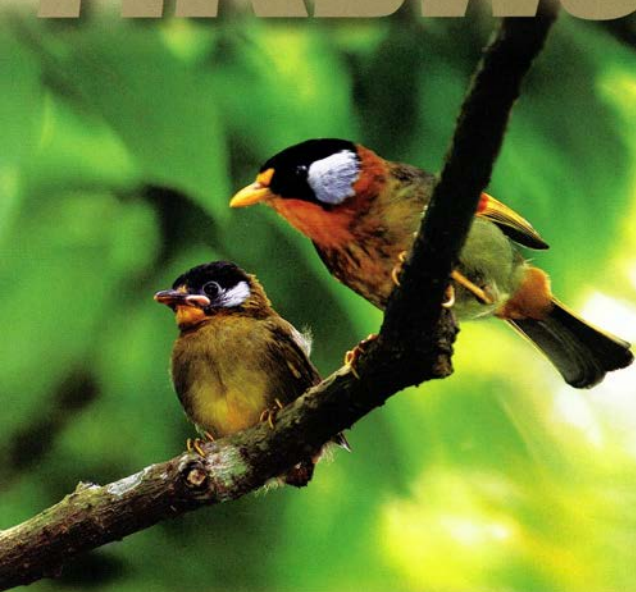


香 港 觀 鳥 會

Hong Kong Bird Watching Society

# HK BWS



週年紀念  
50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary  
1957-2007  
香港觀鳥會 The Hong Kong Bird Watching Society



208

Summer 2008

bulletin 會員通訊



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▲ Striated Heron 綠鷺

Ho Kin Yip Kinni 何建業

Mai Po 米埔 17/08/2008

DSLR Camera, 600mm f/4 lens + 1.4x teleconverter



▲ Striated Heron 綠鷺

Tse Kam Chiu 謝鑑超

Pui O 貝澳 01/03/2008

DSLR Camera, 300mm lens + 2x teleconverter



# Bulletin 208

## The Hong Kong Bird Watching Society Limited

(Approved Charitable Institution of a Public Character)

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- Michele & Peter Wong

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	Mr. Liu Wai Man, Apache
	Ms. Au Chun Yan, Joanne
	Mr. So Ngai Hung, Samson
	Mr. John Alcock
	Dr. Llewellyn Young (deceased in June 2008)
	Mr. Bena Smith (since July 2008)
	Mr. Leung Kwok Wai (Chairman of Crested Bulbul Club)
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Communication	Mr. Lo Wai Yan
Project Officer	Ms. Young Lee Ki
Bird Surveyor	Mr. George W C Ho

The photo theme in this bulletin is "Resident and breeding Hong Kong birds" including – because they're cute- the breeding flamingos in Kowloon Park.

"50<sup>th</sup> anniversary" nostalgia continues with former HKBWS Secretary Clive Briffet's account of birdwatching here in the early 1970s, and the fourth and final part of Clive Viney's *"The Bulletin – 50 years On"*.

Ruy Barretto has sent in his late father's 1954 "Honorary Game Warden" Certificate and raised the issue of whether there is any 21<sup>st</sup> century role for appointees of this type.

The Mai Po update is written for the first time by new MPNR manager Bena Smith. Bena has taken over from **Lew Young**, elevated to the Ramsar Secretariat in Geneva, Switzerland. Lew was well-known to many birders for his common sense and good humour during his 17 years as Mai Po's Reserve Manager. I'm sure we all wish him every success in his new posting.



# HKBWS

## Society News and Projects



### Members Affairs

#### E-mail address of Member

HKBWS has long been publishing Society news through the Bulletin and by E-mail, but the E-mail addresses for many members are non-existent or out-of-date. To keep in touch, please provide your latest email address to us at ([hkbws@hkbws.org.hk](mailto:hkbws@hkbws.org.hk)) or fax (2314 3678 during office hour), writing "Members Updating Email" at the subject line.

(We will also send the above message out to members electronically. You'll know we don't have an accurate E-mail address for you if you don't get this message!)

#### New Look for the HKBWS Website

The Society's Forum on the web broke down frequently in May despite various efforts to restore it. The IT Group finally decided to rebuild everything again using "Discuz" software. The rebuilt Forum opened in mid June, along with a more user-friendly set of sub-forums that make posting and searching easier. With rules for log-in names removed, many web old-timers since 2002 have now re-appeared. Members of the Society can also enjoy a bigger quota for posting photos. So do visit the Forum at <http://www.hkbws.org.hk/BBS/> to chat and share the latest birdwatching news.

#### Member No. 1000

Membership of the Society has finally passed 1000. Member Number 1000 will receive a small gift to celebrate this memorable milestone.

