

香港觀鳥會 The Hong Kong Bird Watching Society



bulletin

會員通訊

187 & 188

Spring & Summer 2003 ~ 春與夏



紅尾水鳩 (小瀝源) Plumbeous Redstart (Siu Lek Yuen) – 壞蛋 1 號



紅尾水鳩 (碗窰) Plumbeous Redstart (Wun Yiu) – 壞蛋 1 號



# The Hong Kong Bird Watching Society Limited

(Approved Charitable Institution of a Public Character)

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<i>Committee members</i>	Mr. Geoff Carey Dr. Lew Young Mr. Richard Lewthwaite Yu Yat Tung

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Mr. Karl Ng

## Staff

*Project Officer* Ms. Carrie Ma

# From the Chairman...

Summer is here. The big flocks of migrants are now only a distant memory. Accompanying us as we go about our daily chores are those birds who share Hong Kong as a home with us; Chinese Bulbuls, Crested Bulbuls, Spotted Doves, Sparrows, Kites and so on. Together, humans and birds live harmoniously in this city habitat. The thought of peaceful co-habitation warms our heart.

Under the cloud of atypical pneumonia in Hong Kong, the atmosphere of human society has been gloomy and depressed. Birds, however, know none of this, and their world continues to be as lively and gay as ever. As the seasons march on, they court, they mate, they breed. In the hot summer months, young innocent birds are seen everywhere, drifting around on wings barely sufficient to keep them airborne, or begging noisily for food from parents. These sights of new life give us immense joy. The thought that they are vulnerable worries us. On top of this, the selfless labour of parent birds reminds us to salute the fortitude of Life.

We very often over-indulge ourselves in the separation of species. But carefully appreciating how birds approach the subject of a meaningful life and quietly reflecting on how we do our own things is probably where we would gain most from bird watching. In this issue, we show a collection of photographs of nestlings, which are images we do not often encounter in the field. Take a good look and see if you might find some new hints about Life in them.



– New born Magpie Robin  
(Lamma Island)

– C.Y. Lam

## SOCIETY NEWS SOCIETY NEWS

– Carrie Ma, Jimmy Chim

### Membership renewal

Dear members, please remember to renew your subscription. You may send the completed subscription form with crossed cheque to the society. Alternatively, you may directly credit 'The Hong Kong Bird Watching Society Limited' account (Hong Kong Bank account no. 534-361423-838) and return the pay-in slip and the completed subscription form to the society. (Remark: cheque payment is highly recommended.) Thank you for your continued support.

Subscriptions for the year 2003 are as follows:

Membership	Subscription Fee (HKD)	Conditions	Bulletin	Bird Report
Individual Member	255	Age 18 or above residing in Hong Kong	Yes	Yes
Individual Member	50	Parents, spouse or children (aged 18 or above) of Individual Members residing in Hong Kong	No	No
Individual Member	60	Age 65 or above residing in Hong Kong	Yes	No
Overseas Member	310	Aged 18 or above residing outside Hong Kong	Yes	Yes
Student Member	60	Student aged below 18	Yes	No
Corporate Member	415	Company or corporate entity	Yes	Yes

## 2003 membership badge

If you have already renewed your membership, you will receive your membership badge for 2003 along with this issue. Please wear this badge when joining the society's activities.



We thank Mr. Lo Ka Man for sharing us his photo and Miss Puk Yuk-yin for helping to do the design work.

## Thanks to Shirley Lam

Miss Shirley Lam, Assistant Project Officer, left the HKBWS office on 30 June, at the end of her current contract. Unfortunately, Society resources do not allow us to renew her contract. We are most grateful to Shirley for her work in connection with the 'Bird watching – learn from nature' project, and we wish her well in her future endeavours.

## Project Staff

The society has renewed the employment contract for Miss Carrie Ma as Project Officer. The Society thanks her for her hard work and is very glad to have her continuing service in the coming year.

## Conservation of Terns

The EC Fund is subsidizing the Society to carry out a project on tern conservation from May to September. The program includes a tern census, large-scale survey, production of educational materials and the organization of educational activities.

In a related matter, AFCD has published a booklet on tern conservation which is enclosed with this bulletin. Tern conservation work by the government can be found in the following website: <http://www.news.gov.hk/tc/category/environment/030502/features/html/030502tc04005.htm>

## "My Favourite Hong Kong Bird"

The Hong Kong Jockey Club is subsidizing the society to carry out a program to encourage people to vote for a Symbolic Bird for "My Favourite Hong Kong Bird". The program is expected to be conducted in Autumn and aims at raising the public awareness about Hong Kong birds. We are now seeking volunteers to help with the operation, publicity, production, homepage design, data analysis, etc. Please contact Project Officer Miss Carrie Ma if you are able to help.

## Bird watching pamphlet for tourists

The Hong Kong Tourism Board and the Society have agreed on a plan for the Society to produce an educational pamphlet for tourists arriving in Hong Kong via the airport. The goal is to encourage bird watching and raise tourist awareness of the bio-diversity of Hong Kong's natural habitat. The printing of the pamphlet is sponsored by Swarovski Hong Kong Ltd. and the Society would like to take this opportunity to thank them their support. If you can help in the production of the pamphlet, in areas such as photography, editing, etc. please contact Project Officer Miss Carrie Ma.

## Crested Bulbul Club

Although the Healthy Aging Project "Bird watching – learn from nature" ended in June, we have set up a Crested Bulbul Club run by several active elders to continue to promote and organize bird watching among the elderly. The committee members include: Chairman – Mr. CHAN Chi Po, Vice-chariman – Mr. LEUNG Kwok Wa, Secretary – Mr. WONG Chiu Shu and coordinator – Ms WAI Chuk Yee, and they hope to continue the good work of the earlier project, which was subsidized by Health, Welfare and Food Bureau and Healthy Ageing Commission.

We are organizing a ceremony to mark the establishment of the Crested Bulbul Club in August. If you would like to meet them, please contact the society office. Elderly birders who wish to join the club, sharing experience with others, or assisting the club's matters, can contact the project office.

## CD-ROM on Waterbird Monitoring 2002-2003

The waterbird monitoring programme for 2002 – 2003 has been concluded and the reports have been sent to the relevant parties and surveyors. The reports have been formatted onto a CD-ROM for easy browsing and viewing. The cost of the CD-ROM is HK\$50. Members can send a crossed check made payable to The Hong Kong Bird Watching Society Ltd. to the project office to order.

If you are experienced in identification of water birds and would like to help the waterbird survey, please contact the project office or the coordinator of waterbird monitoring programme, Mr. Yu Yat Tung at e-mail [tytu@hkstar.com](mailto:tytu@hkstar.com).

## Birds with leg-flags

Mai Po Nature Reserve and inner Deep Bay area attracts thousands of migratory birds each year. From time to time, birders may come across birds which have been ringed with leg-flags; the result of bird ringing activities conducted by researchers in a number of different regions. To help these researchers to collect information on the ringed birds, please note down the following information of any 'flagged' birds you see: date, time, location, flag colour, location (left or right leg), numbers, species, and your contact information. Please e-mail this information to the project office or to the coordinator of waterbird monitoring programme, Mr. Yu Yat Tung at e-mail [ytyu@hkstar.com](mailto:ytyu@hkstar.com).

## Hong Kong Bird Report 1999/2000

The bird reports for 1999 and 2000 will be printed in a combined volume. The editor and volunteers are hard at work on the text and we will keep you updated on developments.

## National Bird Watching Database of China

If you have been bird watching in China, you can help to build up a bird database for China by submitting your bird records to China Ornithological Society which is compiling a database for birds in China. The records should include: time, date, location, species, numbers and observer's name, and be sent via e-mail to Dr. Zhang Zengwang of the China Ornithological Society at e-mail: [zzw@bnu.edu.cn](mailto:zzw@bnu.edu.cn).

## New reference material

### Hong Kong Biodiversity

The Society recently received a copy of "Hong Kong Biodiversity", an AFCD staff bulletin which contains an article on raptors of Hong Kong. It is now available in the project office for society members to peruse. Office hours are Mon. to Fri. from 5:30 pm to 7:30 pm.

### Waterbird Population Estimate

Wetland International issued the third edition of "WaterBird Population Estimate" in November. The 'soft' copy of it is now available for downloading from the following website at: [www.wetlands.org/IWC/WPEnote.htm](http://www.wetlands.org/IWC/WPEnote.htm).

The contents of the publication include:

- database of 868 species in 2271 areas
- estimates of 76% of the species population
- population forecast of 50% of the species
- international conservation information

The publication can also be purchased on-line from NHBS bookstore at [www.nhbs.com](http://www.nhbs.com)

## China and Regional Bird News


### Stopping trading wild life

Because of the SARS outbreak, the mainland's State Forestry Administration P. R. China and State Administration For Industry & Commerce jointly issued a notice in May prohibiting the trading of wildlife in China. Experts from China revealed that several initial SARS patients had a history of close contact with wildlife including pheasants, doves, and owls. News reports claimed that a mainland expert had identified the new virus and confirmed that the virus had spread from animals to humans.

### Birdlife Asia Council meeting

The Birdlife Asia Council meeting has been postponed from May to October this year due the outbreak of SARS in the Asia region.

### Concern about the habitat of Fairy Pitta

In Taiwan, a permit issued to a private company to carry out gravel extraction in Pillow Mountain, Huben Village, Yulin Country, has caused great concern because the lowland forest there is an important habitat of the globally threatened Fairy Pitta – a bird listed by Birdlife International as vulnerable. A survey of the area carried out in breeding season in 2001 identified 159 birds. 96 other bird species have also been recorded in the area, of which 5 species are endemic, and 32 species are sub-endemic. 

## Correction

In bulletin issue 186 Winter 2002, at page 9, 2nd paragraph, 4th line "... all members of the HKBWS General Committee", should be corrected to "... all **of them are** members of the HKBWS General Committee..."

2003 is another year for the Society's project developments, organized and backed up by sub-committees, research groups and over 100 active members of the Society. Members of the Society actively participated in birds and habitat conservation work and education activities last year. In addition to recurrent base activities, we initiated a number of projects. These activities were in line with the objectives of the Society:

**A** To promote the study of ornithology by encouraging the study of birds so as to understand their biology and ecology.

**B** To promote the appreciation and the understanding of birds.

**C** To aid the conservation of birds, wildlife and their habitats.

**D** To promote observance of laws protecting birds and in particular the Wild Animals Protection Ordinance.

### HKBWS recurrent baseline activities are:

1. Collect and analyze Hong Kong bird observation cards
2. Collect and publish field records of birds
3. Publish quarterly HKBWS Bulletin: a magazine featuring Society announcements, news and feature articles on birds and the environment, and information on ongoing and coming activities
4. Publish Hong Kong Bird Report: an annual report on the status of birds in Hong Kong, together with papers on identification and reviews of ornithological and conservation issues
5. Maintain the HKBWS hotline: providing the most updated information on birds
6. Maintain a website ([www.hkbws.org.hk](http://www.hkbws.org.hk)) to provide the most up-to-date information on birds and habitat, and a forum for discussion and reporting of incidents
7. Hold Regular indoor educational meetings
8. Conduct surveys and research projects on birds and their habitats
9. Organize guided field trips to watch birds all over Hong Kong
10. Provide education resources and professional assistance to government, community organizations, schools and mass media
11. Provide professional comments to the government on development programmes, with particular emphasis on the conservation of birds and their habitat
12. Participate in international conferences and exchange information with overseas organizations

### List of Specific Activities from January 2002 to March 2003

**Table 1. Projects and collaborations**

Period	Collaborating organization / Funding source HKBWS committee / research group	Title / content
11/2001 – ongoing	Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department Records Committee	HKBWS Winter Atlas Survey
11/2001 – ongoing	Kite Survey Group	Kite Ecological Survey
Ongoing	Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department Waterbird Monitoring Programme Project Committee	Waterbird Monitoring at Mai Po Inner Deep Bay Ramsar Site

**Table 1. Projects and collaborations (con't)**

10/2001 – 4/2002 10/2002 – 4/2003	Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department Black-faced Spoonbill Research Group	Age Structure of Black – faced Spoonbill
11/2001 – 2/2002 11/2002 – 1/2003	Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department Education and Publicity Committee	World Wetland Day celebration activity – Junior Bird Race
12/2001 – 6/2003	Healthy Ageing Commission and Jockey Club Charitable Fund Education and Publicity Committee	Health and Welfare Bureau, "Healthy Ageing" Community Partnership "Learn about nature by watching birds"
7/2001 – 6/2002	Education Bureau, Quality Education Fund Education and Publicity Committee	Be a Young Naturalist – Promoting Bird Watching and awareness of Hong Kong's natural environment in primary schools
1/2002 – 3/2002	Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department Education and Publicity Committee	Training Course on Bird-watching for International Wetland Park Volunteers (training on bird watching and interpretation skills)
1/2002 – 4/2002	Environmental Protection Department, Environmental Campaign Committee	Day camps for Student Environmental Protection Ambassadors (Two training day camps)
5/2002 – 7/2002	Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department Egret Research Group	Flight-line Survey
5/2002 – 9/2002	Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department Tern Research Group	Tern Survey in the Tolo Harbour and Mirs Bay areas
9/2002 – 3/2003	Swarovski H.K. Limited Hong Kong Professional Teachers' Union Education and Publicity Committee	Talks and workshops for 25 schools One bird watching class for teachers

**Table 2. Publications**

## 2.1 Research and projects

- Anon. 2002. *Age Structure Assessment of Wintering Black-faced Spoonbill in Hong Kong 2001-2002*. Report by the Hong Kong Bird Watching Society to the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department, HKSAR Government.
- Carey, G. J. 2002. *Winter 2001-2002 Report on Waterbird Monitoring at the Mai Po Inner Deep Bay Ramsar Site*. Hong Kong Bird Watching Society. Hong Kong.
- Carey, G.J. 2002. *Waterbird Count Workshop 18 November 2001*. Hong Kong Bird Watching Society. Hong Kong
- Carey, G.J. 2002. *Waterbird Count Handbook: A guide for participants in waterbird counts in Hong Kong*. Hong Kong Bird Watching Society. Hong Kong.
- Cheung, H.F. and Yu, Y.T. 2002. *Tern Survey in the Tolo Harbour and Shek Ngau Chau area*. Report by the Hong Kong Bird Watching Society to the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department, HKSAR Government.
- HKBWS. 2002. *Monthly Waterbird Counts Data (April 2001 – March 2002): Waterbird Monitoring at the Mai Po Inner Deep Bay Ramsar Site*. Hong Kong Bird Watching Society. Hong Kong
- HKBWS. 2003. *Monthly Waterbird Counts Data (April 2003 – March 2004): Waterbird Monitoring at the Mai Po Inner Deep Bay Ramsar Site*. Hong Kong Bird Watching Society. Hong Kong
- Wong L.C. and Kwok H.K. 2002. *Egretty Counts in Hong Kong, with particular reference to the Mai Po Inner Deep Bay Ramsar Site: Summer 2001 Report*. Hong Kong Bird Watching Society. Hong Kong



