebird	5	[8%]	[20%]*	4	[13%]	[21%]*
Total	63	[100%]	[100%]*	32	[100%]	[100%]*

* indicates positively identified birds only

In addition, weekly occurrences are plotted for the accepted records of each of the three frigatebirds together with all unidentified frigatebirds in Figure 2. From this it can be seen that the unidentified birds have occurred mainly in two separate periods. The first is April and May, at the beginning of the main period for frigatebird records, which is also when all three accepted Great Frigatebirds have occurred. The second is in September. This is generally beyond the last of the Lessers, and coincides with three of the five accepted Christmas Island Frigatebird records. Thus, any frigatebird seen in September would appear to have a high probability of being Christmas Island.

Figure 2. Weekly Occurrences of Frigatebirds (1959 to 1997)



The review also showed that the average number of frigatebird records increased from less than two per year to around four per year between the mid 1980s and the mid 1990s, but reduced to two each year in 1995 and 1996 and three in 1997. Increased sightings were probably due to greater observer awareness and activity, combined with the occasional long-term resident in the local Black Kite roosts, which appears to be a recent phenomenon. The review also showed more birds were being identified to species level, as would be expected by the availability of better criteria for separating species. In addition, the ten year period from 1988 to 1997 proved to be similar to the whole period in that most birds positively identified were Lesser Frigatebirds.

Conclusions

Juvenile frigatebird identification is rarely straightforward and there will always be some birds which defy naming to species level. The correct identification will depend on the detailed observation of a number of characters including size, the absence of a well-marked - not just scalloped - solid white extension of the breast and belly patch on to the axillaries and underwing coverts (Great), the precise shape and extent of the breast band and white underparts, and the relative position of the axillary spurs (if present) to the rear edge of the breast band. In particular observers should note whether the white underparts have a rounded or straight leading edge and whether they terminate in a point on the belly (Lesser), in a rounded shape on the belly in front of the feet (Great), or at the vent between the feet (Christmas Island).

Observers are requested to submit very detailed descriptions of the above features on any immature frigatebird encountered, preferably accompanied with

photographs. Even if difficult cases cannot be resolved now, future reviewers may be able to determine their identity.

A review of Hong Kong records using the above criteria has shown that all three species of Indo-Pacific frigatebirds have occurred in Hong Kong. The majority (68%) of the identifiable records are Lesser Frigatebird, despite this species not having been accepted on the Hong Kong List until as recently as 1983. In addition to the Ho Man Tin Christmas Island Frigatebird, the origins of which are uncertain, there are only five acceptable records of this species and only three satisfactory records of Great Frigatebird.

Acknowledgements

The assistance of Geoff Carey, Cheung Ho Fai, Paul Leader, Richard Lewthwaite and Michael Leven is gratefully acknowledged in reviewing old records, while David James provided useful advice on the separation of Great and Lesser Frigatebirds and Michael Turnbull provided constructive comments which have added clarity to the final draft. John Holmes, David Melville, Peter Kennerley and Michael Leven all kindly provided photographs. Mention must also be made of the special contribution by Peter Kennerley to much thought-provoking research and discussion on identification of these intriguing birds and to the drafting of a forerunner to this paper.

在未發表《香港鳥類名錄》前，本會的紀錄委員會進行了全面的文獻審核，重新評估了1998年以前的軍艦鳥紀錄。全球共有五種軍艦鳥，其中三種在南中國海錄得，分別是白斑軍艦鳥 *Fregata ariel* 、白腹軍艦鳥 *F. andrewsi* 和小軍艦鳥 *F. minor* 。在鑑別上，未成年的小軍艦鳥腋下有大片黑斑，有些翼下附近位置有不明顯的白色條紋。白腹軍艦鳥和白斑軍艦鳥都有粉藍色和白色的腳部，而小軍艦鳥有粉紅至紅色的腳部。胸部的方面，白胸軍艦鳥和小軍艦鳥都有黑色的橫紋向兩翼伸延，而頭部的紅色受到空氣的磨損形成另一道胸前紅色的橫紋。白腹軍艦鳥的腹部白色較少，呈三角形向翼下和尾部伸延；小軍艦鳥腹部的白色部份較多，在與尾下的部份有明顯的分隔，呈鵝蛋形狀。文獻審查結果顯示，以往的紀錄，其中有兩個是白腹軍艦鳥，三個是小軍艦鳥。在四、五月期間所錄得的大多是白斑軍艦鳥，而在九月份錄得的大多是白腹軍艦鳥。此外，八零年代至九零年代的軍艦鳥數目由每年兩隻至增加每年四隻，這反映觀鳥人數有增加的趨勢，以及鳥類鑑辨的方面有所進步。加上這十年間(1988至1997年)，白斑軍艦鳥的數字有所增長，由68% 增加至79% 。辨別軍艦鳥需要有足夠的觀察資料，包括大小、胸帶、腹部白色部分的伸延，觀察者需要呈交詳細的資料以便委員會鑑定鳥種。

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Appendix
Results of Frigatebird Review [1959- 1997]

Records not safely attributable as frigatebirds [14 records]

Unspecified 1959	Waglan Island	1
22 May 1961	Sha Tau Kok	7
4 July 1971	Lamma Island	1
20 May 1972	Sha Tau Kok	1
25 November 1975	West Lamma Channel	1
23 April 1977	Mai Po	2
18 August 1977	Victoria Harbour	1
9 March 1982	Victoria Harbour	1
14 April 1985	Sha Tau Kok	1
23 May 1987	Mai Po	1
26 May 1987	Tap Mun	2
22 August 1987	Mai Po	1
2 September 1988	Magazine Gap	1
8 April 1989	Tai Po Kau	1

Note previous records of two at Mount Kellett on 6 July 1934 and one at Victoria Harbour on 25 September 1956 were also considered to be in this category based on the available notes.