#### New Exco Member: Mr. Bena Smith

Mr. Bena Smith replaced Dr. Lew Young as representative of WWF in the Society's Executive Committee. Bena is currently the Reserve Manager, working on habitat management and research at Mai Po Nature Reserve. Before joining WWF, he previously worked for an NGO in West Africa carrying out research in rainforests and before that managed nature reserves for County Wildlife Trusts and the Royal Society for Protection of Birds in the UK. He has been a keen naturalist and birdwatcher since the mid-1980s.

#### "Avifauna of Hong Kong" - a Free Gift to Members

In order to acknowledge the ongoing support of our members, a free gift of the "Avifauna of Hong Kong" will be given to those who have renewed their membership for a second year. Qualified members are required to pick up the book in our office (address on the title page of this bulletin) during office hours.

#### Open Day of new office

To celebrate moving into our newly-bought office, an open day was held on the 19th of July 2008. Around 80 members came along to share our happiness in marking a new chapter in our history.



## Call for Donation: Society's New Office

**Thanks to the generosity of members and friends, donations totalling HKD\$ 707,687 have been collected up to 1 August 2008. Thanks again to all the following people for their help:**

Ms Au Wai Yin	500	Mr Hung Lai Yung	500	Mr Martin Painter	2,000
Mr Chan Chi Hung	500	Mrs Hung Tsang Mei Yuk	200	Mr Michael Turnbull	1,000
Mr Chan Fook Kay	500	Mr Hung Tun Hei	300	Mr Mok Tai Chung	2,000
Mr Chan Hing Lun	8,000	Mr Ip Chi Kuen	200	Mr Ng Ping Tong	200
Mr Chan Ka Wang	200	Mr Ip Kee Kong	500	Ms Ng Wai Yi	200
Mr Chan Ki Ho	5,000	Mr John Edge	2,000	Ms Ng Yan Nar	1,000
Mr Chan Kin Chung	50,000	Mr Kam Wing Ling	1,000	Mr R. J. Black	1,000
Ms Chan Kui Wai	10,000	Mr Keung Ping Leung	1,000	Mr Richard Lewthwaite	25,000
Mr Chan Ming Ming	10,000	Mr Ko Shui Sham	200	Mr Ruy Barretto	5,000
Mr Chan Oi Sheung	200	Mr Ko Wing Hay	300	Mr Sham Tin Lung & Lee Wai Chu	5,000
Mr Chan Sui Hei	2,000	Ms Kwok Kwai King	10,000	Ms Shum Tsun Ling Winnie	500
Mr Chan Tso Yin	1,500	Mr Kwong Koon Wan	500	Ms Siu Ngam, Patricia	1,000
Ms Chan Wai Man	8,577	Mr Kwong Wing Lin	100	Mr Siu Tung Ming	5,000
Mr Chan Yee Wo	1,000	Ms Lai Wai Bing, Sylvia	1,000	Ms So Lai Wah	200
Ms Chan Yin Fong	300	Mr Lam Chiu Ying	300,000	Mr So Siu Hei	10,000
Ms Chan Yin Ping	1,000	Mr Lam Fook Cheuk	300	Ms So Wai Yan	300
Mr Chen Chi Po	1,000	Mr Lam Hin Kwan	3,000	Mr Suen Leung	100
Mr Cheng Kam Yuen	300	Mr Lam Hoi Yuen	500	Mr Tang Wing Shing	300
Mr Cheong U Tan	1,000	Mr Lam Kim Han	1,000	Mr Ted Doleman	200
Mr Cheung Hung Kei	3,000	Ms Lam Kit Ching	300	Mr Tim Woodward	5,000
Mr Chiang Yik Man	1,000	Ms Lam Shuet Fong	1,000	Mr Tong King Lai	1,000
Ms Chim Yuk Ming	1,000	Mr Lam Wai Pang	1,000	Ms Tsang Wai Ping Amy	500
Dr Choi Kai Yiu, Alexander	1,000	Mr Lau Shing Kwan	500	Mr Anthony Bernard Tse	5,000
Ms Choi Wah	500	Mr Lau Wai Man	10,000	Ms Tse Lai Kwan	1,000
Ms Chow Chee Leung	50,000	Ms Law Sam Mui	510	Ms Tsoi Kam Hing	500
Mr Chow Hung Fai	100	Ms Law Wai Yee	400	Mr Wan Siu Ming	1,000
Ms Chow Lai Kuen	3,000	Mr Lee Kai Yuen	5,000	Ms Weng Lien Fen	5,000
Ms Chow Lam Yung Tai	600	Mr Lee Kam Cheong	5,000	Mr Wong Chak Cheong	2,000
Mr Chow Sai Keung	2,000	Ms Lee Mei Ling	2,000	Mr Wong Chiu Shu	100
Ms Chow Shok Yee, Irene	200	Mr Lee Wai Hung	500	Mr Wong Hung Kin	3,000
Mr Choy Siu Hung	1,000	Mr Lee Wai To	300	Ms Wong Shui Chi	1,000
Mr Choy Yan Pui & Ms Law Kit Yee	600	Ms Lee Yuk Ying	5,000	Mr Wong Tak Sing	20,000
Ms Christine Choy & Mr Samuel Ha	10,000	Ms Leung Kam Sheung	200	Ms Wong Wai Ping	5,000
Mr Chui Kin Fai	3,000	Mr Leung Kin Sun	200	Ms Yam Kit Ping	1,000
Mr Fok Tung Ho	500	Ms Leung Kit Ching	200	Mr Yam Tak Ching	2,000
Mr Fong Kin Wa	20,000	Mr Leung Kwok Wa	200	Dr Yau Wing Ho	10,000
Mr Francis Batson	300	Ms Leung Yu Yuk	500	Mr Yip Wai Hung	2,000
Mr Fung Wing Yeung	200	Ms Leung Yuen Ling	1,100	Mr Yu Kwok Kit	100
Mr Geoff Welch	1,000	Mr Li Hung Mo	1,000		
Dr Hau Chi Hang	5,000	Mr Lo Wai Ho	200		
Mr Henry Lui	500	Mr Lok Chun Ming	1,000		
Mr Heung Hon Nang	1,000	Mr Loo Yew Thoe, Joseph	100		
Ms Ho Hang Cheung	100	Mr Lun Kin Shing	3,000		
Mr Ho Kwok Hoi	500	Mr Ma Kit Wah	2,500		
Ms Hui Wai Kim	1,000	Mr Mak Chan Wai	100		
		Mr Malcolm Reeve Nunns	10,000		
		Ms Man Wing Yee	1,000		