**Table 2. Publications (cont)**

- Wong L.C. and Kwok H.K. 2002. *Egretty Counts in Hong Kong, with particular reference to the Mai Po Inner Deep Bay Ramsar Site: Summer 2002 Report*. Hong Kong Bird Watching Society. Hong Kong
- Wong L. C. 2002. *Pilot Study for the Waterbird Monitoring Programme: Feeding Habitat Use and Foraging Flights of Ardeids nesting in the Mai Po Inner Deep Bay Ramsar Site*. Hong Kong Bird Watching Society. Hong Kong
- Yu, Y. T. 2002. *Summer 2002 Report on Waterbird Monitoring at the Mai Po Inner Deep Bay Ramsar Site*. Hong Kong Bird Watching Society. Hong Kong.
- Yu, Y. T. 2003. *International Black-faced Spoonbill Census: 24-26 January 2003*. Hong Kong Bird Watching Society. Hong Kong.
- Yu, Y. T. 2003. *Winter 2002-2003 Report on Waterbird Monitoring at the Mai Po Inner Deep Bay Ramsar Site*. Hong Kong Bird Watching Society. Hong Kong.
- HKBWS. 2002. HKBWS Bulletin: Spring 2002 – No. 183. Hong Kong Bird Watching Society. Hong Kong
- HKBWS. 2002. HKBWS Bulletin: Summer 2002 – No. 184. Hong Kong Bird Watching Society. Hong Kong
- HKBWS. 2002. HKBWS Bulletin: Autumn 2002 – No. 185. Hong Kong Bird Watching Society. Hong Kong
- HKBWS. 2003. HKBWS Bulletin: Winter 2002 – No. 186. Hong Kong Bird Watching Society. Hong Kong
- HKBWS. 2002. Hong Kong Bird Report 1998. Hong Kong Bird Watching Society. Hong Kong

## 2.2 Bulletins and annual report

- HKBWS. 2001. HKBWS Bulletin: Autumn 2001 – No. 181. Hong Kong Bird Watching Society. Hong Kong
- HKBWS. 2001. HKBWS Bulletin: Winter 2001 – No. 182. Hong Kong Bird Watching Society. Hong Kong

## 2.3 Leaflets

- Healthy Ageing: Learn about nature by watching birds
- Wetlands and Migratory Birds
- Long Valley – a living classroom
- Black-faced Spoonbill

## 2.4 Website

- HKBWS Bulletin Board
- Black-faced Spoonbill International Census
- The Black-faced Spoonbill Website

**Table 3. Talks and field trips for schools**

8 & 9 /1/2002	Christian Alliance C.C.S.W.	Talk on bird watching
5 & 25 /1/2002 2/2/2002	Memorial Secondary School	Field trip on bird watching
4/2/2002	Q.E.S.O.S.A. Secondary School	Sound recording for Long Valley Campaign, to be delivered to students during lunch hour
24/2/2002	Ying Wa Girls' School	Talk on bird watching field studies
1/3/2002	P.L.K 1983 Board of Director's College	Talk on Bird Watching
9 – 17/4/2002	Hong Kong Tang King Po College	16 lecture series for S2 and S3 students on biological diversity, trends of international conservation, EIA in Hong Kong and Save Long Valley event
14 & 25 /4/2002	S.T.F.A. Cheung Yu Tung Secondary School	Bird watching field trip Talk on bird watching
12/6/2002 9/7/2002	Victoria English Primary School & Primary Garden (Taikoo Shing)	Talk and guided tour on bird watching
18 & 26/11/2002	China Holiness College	2 talks on bird watching
19/11/2002	Shatin Tsung Tsin Secondary School	Talk on bird watching

**Table 3. Talks and field trips for schools (con't)**

22/11/2002	Ying Wa Girls' School	Bird watching tour to Mai Po
7/12/2002	Yan Oi Tong Tin Ka Ping Secondary School	Bird watching tour
15/2/2003	China Holiness College	2 sessions of morning bird watching activity
22/2/2003	Ying Wa Girls' School	Bird watching tour to Long Valley
22/2/2003	Faculty of Science, HKU	Bird watching tour to Mai Po
22/2/2003	Q.E.S.O.S.A Sec. School	2nd Bird Watching Class – HKBWS provide guidance
1/1/2003 ongoing	Chinese University of Hong Kong	Development of bird watching activities for staff and students of the Chinese University of Hong Kong, including development of checklist, education material, organize workshops bird race etc.
11/2002 & 2/2003	HKU School of Professional and Continuing Education	Bird watching course: Bird watching in the wild

**Table 4. Training / Field Studies / Guidance – for organizations**

10/2001 – 1/2002	Hong Kong Award Holders' Association	Bird watching training for "Skill Section" 11 for medal candidates
5/1/2002	Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department	Talk on migratory birds for the AFCD seminar series on Wetlands of Hong Kong
16/3/2002	Swire Properties Limited	Bird Watching outing to Tsim Bei Tsui: Swire Properties Community Ambassadors (The Boys' & Girls' Clubs Association of Hong Kong – provision of service to new immigrants)
23/3/2002	Community Youth Club Tuen Mun District Committee	Talk on bird watching and nature appreciation - leadership training for CYC participants
4/4/2002	The Boys' & Girls' Clubs Association of Hong Kong	Birdwatching field trip to Luk Keng
7/4/2002 – 21/4/2002	Staff Club, Shaw College, Chinese University of Hong Kong	Bird watching activity for CUHK Shaw College
13/4/2002	LCSD Hong Kong Cultural Museum	Bird watching field trip at Tsim Bei Tsui
25/5/2002	Faculty of Business, City University of Hong Kong	Sharing views on bird watching and life – High table dinner of Summer Leadership Programme
2/6/2002 9/6/2002 16/6/2002	Commercial Radio	Broadcast 5 minutes each on birds
July to October 22/10/2002 27/10/2002	Central and Western District Council	Provision of advice and material for the production of leaflet on birds at HK Park and Lung Fu Shan Training for Nature Interpreter for The Conservancy Association Bird Watching activity at HK Park and Lung Fu Shan

**Table 4. Training / Field Studies / Guidance – for organizations (con't)**

13/7/2002	Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department	Sharing of experience on the AFCD talk on wildlife.
17/8/2002	Hong Kong Cultural Museum	Bird watching field trip at Luk Keng
28/8/2002	Yan Oi Tong Leung King Youth Centre	Bird Watching field trip "Green class room at Luk Keng"
29/8/200	Hong Kong Federation of Youth	Training for nature interpreters: evening talk and field trip to wetland in NE New Territories
7/9/2002 4/10/2002	International Youth of Mountain Chamber Committee	Talk on nature watching
2/11/2002 10/11/2002	Kerry Properties Management Services Limited – Constellation Cove	Talk on bird watching Field trip to Tai Po Kau
10/2002 – 1/2003	Gold Award Holders' Association Hong Kong	Bird watching course
9/11/2002 4/3/2003	CNEC Holy Light Elderly Centre	Talk and field trips on bird watching
11/2002 24/11/2003	Radio Television Hong Kong	Radio Broadcast & Bird watching at Hong Kong Park on how to "add value" through bird watching
29/12/2002	Commercial Radio Hong Kong	Bird watching at Tsim Bei Tsui
1/2003	LCSD Hong Kong Zoological and Botanical Garden	Review bird list for Zoological and Botanical Garden and send photo and text for production of bird calendar
2 – 3/2003	LCSD Kowloon Park	Review bird list for Kowloon Park and send photo and text for production of leaflet
8/2/2003	Radio Television Hong Kong	Members shared experience on bird watching in a phone-in programme on student's homework
3/2003	Tai Po Environmental Association	Provide pictures and material to assist production of a guidebook on Tai Po environment
3/2003	Tai Po Environmental Association	Co-organize the "Tai Po Egret Festival"
9/3/2003	The Conservancy Association	Dance with birds – HKBWS provided adjudicators
23/3/2003	Swarovski H.K. Ltd	Talk on bird watching during "Sport Expo 2003"
9/3/2003	AIG Hong Kong Limited	Bird watching tour at Mai Po 2/11/2002

**Table 5. Overseas meeting / training**

8/2001 – 5/2202	Birdlife Training: Building on experience on (Jordan, Argentina, S. Africa and India)
8/2002	International Ornithological Congress (Beijing)



- Members of ERG surveyed nesting populations and conducted a preliminary flight line study of a colony in Macau on 18 April.

## 1.1.4. Kite Survey Group

Convener: Etta Hui

Members:

Dr. Yip Chi Lap, Karin Chan, Shirley Lam, Henry Lui

Participant:

Chan Tin Lok, Billy Chan, Choi Chung Pak



- Taiwan's Black Kite researcher Shen Chen Chung and documentary photographer Liang Chiet-Te visited Hong Kong for 4 days for Black Kite research and documentary photography. Mr. Shen shared his experience of conducting the incremental Kite counts in Taiwan with the Kite Research Group at Magazine Gap. [The Black Kite documentary is to be presented at the 3rd Symposium on Asian Raptors (10-13 Oct 2003), hosted by the Raptor Research Group of Taiwan (RRGT) in Taiwan.]

- In the afternoon of 16 Feb 2003, KRG led an outing to Tai O. 30+ participants joined, with some staying to watch the sunset and Kite dusk assembly.
- In an RTHK Television programme on March 9th, 2003, KRG introduced Black Kite observation.

### Kite Counts:

The monthly Kite counts at Magazine Gap (MG) and Stonecutters Island (SI) continued this year. Besides members of KRG, a number of participants joined the Kite counts. These included a family who joined regularly, and occasionally some senior citizens from the "Healthy Ageing" project.

In view of the special geographical conditions at Magazine Gap, two Kite count methods were held simultaneously for comparison this year. One is the traditional Kite counting method (snapshot counting) which estimates the number of Kites observable at a particular instant, and another the incremental counting method, which estimates the total number of Kites in the site. A big population difference was found between the two counting methods. We used only the snapshot counting for the Stonecutters, as incremental counting is not feasible.

### Attached is 2003 Kite count data for reference:

19 Jan 2003:	MG- Incremental:	731	Snapshot:	350 / SI- 258
09 Feb 2003:	MG- Incremental:	657	Snapshot:	200 / SI- 239
03 Mar 2003:	MG- Incremental:	279	Snapshot:	110 / SI- 146
13 Apr 2003:	MG- Incremental:	298	Snapshot:	72 / SI- 173

**The Tai O (Lantau Island) Kite count is continuing monthly.**

### Tai O (Lantau Island) 2003 Kite count data:

27 Jan 2003:	52	26 Feb 2003:	15	31 Mar 2003:	16
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### Kite Breeding Survey:

- Stonecutters Island: A monthly Kite breeding survey at Stonecutters has been carried out since Dec 2002. Up to 19th April, 2003, 8 Kite nests were recorded. 5 active, 3 abandoned.
- Tai O (Lantau Island): Up until the end of March, 2003, 8 Kite nests were recorded. 2 active (2002 breeding record), 6 abandoned. There are still signs of potential nests
- Others: Three were recorded. 2 Kwun Tong (one 2001 breeding record), 1 Tsim Sha Tsui (2002 breeding record).

### Other observations:

- An active nest of White-Bellied Sea Eagle at Stonecutters was recorded. Information was requested by the AFCD for their internal publication "Hong Kong Biodiversity Newsletter".
- When conducting the Stonecutters Kite counts at the counting site, a Peregrine Falcon was constantly seen roosting at the top corner of the 'Island Harbour View' building after sunset. In Feb 2003, two Peregrines were seen roosting at the top corner of two separate blocks.

## 1.2. Bird Survey Projects

### 1.2.1 Winter Atlas Survey (2001/02 - 2003/04)

The Society is carrying out large-scale Winter Atlas Survey for 3 consecutive winters beginning from November 2001. This is a large-scale project which aims to produce a map of the distribution of wintering birds in Hong Kong and an assessment of relative numbers in different areas or habitats. This information will provide the Society with a very useful conservation tool, as it will give an indication of the ornithological importance of different areas of Hong Kong. The survey divided the maps of Hong Kong into about 1 200 1-Km squares. 40 experienced members of the

Society carry out regular surveys within the period from November to January each year. In 2002/03, a total of 600 squares were completed.

We will need more members to participate to complete the survey in 2003/04. If members are interested in participating in the survey, please contact the project coordinators Cheung Ho Fai (apcheung@cityu.edu.hk) or Geoff Carey (geoffcarey@netvigator.com). The basic expenses of the project is support by Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD).

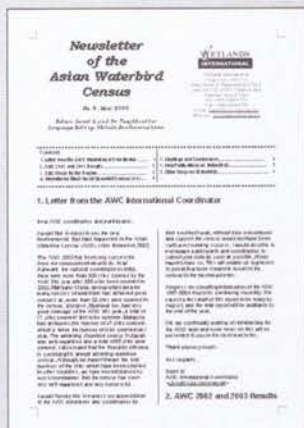
### 1.2.2 Asian Waterbird Census

The number of waterbirds in and around the Mai Po Inner Deep Bay Ramsar Site is being monitored in a series of monthly counts (also see 1.2.5). The January 19th count was timed to coincide with the large-scale annual Asian Waterbird Census organized by Wetlands International – Asia Pacific. The data submitted feeds into an international programme maintaining an overview of the population size, status and trends of waterbirds. Each year, volunteers from all over the Asia network, which covers from Pakistan eastwards to Japan, SE Asia and Australia, join the event. For further information about the census, please visit the Wetlands International at [www.wetland.org/IWC/awc/awcmain.html](http://www.wetland.org/IWC/awc/awcmain.html).

Members who are interested in becoming waterbird surveyors are required to build up bird watching experience and confidence. This is gained through practice, reading, and consulting experienced members of the Society. Potential applicants should contact the coordinator of the waterbird monitoring programme, or join the waterbird count training at the end of each year.

### 1.2.3 Breeding Tern Survey

In 2002 breeding season, the Society received funding from AFCD to coordinate a survey of breeding terns in Tolo Harbour and Mirs Bay (also see 1.1.1). A preliminary report has been submitted to AFCD in Nov/Dec 2002. A revised report will be submitted soon.



### 1.2.4 Black-faced Spoonbill Age Structure

The Black-faced Spoonbill Group conducted a survey on the structure of wintering Black-faced Spoonbill for AFCD from November 2002. Field data collection was expected to be finished in April 2003.

### 1.2.5 Waterbird Monitoring Programme at the Mai Po Inner Deep Bay Ramsar Site

The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) has been subventing the Hong Kong Bird Watching Society Limited (HKBWS) to conduct a long-term Waterbird Monitoring Programme (WMP) at the Mai Po Inner Deep Bay Ramsar Site since 2000. The predecessor of the programme was a volunteer-led annual waterbird counting programme which started in 1979. It eventually became part of an internationally-coordinated survey in Asia. The subvention has enabled the application of professional coordination and greater rigour to the surveys and ensured that the data collected would be relevant to the conservation and management of the Ramsar Site.