Records acceptable as frigatebird sp. but not safely attributable to any species [24 records]

20 May 1961	Repulse Bay	2
7 to 9 July 1969	Sha Tau Kok	2
2 May 1971	Victoria Peak	1
4 May 1975	Mai Po	1
16 April 1976	Ting Kau	1 (previously published as Christmas Island in *HKBR 1976*)
10 August 1976	Stonecutters Island	1
23 July 1977	Victoria Harbour	1
5 May 1980	Green Island	1
18 September 1983	Mirs Bay	1
18 September 1985	East Lamma Channel	1
10 May 1986	Lau Fau Shan	1
28 December 1986	Cheung Chau	2
21 May 1987	West Lamma Channel	1
9 April 1989	East Lamma Channel	1
7 June 1990	Lamma Island	1
6 February 1992	Cheung Chau	1
8 March 1992	Aberdeen Country Park	1
29 March 1992	Aberdeen Country Park	1
13 June 1992	Wong Nei Chong	1

22 June 1993	Victoria Harbour	1
22 March 1994	Magazine Gap	1
17 May 1994	Mong Tseng	2
15 June 1995	Magazine Gap	1
17 February 1997	Magazine Gap	1

Lesser Frigatebird [17 records]

11 September 1983	Mid Levels	1 dead adult female
3 May 1986	Mai Po	1 imm.
3 May 1987	Tsim Bei Tsui	1 imm.
8 April to 12 August 1988	Magazine Gap	up to 2 imm. roosting with Black Kites
29 April 1988	Mai Po	1 imm. or female
6 May 1989	Mai Po	1 imm.
27 May 1989	Tolo Harbour	1 adult male
18 June 1989	Ninepins	1 adult male
7 June 1990	Lamma Island	1 imm.
27 December 1991	Magazine Gap	1 imm. roosting with Black Kites to 26 August 1992 (see *HKBR 1991* Plate 4)
25 April 1992	Sai Kung	1 imm.
29 April 1992	Clearwater Bay	1 imm.
22 August 1992	Po Toi Island	1 imm.
5 June 1993	Starling Inlet	1 imm. female
15 June 1995	Magazine Gap	1 imm.
5 June 1996	Wah Fu	1 imm.
23 April 1997	Mai Po	1 imm. (first stage juvenile)

Great Frigatebird [3 records]

14 April 1985	Tsim Bei Tsui	1 imm.
5 May 1985	Rocky Harbour	1 imm.
20 May 1987	West Lamma Channel	2 imm.

Christmas Island Frigatebird [5 records]

5 September 1981	West Lamma Channel	1 imm.
10 February 1990	Tsim Bei Tsui	1 imm. (previously published as Lesser in *HKBR 1991*)
25 September 1993	Cape D'Aguilar	1 imm.
6 August 1996	Sha Chau	1 imm.
10 March 1997	Mai Po	1 imm. (first stage)

Scops Owls In Hong Kong

John Holmes

Introduction

Hong Kong has two species of scops owl, Collared Scops Owl *Otus bakkamoena* and Oriental Scops Owl *O. sunia* (Carey *et al.* 2001). Despite these species being nocturnal, sightings of both have become quite regular in recent years due to increased observer activity. A third scops owl species, Mountain Scops Owl *O. spilocephalus*, is distributed across neighbouring Guangdong province (Cheng 1987) and has not yet been recorded in Hong Kong, but might occur and is thus included here.

Scops owls appear to be attracted to minor roads or tracks, provided that there is little human disturbance and a low canopy of vegetation is available on which to perch. The birds sit in wait for insects, lizards or other small prey to cross the open space beneath. If approached slowly, Collared and Oriental Scops Owls may sometimes be seen to within a few feet. Collared Scops Owl, as a resident species, may be seen at any time of the year. Oriental Scops Owl is a scarce passage migrant, most often recorded in autumn from mid-October to early December.

Regional field guides (e.g. King *et al.* 1975, Lekagul and Round 1991 and Viney *et al.* 1993) tend to show owls as they look in daytime, usually with ear-tufts erected, and the main purpose of this short paper is to enable observers to differentiate clearly between these species when encountered by torchlight, when ear tufts are flattened and the facial disc is more obvious. They may also of course be easily distinguished by their calls, but this paper is concerned with physical appearance only.

Collared Scops Owl *O. bakkamoena*

This is the more numerous and, at about 23 cm., the larger of Hong Kong's scops owl species. By day the eyes are dark orange but at night they appear so dark that they resemble hollow sockets, which accentuates the paleness of the facial disc. The underparts are lightly streaked and are noticeably lighter than the upperparts, which are invariably chocolate-brown. The buffy nuchal collar - after which the species gets its name - is often very indistinct on local birds. Camera flash tends to show some red in the eye, which is not always seen by torchlight.

32 19 October 1996

33 18 October 2001

34 17 December 1999

35 21 November 1999

Plates **32** to **35** Collared Scops Owls *Otus bakkamoena* Cloudy Hill, Hong Kong *John Holmes*

Oriental Scops Owl *O. sunia*

This species always shows yellow irides (contrasting with dark pupils) and, at 19 cm, is also smaller than Collared Scops Owl. Like Collared Scops Owl, Oriental Scops Owl is invariably streaked on the breast, even though the overall colouration may vary between plain grey and varying degrees of rufous.

36

37

Plates **36** and **37** Oriental Scops Owl *Otus sunia*
Cloudy Hill, Hong Kong, 23 October 1998
Two views of the same individual. Quite rufous overall, showing more characteristic streaks, especially on chest and belly. The ear tufts have been raised at the approach of a person. *John Holmes*

38 Oriental Scops Owl *Otus sunia*
Cloudy Hill, Hong Kong, 12 October 1998
A dark rufous and finely streaked individual with the characteristic "whitish eyebrows" (King 1975)
John Holmes

39 Oriental Scops Owl *Otus sunia*
Cloudy Hill, Hong Kong, 17 October 2001
A greyish individual with light rufous streaking
John Holmes

Mountain Scops *O. spilocephalus*

Mountain Scops Owl, like Oriental Scops Owl has yellow eyes but lacks streaking on the breast. At 20 - 21 cm it is also slightly larger than that species. The individual depicted has a blemish on the right side of its breast, but otherwise shows typically fine barring. The spotting on the upperparts is very fine, and the buffy edge to the scapulars far less noticeable than on Oriental Scops Owl.

40 Mountain Scops Owl *Otus spilocephalus*
Captive bird photographed at Kadoorie Farm and Botanical Garden, Hong Kong, May 2000
John Holmes

41 Mountain Scops Owl *Otus spilocephalus* (left) and Oriental Scops Owl *Otus sunia* (right)
Captive birds photographed at Kadoorie Farm and Botanical Garden, Hong Kong, May 2000
John Holmes

Acknowledgments

Thanks to Gary Ades and Rupert Griffiths of Kadoorie Farm and Botanic Garden for access to owls in their care. Thanks also to Geoff Carey, Paul Leader, Michael Leven and Peter Kennerley for comments on earlier drafts. Finally, thanks to my wife, Jemi, for actually finding most of these birds.