**In addition, Dr Cheung Ho-fai donated the cost of shelving, Michelle Kong and Chan Kin-chung supplied chairs, and Eling Lee provided a water cooler with a year's free supply of distilled water.**

## Celebration of HKBWS 50th Anniversary

To celebrate Fifty Years of the HKBWS, a series of special activities was held at the end of 2007. For the record, they are described below.

### HKBWS 50th Anniversary Bird Watching Day

Date: 9 Dec 2007

No. of Participants: about 150 members and friends

Birding Spots: Kowloon Park, Long Valley, Kam Tin, Nam Sang Wai, Maipo, Shing Mun Country Park



### HKBWS 50th Anniversary Dinner

Date: 9 Dec 2007

No. of participants: about 220 members and friends

Guests of Honour: Mr. Mike Chalmers, Senior Member  
Mr C Y Lam, Honorary President  
Dr H F Cheung, Chairman



### HKBWS 50th Anniversary : An Evening with Friends

Date: 11 Dec 2007

Participating Organizations: BirdLife International Asia Division, Shenzhen Bird Watching Society, Agriculture, Fisheries & Conservation Department, Schmidt Marketing, Swarovski Hong Kong Limited, Green Peace (China), The Conservancy Association, Tai Po Environmental Association.



BirdLife International Asia Division :  
Mr Michael Crosby & Mr Simba Chan



APCC: Dr Pui Si, Mr MH Lee, Mr CC Loy, Mr JK Chan,  
Mr Edmund Lam, Mr Carrie Ma



Shenzhen Bird Watching Society: Mr Or King



Schmidt Marketing (HK) Ltd: Mr Brian Liang



The Conservancy Association: Mr Rico Wong, Mr Ken Si,  
Ms SF Ho



Tai Po Environmental Association: Dr WK Yau



Green Peace (China): Mr Gloria Chang



Swarovski Hong Kong Ltd: Mr Eric Hui

# HKBWS - Hong Kong Bird Race 2008

**Date of Race: 19-20 Apr 2008**

## Racing teams

Name of Team	Captain	Team Members					
Besra Team	Dickson Wong	郭志泰	Henry Lui	Jane Cheng	Christna Chan		
DEB Ibis	Shum Ting Wing	Chan Ying Chi	Cheung Ka Yan	Law Man Suet	Luk In	Li Pui Wang	Lee Tsz Yan
DEB Tern	Lau Sin Pang	Ip Ka Lok Kelvin	Cheng Nok Ming	Li Pui Sze	Chan Hon Ki	Chan Kai Po	Wong Wai Ho
Nighthjar	Lo Kar Man	Doris Chu	Tam Yiu Leung	Simon Wong	Ronley Lee		
Rice, Wine, Chicken	Alan Lam	岑嘉智	黃顯銘	林家堅	廖碧燕		
One for All	溫兆銘	黃紀剛	區智恩	方偉賢			
Two-Meter High	張國良	羅詠儀	梁敬德	施冬吟	魏志陽		
Seven Sisters	Vicky Yeung	Billy Hau	Chick Hiu Lai	Fion Cheung	Aidia Chan	Karen Law	Polly Chik
The Lark	Li Wai Ki	Ng Cho Nam	Ng Tsz Wai	Chan Ming Ming	C Y Lam		