**The WMP in 2002-2003 constituted the following components:**

- (a) Waterbird Monitoring,
- (b) Publications,
- (c) Training and Programme Development. Waterbird monitoring

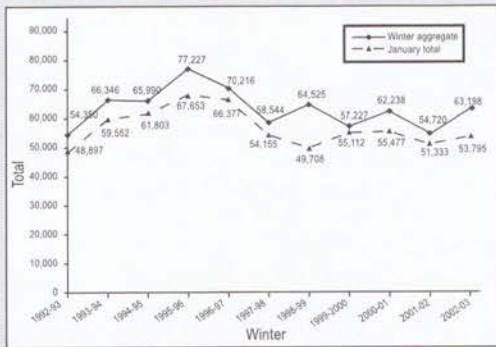
#### (a) Waterbird Monitoring

This component comprised monthly counts of waterbirds, surveys of egrets and herons (Ardeids) nesting colonies and intensified surveys of migrant shorebirds.

#### Monthly Waterbird Counts

- Monthly surveys of waterbirds covering the whole Ramsar Site were conducted throughout the year from March 2002 to April 2003. The January count coincided with the annual Asia Waterbird Census organized by Wetland International Asia-Pacific.
- The aggregate number of wintering waterbirds in the winter of 2002-2003 was 63,198, which is higher than the 54,720 total of 2001-2002. It remained lower than the peak number of 77,227 recorded in the winter of 1995-1996. The figures have apparently stabilized in the last five years (Figure 1). The "aggregate number" refers to the sum of peak species counts for the period from December to February.

Figure 1. January waterbird count totals and aggregate of peak species counts December to February 1992-93 to 2002-03



## Egretty Counts

- Counts were carried out at egrettries during the breeding season in 2002. The number of nests of Ardeids was counted and the number of birds returning to or leaving egrettries at dawn or dusk was also recorded. The egrettries in the Ramsar site were found to hold about 30% of the active nests of five ardeid species (Great Egret, Little Egret, Black-crowned Night Heron, Chinese Pond Heron and Cattle Egret) in the whole of Hong Kong.

## Shorebird Counts

- The shorebird counts were carried out throughout the year, with observations made down to the species level where possible and of significance to conservation, especially for endangered species. The frequency of counts was adjusted for the different seasons of the year, reflecting the level of activity of migrants passing through Hong Kong.
- WMP results identified 14 bird species of conservation significance either due to their being listed as globally threatened or because Deep Bay supported at least 1% of the regional or flyway populations. The most significant result was that Deep Bay area supported 11% of the regional population of Dalmatian Pelican and 22% of the world population of Black-faced Spoonbill.
- There was a high count of Pied Avocet during the winter of 2002-2003. An astonishing peak count of 5,846 was obtained in February 2003, a new high for Hong Kong. It was nearly 3 times the previous peak number of 2,045.
- The status of Falcated Duck continued to be of major concern. The peak count this winter was 5 birds in

January 2003, the first time it occurred since winter 2000-01. Compared with a peak count of 237 birds in 1990-91, there obviously has been a major decline and a worrying trend towards extinction. This species may be suffering from a population decline as the numbers have decreased too in Japan, South Korea and Taiwan. The trend in mainland China is largely unknown.

- Of equal concern was the decline in the number of the globally vulnerable species Saunders's Gull. The peak winter count this past winter was 35 in February 2003. Numbers have declined since the peak of 172 in 1993-94, and have remained low (31 to 70 birds) in the last 5 years.

## Black-faced Spoonbill International Census:

- The Hong Kong Bird Watching Society is co-ordinating the Global Black-faced Spoonbill Census from 2003 onwards. 1,069 Black-faced Spoonbills were counted in the census this year. This was the first time the number exceeded 1,000, and represents an increase of 10% over the 2002 count.

## Bird ringing database

- A one-off project was conducted to collate past ringing data in Hong Kong and compile it in the form of a database which would facilitate future studies on the pattern of migratory birds and their life history in this part of the world. Over 45,000 records were collected, each giving information on species, date and place of ringing, ring number and recapture information if any.

## (b) Publications

The existing Waterbird Count Handbook was updated, the focus being the maps of the count sites in the Ramsar Site where changes on the ground took place. The Handbook serves as the technical basis as well as a training reference for newly recruited volunteer bird surveyors of the counting activity.



- The results of the surveys and studies were published in the following reports:
  - Monthly waterbird count data, April 2002 – March 2003
  - Summer 2002 report on the WMP
  - Winter 2002-03 report on the WMP

- d) Egretty counts in Hong Kong, with particular reference to the Mai Po Inner Deep Bay area: Summer 2002 Report.
- e) Shorebird Monitoring at the Mai Po Marshes and Inner Deep Bay Ramsar Site: 2001-2002 Report.
- f) International Census of Black-faced Spoonbill: 24-26 January 2003.



A bilingual leaflet "Black-faced Spoonbill" was produced. It serves as general publicity material for the WMP as well as an education resource for schools and other outreach activities. It describes the general behaviour of the Black-faced Spoonbill, distribution and migration route, world protection status and the importance of the Ramsar Site to this globally threatened species. The leaflet has been distributed to schools, AFCD, potential bird surveyors, bird watchers, participants at outreach events, etc.

A CD-ROM on the 2002-2003 WMP was produced. It provides a convenient means to access reports, data, handbook and education information of the WMP.

## (c) Training and Programme Development

### Waterbird Count Training

In order to strengthen the local ability to do waterbird monitoring, a training course on waterbird counting was run on 24 November 2002. The intensive course included site visits and field practice sessions. It was intended to equip volunteers with skills, on-site experience, accuracy and scientific validity in data collection. 18 potential counters attended the course and some of them started to accompany experienced counters as apprentices for waterbird surveys.



### Public Forum

A public forum "Waterbird Monitoring Programme: Long-term Trend of Black-faced Spoonbills and other waterbirds" took place on 24 March 2003. More than 90 persons attended the event. The audience included government officers, environmental consultants, representatives of NGOs, birdwatchers, teachers and students. The presentations were well received. The response of the audience was enthusiastic as shown by the very active question and answer period.

### Website

The website on the WMP programme was maintained and operated throughout the year. Its contents include an introduction to the WMP in Hong Kong and on-line annual reports and summaries arising from the counts. A new website "International Black-faced Spoonbill Census" was produced, providing information on ecology, distribution, migration, ringing information, world data and trends. Both websites are hosted on the HKBWS website at [www.hkbws.org.hk](http://www.hkbws.org.hk).



## 2. Outreach projects

### 2.1 Healthy Ageing "Bird Watching – Learning from Nature"

The "Bird Watching – Learning from Nature" programme, funded by the Elderly Commission of Health, Welfare and Food Bureau, and Hong Kong Jockey Club Charitable Fund, was started in December 2001 and scheduled to end in May 2003. The project aims to reach the elderly, providing chances for nature appreciation through watching birds and nature. The project was divided into two sections: (1) "Promotion and Publicity Stage" from December 2001 to August 2002, and (2) "Strengthen and Outreach Stage" from September 2002 to May 2003.



Through a series of seminars, outdoor bird watching, production of education material and organized training,



outstanding participants will be invited to become “Elderly Nature Interpreters” to share the joy and knowledge of watching birds and nature with other elderly people. We also produced a CD-ROM to train elderly volunteers, and to equip them with more knowledge.



Up to June 2003, we have served 86 organizations and reached 9,600 elderly, about 30% of them in intensive care programmes. We have organized a 2nd training session for “Elderly Nature Interpreters” in hopes of building up a pool of enthusiastic interpreters. We have facilitated the establishment of Elderly Bird Watching Committee, which help us to organize the Elderly Nature Interpreters group namely “Crested Bulbul Club”, and are now trying to form a committee for them. We hope this would help the elderly to continue the “Healthy Ageing” spirit after the end of the project.

## 2.2 Quality Education Fund: “Be a Young Naturalist”

The Society started the one-year project “Be a Young Naturalist” – Promoting bird watching activities and awareness of Hong Kong’s natural environment, in primary schools from July 2001 to



June 2002. It delivered education booklets to all primary schools in Hong Kong, produced education packages and provided close guidance to 30 schools by delivering talks and organizing field study days. A website was created and exhibition boards are available as an on going resource for teachers and students. A drawing competition was organized for students, as well as seminars and field study for teachers.

30 schools received direct service from the project, allowing the project to reach out to 10,343 students. The drawing competition attracted 600 students. The education booklet benefited 27,600 students and teachers. The seminars provided training to about 70 teachers. The Roadshow gave the project a high degree of visibility and reached over 51,000 students, teachers and members of the public.



The QEF project has been very successful in serving as a demonstration to teachers on how future bird watching activities could be organized. It also reduced the workload of teachers in organizing such activities in schools.

In brief, the QEF project achieved a total of 120,352 contacts with students, teachers and members of the public from July 2001 to June 2002. Very positive response was observed. We received a number of enquiries to provide technical assistance and advice on birds and natural environment to primary schools, far exceeding the quota set for the project. There was clearly a great demand for

Items	Expected no. of audiences	Actual no. of audiences
<b>A. Education Events:</b>		up to 6,500 students
– School visits and field study days (30 events)		10,343 students
– Drawing competition (1 event)	200 students	Provision of technical assistance: 739 students 600 students
– Road shows in schools (20 schools)	15,000 students	~21,000 students
<b>B. Teachers Development</b>		
Training seminar and field study trip (1 event)	70 teachers	70 teachers
<b>C. Education Material</b>		
Exhibition boards, education kit and booklet	50,000 students	Booklet: 57,600 students Exhibition (schools): ~21,000 students* Exhibition (Mai Po): ~30,000 visitors** Education kit: 30 schools
<b>D. Website Development</b>		
	All schools	All schools

\* on the basis of 1,000 students per school

\*\* estimated number of visitors per year to the Education Centre of Mai Po Nature Reserve

“birds and biodiversity” education. Already, one of the schools has requested the Society to serve as a consultant for their future bird watching programme. An Education TV programme was produced based on the information the project delivered to schools. This project met this need in a timely and effective manner.

## 2.3. Bird Watching Classes

### 2.3.1 HKU SPACE “Watching Birds in the Wild”

The Society held two bird watching courses for the School of Professional and Continuing Education of the University of Hong Kong, in November 2002 and February 2003. The courses included 5 lectures and 5 field trips which enabled participants to learn the skills on watching birds in different habitats including urban areas, farmland, wetlands, woodlands, etc. We thank CY Lam for organizing the courses, Ronley Lee and Simon Wong for the coordination and for field interpretation.

We organized a bird watching course from October 2002 to January 2003, for Gold Award Holders’ Association members who are interested in watch birds, and for medal candidates of the Hong Kong Award For Young People in the “Skills” section. The course has been successfully completed. GAHA has sent us a letter inviting us to hold another bird watching course at the end of 2003.

### 2.3.3 Q.E.S.O.S.A. Bird Watching Class

Since the QEF programme in 2000-01, which promoted bird watching in secondary schools, it is very encouraging to us to find that there are schools organizing their own bird watching activities. Q.E.S.O.S.A. Secondary School in Tin Shui Wai organized the 2nd bird watching course for schools in Kowloon and New Territories on 22 February. 40 participants joined the event. Students of the school prepared well for the function. We noted that they had greatly improved their knowledge of wetlands and birds, culture and presentation.

### 2.3.4 World Wetland Day celebration activity – Junior Bird Race

To celebrate the annual World Wetland Day, the Society assisted AFCD in organizing bird watching training and a Bird Race for 200 secondary school students. We received a warm response from schools. The activity also attracted school bird watching clubs, to share knowledge and test their skills. The bird race was held on 17 February, and 55 teams participated in the event. The best 6 teams succeeded in recording more than 40 species of birds. These teams were St. Stephen Church Secondary School, T.W.G.H.S., Mrs. Fung Wong Fung Ting College, Baptist Wing Lung

College, Lee Kau Yan Memorial School and Hon Wa Middle School

## 2.4 Talks, outings, training and outreach

### 2.4.1 CUHK Project

The Society maintained communication with CUHK since May 2002, when there was news report on threats to Hong Kong’s largest Little Swift colony at the University Library. A project on bird watching was started in January 2003 and we have facilitated CUHK with the following:



- Production of leaflet and checklist on birds of CUHK campus
- Organization of a workshop on bird watching on 7-8 March 2003
- Bird-Race for Environmental Week on 15 March 2003

We will keep in touch with CUHK staff. It is expected that a 12-month bird survey will be carried out by students. Members interested in helping with coordination are welcome to contact the Society Office by e-mail [hkbws@hkbws.org.hk](mailto:hkbws@hkbws.org.hk) or at 2377 4387.

### 2.4.2 Faculty of Science, The University of Hong Kong

The Society facilitated the Faculty of Science for a Mai Po bird watching activity on 22 February, 2003. Target audiences for the event were senior secondary school students who wish to further their study in science. We received positive feedback from the Faculty about the professional experience of our interpreters. A website on the activity has been made available for public access at <http://www.hku.hk/science/trip/maipo.html>. We thank Luke Woo for the coordination and field interpretation.



### 2.4.3 Environmental Campaign Committee

The Society facilitated the Environmental Campaign Committee of the Environmental Protection Department in organizing 4 day-camps for the Student Environmental

Protection Ambassador training. A total of 139 Environmental Ambassadors of intermediate and senior level (S.3 - S.6) from 45 secondary schools participated in the event. Highlights of the event included:

- 1 & 8 March (Topic: wetlands and birds)
- 15 & 22 March (Topic: birdwatching and ecotourism)

We thank Carrie Ma, Ho Man Fai, Angus Ho and Joanne Au for their assistance. From the results of questionnaire survey, we found the response is very positive. Students enjoyed the tasks we designed and learnt from them.

#### 2.4.4 Tai Po Environmental Association: Hong Kong Egret Festival

The Society was invited to co-organize the Hong Kong Egret Festival with the Tai Po Environmental Association. We were interviewed by Sing Tao Daily on the topic of "Routes for egret watching", which aimed to increase the public awareness about egrets in Hong Kong. The newspaper article was published on 14 March 2003. The Association is organizing a series of competitions on the topic of egrets, including:



- English Poem Contest
- Chinese Poem and Chinese Painting Contest

#### 2.4.5 Tai Po Environmental Association: Guidebook on Tai Po environment

The Tai Po Environmental Association is preparing a guidebook on the environment of Tai Po under the funding from ECC. The Society supported the production by providing text and photos on birds and bird watching hotspots. We thank Henry Lui, Marcus Ho, Michelle and Peter Wong and Carrie Ma for preparation.

#### 2.4.6 The Conservancy Association: Dance with the Birds

Some members were nominated to serve as adjudicators for the "Dance with the Birds 2003- Bird Model and Dance Competition" on 9 March 2003. The Society thanks for their kind help:

Chan Ming Ming: Secondary School – Bird Model Flying Competition

Robin Fung: Primary School – Exxon Mobil Bird Imitation

Forrest Fong: Secondary and Primary School – Cheung Kong Hong Kong Electric Group Club "Bird in Nest" Model Competition

#### 2.4.7 Swarovski H.K. Ltd

1. We have completed the Swarovski-sponsored education event from September 2002 to February 2003. The 26 school events have allowed us to reach 5,847 students and teachers. The bird watching class benefited 50 teachers and enabled them to receive close guidance on knowledge and skills of bird watching.
2. We offered Swarovski a half-hour talk on birdwatching at the "Sports Fair 2003" on 23 March 2003.
3. Swarovski planned to equip our volunteers and accredited outing leaders with professional equipment. Binoculars and a telescope (four EL 10x42, two SLC 10x42 binoculars, one telescope ATS65HD w/20-60xs eyepiece and one tripod) were lent and placed at the Society office. These will be use during bird watching and publicity events. Outing leaders interested in borrowing this equipment, please contact Carrie Ma at the Project Office.