領角鴞和紅角鴞是兩種在香港可以看見的角鴞，近年由於晚間觀鳥活動的增加，令完全在夜間活動的它們，更規則地被發現。雖然在香港未有第三種角鴞的記錄，但在鄰近廣東省曾有黃咀角鴞，本文主旨是介紹這三種角鴞在晚間手提電筒光線下的分辨特徵：領角鴞是香港最常見及最大型的角鴞，看似洞坑的深暗眼睛，強調了灰白的面盤；下體的淺條紋比上體的褐色為淺；本地品種的黃褐色頸領是不明顯的。紅角鴞比領角鴞細少，它的辨認特徵是黃色的虹膜，與深暗的瞳孔成為對比；像紅角鴞般，黃咀角鴞的眼睛也是黃色的，但胸前沒有條紋，上體的斑點非常細緻；相對於領角鴞，它的黃褐色的頸領非常不明顯。

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PHOTOSPOT: HONG KONG NIGHTJARS

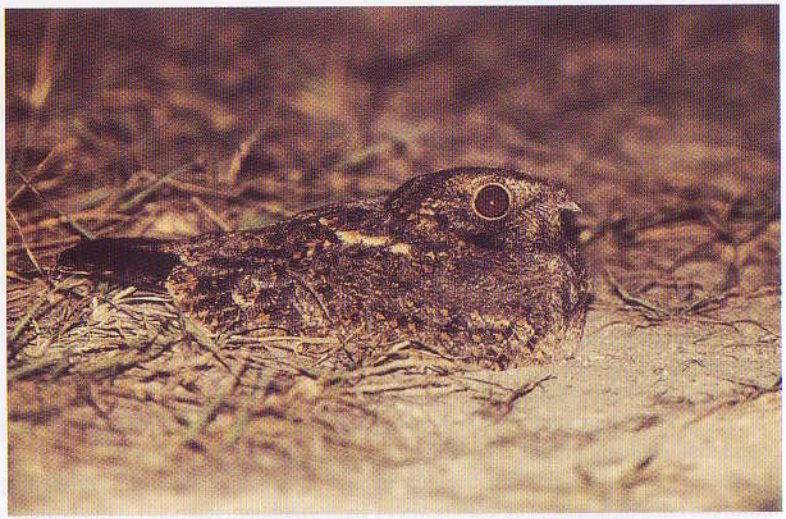
Martin Hale

Two species of nightjar *Caprimulgus* occur in Hong Kong, namely Savanna *C. affinis* and Grey *C. indicus*. Chalmers (1996) dealt with the separation of these two species, with an emphasis on identification in flight, since this is how most nightjars have been observed in Hong Kong.

However, a recent increase in interest in nocturnal birding has resulted in sitting nightjars being encountered more often. Typically individuals are observed on reclamation areas or on little used surfaced roads after dark, and are illuminated by car headlights or spotlights.

In addition to the features mentioned in Chalmers (1996), it has been found that, on sitting nightjars, a reliable and almost instantaneous indication of the species being observed is the presence of a large dark "patch" across the lesser covert/scapular area of both sexes of Grey Nightjar (Plate 44). This "patch" results from a combination of the large black centres of the scapulars and the dark brown colour of the lesser coverts. It contrasts with extensive and obvious grey-buff spotting on the median and greater coverts, and with the basal area of the scapular feathers, which is light grey. It is easily seen on sitting birds in the rather harsh light conditions described above. It is a feature not shown by Savanna Nightjar (Plates 42 and 43), both sexes of which have a rather more uniform grey-brown plumage, which is lightly (male) or more boldly (female) spotted with chestnut.

42 Savanna Nightjar *Caprimulgus affinis*, male
Tin Shui Wai Reclamation, Hong Kong, November 1998 *Martin Hale*



43 Savanna Nightjar *Caprimulgus affinis*, female
Tin Shui Wai Reclamation, Hong Kong, November 1998 *Martin Hale*

44 Grey Nightjar *Caprimulgus indicus*, male
Cloudy Hill, Hong Kong, November 1998 *Martin Hale*

以往，多數只是飛行中的夜鷹才被觀察得到，但由於近年晚間觀鳥活動漸漸增多，錄得更多夜鷹在坐地上的記錄。在一九九六年香港鳥類報告中，Chalmers 已經詳細介紹怎樣分辨飛行中的林夜鷹和普通夜鷹；本文目的是補充在停棲時的辨別特徵，普通夜鷹有一深色斑紋在小覆羽至肩羽，而林夜鷹則沒有。

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Notes on Birds of the Songjiang District, Shanghai, 1996-99

Richard Stott

Background

The city of Songjiang and its Industrial Zone lie 35 km south-west of Shanghai, in the flood plain of the Yangtze River, thus at or just above sea level. These notes report on observations of birds made there between summer 1996 and spring 1999, on work-related visits made for two days at a time at one or two week intervals, with about one hour per week devoted to recording the birds of the area.

The area studied was on the edge of an urban area, in a partially developed part of an industrial development zone consisting mainly of rice fields interspersed with smaller areas of other crops and including one small orchard (which was uprooted in the autumn of 1998). There were areas of uncultivated land, particularly around water courses and around the houses and small villages which were sparsely distributed throughout the area. These uncultivated areas had some trees and there were reeds along the banks of the water courses. They were clearly an important resource for many of the species recorded.

Hunting was not widespread in the area although on occasion individuals with home-made shotguns were seen.

Weather patterns in 1997/98 were influenced by *el Niño* and as a result were unusual; in 1997 the first frosts of the year arrived in early November, but in 1998 there was no frost until late December. In fact, the winter of 1998/99 turned out to be exceptionally mild, being without snow and having only brief periods below 0°C. It is therefore likely that some of the timings of arrivals may not be typical.

During the period of the study development of the area slowly continued. Some areas of trees, once much favoured by birds were bulldozed and a number of the drainage channels were blocked, becoming stagnant and choked with weed. This latter change in particular meant that the frequency with which Common Kingfishers were recorded was much reduced.