Ying Ying Shui Lang Jan	Wan Pak Ho	Yu Yat Tung	Sung Yik Hei	Lee Kowk Shing	Pang Chun Chiu		
Blind Bunting	Gary Chow	鄧詠詩	陳思敏	Yam Wing Yiu	黃健		
Team B	Bill Man	Wong Shu Chi	Tang Wing Shing	Wu Fung Mui			
The Hwamei*	蘇懿青	蔡文欣	曾慧	陳慈翠			
Urocissa hongkongensis	Kwan Wai Keung	Leung Ka King	Ho Lai Man	Fu Vivian	Yau Pak To	To Chun Hong	
Eight In One	Fu Wing Kan	Hung Tun Hei	Yip Sin Hang	Yuen Pui Yu	Li Ming Wai	Leung Siu Him	
Black Kite	Dong Jiangtian	黃俊	于山	鞠立紅	黃林	鍾穎	陳劍斌
Waterbird	Allen Chan	Helen Chan	陳家華	萬少萍	李日明		
Chili Soy Sauce	Tam Yip Shing	Cheung Mok Jose Alberto	譚琳	王偉東	葉思敏		
113 Secondary School, Guangzhou (1)	吳碧雲	李穎宜	李依	李泳澄	詹俊波	余露	明桂榮
113 Secondary School, Guangzhou (2)	吳碧雲	陸禮軍	趙廣通	陳達	黃敬坤	彭詩淵	王慧婷
Eight to Four	Jemi Wong	Chu Chui Ping	Chu Cho Yan	Carrie Ma	John Holmes	Lee Yuk Ying	
Ma Ying Zu	Karin Chin & Lachlan Chin	Beta Yip	Maria Lo	Eric Chan	Fiona		
Happy CBC	Choi Chung Pak	Leung Ho Chi	Lau Shing Kwan	Chow Hung Fai	Ng Pui Man		

\* \*members from Guangzhou Xi Guan Foreign Language School, GZXG Pui Ying Middle School, GZ 18th Middle School & GZ Lap Yin Middle School. \*





- ① Besra
- ② DEB Ibis
- ③ DEB Tern
- ④ Nightjar
- ⑤ Rice, Wine, Chicken
- ⑥ One for All
- ⑦ Two-Meter High
- ⑧ Seven Sisters
- ⑨ The Lark
- ⑩ Ying Ying Shui Lang Jan
- ⑪ Blind Bunting
- ⑫ Team B
- ⑬ Hwamei
- ⑭ Urocissa hongkongensis
- ⑮ Eight in One
- ⑯ Black Kite
- ⑰ Waterbird
- ⑱ Chili Soy Sauce
- ⑳ 113 Secondary School, Guangzhou (1) (2)
- ㉑ Eight to Four
- ㉒ Ma Ying Zu
- ㉓ Happy CBC



Sponsor of bird crystals: Mr Eric Hau of Swarovski

## Hong Kong Bird Race 2008 President's Cup & Best Record Award

Racing Teams	Number of species	Best Record
Besra	125	Bonelli's Eagle
DEB Ibis	107	Asian Barred Owl
DEB Tern	106	Painted Snipe
Nightjar	119	Grey-faced Buzzard
Rice, Wine, Chicken	97	Japanese White-eye
One for All	62	Purple Heron
Two-Meter High	117	Ashy Minivet
Seven Sisters	119	Dollarbird
The Lark	110	Great Bittern
Ying Ying Shui Lang Jan	149	Grey Treepie
Blind Bunting	130	Cinnamon Bittern
Team B	103	Red-necked Phalarope
The Hwamei	88	
Urocissa hongkongensis	95	Yellow-billed Grosbeak
Eight in One	115	Japanese Yellow Bunting
Black Kite	92	
Waterbird	119	Narcissus Flycatcher
Chili Soy Sauce	132	Swinhoe's Egret
113 Secondary School, Guangzhou (1)	82	
113 Secondary School, Guangzhou (2)	82	
Eight to Four	102	Great Cormorant
Ma Ying Zu	102	Mountain Bulbul
Happy CBC	80	Crested Serpent Eagle