From 2002 to March 2003, we received requests from 13 schools and 22 organizations for providing talks, outdoor activities and technical assistances. For details, please refer to Table 3 and 4.

## 3. Publicity

### 3.1 Websites on special topics

We are producing two websites on special topics:

- The Black-faced Spoonbill Website (by BFS Research Group)
- How to start bird watching (by Yam Wing Yiu)

These will be uploaded onto the HKBWS website soon.

### 3.2 Photo guide

Preparation for a photo guide to the birds of Hong Kong is underway. A number of working groups were formed to help production of the book. Members who are interested in offering help on editing, proof-reading or provide us professional comment on printing and publicity, please contact the Project Office.

### 3.3 Hong Kong Discovery – Regular articles

The Society submitted articles for Hong Kong Discovery

bi-monthly magazine, to provide detailed bird watching information for nature lovers, hikers and people who are interested in outdoor activities:

- Vol 12. Sept/Oct  
**2002 Where to watch birds – Mai Po**
- Vol 13. Nov/Dec 2002  
**Where to watch birds – Nam Chung and Luk Keng**
- Omnibus Collection No. 1  
**Birdwatching Trip from Tai Ho River to Mui Wo Wetland**
- Vol 14. Jan/Feb 2003  
**Lung Fu Shan Bird Watching Trip**
- Vol 15. Mar/April 2003  
**Feature Story on Black-faced Spoonbill**

We thank Dickson Wong, Carrie Ma and Henry Lui for preparing these regular articles. Thanks also to Black-faced Spoonbill Research Group for providing useful information on conservation of Black-faced Spoonbill, editing and proof-reading.

## 4. Network building: China and International

### 4.1 International Ornithological Congress

The 23rd International Ornithological Congress was held in Beijing from 11-17 August 2002. C.Y. Lam and Cheung Ho Fai represented the Society at the event. An abstract on "Waterbird Monitoring Programme in Mai Po Inner Deep Bay Ramsar Site" was submitted for poster presentation.



### 4.2 BirdLife International: Building of Experience

Mike Kilburn and Carrie Ma attended the one-year training "Building on Experience" from July 2001 to May 2002. The programme aims to facilitate and maximize the sharing of experience between BirdLife partners, and to train participants in the implementation of Society management, fundraising and conservation programmes. The training comprised 4 sessions in Jordan, Argentina, South Africa and India, with each session lasting 10 days.



Mike and Carrie each attended two sessions.

We thank members for supporting the development of the Society, and for their donation of HK\$48,000 for participation fees. A total of HK\$72,634 was received, with the balance to be used for education and publicity purposes.

### 4.3 Royal Society for the Protection of Birds

Joan Fisher and Wendy Smith, two representatives from the RSPB, visited the Society in March for one-month sabbatical leave. They visited representatives of the Society and offered us advice on marketing. A report will be submitted to the Society later on. We thank RSPB and the support of the two representatives.

### 4.4 BirdLife International – China Project

A meeting between representatives of BirdLife Asia Council, partners of the Asia region and the Society was held in 6-7 July. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss potential projects in China and relevant strategies. A steering committee was formed, an initial plan was to explore education and publicity projects in Yunnan. BirdLife representatives David Gandy and Cristi Nozawa visited Hong Kong in November 2002 and March 2003 respectively for discussing and drafting proposals, and to seek potential funding.

### 4.5 HKBWS China Conservation Fund

The 2001 Derbyan Parakeet Project in Yunnan Province by Prof. Han Lianxian has been completed, and a report has been submitted to the Society. In 2002, the project for bird surveys in Mau Lian Nature Reserve in Guizhou Province was in progress. Promotion for new funding applications for 2003 has just started. Members interested in reading the report or obtaining further information are welcome to contact Dr. H.F. Cheung at [apcheung@cityu.edu.hk](mailto:apcheung@cityu.edu.hk).

### 4.6 National Bird Watching Database

After the International Ornithological Congress in Beijing in August 2003, C.Y. Lam and Cheng Ho Fai have donated a total of HK\$12,000 to China Ornithological Society to support the establishment of National Bird Watching Database. We have received a preliminary report from the China Ornithological Society at the beginning of 2003. In addition, the establishment of the database has encouraged the collection of more records or information by birdwatchers in China. A website was established by keen bird watchers at <http://www.fon.org.cn/birdwatching/index.php?id=1758>. Members of the Society have participated in reviewing records.





## Brief Note from Kite Research Group

Our group has received the information of Black Kite nest location, and help from several enthusiastic birders in this breeding season. We would like to acknowledge them here:

- Rev. John C. Coghlan, S.J (Ricci Hall, the University of Hong Kong)
- Rolando Dela Cruz (Ricci Hall, the University of Hong Kong)
- Yuichi Tai

We would like to call for any information about Black Kite ecology, such as the location of nest and flight lines etc. The information will be very helpful in the conservation and research of the local Black Kite.

- Etta Hui

Please contact through: [kitehk@bonbon.net](mailto:kitehk@bonbon.net)



## Conservation News

- Mike Kilburn,  
*Chairman, Conservation Committee*

### — AFCD takes steps to protect terns —

Following increasing disturbance to Hong Kong's only tern colony from hobby fishermen and poorly organised "eco tour groups", HKBWS raised its concerns with the Conservation Section of the Department for Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation.

During the course of several discussions, HKBWS asked that the colony be designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), for which it plainly qualifies, and that the island where the colony lives be closed to all but those holding a permit issued by AFCD.

We believe it is possible for the tour groups to enjoy the spectacle of the birds from a boat without landing on the island. We also believe that fishermen who are totally dedicated to fishing in the waters around the colony could also use boats

AFCD has decided on a different course. It is posting a large sign on the island warning against disturbing the terns, and is posting a warden at weekends during the breeding season, which runs from May to September. They have also produced an attractive and informative leaflet about terns which will be distributed through fishing tackle shops and Hong Kong's home-grown outdoor magazine - *Discovery*. A planned seminar to brief local companies who lead tours to the island (which cause the most serious disturbance to the colony) was postponed due to the SARS outbreak.

HKBWS welcomes these initiatives, but is concerned that it may not be enough to halt the declines of the last two years or to reverse the disappearance of Roseate Tern as a breeding species in Hong Kong. We therefore remain disappointed that they will not close access to the island during the critical breeding season. Both HKBWS and AFCD will monitor the situation over the course of the summer, conducting separate surveys, but working in close co-operation. We hope the tern survey group will publish the resulting data in an upcoming issue.

### — Egrettries Damaged at Fung Lok Wai and Mai Po Village —

Two important egrettries in Deep Bay have been damaged within two weeks.

*Mai Po Village Egrettry* was largely abandoned due to disturbance caused by Highways Department clearing vegetation (the second year in a row this has occurred). The remaining birds gave up their attempt when Drainage Services Department staff engaging in routine maintenance caused further disturbance. Captain Wong, Conservation Officer of Kadoorie Farm has written to the departments concerned, requesting that they avoid planning routine work at this site when preparing their workplans in coming years

HKBWS urges AFCD to prepare a paper for all Government departments, indicating the locations of all egrettries in Hong Kong and advising on the

## Conservation News (con't)

duration of the breeding season, so that such disturbance can be avoided in the future.

**Fung Lok Wai Egretty** was harmed by a much more calculated act of destruction. An unknown developer has cleared a large area at the edge of the Fung Lok Wai site and the Wetland Park. In the process, a bulldozer cleared undergrowth and trees including those in which egrets were already nesting. A site visit in late April revealed broken egret eggs on the ground and the colony abandoned.

This act is illegal, but there is little that AFCD can do under the Wildlife Protection Ordinance Cap 170 unless the destruction is actually witnessed.

Planning Department's Central Enforcement and Prosecution Unit has been informed and has noted that

the clearance is illegal for the further reason that a fishpond has been filled.

### — Shuen Wan Marsh under attack again —

Illegal filling is once more under way at Shuen Wan Marsh near Tai Po. Trucks dumping mud into a fishpond and into the mangroves have been seen on the nearby Architectural Services Department sites in Tai Po. Complaints have been lodged with the Planning Department, by the member who witnessed the dumping and through Kadoorie Farm and WWF.

Members are urged to keep alert for any signs of damage to egrettries and other important habitats, take photos if possible and report such matters to AFCD and HKBWS, who will follow up with the appropriate government department.



## Waterfowl Collection

With several hundred ducks roosting in the Waterfowl Collection each winter, it is important to maintain a good quality of water in the Collection in order to reduce the risk of any disease outbreaks amongst the ducks. One way is to flush clean water through the Collection and during the winter of 2002/2003, a pump was installed to bring water from either gei wai 13 or 14 into the Collection. In April, we began draining Pond 15a so that a pipe to drain water from the Collection can be installed in the bund at the back of the Collection. When this work is finished later this summer, we hope to be able to provide a cleaner Collection for the wintering ducks to roost.

## Pond 16b

When Pond 16b was turned into a rain-fed 'freshwater' pond in the autumn of 2001, it quickly became quite an attraction for freshwater plants and animals. However since then, one of the freshwater plants inside the pond (*Scirpus littoralis*) quickly became dominant and began taking over the open areas of water. As a result, Pond 16b has to be drained again to control this plant. Firstly, it will be removed and the floor of the pond then be contoured to create a variety of deep and shallow areas, instead of the flat floor that is there now. Freshwater plants will then be able to grow on the shallow areas, but not on the deeper channels and pools. This work will be completed by the end of this summer.

## Gei wai 24

Another problem facing the rain-fed 'freshwater' ponds in the reserve is the arrival of Catfish *Clarias fuscus*, which can crawl over the bunds from one pond to another during rainy weather. These fish muddy up the water and dig up the freshwater plants in the pond. When they become too numerous, the pond has to be drained so that these fish can be removed. This summer, a number of the ponds that make up gei wai 24 will be drained so that the Catfish can be removed. The work will be finished by the end of the summer so that the pond can be re-filled before the arrival of the wintering waterbirds.

## Illegal fishermen in Deep Bay

Deep Bay has faced the problem with illegal fishermen for many decades. In late April, staff from Mai Po and AFCD carried out a joint operation and removed some 2.5 km of illegal fish nets from the Deep Bay mudflats. Afterwards, AFCD wardens and police from Lok Ma Chau carried out further operations to arrest the illegal fishermen themselves. These operations will continue. If any HKBWS members see illegal fishermen on the Deep Bay mudflats, please either inform Mai Po staff (Tel: 2471-6306) of AFCD Nature Wardens (Tel: 2471 4411).




## More news ...

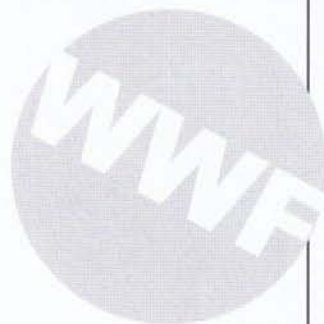
WWF Hong Kong will organize a seminar on 27 September at the City University of Hong Kong, on the topic of the management and conservation of Mai Po Nature Reserve. The seminar will cover a number of topics including

- The Role of AFCD in the Management and Conservation of Mai Po Nature Reserve
- Overview of the importance of the Mai Po Inner Deep Bay Waterbirds
- Management of the Mai Po Nature Reserve
- Education and public awareness outreach work at Mai Po Nature Reserve
- Conservation of the Wetlands around Mai Po Nature Reserve

The coordinator of the HKBWS Waterbird Monitoring Programme, Yu Yat Tung, will speak on the second topic.

Members who are interested are encouraged to attend. It will be followed by a guided Mai Po tour on 12 October 2003. For booking, please contact WWF at 2523 2316. 

– WWF Seminar on the Management and Conservation of Mai Po Nature Reserve



# Mai Po update

– Lew Young



## 漁農自然護理署

AFCD is reporting that there are some signs of a reduction in number of illegal fishermen in the Deep bay area.

Two illegal fishermen were recently arrested and their equipment was confiscated.

It appears the fishermen may have been hired by seafood merchandisers to collect mudskippers. Mudskippers can fetch around RMB 11-12 per catty on the mainland, and some are even exported to Taiwan.

AFCD will continue to monitor to the situation, and is arranging for further patrols of the Inner Deep Bay area. In order to increase the protection of the wetlands, AFCD is increasing communications with the HK Police Force and will carry out joint action if necessary, to arrest the fishermen and confiscate illegal fishing equipment.




– Mr. K M Law, AFCD



# Scarlet-backed Flowerpecker

– William Wong

In reference to a recent message in the BBS that a male Scarlet-Backed Flowerpecker (*Dicaeum cruentatum*) had been seen in the same bush at Tai Po Kau for over a month, William Wong has some helpful advice for birders.


“I have taken some photos of this bird and noticed that it fed on the berries of a citrus fruit tree. After close examination, I also found that the berries actually belonged to the evergreen *Taxillus chinensis*. This is a parasite of citrus fruit trees. The bird swallows the berries whole and the seeds are unharmed after passing through its digestive system. When the seed emerges, it still has considerable stickiness and so remains attached to the bird’s rear. When the bird wipes the seed off against a host tree, the seed will germinate. The Flowerpecker thus helps to disperse the seeds of the parasitic shrub in return for the berries. This relationship is called Symbiotic Association. In Australia, the Mistletoebird (*Dicaeum hirundinaceum*), of the same genus as the Scarlet-Backed Flowerpecker, has a similar relationship with the Mistletoe, its prime food source. So the next time you want to find a Scarlet-backed Flowerpecker, it might be easier to locate the parasitic shrub *Taxillus chinensis* first.” 

## Kite nest at Ricci Hall, HKU

– Beta Yip

Rev. Fr. John C. Coghlan S.J., Warden of Ricci Hall, the University of Hong Kong, has contacted HKBWS indicating that they found a kite nest near the hall. With the help of Fr. Coghlan and his assistant Rolando de la Cruz, Kite Research Group members Etta Hui and Beta Yip visited the hall for the first time on 2003-04-29.

The nest was very close and in good view. There were two chicks. Beta took about two hours of digital video of the nest every week to monitor the chicks' growth. The first two tapes showed that both parent birds came back to the nest around sunset. One of the parent birds left soon after it's back, and the other stayed and fed the two birds. The bigger chick got most of the food; the smaller chick apparently had only one bite.

At the time of writing, the young kites could already fly by themselves. 18 digital video tapes have been taken and they are being reviewed and analysed. 