General Summary

A total of 69 species (including one presumed escape) were recorded.

As indicated above, the area is part of a huge river delta and as such the habitat is quite uniform over a wide area. Thus migrant species can move on a broad front and if their numbers are relatively small they may not occur in the relatively small study area each year. Of the 69 species recorded, 35 were recorded on three occasions or fewer and only four species were recorded on more than 75% of occasions. It seems likely therefore that the true number of species occurring in the area is rather higher than 69.

SPECIES LIST

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

Not recorded in the study area itself, but a pair was observed on a large pond beside the freeway which runs beside the Songjiang Industrial Zone between February and April 1999.

Great Egret *Egretta alba*

One flying by on 3 September 1998.

Intermediate Egret *Egretta intermedia*

A flock resting in trees on 14 August 1997

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*

A small flock flying by on 12 June 1997.

Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis*

Small flocks feeding in rice fields on 7 May and 8 July 1998, presumably attracted by the considerable frog population.

Chinese Pond Heron *Ardeola bacchus*

Recorded intermittently between May and September when frogs were abundant.

Black-crowned Night Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax*

Although a large roost exists near to Shanghai's Hongqiao Airport, this species was not seen regularly. On the occasions when it was present, it was usually in groups of between one and four birds. A larger flock of approximately 50 birds was seen circling the area in mid-November 1997 and another in mid-December 1998, after the arrival of the first frosts.

Common Teal *Anas crecca*

A party of three on 13 March 1998.

Eurasian Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*

One passing overhead on 20 November 1997 and a young bird present on successive weeks in early November 1998.

Common Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*

Singles between October and December.

Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus*

One passing overhead on 24 September 1996.

Common Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus*

Single male birds on 24 September 1996 and 12 February 1998, a single female flushed from dense scrub on 12 November 1998 and the head and flight feathers of a dead male bird discovered on 28 April 1999. All were of the East China race *P. c. torquatus*.

White-breasted Waterhen *Amaurornis phoenicurus*

One was recorded on 11 March 1999 not far from where two birds probably of this species had been seen on 28 January 1999. The Yangtze estuary is at the northern limit of the distribution for this species.

Northern Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*

Two flocks, each of about 20 birds, flying north on 5 November 1998.

Pacific Golden Plover *Pluvialis fulva*

A party of 14, mostly in breeding plumage, roosting at midday on 14 April 1999 on a grassed area of about 5 hectares.

Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius*

An adult in a waterlogged field on 24 Feb 1998, and two weeks later, on 13 March 1998 seven in the same area. The only record in 1999 was of one on 22 March

Little Curlew *Numenius minutus*

One roosting on waterlogged grass following heavy overnight rain on 22 April 1999.

Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*

One on waterlogged grass following heavy overnight rain on 22 April 1999.

Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*

Up to three recorded intermittently throughout the year.

Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola*

Twenty individuals on waterlogged grass following heavy overnight rain on 22 April 1999. Three remained in the area the following week.

Common Sandpiper *Tringa hypoleucos*

Up to three recorded intermittently throughout the year.

Pintail/Swinhoe's Snipe *Gallinago stenura/megala*

One flushed from the edge of a rice field on 18 Sep 1998 and several amongst Common Snipe in a waterlogged meadow following heavy overnight rain on 22 April 1999.

Common Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*

Singles and pairs in May and August and parties of up to 16 in late winter and early spring. Following heavy overnight rain, approximately 30 on waterlogged grass on a factory site on 22 April 1999.

Gull-billed Tern *Sterna niloctica*

Seven on 20 August 1997.

Oriental Turtle Dove *Streptopelia orientalis*

Recorded regularly in spring and autumn, particularly February-March and September/October.

Spotted Dove *Streptopelia chinensis*

Recorded regularly throughout the year.

Common Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*

Intermittently present throughout the year, but increasingly less frequently so, as drainage channels became blocked and then choked with weed.

Dollarbird *Eurystomus orientalis*

One on 18 September 1998.

Eurasian Skylark *Alauda arvensis*

Flocks of c.20 birds arrived in early November each year and remained throughout the winter, the last records being made in March.

Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica*

Found breeding in the area, being present from April to September. The dominant race was *H. r. gutturalis* but one or two individuals recorded in the spring of 1999 with pronounced rufous underparts were clearly of the Mongolian race *H. r. tytleri*.

Red-rumped Swallow *Hirundo daurica*

Found breeding nearby, although not apparently breeding within the study area. Present from May to September.

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*

Recorded irregularly in small numbers during August.

White Wagtail *Motacilla alba*

Juveniles of the race *M. a. leucopsis* were recorded frequently during May and June. Adult birds were rarely recorded.

Olive-backed Pipit *Anthus hodgsoni*

Regularly recorded in small numbers throughout the winter months. Earliest arrivals were in November and birds remained until March.

Red-throated Pipit *Anthus cervinus*

Recorded in March and October.

Chinese Bulbul *Pycnonotus sinensis*

Regularly encountered, although not in large numbers.

Brown Shrike *Lanius cristatus*

Most records were of young birds passing through between June and September when they were comparatively numerous with counts of up to ten. All were of the race *L. c. lucionensis*.

Long-tailed Shrike *Lanius schach*

A widespread species, found breeding in the study area, with the mewing of juvenile birds requiring feeding frequently heard during May and June.

Daurian Redstart *Phoenicurus auroreus*

A small number were present throughout the winter months from November to March.

Common Blackbird *Turdus merula*

In 1998, one was recorded in mid-February, up to four on 8 July and six on 5 November.

Brown-headed Thrush *Turdus chrysolaus*

One on 20 April 1999.

Pale Thrush *Turdus pallidus*

Three or four (perhaps juveniles), first recorded on 4 December 1998 on a cold sunny morning after the second surge of the winter monsoon, were subsequently recorded on many occasions up to March 1999.

Dusky Thrush *Turdus naumanni*

Generally parties of up to 12 were recorded between November and February. However, on one occasion in mid-December 1998 parties totalling over 300 birds were seen feeding in rice stubble. It is tempting to speculate that this was due to the serious flooding in the middle Yangtze River, which took place in the late summer of that year and which may have caused widespread failure of the rice crop. For the most part these were of the race *T. n. eunomus* but in February 1998 a number of the nominate red-tailed race *T. n. naumanni* were seen.