### Winner of the President's Cup

149 species by the team of "Ying Ying Shui Lang Jan" which included: Wan Pak Ho (Captain), Yu Yat Tung, Sung Yik Hei, Lee Kwok Shing, Pang Chun Chiu



### The Best Record:

Team B - Red-necked Phalarope



### The Chairman's Choice

Chili Soy Sauce - Swinhoe's Egret



### The President's Choice

Team B - Red-necked Phalarope



### Publications for free distribution

HKBWS have a large number of HKBWS publications and back issues of bulletins for free distribution. Members are always welcome to visit the new office and take away free copies of the following publications:

1. Leaflets and Postcards of different bird species
2. Back issues of the HKBWS bulletin
3. Proceedings: Keeping Asia's Spoonbills Airborne – International Symposium on Research and Conservation of the Black-faced Spoonbill
4. China Bird Watch Magazine
5. China Bird Report 2005 (last few copies) (Nice cover photo! – Ed.)
6. "Colours on Wings" – Photo Contest 2006 booklet

### Intern Student

During the summer holiday, Wan Kwok Ho, a student from the City University of Hong Kong, joined our office as a summer intern student. His primary duty has been to participate in our Long Valley Project.

### Long Valley Poster

Nature Conservation Management for Long Valley has published 2 posters illustrating the scenery and birds found in both summer and winter at Long Valley. Free copies are available from the HKBWS office to those who send a request with a self addressed envelope ( 13 X 10 inch ) stamped with a 3 dollars postage stamp.



## Education Activities

### "A Century of Birds - A video bird guide of Hong Kong" (DVD) Mr Man Chup Ming (Creator)

This DVD, the fruit of more than four years of dedication by Mr MAN Chup Ming, features :-

- The first bird guide in DVD format, 80 minutes long
- Introduces 100 common bird species, including females, males, baby birds, juveniles, breeding and bird calls
- In Mandarin, Cantonese and English with Chinese and English subtitles
- Each DVD includes a "Bird Watching Hong Kong" leaflet and a CD-Rom produced by Swarovski Hong Kong Limited to introduce digiscoping

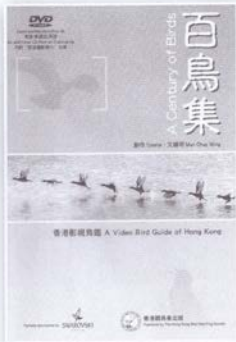
#### **Contents:**

1. The DVD has been divided into 4 sections, beginning with:  
Water birds – 50 common water bird species and Land birds – 50 common land bird species.
2. Forest birds feeding on "Red Hot Poker" trees are a highlight.  
The most common species in the crow family and other black-coloured birds are examined in a segment discussing the present status of House Crow in Hong Kong.
3. Close-ups of butterflies, dragonflies, mudskippers and rare birds are blended with bird calls, insect calls, frog calls and light music.
4. The "Songs of Birds" segment combines still photos of birds (by Peter and Michelle Wong) with bird calls.

Price: Member: HK\$66 Non-member: HK\$88

Student (below 18) or Senior Citizen (above 65): HK\$50

To purchase both "Episodes of Birds" (Man Chup-ming's previous film) and the new "A Century of Birds" at the same time: Member: HK\$90 Non-member: HK\$100"



### Crested Bulbul Club

1. Early Morning Bird Watching at Kowloon Park & HK Park  
No. of participants in Hong Kong Park from Mar to July 2008: 236  
No. of participants in Kowloon Park from Mar to July 2008: 431
2. Bird watching interpretation in Hong Kong Wetland Park  
A total of 127 people have participated in this service from March to May 2008.
3. Bird watching services and activities  
1/6/2008 Hong Kong Park Green Fun Day

## Survey, Research and Training

### House Crow Nest Survey

The Society was commissioned by AFCD to conduct a survey of the urban House Crow population from mid April to mid July. Results will be released in a forthcoming issue.