領角鴞 – 黃亞萍

Collared Scops Owl – Jemi Wong



Hope is the thing with feathers  
That perches in the soul  
And sings the tune without the words  
And never stops at all

And sweetest in the gale is heard  
And sore must be the storm  
That could abash the little bird  
That kept so many warm

I've heard it in the chilliest land  
And on the strangest sea  
Yet, never, in extremity  
It asked a crumb of me

~ Emily Dickinson ~



黃胸織布鳥 - 李鶴飛

Baya Weaver - Lee Hok Fei



家燕 - 杜鸞炯

Barn Swallow - Hendrix To



白胸苦惡鳥 - 方健華

White-Breasted Waterhen - Forrest Fong



白胸苦惡鳥 White-Breasted Waterhen - 壞蛋1號

噪鵲 - 高偉琛

Koel - Koel Ko





褐頭鷦鷯 - 李鶴飛、陳志光

Plain Prina - Lee Hok Fei, Daniel C K Chan

我的希望是一窩雛鳥

當蟬聲漸近  
市聲漸遠  
我將希望繫在枝頭  
纍纍結實的  
是一窩雛鳥  
那歌聲仿如一陣  
早晨的風  
薄薄地  
細紋在每片葉脈裡

當木棉在微微溫轉的春末  
抽芽長高  
市聲漸遠、漸遠  
請相信我  
那歌聲將會升上雲端  
然後如一陣急雨  
打在沉默的湖面  
沒有漣漪  
一行白鷺  
靜靜地飛向遠山

~ 湖明 ~

# "RECORDS 2002"

## Bird Watching Competition – Forrest Fong

### Guess and Find, Find and Record

Ever heard of "Records 2002"? It is the title of our first Bird Watching Competition. This event was aimed at enhancing members' bird watching skills, and more importantly, encouraging them to submit bird records to the Records Committee.

We appreciated the contribution from our senior member, Mr CHAN Ming Ming, for his written poems highlighting the aims of the event. His poems were titled GUESS, FIND & RECORD, focussing on the joys of bird watching and emphasizing the importance of submitting bird records.

GUESS for it – SGuess where and when to find the bird

LOOK for it – SLocate the bird and identify it.

SUBMIT it – Submit the bird record to Records Committee for future study/reference.

### Experience Sharing – A battle of wits initiated by Boss LEE

Many members had asked in the past when the society would have our own bird watching competition. As a result of the continuing efforts of Boss Lee (Mr. LEE Wai-ki), the outline of the competition was finalized and endorsed by the committee.

Although bird watching is an ideal solitary sport, birdwatchers also love to share their knowledge and experiences with each others, and newcomers are always welcome. Our members are very keen on participating in the society outings, but while these activities offer the opportunity to watch birds, there is often no chance to share our experiences together. In view of this, this event aimed to build a closer companionship among members. We considered incorporating a fundraising component in the competition but we later decided on an event with simple objective, focussing on members' exchanges and sharing of their bird watching experiences.

### The Right Time?

In order for this event to celebrate the 45th anniversary of our Society, we had to hold it by the end of 2002.

Unfortunately, December is not the peak season for the migratory waders or forest birds. However, there are still many chances to see rare birds in December. For instance, our members had logged the first record of Lesser Whitethroat, and the second and fourth record of Blue-throated Bee-eater and Black-necked Grebe respectively in the weeks before the race. Photos of these species were made into badges for all participants.



### Team Matching – combining Junior and Experienced Birdwatchers

In order to provide the opportunity for our members to share their experiences and insights during the competition, we encouraged the junior members to team up with experienced birdwatchers. At first, most junior members were reluctant because of their limited skills, but with encouragement from the experienced birdwatchers, they all finally joined in.

More than 70 members participated our first bird watching competition, forming 15 teams including two teams of the elderly birdwatchers and one team of secondary school students.

Table A: The list of participants and their team represented



Name of Team  
Black-capped Kingfisher

Team members  
Chan C.P., Tsu K. F., Ng Y.L., Ho P.S.,  
Tong K.L., Hon S. and Wong C.K.



Name of Team  
Red-whiskered Bulbul Team

Team members  
Lui S.F., Leung K.W., Man P.M.,  
Shirley Lam, Lee W. K.



Name of Team  
Fei Gei Bird Team

Team members  
Cheung Ho Fai, Ada Chow,  
Yip Wai Ho, Vivian Chu, Winnie Kwan



Name of Team  
Roadrunner Team

Team members  
Aukie Au, Lee K. C., May Lam,  
Mary Fong and Chow Fu Wah



Name of Team  
Wild Bird Team

Team members  
Yu Yat Tung, Forrest Fong, George Ho,  
Chiang Ming Liang, Emily Chow



Name of Team  
Sparrow Team

Team members  
Chan Yung, Kwan T. H., Kwan L. H.,  
Cheung C. K., Capitan Wong



Name of Team  
Flying Color Team

Team members  
Ondy Wong, Tai Sheung Lai,  
Alan Chan, Chan Wai Ching



Name of Team  
Nightjar I Team

Team members  
Anthony Lo, Wing Chu,  
Tam Yiu Leung, Simon Wong,  
Ronley Lee



Name of Team  
Nightjar II Team

Team members  
Stanley Ng, Anise Chan, Jimmy Chim,  
William Tsui, Eugene Yeung,  
Winky Huen, Yiu Kai Chi, Chan Sik Nga



Name of Team  
Little Black Lu Lu Chu Team

Team members  
Apache Lau, Joanna Lam,  
Wong Wan Ying, Ho Man Fai,  
Gary Chow



Name of Team  
Tweetie Team

Team members  
Carrie Ma, Chan Ming Ming, Yeung Y. M.,  
Lee Yuk Ying, Wong Wai King



Name of Team  
Hoopoe Team

Team members  
Dickson Wong, Tsang Lai Yu,  
Wan Tsui Yan, Yu Shu Pan,  
Lee Kwok Shing, Karin Chan



Name of Team  
Black-eared Kite Team

Team members  
Robin Fung, Deborah Li, Simon Lau,  
Cheung Ka Man, Cherry Wong,  
Yam Wing Yiu



Name of Team  
Long Valley Team

Team members  
Lau Kam Yuen, Lau Sin Pang,  
Ling Chi Keung, Henry Lui,  
Chan Tin Lok



Name of Team  
Baptist Wing Lung Secondary  
School Team

Team members  
Wong Ka Po, Kam Ka Man, Lam C. K.,  
Kiu C. C., Lee S. F., Wong H. L.  
(Teacher: Kowk Chi Tai, Sybel Lam)

Weeks before the race, each team was busy preparing for the competition, practicing and planning the routes which best suited their own abilities. One month before the race, a briefing session for all participants was held, and we were happy to invite Dr. Kwan to share his past experiences. His valuable advice helped the participants in planning the best route for the race.

## 24 hours from 16:30 to 4:30pm

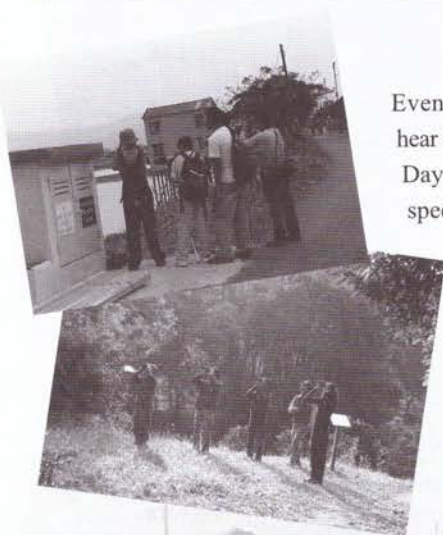
The race ran from 16:30 on 14 December to 16:30 on 15 December. Teams could start anywhere and tried to record as many species as they could in this 24-hour period. Most teams chose wetlands such as Tsim Bei Tsui, Mai Po and Kam Tin as their starting point. Others set off at Tai Po Kau, Long Valley, Luk Keng and Kowloon Park instead. The result up to 8:00 p.m. on Day 1 was:

Name of Team	No. of bird species records	Best Bird of the Race
Black-capped Kingfisher Team	28	Golden Spectacled Warbler
Red-whiskered Bulbul Team	38	Eurasian Eagle Owl
Fei Gei Bird Team	40	

<i>Name of Team</i>	<i>No. of bird species records</i>	<i>Best Bird of the Race</i>
Roadrunner Team	40	
Wild Bird Team	48	
Sparrow Team	60	
Flying Color Team	30	White's Thrush & Grey-headed Lapwing
Nightjar I Team	47	
Nightjar II Team	50	Baer's Pochard
Little Black Lu Lu Chu Team	26	
Tweetie Team	42	Collared Scops Owl & Ring-necked Pheasant
Hoopoe Team	15	
Black-eared Kite Team	31	
Long Valley Team	47	
Baptist Wing Lung Secondary School Team	50	Peregrine Falcon

Even after sunset, the participants were busy visiting different places, hoping to hear the calls of Asian Barred Owlet, Nightjar or Collared Scops Owl. By the end of Day 1, the Sparrow Team, formed with two high-school students, had recorded 60 species and was the leading team. One of the 'elderly' teams, the Red-whiskered Bulbuls, recorded an Eagle Owl in Tsim Bei Tsui.

On the second day, participants woke early and went to Tai Po Kau for woodland birds. Thereafter, they rushed to other places and attempted to put more birds on their list. By noon, most teams had reached Mai Po Nature Reserve but the low tide (1.3m) drove

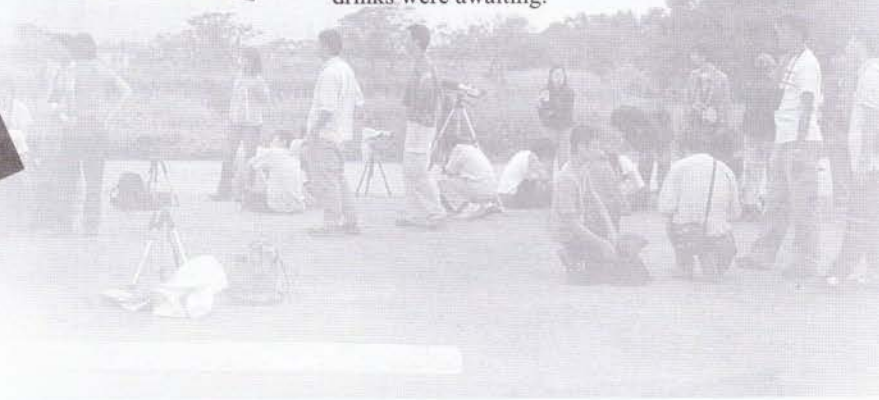






them away from the boardwalk to the reserve and nearby fishponds to look for waders and waterfowl instead.

Each of the 15 teams reached the helipad at 16:30 sharp and got busy counting their records. Later everyone moved to the University Guest House at CUHK, where tables of delicious food, bottles of beer and drinks were awaiting.



## Results

Before the dinner, Chairman CY Lam first announced the prize-winners. First prize went to the Wild Bird Team, who recorded 139 species in 24 hours. Each group was asked to select their own Best Bird of the day, and everyone voted for the Best Bird Record. As expected, the Eagle Owl, which was spotted by Red-whiskered Bulbul team at Tsim Bei Tsui, won the prize by an overwhelming majority.

<i>Name of Team</i>	<i>Record submitted</i>	<i>Revised recorded</i>	<i>Bird of the Day</i>
Black-capped Kingfisher Team	83	82	Golden Spectacled Warbler
Red-whiskered Bulbul Team	96	95	Eurasian Eagle Owl
Fei Gei Bird Team	107	107	Common Starling
Roadrunner Team	102	96	Night Heron
Wild Bird Team	140	139	Bright-capped Cisticola
Sparrow Team	119	118	Japanese Paradise-flycatcher
Flying Color Team	119	117	Savanna Nightjar
Nightjar A Team	108	95	White Pelican



<i>Name of Team</i>	<i>Record submitted</i>	<i>Revised recorded</i>	<i>Bird of the Day</i>
Nightjar B Team	101	100	Citrine Wagtail
Little Black Lu Lu Chu Team	106	103	Spotted Eagle
Tweetie Team	109	109	Silky Starling
Hoopoe Team	102	102	Spotted Eagle
Black-eared Kite Team	87	87	Scarlet Minivet
Long Valley Team	120	101	Plumbeous Redstart
Baptist Wing Lung Secondary School Team	82	82	Peregrine Falcon



### Counting from A to F – Categories of birds recorded

202 bird species were recorded during this 24-hour bird race (193 species in Category A to D and 9 species in Category E & F). These records were later submitted to the Records Committee.



Overall, the ‘elderly’ teams (Red-whiskered Bulbul and Black-capped Kingfisher team) recorded 96 and 82 species respectively. Another team formed by high school students spent the entire time in recording birds in wetland habitats (e.g. Long Valley and Kam Tin), and also recorded 82 bird species.



Some rare bird records came from surprising places such as Wun Yiu, Sha Lo Tong, Kam Tin and Tsim Bei Tsui.



Teams that broke the rules of the contest were penalized by having the birds recorded from that venue deleted from their totals:

- Roadrunner Team (venturing onto the restricted walkway between geiwai #16/17 and pond #14)
- Long Valley Team and Little Black Lulu Chu Team (driving on the restricted access road in Tai Po Kau Special Area)
- Nightjar Team I (driving along the Frontier Closed Area in Mai Po Nature Reserve)


The adjudicators also refused to admit following bird species recorded in the race:

- White Pelican
- Red-necked Stint
- Pectoral Pipit
- Arctic Warbler
- Japanese Paradise Flycatcher

## Acknowledgements

Thanks are due to the following members who spared their valuable time and were actively involved in preparing the race:

- Dr. CHEUNG Ho-fai for taking up the adjudicator's role
- Mr CHAN Ming-ming, for naming the event so aptly, and for composing the aspiring poems
- Miss Carrie MA for her kind assistance and constructive advice
- Mr. YING Hak-king, Mr. YU Yat-tung and Mr. LEE Hok Fei for their generous donations of birds' photos
- Mr. HO Man-fai for production of the memorable badges
- Boss LEE Wai-ki for his generous sponsorship and support for the Elderly Teams
- Mr. MAN Chup-ming, Ms Shirley LAM, Mr and Mrs CHU for their helpful assistance to the Elderly Teams
- Ms HO Yuen Ying for her kind assistance to the secondary school team
- Our webmaster, Mr. Karl NG for uploading the latest results of the event on bulletin board
- Mr. William WONG, Mr. John HOLMES and Ms. Jemi WONG, Mr. Peter WONG and Ms. Michelle KONG for taking lively snapshots throughout the event
- Ms Winnie KWAN for donating the prizes
- Mr. Richard LEWTHWAITE for excellent dining arrangements
- Ms. Joanne AU for sharing the co-ordination and preparation of the event
- and lastly, Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) for their cooperative assistance.

Without the continuous support from our members, the event could not run smoothly. We believe this event fostered unity and solidarity among our society, and we forward to seeing you all again at future events 

Are

*Are you there*

you

*when wings flicker and sweet notes uttered?*

Look

*Cheer up the puzzled minds*

there

*while feathers hide!*

– Chan Ming Ming

*Are you there*

*when Tai Po Kau wakes and Mai Po sweats?*

*Hold back the blissful cries*

*while Cloudy Hill subsides!*

*Are you there*

*when joyful tears shed and contentment shared?*

*Marvel at the glorious record*

*while thankful hearts throb!*

# Experiences of the Nightjar Team on “Record 2002”

– Stanley Ng

To celebrate the 45th anniversary of the Hong Kong Bird Watching Society, the “Record 2002 -Bird Watching Competition” was organized in mid-December. Over eighty members in sixteen teams tried their best to record as many species they could over the territory in 24hrs. The team recording the highest number of species in the race would be the winner.