Vinous-throated Parrotbill *Paradoxornis webbianus*

Usually encountered in parties of between ten and twenty, though during the breeding season the size of the parties dropped to two to four and in winter it rose to 60-100.

Japanese Bush Warbler *Cettia diphone*

Recorded during the breeding season only, between May and July, with daily counts of between two and ten pairs.

Oriental Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus orientalis*

Recorded in small numbers in May and August/September only.

Zitting Cisticola *Cisticola juncidis*

Common and numerous during the breeding season and throughout the summer. Less obvious at other times but present in small numbers throughout the year.

Pallas's Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus proregulus*

Two adults in mid-December 1998.

Yellow-browed Warbler *Phylloscopus inornatus*

Small numbers of this species were recorded in April and September and two individuals were recorded in January 1999.

Coal Tit *Parus ater*

One of the crested race *P. a. pekinensis* in August 1997.

Great Tit *Parus major*

Only observed irregularly. The sub-species recorded was *P. m. minor*, which has greenish yellow on the upper back and nape.

Chestnut-eared Bunting *Emberiza fucata*

Small parties recorded regularly in reeds beside a drainage channel throughout the winter of 1998/99.

Little Bunting *Emberiza pusilla*

One was seen on the edge of dense scrub on 28 January 1999.

Yellow-browed Bunting *Emberiza chrysophrys*

Recorded throughout each winter in small numbers with earliest records from the beginning of November and the last birds leaving by 21 April.

Rustic Bunting *Emberiza rustica*

Recorded in winter, with good numbers until February but smaller numbers remaining until 12 March. First records were in mid-November when many of the birds appeared to be moving through; for example, on 19 November 1998 there were large numbers present following the first cold snap of the winter (10°C) but the following day when it was much warmer very few remained.

Yellow-throated Bunting *Emberiza elegans*

In early December, the most common bunting encountered on overhead wires, in trees and in scrub. Present from late October until mid-March.

Black-faced Bunting *Emberiza spodocephala*

Present throughout the winter (October - March) in good numbers (particularly in late October), though much less obvious than other buntings due to their skulking habits.

Meadow Bunting *Emberiza cioides*

Small numbers in reeds beside watercourses in the coldest months of winter. Birds in summer plumage were recorded from mid-February onwards. The latest record was on 12 March. The mild early winter of 1998 resulted in no birds arriving until mid-December, a month later than in 1997.

Brambling *Fringilla montifringilla*

A flock of c. 200 arrived at the beginning of December 1997 collecting in the tops of trees together with small groups of Dusky Thrushes. The numbers reduced as the winter wore on but they were present from December to February. Very few were recorded in the winter of 1998/99 which was much warmer.

Grey-capped Greenfinch *Carduelis sinica*

A pair recorded in tall grass on 12 May 1999.

Yellow-billed Grosbeak *Eophona migratoria*

One was recorded in June 1998.

Japanese Grosbeak *Eophona personata*

Small parties recorded over a three-week period from mid-November to early December 1997, moving on when freezing weather arrived. A party of 6 passed through on 29 October 1998.

White-rumped Munia *Lonchura striata*

Small flocks recorded in August 1996 and October 1998.

Scaly-breasted Munia *Lonchura punctulata*

A small flock recorded in August 1996.

Eurasian Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus*

Widespread and numerous.

White-cheeked Starling *Sturnus cineraceus*

Flocks were commonly encountered on migration during November 1997. However, none was recorded during 1998/99 suggesting that numbers moving through were small and alternative migration routes are used in the area.

Black-necked Starling *Sturnus nigricollis*

A pair seen on a cold, sunny afternoon in February 1998 were a surprise, and are assumed to have been escapes from captivity.

Crested Myna *Acridotheres cristatellus*

First records were from July 1998 including one of two individuals, an adult and a juvenile on 17 July 1998. The records came shortly after a day when a temperature of 38.7°C had been recorded, making it the hottest day in the area since 1953. A pair was also seen on two occasions in March 1999. However, the

possibility of all these records being the result of escapes from captivity cannot entirely be ruled out.

Black Drongo *Dicrurus macrocercus*

One overhead on 14 April 1999.

Richard Stott 於一九九六年夏天至九九年春天於上海工作期間，在西南35公里的城市宋江進行鳥類觀察。宋江位於長江洪泛平原上的工業城市邊緣，附近有稻田、果園、集水區等環境。當地天氣受到厄爾尼諾現象的影響，加上部份地區受到人為干擾，對候鳥構成影響。這段期間，共錄得69種鳥類，其中的四種鳥類包括田鷚、棕背伯勞、棕扇尾鶯和黃喉鷸等，佔超過75% 的數量、另35 種只有約3 個或以下的紀錄，據估計，當地確實的鳥類可能超過96 種。

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NOTES

Little Grebe feeding on chironomids

David Melville

At 1755h on 10 February 1996 there was a hatch of chironomids in the ponds of the Waterfowl Collection at Mai Po. Many imagos were visible on the water surface and there were several swarms flying outside the WWF Hong Kong Education Centre. I was interested to observe a Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis* feeding on the chironomid imagos. The bird swam quite rapidly to and fro, picking midges from the water surface. Occasionally it stretched up, or even stood up, to catch a flying midge. The bird continued feeding in this manner for more than ten minutes.

I was interested by this behaviour as I had never previously observed Little Grebes feeding on insects in Hong Kong, and P.J. Leader (pers. comm.), who has carried out many hundreds of hours of observations of birds on fish ponds in the Deep Bay area, also had never recorded such feeding behaviour. George Walthew (*in litt.* to G.J. Carey), however, has recorded Little Grebes feeding in this manner, in April and May, on rain-filled ponds at Nam Sang Wai and Tsim Bei Tsui. Similar feeding behaviour has been recorded in Europe (Cramp and Simmons 1977).

Little Grebes occur in freshwater fish ponds in the Deep Bay area as well as in the brackish *gei wai* at Mai Po, but are usually observed diving, and prey brought to the surface mostly comprise fish and shrimps. Caldwell and Caldwell (1931) record 'various aquatic insects' in the diet of Little Grebes in southern China, noting that these are 'taken under the water'. G. Walthew (*in litt.* to G.J. Carey) has suggested that Odonates and Hemipterans form the bulk of the diet of Little Grebes on rain filled ponds in which fish populations are absent or minimal.