### Terns Research Group Report - Alan Chan

Breeding tern surveys continued this year at Mins Bay and the rock near Po Toi. There was only one successful colony at Mins Bay. Bird counts were similar to last year but all three species, namely Bridled, Black-naped and Roseate managed to produce fledglings. Up to 120 birds were recorded at the rock near Po Toi, with Black-naped and Roseates appearing in early July. Sadly this colony suffered from frequent disturbance by fishermen landing on the rock. The worst happened on 13 July when 2 men wandered around and picked up some eggs. Bird numbers fell immediately within days and at the end only one Roseate chick could fledge. The incident was reported to AFCD together with a re-iteration of our proposal to close the four major tern islands during the breeding season. AFCD, however, would not listen. Good numbers of Black-naped and Roseate terns were found in Hong Kong waters from late July – there were up to 200 to the south of Lantau and at least 80 around the Tolo Channel. They probably came after breeding outside Hong Kong. Many photographers got good pictures of these birds as they chased after ferries between Ma Liu Shui and Wong Shek Pier.

### Egret Research Group Report - Captain Wong

As in previous years, ERG are conducting a territory-wide egret count in 2008. Members are welcome to report nesting colony sites to ERG at [hkbws@hkbws.org.hk](mailto:hkbws@hkbws.org.hk). Members who are interested in understanding how to count egret nests are welcome to join the egret count training workshops in the future (dates to be announced)

- (2) ERG have conducted a government-funded study regarding habitat use by nesting birds in Starling Inlet, Tolo Harbour and two nesting sites in Inner Deep Bay during 2008.
- (3) ERG have planned a visit to a nesting colony in Daya Bay, Shenzhen. It is said that this colony falls within the boundary of the nuclear power plant. The survey may help to clarify the status of nesting Black-crowned Night Heron in HK as it is suspected that the decline in the nesting population of Night Heron in Starling Inlet may be due to formation of a new colony nearby.

### Swallows & Swifts Research Group

Since May 2008, our swifts and swallows research group have carried out a breeding Swifts and Swallows count. Results will be announced soon.

### Nature Conservation Management for Long Valley (2008 - 2010) – Vicky Yeung

The Conservancy Association and Hong Kong Bird Watching Society are now cooperating with 20 local farmers, managing about 711,000ft<sup>2</sup> of farmland. Habitats include shallow water habitat, less intensive wet agricultural land (i.e. Water Chestnut, Chinese Arrow-head, Paddy Rice and Lotus cultivation), intensive wet agricultural land (i.e. Water Spinach and Water Cress cultivation), Water Flea Ponds as well as Fish Ponds. A crop of Paddy Rice was planted in May. We will try to protect some of the crops from birds and harvest as seeds for rice planting next year. On the other hand, we have put 10,200 Mud Carp and 10,000 Goldfish (cultivated species) into the fishpond in order to provide food for egrets and herons in late December when the pond is drained.



Planting Water Caltrop



Rearing freshwater fish

## **Removal of Mangrove Seedlings from the Deep Bay Mudflats**

Around 31,000 mangrove seedlings growing in a 40 hectare area of inter-tidal mudflat will be removed this Autumn. The area to be cleared is located directly in front of the bird-watching hides and the aim of this work is to ensure an open area of mudflat is available to waterbirds for roosting and feeding, and also for visitors to enjoy unobstructed views of the mudflat.

This work has been carried out annually since the 1980s and each year a greater number of seedlings need clearing; in the last 10 years alone, the quantity has increased 5-fold. Also, due to silt accretion, the mudflat is becoming higher and drier, making it increasingly difficult for our staff to carry out the work. However without this clearance the mudflat would quickly become covered by mangroves and the mudflat areas where the birds roost and feed would be lost.

This year, the work will be carried out from September and completed by the end of October before wintering waterbirds arrive. At same time, AFCD will continue to remove the exotic mangrove species *Sonneratia* spp. from areas close to the Shenzhen River mouth. This work is vital to ensure the mangrove forests remain healthy and natural in the long-term.

## **Inter-tidal Gei wai Habitat Management Trial**

As reported in the Spring bulletin update, gei wai #21 in Southern Mai Po is being converted into an alternative high-tide roost area. The works are large-scale, but never-the-less going well and expected to be complete by Autumn 2009.

Gei wai #21 has been operated as an "inter-tidal" waterbody over the last decade and on occasion this attracted large numbers

(over 500) of feeding waterbirds, most notably herons, egrets and Black-faced Spoonbill. Once converted into a high-tide roost, Mai Po would lose its only inter-tidal gei wai, so to compensate, the neighbouring gei wai, no. #22, will now be handed the responsibility on a trial basis. Gei wai #22 is of similar dimension to #21, but has the advantage of containing a larger area of open water and being less vulnerable to disturbance. Waterbird usage will be monitored over the 2008-09 winter period to assess its suitability and function as an inter-tidal gei wai.

Also of interest to birdwatchers, gei wai #21 will be flooded throughout the winter to prevent vegetation growing back, and this has great potential to attract duck. So from November I recommend you take the time to visit these gei wai.