On the first day, my team members gathered at Tsim Bei Tsui hours before the race started and rushed to mark down any locations with significant numbers of birds. As the starting time approached, we got more excited but we also worried that the birds would disappear by the time the race started.

Once the hands of the clock reached 4:30p.m., we all got busy looking for traces of the birds, and luckily we found Black Drongo, Silky Starling, Siberian Stonechat, White-cheeked Starling, Olive-backed Pipit, Cormorant, Great and Little Egret, Grey Heron, Collared Crow and Common Kingfisher. We were also fortunate to add the beautiful Black-capped Kingfisher to our list. Some of my team members also spotted the Red-turtle Dove and Blue Magpie, and on our way to next stop, the Red-vented Bulbul, Dusky Warbler, Yellow Wagtail and Redshank were also added to our list.

Toward dusk, we began to hear our stomachs growling, a signal that it was time for us to “re-fuel”. During the delicious meal, we counted the number of birds we had listed on day one and found that we had already recorded 50 species.

After having a good night’s rest, all of us were fully charged up for the second day. We woke early and reached Kowloon Park before dawn. First we found Night Heron and Hwamei roosting in the bushes, and with the birds becoming more active as the sun rose, we saw Parakeets and an Asian Brown Flycatcher among others.

Thereafter, we went to the Kowloon Hill Catchment area. When we walked along the path, a flock of Striated

Yuhina jumped over the branches and also brought us a fantastic bird wave. We were excited to find Yellow-cheeked Tit, Verditer Flycatcher, Great Tit, Velvet-fronted Nuthatch and Grey Drongo in the flock. This bird wave not only kept us awake but also kept up our morale.

Next, we rushed to Tai Po Kau hoping for more bird species to be put on our list. Perhaps we were a bit late for this stop, because by the time we got there, other teams were already walking down the slope with smiles on their faces. However, our team walked up the slope and we were soon busy recording Blackbird, Rufous-capped Babbler, Black Bulbul, Fork-tailed Sunbird, Red-flanked Bluetail and Scarlet-backed Flowerpecker. Shortly afterwards, we hurried over to the Shek Kong Airport where we saw Green Sandpiper, White Wagtail and a male Daurian Redstart as we were walking along the water channel. There were also Plain Prinia, good numbers of Masked Bunting, pairs of Common Myna, and lastly, an airborne Crested Goshawk.

Though it was a very hot and sunny afternoon, our morale remained very high as we travelled over to Sha Po Village in Kam Tin. About 10 meters down the path, we saw a couple of White-backed Munia and Spotted Munia hanging on the reeds nearby. Other birds such as the Turtle Dove, Fantail Snipe and White-breasted Waterhen were also spotted. Afterwards, we drove to Long Valley to have a fast lunch before we went into the fields to get Citrine Wagtail, Red-throated Pipit and Cattle Egret.

Time was getting short as we pulled into our last stop, the Mai Po Nature Reserve. Firstly, we got a Azure-winged Magpie when it jumped out from the fig tree at the Mai Po car park. Then we managed to put different species of waders, waterfowl and raptors on our list. After hours of bird spotting, we felt exhausted and collapsed over the finishing line as time ran out. In the end, our team managed to record a total of 103 bird species for the race.



# The Red-whiskered Bulbul Team

In celebration of the 45th Anniversary of the HKBWS, senior members of the Society including Forrest Fong and Aukie Au, took time to organize a bird watching competition – Records 2002 – on 14th and 15th December. Around a hundred members from all walks of life joined this “bird feast”, forming 16 teams altogether. Teams chose their own names; our team, the Red-whiskered Bulbul Team, was composed of 3 “mature” novice bird watchers, myself, Ms. Shirley Lam, and the experienced Boss Lee as our team captain. To better equip ourselves for the event, we did a pre-trip on 8th December, visiting places like Tai Po Kau, Long Valley and Tsim Bei Tsui. We were severely put to the test on that day: temperatures plummeted to 13 degree Celsius, with strong north-westerly winds accompanied by drizzle all day long. However, despite the unfavourable conditions, we stuck to our task.

At 4:30pm on 14th December, we arrived at Tsim Bei Tsui in Boss Lee’s car to begin the competition. As we got out of the car, Boss Lee pointed towards a flock of Crested Mynas perching on the wire. Anna, our recorder (also known as Sister Lui), immediately put down the species name, time and location on the record sheet, according to the regulations. Soon afterwards, Boss Lee looked over the mudflat with his binoculars, and in order to let us see the ducks more clearly, he also set his telescope to where the birds were, naming each species patiently: Green-winged Teal, Garganey, Pintail etc. After each duck species had been carefully observed and recorded, he pointed the telescope towards the gulls at the far end of the mudflat, where we saw Black-headed Gulls and Saunders’ Gulls. Time slipped us by as we watched these birds feeding and playing, and dusk arrived quietly. Boss Lee signaled for us to get in the car and we headed back to town. As the car approached a foul-smelling area, he slowed down and carefully circled around. Suddenly, something golden shot out from the left-hand side of the car and flew towards the trees ahead. We watched a big bird flying towards the trees with its wings fully extended. [Wow! What a pair of long wings!] The experienced Boss Lee immediately

identified it as an Eagle Owl, the most rewarding bird of our whole trip.

The Red-whiskered Bulbul Team arrived at Kowloon Park early in the morning of April 15th. Everyone was busy checking the trees and the shrubs around the pond for birds, and we had very good views of the Rose-ringed Parakeet and Black-crowned Night Heron. We could not stay long and rushed to our next destination, Tai Po Kau. Because the birds here are mostly forest species, we found that one has to have very good ears and acute eyesight in order to identify bird calls and pick up minute movements among the leaves. These skills obviously take years of experience and practice and they were very hard for novices like us to pick up. We were very lucky to have Boss Lee in our team, since he was just the right person to do forest-birding with. Birds recorded on this trip included Great Tit, Yellow-cheeked Tit, Scarlet-backed Flowerpecker, Fork-tailed Sunbird, Silver-eared Mesia, Blue-winged Minla and Short-tailed Bush Warbler.

Next it was on to Long Valley, that patch of vibrant farmland of watercress and lotus ponds, which seems to attract birds like a magnet. It was a fruitful trip for us; we had Cattle Egret, Little-ringed Plover, Green Sandpiper, Spotted Munia, Richard’s Pipit, Olive-backed Pipit, Yellow Wagtail, Daurian Redstart and Siberian Stonechat, among others.

After a short break and hasty lunch at the Mai Po Nature Reserve car park, we headed towards the Education Center for unrecorded species of ducks. Although there were flocks of ducks were swimming in the pond, we didn’t record any new species. We moved on, looking for birds in the reedbeds and mangroves. It was almost an hour later when we finally the road by the fence. We pressed on and reached pond 20. There were no new species among the ducks here either. But panning our binoculars towards an egret group at the rear end of the right hand corner, we found 40-50 large white birds foraging with their black beaks moving from side to side in the water. We knew from their behaviour that they

were Black-faced Spoonbills. Keeping a close eye on these busy birds, we awaited for the precious moment when they paused and lifted their spoon-shaped beaks out of the water. We were all very excited about this piece of good fortune, and observed them for some time until we found another very big bird. I looked into the field guide and discovered that it was a Pelican, but it left shortly afterwards and headed towards the mudflats. It was only then that I looked at my watch and to our amazement, it was already 4 o'clock, only half an hour until the finishing time. We joined the march towards the

gathering point along the cement path with other teams, where we re-organized our record sheet and handed it in. Dinner was held at the Guest House in the Chinese University of Hong Kong, where Forrest Fong MC'd, and a representative from each team came on stage and reported their results. The Wild Bird Team got the highest number of species and won the competition. But the Best Record of the competition was selected by votes and our Eagle Owl won us the Best Records Prize. The whole event ended on a high note, to everyone's satisfaction.



# Race, Race

– Geroge Ho  
(Form 6 student)

Participating in a bird race is a good way to build up one's bird watching skills. Not only can we observe different species of birds, but we also get a chance to see their characteristic behaviour during a race. All this helps to improve one's ability at identifying bird species. I have participated in many different bird races, including two recent ones; the Bird Race for Secondary School Students organized by AFCD and the Record 2002- Bird Watching Competition organized by HKBWS. Though the principles were the same, counting the different bird species, the rules of these two races were slightly different.

The duration of the Bird Race for Secondary Students was three hours only. The venue of the race was a place I am quite familiar with, Mai Po Nature Reserve, but it was quite demanding to find the birds in such a short period of time. As I was busy searching for birds during the race, I missed the chance to appreciate the beauty of Mai Po Nature Reserve. However, there wasn't a lot of pressure in this race and actually it was not too challenging, since it was an inter-school competition where all participants were secondary students.

Record 2002 – Bird Watching Competition was my first 24-hour bird race. As it was an open competition, all my competitors came from different backgrounds. Some of them were new birders, but a lot of them were very experienced. This time, it was simply a test of bird watching skills. Participants were free to choose where they wanted to go in this race. We could go anywhere in Hong Kong where we felt it would be rich in birds. It was different from the race for students. Under the new circumstances, I felt enormous pressure when taking part in this race.

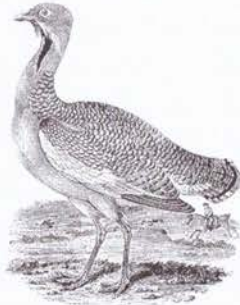
Luckily, my team captain was an experienced birder and he eased my worries. He spotted about 90% of birds for my team. For me, a first-time participant in the open competition, it was a relatively easy way to start. I imagine it would be different I were the captain of my team!

Through years of bird watching activities, I have seen a lot other interesting aspects of nature besides birds, such as stick insects creeping along near me, fish swimming in a clear stream, different ferns sitting in the shadows. Such close interactions with nature are better experienced than described, but I hope you have the chance to appreciate nature as I have been lucky enough to.



## Great (Britain's) Bustard?

Twenty great bustard chicks are scheduled for a summer release in England, in the first step towards re-establishing a breeding colony of a bird last seen in Britain 150 years ago. The great bustard, (*Otis tarda*), as tall as a deer and weighing up to 20



kilograms, inhabited the open grasslands of Salisbury Plain until they were finally wiped out by hunters. The great bustard's tasty meat and great size meant it was highly prized by 19th-century hunters. Following rain or a heavy dew, when the water-sodden birds had difficulty getting airborne, hunters would chase the birds on horseback with packs of greyhounds.

Now the Great Bustard Group is planning to reintroduce the birds to the Plain, famous for its Stonehenge monument, using chicks raised from eggs rescued from the path of tractors in Russia. The birds' release will mark the culmination of four years' work by the Great Bustard Group. Once on Salisbury Plain, the birds will likely be free from harassment by hunters or anyone else. They will be protected by the armed troops, tanks and helicopter gunships of the British military. Salisbury Plain is the country's main army training area.

## Burma rediscovers vanished bird

Asian birdwatchers are celebrating the rediscovery in Burma of a bird last seen there almost 90 years ago.

Gurney's Pitta, a strikingly coloured species listed by IUCN as "critically endangered",



were found by a team of Burmese conservationists from the Bird Enthusiasts and Nature Conservation Association, and BirdLife International. They found the birds at four lowland forest sites, with a maximum of 10-12 pairs at one of them. However, the team was not permitted to visit every site it wanted to, and believes there may be significantly more pittas living in unexplored parts of the forest. The only previously-known population of Gurney's pitta consists of about 30 birds living in a small part of southern Thailand. The last confirmed sighting in Burma was in 1914.

The Burmese pittas are increasingly threatened by the rapid clearance of the forest to make way for oil palm plantations, and BirdLife members are attempting to identify the largest remaining areas of suitable lowland forest and to work with the Burmese authorities on a conservation strategy. They will also continue working with Thai authorities to protect the pittas there.

## Hope for India's dying vultures

Scientists are reporting the first signs of success in their battle against a mystery disease that has decimated India's vultures. Two afflicted Griffon Vultures (*Gyps fulvus*) appear to have been nursed back to health by researchers.



The mystery illness was first spotted in the 1990s by scientists at the Bombay Natural History Society. Since then populations of the large birds have dropped by about 98 per cent. The three resident species of vulture in India are in serious trouble, with the Slender-Billed Vulture (*Gyps tenuirostris*) reduced to less than 300 birds. Researchers now believe a viral disease may be leading to death by dehydration. As Andrew Cunningham of the Zoological Society of London explains, "Sick birds stop eating, which is their main source of water, and



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World Bird News

World Bird News

World Bird News

– Steve Burrows

stop soaring, which is the main way they cool down. Hunched in the blazing Indian sun, they can easily dehydrate and die.” Though the virus has not yet been identified, the two sick vultures were rehydrated in captivity and seem to be recovering well.

### And finally...

Birdwatchers in the U.K. were almost deprived of the tick of a lifetime recently when a hungry



sparrowhawk launched an attack on a rare visitor.

A Black Lark, (*Melanochorypha yeltoniensis*) a native of the Ural mountains in Central Asia, appeared in Anglesey, Wales, during the first week in June, and immediately began attracting birders from all over Britain. It is thought to be the first legitimate sighting of the species ever recorded in the U.K. But many of the 1,000 plus birders who made the journey to Wales almost missed the chance to see the bird when a sparrowhawk made a high speed swoop at it. “All the black lark could do was flatten itself against the ground as the hawk swooped to try and catch it,” said Alan Davies of the RSPB. “The hawk missed the lark by inches before flying off again.” The RSPB encouraged dedicated birdwatchers to make the most of the opportunity to see the bird. “Anyone who misses this will never be allowed to forget it for the rest of their lives,” said Mr. Davis.



I believe most bird watchers are deeply attracted by the kingfisher's dazzling plumage and their outstanding fishing abilities. In Hong Kong, five kinds of kingfishers can be found (excluding the Collared Kingfisher and Ruddy Kingfisher, which are classified as 'vagrants'). Common Kingfishers are easily seen and they are familiar to us. On the other hand, the big Crested Kingfishers are seldom seen, though most bird watchers long to see them. These two kinds of kingfishers have their own characteristics and even their own 'fan clubs'. Some bird photographers aim particularly at taking photos of them. I have come across two picture books about them by Japanese photographers.

# Good bird book

– Samson So



The first book, *The Story of Kingfishers* by Author Wakao Chikashi (Publisher: Kawade Shobo Shinsha 2001. ISBN: 4-309264786 Price: 1600 Japanese yen.) covers the complete lifecycle of kingfishers and focuses in detail on the bird's feeding, courtship, and mating

behavior and on the development of the young. Although it is written in Japanese, the 90 remarkable photos would make it a welcome addition to the book collection of any birder. It is also a useful reference book because the photos show different identification features between female and male, mature and immature kingfishers. The high quality photos are all sharp and clear, and those of kingfishers catching fish under water are particularly striking.