一九九六年二月，在米埔水禽飼養池錄得小鸊鷉進食水面上的紅蟲，過程約十分鐘。同樣的觀察記錄亦在四、五月期間在南生圍和尖鼻嘴內盛載雨水的塘內錄得。根據米埔以往的記錄，該鳥種以進食魚類和蝦類為主，Caldwell (1931) 亦記載這種鳥的食物包括水底下的昆蟲，而 G. Walthew (idem.) 指出如在載滿雨水的塘中，魚類數量稀少，小鸊鷉則會以蜻蜓、蟻和蜂作為食物。

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Cramp, S. and Simmons, K.E.L. (eds.) 1977. *The Birds of the Western Palearctic*, Vol. I. Oxford University Press, Oxford.

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Asian Barred Owlet breeding inside a village house

John Holmes

Around midday on May 11, 1997, while visiting a friend at Tsung Yuen, north of Ho Sheung Heung, our attention was drawn to an Asian Barred Owlet *Glaucidium cuculoides* which a neighbour of our friend had found beneath his car. The bird was fluffy and defiant; obviously a juvenile. It was uninjured but plainly unready for the big, wide world.

The area consisted of newish village houses surrounded by mature Camphor Trees *Cinnamomum camphora*. Remembering a pair of juvenile Asian Barred Owlets that had fallen from a tree in Ta Kwu Ling, I looked around for a nest hole, without success. At this point a Mr Hau came out of an adjacent house. Spying the juvenile owlet he said, "Oh! I had those building a nest in my kitchen last year!" The building was a three-storey village house, designed to be split into three flats. Each floor had a kitchen in one corner. As Mr Hau and his family occupied the whole house, the top floor kitchen was used as a storeroom. At head height were fitted cupboard units. An aluminium exhaust tube 15 cm in diameter ran along the bottom of the units from an exhaust hood to the window. Before 1996 Crested Mynas *Acridotheres cristatellus* had found their way into the cupboard along the exhaust pipe. In 1996, Mr Hau discovered that Asian Barred Owlets had displaced the mynas. To prevent the birds soiling the cupboard, he had bought a translucent plastic box, cut the pipe and fed it into the box.

We opened the cupboard and I could see three birds in the box, making an agitated ticking sound. As none of us wished to share a confined space with three angry owls it was decided to leave the box lid on, close the door and leave them alone. I then took the one found under the car to Kadoorie Farm, unsure whether it would have been better to put it back into the box or not.

There was no extractor fan on the end of the pipe and it appeared that the birds found the man-made tunnel and dark cavity at the end attractive. The kitchen window was about 7 metres above the ground, similar in height to potential nest holes in the branches of the adjacent Camphor trees.

At 21.00 hrs, my wife Jemi and I returned to find another two juveniles, one standing at the pipe end in the kitchen window and a second perching on a tree branch about 10 metres away. A parent was flying around nearby. We left quickly so as not to disturb them any further.

Neither La Touche (1931-1934), Ali and Ripley (1987), Cheng (1987), nor del Hoyo *et al.* (1999) make any mention of this species using anything other than a tree cavity for nesting purposes.

Acknowledgment

I would like to thank Mr Bernard Hau for showing us the nest box in his kitchen and allowing us to access the area again.

1997年5月11日，河上鄉北面松園一所三層村屋頂樓之廚櫃內發一巢數隻斑頭鵂鶹，該廚房作儲物用，廚櫃內有管道通往屋外。從屋主得知年前鵂鶹已取代原本在廚櫃內造巢之八哥。該管道出口離地面約七米，與屋旁的樹桿高度相約，相信可能是該鳥種巢位的高度。

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del Hoyo, J., Elliot, A. and Sargatal, J. (eds.). 1999. *Handbook of the Birds of the World*, Vol. 5, Barn-owls to Hummingbirds. Lynx Edicions, Barcelona.

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GUIDELINES FOR THE SUBMISSION OF RECORDS

Recording and record submission

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, which includes a detailed summary of birds recorded each year, depends on members submitting records of their observations. The submission of records also provides the raw data on which the Society and other researchers can draw conclusions about such things as the importance of a particular site or habitat in Hong Kong, the rarity of a particular species, patterns of migration or habitat preferences. For these reasons, members are encouraged to submit records at the end of each year.

What kinds of records are required? The answer to this question is most kinds, except those relating to species that are common and widespread in appropriate habitat. In particular, we welcome records of all but the most common migrants and winter visitors, of scarce residents or records of common residents occurring in unusual numbers or habitat. A careful reading of *The Avifauna of Hong Kong* will provide a good guide as to which records might be of interest. If in doubt, however, it is best to submit the record.

The Society prefers to receive records entered into a simple Excel spreadsheet, as this facilitates analysis and allows easy extraction of records for both species and sites. This Excel file should contain seven columns containing the following data: species number, species name (both as contained in *The Avifauna of Hong Kong*), date, place, number of birds, notes and observer name. Observations can then be entered, using one row for each record. Those requiring a sample file can contact the Society office (hkbws@hkbws.org.hk).

In addition, the Society provides 152mmx106mm cards on which records can be submitted. These cards are stored in a species-indexed filing system; however, this system makes it more difficult to extract site information and requires greater storage space.

Rarities

While the birds of Hong Kong are better known than those of many parts of Asia, new species are regularly being added to the Hong Kong List, and the status of a number of other species remains uncertain. Further, field identification techniques for some species still require refinement. The Society has a Records Committee to assess records and ensure that a high standard of reporting is maintained. This quality control provides, in part, the Society with a reputable voice in relation to the birds of Hong Kong and the region.

While the Records Committee may examine any record submitted, close attention is generally only given to those of rarities. A list of rare species considered by the Records Committee is provided below. The list may seem rather

long, but, nevertheless, adequate substantiation in the form of a written description, photograph, video, audio recording or some combination of these is required if the record is to be considered valid and published. A standard recording form for unusual records is available from the Society website, Society office or from the Recorder. Ideally, field notes on a rarity should cover the following points:

1. Date, time, duration and location of sighting, number present and sex or age, if known.
2. Binoculars or telescopes used, distance of bird from observer, weather and light conditions.
3. Description of habitat and a record of other birds, if any, it was associating with.
4. Activity of bird (at rest, in flight, swimming etc).
5. General size, shape and structure compared with other more familiar species. Structural features that may be important should be detailed (e.g. bill length compared to length of head, relative position of wing tips to tail tip, primary projections, hind claw length etc).
6. The most detailed description possible of plumage and bare parts, and not just those considered helpful in identification. Try to organise the components of the description logically, for example: head, upperparts, upper- and underwings, upper- and undertail, underparts, bare parts (iris, bill, gape if seen, legs and feet)
7. Any vocalisations. Try to indicate the quality of the sound (harsh, piercing, rattling, hoarse, liquid etc), and compare it with calls of other species.
8. Previous experience with the species or similar species.
9. Names of other observers or photographers present.