## **Buffalo Study**

As a continuation to the 2006 buffalo study, which concluded buffalo could maintain a bund vegetation height and attract birds similar to manual management methods on freshwater ponds, a second beast will now be added into the enclosure at Sub-pond #24c. By increasing grazing pressure we hope to create habitat conditions more attractive to Grey-headed Lapwing, Greater Painted Snipe and Cattle Egret. Also the centralised reed stands within the pond will be cleared and the water-level lowered to help "marshy" conditions develop. Bird and vegetation data will continue to be collected for the next 3 years.

If you have any questions about these works, then please don't hesitate to ask any of the WWF staff at Mai Po. You can contact us by telephone (2471 6306) or by e-mail ([bsmith@wwf.org.hk](mailto:bsmith@wwf.org.hk)).



# 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary



## The Bulletin 50 Years On (Part IV) – Clive Viney

### Business as usual

Nobody wanted the worst job in the Society, Honorary Secretary, and in the nineties the post changed hands almost monthly. However, in the Bulletin it was business as usual with Mike Chalmers reporting on the Breeding Bird Survey, which finally looked like being a success, Jim Hackett told us about Ho Chung (where it all started for me) and provided a useful map, Martin Hale wrote of Big Bird Race 93, which the Stonechats won with a record breaking 171 species and CY reported seeing Emperor Penguins on the Shackleton Ice Shelf. Record cards could now be submitted in Chinese. Paul Leader took over *Report on the Birds*, which appeared in an uncomfortable systematic format.

Bulletin No. 151 (March 1994) was necessarily trimmed down as Liz Leven, the hardworking English Language Bulletin Editor (as the post was now called) had not been well. She had done the job for three years and pleaded for a volunteer to replace her. Peter Hopkin kindly took over the post and used a new Word Perfect format - Ming Ming Chan was the Chinese Language Bulletin Editor.

Conservation awards and grants were awarded by the Oriental Bird Club for studies in China and regular progress reports appeared in the Bulletin. An exciting development at Mai Po was the approval of a Society-funded boardwalk hide overlooking Deep Bay. Mike Leven wrote a riveting account of how On Fern Holdings (alias Stonechats) won the Big Bird Race 94, which raised HK\$1.63 million. Two long awaited additions to Hong Kong's birding literature were the Chinese edition

of Viney, Philipps and Lam (reviewed by Cheung Ho Fai) and David Diskin's privately published *Birding Hong Kong* (reviewed by Mike Turnbull). A new series *Birds from my Window* was launched with articles by Helen Bennett and Jemi Wong. The Bulletin's first mystery bird was an instructive line drawing of an Upland Pipit and there was even a specialist competition based on day lists of birds.

The departure of so many old hands and the lack of a permanent secretary caused the Bulletin to enter the doldrums. As ever, the essentials were there such as important Society news and announcements, bird news (happily back in a chatty format), forthcoming outings and a few overseas reports that were easily included from a floppy disc. During 1993 and 1994, local outing reports had reduced to a trickle and by Bulletin 157 (September 1995) they stopped altogether. On the plus side, there were regular meetings for beginners and the newly formed Ornithological Society of China was looking for members.

### Development debate

At last the Society had a Secretary, Wong Ah Ping stepped into the breach.

The long hoped for RAMSAR designation for Inner Deep Bay and Mai Po was finally declared by the British Government on 4<sup>th</sup> September 1995. Twenty-five years of fighting had come to fruition but there was still much to be done as Mai Po and Deep Bay were seriously

threatened on all sides by developers. Bulletin No. 158 (December 1995) allowed Eco-schemes Asia Ltd. to state their case for limited development and Michael Lau responded. In the following Bulletin, three months later, Gary Grant of Eco-schemes answered Michael Lau's points and again Michael was permitted space to answer. Members were urged to state their views. Sadly, the arguments provoked no published response, although it was known that within the upper echelons of the birding community strong views for and against were held. David Melville among others felt that without compromise, we might find ourselves left with little of value but on the other hand with my Government hat on I had dealt with developers for almost 30 years and thought this attitude naive. Soon battle lines would be drawn and knives sharpened.

### **Departed member**

Over the years, Bulletins contained many patch reports but I had never written of Mount Nicholson where I was lucky enough to live for the past 18 years in a secluded bungalow with a garden and made daily wildlife notes. I disciplined myself to make sense of my diaries and produced the gratis booklet *Mount Nicholson 1978-1995*, which I was permitted to review myself.

Crazy things were happening with the Bulletins. Numbers 159 and 160 were issued with the wrong year in the heading and Bulletin No. 161 does not exist!