The second book, Greater Pied Kingfisher by Author Masami Tanaka (Publisher: CREO Corporation, Japan. 1996 ISBN: 4-906371-69-8, Price: 2990 Japanese yen) looks at the bird known as Crested Kingfisher in Hong Kong. The book takes a different approach to The Story of Kingfishers. The photos are much more scenic and atmospheric so that that this is more of an artistic photo album on the topic of the Greater Pied Kingfisher. From the 86 carefully selected photos we can see their lightning underwater “bombing style” dives, enjoy their charming and gentle courtship behaviour and share their activities in raising a family. Most importantly, we have a chance to learn about the quiet, unpolluted streams they prefer for their habitat. Although there is not a lot of textual information about the Greater Pied Kingfishers, the composition of the photographs, the background selections, lighting contrasts and photographic data are valuable references for bird photographers.



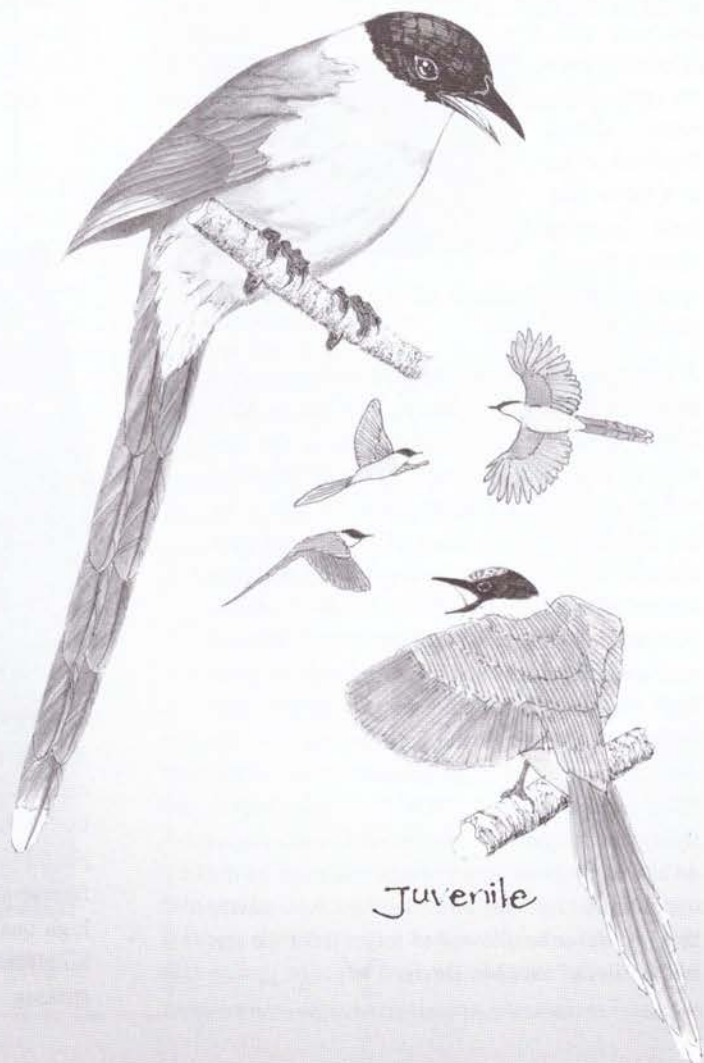
## Azure-winged Magpie

Magpies are large, long-tailed birds that are closely related to the crows. There are three Magpie species that can be seen in Hong Kong: the Common, Blue, and Azure-winged. The Azure-winged Magpie is the smallest of the three. It has a black cap, white collar, dusky-grey back, white underparts, and light blue wings and tail. Its call is a series of “get-get” sounds.

The last member of an Azure-winged Magpie population on Hong Kong Island died about 10 years ago. After that, this species was not seen in Hong Kong for a long time. Then about 3 years ago, it re-appeared in Tung Chung. Since then, it has spread to other places in Hong Kong, with Mai Po seeming to be its favorite haunt. This year, the Azure-winged Magpie was found breeding in Mai Po.



- Cheung Ho Fai, Lee Yuk Ying



- Steve Burrow

In response to a query from overseas, Richard Lewthwaite put together a list of examples of waterbirds found dead or injured after colliding with buildings in Hong Kong, and other birds found in less-than-natural habitats. It makes interesting reading, and serves to remind us that, here in Hong Kong, the city and the countryside are never more than a heartbeat apart.

- **Lesser Frigatebird** (*Fregata ariel*)

Following a typhoon, one was found dead on the roof of Island House school, 11 September, 1983.

- **Japanese Night Heron** (*Gorsachius goisagi*)

An adult flew into wall at HK Polytechnic University, 19 April, 1988. It was taken into care & released 2 days later.

- **Slaty-breasted Rail** (*Gallirallus striatus*)

2 collided with the Murray Building during the night of 23 October, 1970.

- **Watercock** (*Gallicrex cinereus*)

1 collided with the Murray Building night of 23 October, 1970.

- **Band-bellied Crake** (*Porzana paykulli*)

1 struck a wall at Jardine's Lookout, 11 October 1977.

- **Common Moorhen** (*Gallinula chloropus*)

1 collided with the Murray Building night of 28 October 1970.

- **Eurasian Woodcock** (*Scolopax rusticola*)

One found freshly dead at Admiralty, 29 September, 1988.

*The following are some recent reports phoned in to Hong Kong Birdline concerning disoriented migrants in urban settings.*

- **Slaty-breasted Rail** (*Gallirallus striatus*)

A juvenile was found in a private garage in a low-rise development, 6 October, 2002

- **Pheasant-tailed Jacana** (*Hydrophasianus chirurgus*)

One found beside a swimming pool at Mei Foo, 3 Nov 2002. It was taken into care.

- **Lanceolated Warbler** (*Locustella lanceolatus*)

One flew into a public light bus at Pok Fu Lam, 5 November, 2002.

- **Pallas's Leaf Warbler** (*Phylloscopus proregulus*)

One was found inside a railway compartment at Tsim Tsa Tsui MTR station, 12 January, 2003.



[Please note: these are unchecked records. All members are reminded of the importance of importance of submitting all records on cards or electronically]

## January

In late January, there came news of a White-spectacled Warbler, potentially a first record for Hong Kong, which was photographed in Tai Po Kau on 31st. (Please see previous HKBWS Bulletin for the rest of January's bird news.)

## February

Wun Yiu, a village on the outer edge of Tai Po, hosted a fine series of birds throughout the month, the rarest being a Brown-breasted Flycatcher (potentially only the 2nd or 3rd Hong Kong record) during 2nd-9th. Other good birds here included single Red-throated, Verditer, Asian Brown and Mugimaki Flycatchers, a Black-naped Monarch, two Plumbeous Redstarts, a Bull-headed Shrike, and up to 23 Common Rosefinches.

Elsewhere, there were two Bright-capped Cisticolas at Ma Tso Lung and a Dusky Thrush and a Ruddy-breasted Crake at Long Valley on 2nd (the latter two birds continued to be reported intermittently throughout the month), Pygmy Wren Babblers in song at either end of Hok Tau reservoir on 7th and 9th, and a Bay Woodpecker calling at Ng Tung Chai on 9th (this follows a sighting the previous month at Plover Cove).

An influx of Black-tailed Gulls into Hong Kong waters involved record numbers. Following 50 near Sam Mun Tsai on 13th, 50 in Hong Kong Harbour and 100 off the Soko Islands on 15th, there were 110 in front of the Mai Po boardwalk on 21st and 296 in Tolo Harbour on 22nd, an increase of almost fifty percent over the previous highest count of 200 in Starling Inlet on 17 February 1985. On 23rd, an amazing 5673 Pied Avocets were logged in Deep Bay, nearly three times the previous highest count.

Other reports from coastal waters included a Bridled Tern off North Lantau on 9th, potentially the first ever winter record, and Common Gulls in Hong Kong Harbour on 18th, whilst a Nordmann's Greenshank and up to two Long-billed Dowitchers were intermittently sighted throughout the month in Deep Bay.

In addition to a Eurasian Eagle Owl at Wo Hop Sek and

the first Grey Nightjar of the year at Sha Lo Tung, other notable birds found during the Big Bird Race on 22nd were a Yellow-bellied Tit at Mong Tseng, a Common Starling at Kam Tin and a Chestnut-bellied Rock Thrush at Kadoorie FBG.

The origins of a White Pelican, found at Mai Po in December and which subsequently attached itself to the wintering Dalmatian Pelican flock, were hotly debated, not least because it was a potential first record. The issue was conclusively settled by in-flight photos posted on the HKBWS web-site which showed the flight feathers to have moulted in a highly irregular pattern, incompatible with wild origins. Indeed, so many flight feathers were missing that it was hard to imagine how the bird was able to support itself in flight. However, at some time after February 23rd it departed with the Dalmatian Pelicans and then, amazingly, was sighted at the end of March over 800 kilometres northeast of Hong Kong at the mouth of the Min River, Fujian, in company with nine Dalmatian Pelicans (per Yu Yat Tung).

## March

March being a month of transition, two flocks of Striated Yuhinas in the Mount Austin area on 2nd were the last reported of the winter, whilst two White-vented Noddies at Sham Chung on the same day were the first of the spring. On 7th, two Great Crested Grebes were found at fishponds at Mai Po, an unusual habitat for these winter visitors, and there were first spring records of the year of Asian House Martin at Ng Tung Chai and Red-necked Phalarope and an Oriental Pratinclue at Mai Po. A flock of 40 Eurasian Siskins at Sek Kong on 8th were followed by a Vega Gull in Deep Bay on 9th, potentially only the second ever Hong Kong record.

Apart from a Slaty-backed Forktail and a Mountain Bulbul at Ng Tung Chai on 12th, there were few reports of interest until 17th when a Japanese Grosbeak was noted at Lam Tsuen. Subsequently, following 12 Grey-faced Buzzards at Mount Austin on 23rd, welcome examples of spring passage were a Spoon-billed Sandpiper and an early Oriental Cuckoo on 26th, 103 Great Knot on 27th, a Paddyfield Warbler on 30th, all from Mai Po or Deep Bay, and a Siberian Blue Robin at Lookout Link on the latter date.

Two Crested Kingfishers at Mui Wo on 24th were the first at this locality.

## April

This key month in the birding calendar witnessed good numbers of Ashy Minivets, a steady shorebird and tern passage in Deep Bay, an unprecedented series of Blue-throated Bee-eater records, and the build-up towards record numbers of Chinese Goshawks.

Ashy Minivets were reported during 5th-27th mainly from the islands of Lamma, Po Toi, Cheung Chau and Lantau, peak counts being 25 at Po Toi on 6th and 28 at Mui Wo (Lantau) on 27th, an unusually large number for the last week of April. Among other passerines, flocks of 70 and 22 Chinese Starlings were reported at Mai Po on 4th and Lamma on 7th, whilst flycatcher passage took place mainly between 3rd and 13th, the best day being 5th when seven species (Asian Brown, Mugimaki, Narcissus, Ferruginous, Blue-and-white, Hainan Blue and Japanese Paradise) were logged in Tai Po Kau. A Brambling was seen at Mai Po on several occasions around 7th, but apart from Black-faced Buntings, which were widespread, rather few buntings were reported, the rarest being a Japanese Yellow at Mai Po on 11th. Two rare thrushes were reported – an Orange-headed in Tai Po Kau on 8th and a Brown-headed at Mount Davis the next day – and a late Mountain Bush Warbler was trapped at Mai Po on 7th. A Ruddy Sparrow was seen in the Mai Po car park on 23rd.

Waterbirds seen in Deep Bay included a late Northern Lapwing at Mai Po on 1st-2nd, one or two Spoon-billed Sandpipers on most days with high diurnal tides after 6th, up to 16 Nordmann's Greenshank and 75 Caspian Terns, numbers of both species peaking on 7th-8th, an obliging Oriental Plover on 13th-14th, one or two Swinhoe's Egrets from 20th, six Little Stint (a new high) on 24th, and up to 58 Asian Dowitchers, these heralding record numbers that were to follow in May. Outside of Deep Bay, a Ruddy Crake was at Long Vallley on 7th and a Little Curlew at Chek Lap Kok on 25th.

An unusually strong bee-eater passage included one Blue-throated and four Blue-tailed at Po Toi on 13th, 20 Blue-tailed at Mai Po on 16th, followed by 10 Blue-throated at Dong Ping Chau on 18th and two at Mai Po

on 25th. Apart from the individual photographed in autumn 2002, which will hopefully be submitted as a record, there are only two other Hong Kong records of Blue-throated bee-eaters.

An Oriental Cuckoo was seen at Po Toi on 6th, and single Hodgson's Hawk Cuckoos were heard at Ng Tung Chai on 1st and 29th and at Tai Po Kau on 7th and 10th.

Apart from a Black-winged Kite and an exceptionally early Chinese Goshawk at Mai Po on 3rd, a Besra at Cheung Chau on 7th and single Grey-faced Buzzards at Ng Tung Chai on 7th and Pok Fu Lam on 10th, there were no notable reports of migrant raptors until 27th when a minimum of 168 Chinese Goshawks passed over Pak Kok Village, Lamma Island, presaging a record flock there four days later.

## May

The first three weeks of the month brought new high counts for three species and, astonishingly, first nesting records for four other species.

On 1st, successive flocks of Chinese Goshawks, totalling at least 665 individuals, were counted passing over Pak Kok village (Lamma Island) between 0900h and 1030h. This is the largest ever day-count and, taken with the late April count of 168, makes 2003 the year with the highest ever aggregate. The previous peak count (600 at Tsim Bei Tsui on 28 April) and highest annual aggregate (779) both dated back to 1985.

Other Chinese Goshawk reports on 1st (70 at Tuen Mun, 17 at Shing Mun, and three at Kam Tin) possibly involved the Lamma birds. Passage of this species then fell away in the days that followed, with seven at Tung Chung on 3rd and only one at Lamma on 4th.


On 2nd, a total of 353 Asian Dowitchers were counted at Mai Po, a record count compared to the previous highest count of 325 on 29 April 1984, also at Mai Po. Also on this day, 3-4 pairs of Black-winged Stilts were incubating on Pond 23 at Mai Po, the first nesting record for Hong Kong. Though torrential rain then appears to have inundated the nests on this pond, a pair was subsequently seen nest building on Pond 7.

On 4th, 155 Sharp-tailed Sandpipers were logged at Mai Po, the second highest count after that of 192 on 12 May 1992, also at Mai Po.



On 10th, Red-rumped Swallows were found nesting at Kam Tin, the first such record for Hong Kong. On the same day, seven Crested Serpent Eagles were seen simultaneously from Ng Tung Chai, a new high count, and there were sightings of a Pechora Pipit at Shuen Wan and a Lanceolated Warbler at Cheung Chau. The following day, Pied Avocets were observed copulating and nest-building on the scrape at Mai Po, the first nesting record for Hong Kong.