A rough sketch or diagram is often very helpful, and photographs, of course, are invaluable. Try to get others to see the bird, as two descriptions are better than one, and make sure you take notes on the spot, as it is all too easy to imagine field marks after consulting a book! Records of species not on the Hong Kong List generally require more than usually detailed descriptions for acceptance.

With regard to species that have distinctive vocalisations, the Records Committee realises that in some cases call only records are acceptable. However, no matter how distinctive, the call should be described in as much detail as possible.

If you are able to take reasonable notes of a bird but still cannot identify it, send in the description as it may be possible for the Committee to identify it for you. The increasing number of field guides on the market often make positive identification appear straightforward, but it should be remembered that there are still a number of species that are difficult to separate, and it is only by careful observations that some birds can be identified.

The following list of species for which substantiation is required has recently been revised based on the data collated in *The Avifauna of Hong Kong*. In addition, any record of a species not in Categories A-E of the Hong Kong also

requires substantiation as a 'first' for Hong Kong. The Records Committee may also request substantiation of any record that is unusual in terms of the habitat, number of birds or time of year. If you make such an observation, please be prepared to supply written substantiation, preferably made at the time of observation. Records of species on this list that are submitted without substantiation cannot be considered.

Categories A to D

Species number	Species	
001	Pacific Loon	*Gavia pacifica*
004	Horned Grebe	*Podiceps auritus*
005	Black-necked Grebe	*Podiceps nigricollis*
006	Streaked Shearwater	*Calonectris leucomelas*
008	Red-footed Booby	*Sula sula*
009	Brown Booby	*Sula leucogaster*
011	Christmas Island Frigatebird	*Fregata andrewsi*
012	Great Frigatebird	*Fregata minor*
013	Lesser Frigatebird	*Fregata ariel*
020	Pacific Reef Egret (white-phase)	*Egretta sacra*
025	Japanese Night Heron	*Gorsachius goisagi*
034	Glossy Ibis	*Plegadis falcinellus*
038	Greylag Goose	*Anser anser*
041	Cotton Pygmy-goose	*Nettapus coromandelianus*
	Hybrid Eurasian x American Wigeon	*Anas penelope x americana*
048	Green-winged Teal	*Anas carolinensis*
056	Ferruginous Duck	*Aythya nyroca*
059	Velvet Scoter	*Melanitta fusca*
060	Common Goldeneye	*Bucephala clangula*
061	Smew	*Mergellus albellus*
065	Crested Honey Buzzard	*Pernis ptilorhyncus*
068	Brahminy Kite	*Haliastur indus*
073	Pied Harrier	*Circus melanoleucos*
079	Eurasian Sparrowhawk	*Accipiter nisus*
084	Mountain Hawk Eagle	*Spizaetus nipalensis*
090	Yellow-legged Button-quail	*Turnix tanki*
091	Barred Button-quail	*Turnix suscitator*
092	Common Crane	*Grus grus*
094	Water Rail	*Rallus aquaticus*
096	Band-bellied Crake	*Porzana paykullii*
097	White-browed Crake	*Porzana cinerea*
100	Brown Crake	*Amaurornis akool*
114	Common Ringed Plover	*Charadrius hiaticula*
115	Long-billed Plover	*Charadrius placidus*
132	Lesser Yellowlegs	*Tringa flavipes*
140	Red Phalarope	*Phalaropus fulicaria*
145	Long-billed Dowitcher	*Limnodromus scolopaceus*

154	Pectoral Sandpiper	*Calidris melanotos*
161	Pomarine Jaeger	*Stercorarius pomarinus*
162	Long-tailed Jaeger (autumn records)	*Stercorarius longicaudus*
164	Mew Gull	*Larus canus*
168	Glaucous-winged Gull	*Larus glaucescens*
169	Glaucous Gull	*Larus hyperboreus*
172	Relict Gull	*Larus relictus*
174	Slender-billed Gull	*Larus genei*
175	Little Gull	*Larus minutus*
177	Black-legged Kittiwake	*Rissa tridactyla*
187	Sooty Tern	*Sterna fuscata*
195	Barred Cuckoo Dove	*Macropygia unchall*
197	Thick-billed Green Pigeon	*Treron curvirostra*
198	White-bellied Green Pigeon	*Treron sieboldii*
203	Hodgson's Hawk Cuckoo	*Hierococcyx fugax*
206	Asian Lesser Cuckoo	*Cuculus poliocephalus*
211	Grass Owl	*Tyto capensis*
215	Brown Fish Owl	*Ketupa zeylonensis*
217	Brown Hawk Owl	*Ninox scutulata*
218	Short-eared Owl	*Asio flammeus*
221	Himalayan Swiftlet	*Collocalia brevirostris*
224	Common Swift	*Apus apus*
232	Collared Kingfisher	*Halcyon chloris*
233	Blue-throated Bee-eater	*Merops viridis*
239	Speckled Piculet	*Picumnus innominatus*
240	Rufous-bellied Woodpecker	*Dendrocopos hyperythrus*
241	Rufous Woodpecker	*Celeus brachyurus*
242	Grey-headed Woodpecker	*Picus canus*
243	Bay Woodpecker	*Blythipicus pyrrhotis*
244	Fairy Pitta	*Pitta nympha*
245	Blue-winged Pitta	*Pitta moluccensis*
246	Greater Short-toed Lark	*Calandrella brachydactyla*
247	Eurasian Skylark	*Alauda arvensis*
249	Plain Martin	*Riparia paludicola*
258	White Wagtail	*M.a. lugens* and *M.a. personata*
266	Swinhoe's Minivet	*Pericrocotus cantonensis*
276	Tiger Shrike	*Lanius tigrinus*
280	Japanese Waxwing	*Bombycilla japonica*
281	Japanese Robin	*Erithacus akahige*
288	Black Redstart	*Phoenicurus ochruros*
294	Pied Wheatear	*Oenanthe pleschanka*
295	White-throated Rock Thrush	*Monticola gularis*
296	Chestnut-bellied Rock Thrush	*Monticola rufiventris*
324	Pale-footed Bush Warbler	*Cettia pallidipes*
327	Yellowish-bellied Bush Warbler	*Cettia acanthizoides*
328	Brown Bush Warbler	*Bradypterus luteoventris*
333	Middendorff's Grasshopper Warbler	*Locustella ochotensis*
334	Styan's Grasshopper Warbler	*Locustella pleskei*

336	Manchurian Reed Warbler	*Acrocephalus tangorum*
337	Paddyfield Warbler	*Acrocephalus agricola*
338	Blunt-winged Warbler	*Acrocephalus concinens*
339	Blyth's Reed Warbler	*Acrocephalus dumetorum*
342	Booted Warbler	*Hippolais caligata*
348	Chiffchaff	*Phylloscopus collybita*
350	Yellow-streaked Warbler	*Phylloscopus armandii*
353	Chinese Leaf Warbler	*Phylloscopus sichuanensis*
355	Hume's Leaf Warbler	*Phylloscopus humei*
357	Greenish Warbler	*Phylloscopus trochiloides*
358	Pale-legged Leaf Warbler	*Phylloscopus tenellipes*
359	Sakhalin Leaf Warbler	*Phylloscopus borealoides*
362	Grey-crowned Warbler	*Seicercus tephrocephalus*
363	Bianchi's Warbler	*Seicercus valentini*
364	Chestnut-crowned Warbler	*Seicercus castaniceps*
365	Rufous-faced Warbler	*Abroscocopus albogularis*
366	Brown-chested Jungle Flycatcher	*Rhinomyias brunneata*
374	Green-backed Flycatcher	*Ficedula elisae*
376	Rufous-gorgeted Flycatcher	*Ficedula strophiata*
379	Fujian Niltava	*Niltava davidi*
381	Pale Blue Flycatcher	*Cyornis unicolor*
382	Blue-throated Flycatcher	*Cyornis rubeculoides*
388	Yellow-bellied Tit	*Parus venustulus*
392	Plain Flowerpecker	*Dicaeum concolor*
399	Grey-necked Bunting	*Emberiza buchanani*
403	Yellow-browed Bunting	*Emberiza chrysophrys*
404	Rustic Bunting	*Emberiza rustica*
405	Yellow-throated Bunting	*Emberiza elegans*
408	Black-headed Bunting	*Emberiza melanocephala*
411	Japanese Reed Bunting	*Emberiza yessoensis*
412	Pallas's Reed Bunting	*Emberiza pallasi*
413	Common Reed Bunting	*Emberiza schoeniclus*
414	Brambling	*Fringilla montifringilla*
419	Japanese Grosbeak	*Eophona personata*
423	Russet Sparrow	*Passer rutilans*
426	Chestnut-tailed Starling	*Sturnus malabaricus*
428	Chestnut-cheeked Starling	*Sturnus philippensis*
430	Rose-coloured Starling	*Sturnus roseus*
445	Daurian Jackdaw	*Corvus dauuricus*
446	Carrion Crow	*Corvus corone*

Category E

All species except Common Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus*, Budgerigar *Melopsittacus undulatus*, Alexandrine Parakeet *Psittacula eupatria*, Grey-cheeked Fulvetta *Alcippe morrisonia*, Black-throated Tit *Aegithalos concinnus*, White-vented Myna *Acridotheres cinereus*, Hill Myna *Gracula religiosa*, Azure-winged Magpie *Cyanopica cyanus* and House Crow *Corvus splendens*.

NOTES FOR APPLICANTS WISHING TO VISIT MAI PO MARSHES NATURE RESERVE

Members should note that entry to the Mai Po Nature Reserve is restricted in order to minimise disturbance to the wildlife. Applications for permits to enter the restricted area will not normally be entertained unless the applicants are experienced bird watchers, scientists conducting research or others with official duties to perform in the areas.

Members are advised to **state their reason(s) clearly** when initially applying and when applying for renewal of permit:

1. Mai Po Marshes Entry Permit

- An annual permit to enter the Mai Po Marshes Nature Reserve

Write to:
Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department
7/F Cheung Sha Wan Government Offices
303 Cheung Sha Wan Road, Kowloon, Hong Kong

Application letter for HKBWS member is available for download at the Society website: **http://www.hkbws.org.hk/MP_permit.pdf**. Please send photocopies of the following together with your application letter:

- HKID card or passport
- Hong Kong Bird Watching Scoiety membership fees receipt
- Old "Mai Po Marsh Entry Permit" (if any)

Please mark "Application for Annual Permit" on the envelope. For enquiry, please contact Mr. C.L. Wong of AFCD at 2150 6921.

2. Frontier Closed Area Permit

- For access to the Boardwalk hides beyond the security fence at Mai Po, entry to which is strictly controlled by the Hong Kong Police Force

In accordance with the Permit Office's new policy on issue and renewal of Frontier Closed Area (FCA) Permits, **all applicants must sign a "Personal Data Declaration Form"**. As usual, WWF-HK will help to apply for permits on your behalf. The form is now available for download at the HKBWS website: **http://www.hkbws.org.hk/FCA_form.pdf**

To apply for or renew FCA permits, please **submit** your signed declaration form (with orginal signature) to:

The Mai Po Coordinator
Mai Po Nature Reserve
San Tin, Yuen Long, Hong Kong

together with photocopies of the following:

- HKID card or passport
- Hong Kong Bird Watching Society membership fees receipt
- WWF-HK Membership Card
- The most updated "Mai Po Marshes Entry Permit" (issued by AFCD, see (1))
- Donation cheque of HK$100 payable to "World Wide Fund For Nature Hong Kong" (for maintenance of bird watching hide)

Please note that all FCA permits expire on 4 March each year.
Please renew your permit by submitting the above documents before 31 December every year, starting from 31 December 2001.

For enquiry, please contact Ms. Silvia Yeung of WWF-HK at 2471 6306.

All permit holders are reminded that they are required to register at the Nature Warden Post every time they enter the Restricted Area.