During this period, one or two Spoon-billed Sandpipers continued to be seen at Mai Po, a Pheasant-tailed Jacana

was found on the scrape, single Blue-throated Barbets (Category E) were heard singing at Mount Austin and Ng Tung Chai, and there were a light passage of Dollarbirds. Tern passage was noted on 10th-11th, with 200 White-winged from Green Island, 58 White-winged and a single Aleutian in Tolo Harbour, a mixed flock of 150 White-winged and Whiskered from Lamma, and 18 Roseate from Cheung Chau. On 11th, there were 15 Brown Shrikes and 12 Arctic Warblers at Po Toi, and 35 Pechora Pipits at Mai Po. A Hodgson's Hawk Cuckoo was heard at Ng Tung on 13th, and two unseasonal Red Turtle Doves were at Shuen Wan on 17th.


On 18th, Yellow-billed Grosbeak was added to the list of Hong Kong nesting species following the discovery of a nest with five eggs at Kam Tin. 

## Coming Activities

Date	Leader / Speaker	Activity / Gathering location	Time	Difficulty
17 Aug (Sun)	Ho Man Fai Robin Fung	<b>Kap Lung Trail</b> 07:30 Tsuen Wan MTR Station Hang Seng Bank	08:00 – 13:00	XX
31 Aug (Sun)	Forrest Fong Ada Chow	<b>Mai Po</b> 08:00 Kowloon Tong KCR Station (B1/B3 exit) <b>or</b> 09:00 Mai Po carpark coach leaves at 15:00 and back to Kowloon Tong at 16:00  	09:00 – 15:00	XX
6 Sept (Sat)	Cheung Ho Fai	<b>Digit-scoping Workshop</b> Hong Kong Park 15:00 Supreme Court Road entrance	15:00 – 17:00	X
7 Sept (Sun)	Ying Hak King	<b>Kap Lung Trail</b> 07:30 Tsuen Wan MTR Station Hang Seng Bank	07:30 – 13:00	XX
13 Sept (Sat)	Chan Kwai Pak  Wong Chiu Kui (Crested Bulbul Club Leader)	<b>Tsim Bei Tsui &amp; San Pui Ho</b> ** 08:00 CityBus #969 bus stop (HongkongBank Headquarter, Central) <i>(10 Seats ONLY. Booking will be accepted on a First-come-first-serve basis.)</i>	08:00 – 16:00	XX
14 Sept (Sun)	Li Wai Ki John Holmes	<b>Tai Po Kau Nature Reserve</b> 08:00 Tai Po Kau carpark (Tsung Tsai Yuen)	08:00 – 13:00	XXX

Date	Leader / Speaker	Activity / Gathering location	Time	Difficulty
21 Sept (Sun)	Mike Turnbull Arthur Yiu	<b>Boat Trip: &lt;Lamma Channel&gt;</b> 08:15 Aberdeen Public Pier (near Ocean Court) 17:00 back to Aberdeen Public Pier (Member \$150, Non-member \$200)	08:30 – 17:00	XXX
28 Sept (Sun)	Mike Chalmers Tai Sheung Lai	<b>Mai Po</b> 08:00 Kowloon Tong KCR Station (B1/B3 exit) <b>or</b> 09:00 Mai Po carpark coach leaves at 15:00 and back to Kowloon Tong at 16:00  	09:00 – 15:00	XX
4 Oct (Sat)	Choy. C.P.  Ng Yuk Lin (Crested Bulbul Club Leader)	<b>Kowloon Park</b> ** 08:30 McDonald, Kowloon Park	08:30 – 11:00	X
4 Oct (Sat)	Mike Kilburn Kwan Tze Hoi	<b>Long Valley</b> 15:00 Yin Kong carpark	15:00 – 18:00	X
8 Oct (Wed)	Yu Yat Tung	<b>Indoor meeting: &lt;D of raptors and migratory raptors&gt;</b> Room 1113, Hong Kong Scout Centre, Scout Path, Austin Rd, Kowloon (Member \$10, Non-member \$30)	19:00 – 20:30	X
12 Oct (Sun)	Wong Ming Chan Kam Wai, Stanley	<b>Tai Mong Tsai, Sai Kung</b> 09:00 Tai Mong Tsai Car Park (near Yau Lee Store 有利士多)	09:00 – 12:00	XX
15 Oct (Wed)	Lo Yiu To  Li Ngan (Crested Bulbul Club Leader)	<b>Tsuen Wan Shing Mun Reservoir</b> ** 08:30 Heng Sang Bank, Tsuen Wan MTR station	08:30 – 13:00	XX
19 Oct (Sun)	Ho Man Fai Lee Kwok Shing 9680 0040	<b>Kadoorie Farm</b> 08:00 Tai Wo KCR station Taxi station	08:00 – 12:00	X
25 Oct (Sat)	Chan Kwai Pak  Ng Yan Lai (Crested Bulbul Club Leader)	<b>Mai Po</b> ** 08:00 CityBus #969 bus stop (HongkongBank Headquarter, Central) (Only open to those Mai Po Nature Reserve Permit Holders)	08:00 – 15:00	XX
26 Oct (Sun)	Richard Lewthwaite Dickson Wong	<b>Mai Po</b> 08:00 Kowloon Tong KCR Station (B1/B3 exit) <b>or</b> 09:00 Mai Po carpark coach leaves at 15:00 and back to Kowloon Tong at 16:00  	09:00 – 15:00	XX



Date	Leader / Speaker	Activity / Gathering location	Time	Difficulty
1 Nov (Sat)	Choy Chong Pak Chan Man Cheung (Crested Bulbul Club Leader)	<b>HongKong Park</b> ** 08:30 Museum of Tea Ware, Hong Kong Park	08:30 – 11:00	X
2 Nov (Sun)	Cheung Ho Fai Shirley Lam	<b>Shek Pik - Fun Lau – Tai O</b> 09:00 Tung Chung MTR Station Hang Seng Bank	09:00 – 15:00	XX
9 Nov (Sun)	Hung Wai Ming Au Chun Yan	<b>Tai Po Kau - Lead Mine Pass – Wun Yiu</b> 08:00 Tai Po Kau carpark (Tsung Tsai Yuen)	08:00 – 13:00	XX
16 Nov (Sun)	Forrest Fong Stanley Ng	<b>Shing Uk Tsuen</b> 09:00 Hang Heung Bakery, Yuen Long (near LRT Tai Tong Rd Station)	09:00 – 15:00	XX
23 Nov (Sun)	Luk Tsun Pun William Wong	<b>Mai Po</b> 08:00 Kowloon Tong KCR Station (B1/B3 exit) <b>or</b> 09:00 Mai Po carpark coach leaves at 15:00 and back to Kowloon Tong at 16:00 	09:00 – 15:00	XX
30 Nov (Sun)	Captain Wong Tam Yiu Leung	<b>Lai Chi Wo</b> 08:00 Tai Po KCR station (near Taxi station) <b>or</b> 08:45 Wu Kau Teng carpark Back to Luk Keng at 18:00	08:45 – 18:00	XXX
3 Dec (Wed)	Guest speaker from Kadoorie Farm	<b>Indoor meeting: &lt;KFBG Programme&gt;</b> Room 1113, Hong Kong Scout Centre, Scout Path, Austin Rd, Kowloon (Member \$10, Non-member \$30)	19:00 – 20:30	
6 Dec (Sat)	Choy Chong Pak Hon So (Crested Bulbul Club Leader)	<b>Hong Kong Botanical &amp; Zoological Garden</b> ** 08:30 Tuck Shop	08:30 – 11:00	X
7 Dec (Sun)	Apache Lau Ada Chow	<b>Mount Davis</b> 08:00 Youth Hostel	08:00 – 12:00	X
14 Dec (Sun)	Chan Yung Shirley Lam	<b>Kap Lung Trail</b> 07:30 Tsuen Wan MTR Station Hang Seng Bank	07:30 – 13:00	XX
21 Dec (Sun)	Cheung Ho Fai	<b>Cheung Sha</b> 09:00 Tung Chung MTR Station Hang Seng Bank	09:00 – 12:00	XX
28 Dec (Sun)	Peter Wong Michelle Kong	<b>Wun Yiu</b> 08:00 Tai Po KCR station (near Taxi station)	08:00 – 12:00	X

**\*\* Crested Bulbul Club Activity –**

*These activities are led by elderly nature interpreters, members are welcome to join with elderly members of their families.*



**Note! Priority is given to members of the Society.** Please contact the leader several days before the meeting to confirm attendance, otherwise you may miss out on changes in timing. The 'X' rating conveys the degree of difficulty in each outing in terms of seeing the birds; Members are of course more than welcome to attend any event. **Please wear your membership badge when joining the activities.**

- \* Members who use the Society coach to Mai Po must confirm their attendance by returning the booking slip with payment. Those using own transport please also notify Ms. Ada Chow, the Mai Po tour coordinator - this is important because the maximum number of members who can attend the outing is 50, as set by the AFCD permit. Failure to do so may result in being refused access to the reserve.
- \* Unsuccessful applicants will be notified by phone or by e-mail at least one week before the outing. If you wish to check your booking, please contact Ms. Ada Chow at 2580 6472.

**Non-members joining Mai Po trips will have to pay the coach fare irrespective of whether they make use of the coach.**

Payment to the Society may be made in two ways:

- (1) by returning the attendance slip with a cheque in English made out to the "Hong Kong Bird Watching Society Ltd" OR
- (2) by depositing the fee into the A/C no. 534-361423-838 of Hongkong Bank in favour of "Hong Kong Bird Watching Society Ltd". Please send the booking slip in as well to confirm your payment and attendance.



Transportation arrangement



Please fill in the booking slip and return

For all outdoor meetings please bring drink and food, appropriate clothing for the location, and sun cream and mosquito lotion if needed!

Tidal information <http://www.info.gov.hk/hko/astron/pretide/epremap.htm>

## Activity Booking Slip

I wish to reserve places for \_\_\_\_\_ members and \_\_\_\_\_ non-members for the tour on: \_\_\_\_\_.

\*  12 Jan 2003 (Sun) Tsim Bei Tsui       23 Feb 2003 (Sun) Mai Po       6 Apr 2003 (Sun) Mai Po

The number of person(s) using the coach is \_\_\_\_\_. Coach fare:

\*  \_\_\_\_\_ x HK\$40/Member       \_\_\_\_\_ x HK\$60/Guest      #  \_\_\_\_\_ x HK\$20 Student member

# Non-members joining Mai Po trips will have to pay the coach fare irrespective of whether they make use of the coach.

Cheque for HK\$ \_\_\_\_\_ (In English. Payable to The Hong Kong Bird Watching Society Ltd)

Name : \_\_\_\_\_ Contact No. : \_\_\_\_\_

Address : \_\_\_\_\_

Date : \_\_\_\_\_ Signature : \_\_\_\_\_

*Note: Please send this application together with crossed cheque by mail to Ms. Ada Chow, P.O. Box 28554, Gloucester Road Post Office, Wanchai, Hong Kong.*

*Application should be made at least two weeks before the date of the outing. Late application will only be accepted if places are available.*

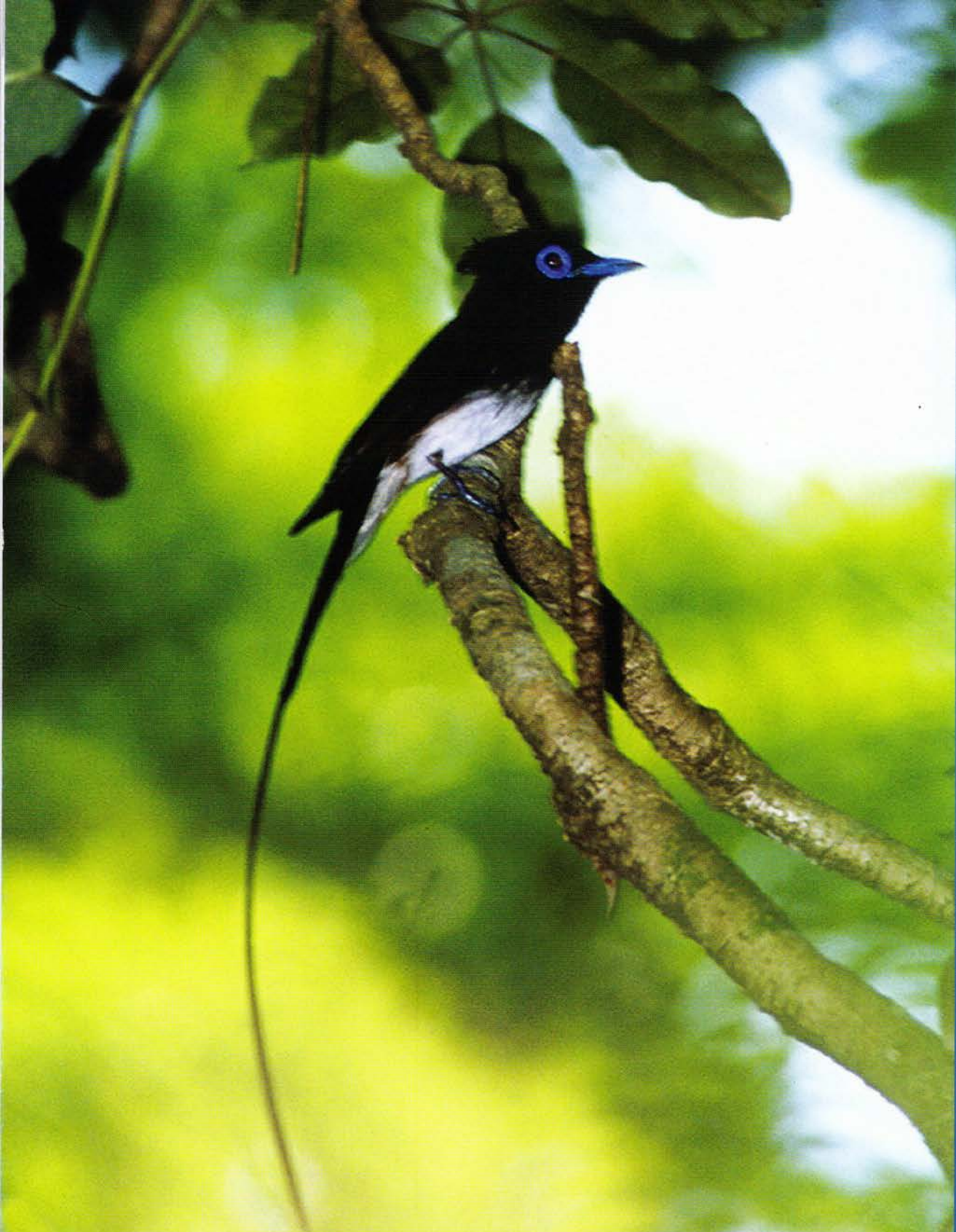
\* Please  as appropriate

棕三趾鳥 (米埔) – 何萬邦 Barred Buttonquail (Mai Po) – Marcus Ho



三寶鳥 (蠔涌) – 張浩輝 Dollarbird (Ho Chung) – Cheung Ho Fai





紫壽帶鳥(大埔濠) - 黃理沛

Japanese Paradise Flycatcher (Tai Po Kau) - Peter Wong