Unbelievably, Bulletin No. 160 contained my second Society obituary! This one I was invited to write myself and it was published in toto. How many of us get to read our obituaries let alone reread them ten years later?

Bulletin No. 162 (September 1996) announced that the Society's new Cathay Pacific Hide was open for business. Mike Kilburn and Carrie Ma jointly took over the duties of Bulletin Editor. Birdwatching in China was taking off in a big way and Bulletin No. 163 (December 1996) contained no fewer than four book reviews directly relevant to birding in the region. In this Bulletin it was good to see a mini-revival of the outing report format with S L Tai's *Target 100* (they scored 105). On 26<sup>th</sup> February 1997, Cheung Ho Fai demonstrated his CD-ROM database *Common Hong Kong Birds* at the Royal Observatory.

### **Transition**

Bulletin No. 163 (March 1997) and the one following were not only the last Bulletins to appear whilst Hong Kong was still a British colony but they were in a new, neat A5 format. The front cover professionally referenced contents and stated who was who in the Society with contact details. Richard Stott wrote poignantly *The Last Four Years - A Chairman's View*. Importantly, a meeting was held on 1<sup>st</sup> June 1997 to discuss ways to increase Society involvement in the conservation of birds and their habitat in Hong Kong and China. More and more regional bird books were appearing and these were quickly reviewed in the Bulletin. No Bulletin was complete without its dose of overseas bird reports but Jasper Hornsokov's *Qinghai; 25<sup>th</sup> September - 12<sup>th</sup> October 1996* was special. A First Day Cover marking the Society's 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary was distributed to members - the three stamps attractively designed by member Miss Lee Yuk Ying depicted migratory birds. Carrie Ma was constructing a Society website.

At the 1997 AGM, Richard Stott stood down and Lam Chui Ying was elected Chairman. Not only Hong Kong but also the Hong Kong Bird Watching Society was entering a new age.

### **Bulletin revolution**

When I took Bulletin 165 9.1997 out of its envelope in my Tavira study, I was amazed. On the cover was a fine photograph of a Black-naped Tern in flight and inside were more photographs of terns all taken in Hong Kong waters. Clearly, whilst most of the population was mesmerised by the handover, the Society's photographers were busy on the high seas. It must have been difficult enough to find these rare terns let alone take photographs. The next edition, some three months later was even more impressive - a professional design house had helped with the layout and high quality art paper used for the photographs. Astonishingly, the photos included a Barred Buttonquail and a male Pied Harrier - species not seen well by most Hong Kong birders and here they were photographed. Where had these photographers been hiding? Their work was outstanding. Inside, the contents continued the high standard employed in the previous two Bulletins - a melody of Society news and announcements, conservation news, bird reports, humour, book reviews and overseas trip reports. The Bulletin was no longer a throwaway newsletter but a booklet to treasure and

▲ Brown Fish Owl 褐魚鴞

Chan Kai Wai 陳佳瑋

Pui O 貝澳 12/02/2008

DSLR Camera, 500mm f/4 lens + 1.4x teleconverter



▲ Eagle Owl 鵟鴞

Ng Lin You 吳曉宥

Lai Chi Kok Park 荔枝角公園 30/11/2007

DSLR Camera, 500mm f/4 lens

▲ White-bellied Sea Eagle-Juvenile 白腹海鵰幼鳥

Isaac Chan 陳家強

Chek Keng 赤徑 29/08/2008

DSLR Camera, 300mm lens + 1.7x teleconverter



▲ White-shouldered Starling 灰背椋鳥

Ho Kin Yip/Kinni 何建業

Mail Po 樂埔 20/07/2008

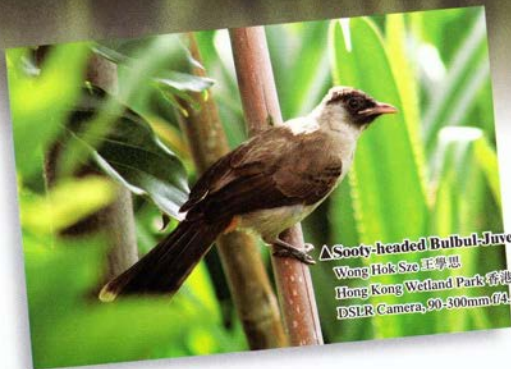
DSLR Camera, 600mm f/4 lens + 1.4x teleconverter

▲ Crested Serpent Eagle-Juvenile 蛇鵟幼鳥

oLDcaR 李啓康

Tai Po 大埔 30/12/2007

DSLR Camera, 600mm lens



▲ Sooty-headed Bulbul-Juvenile 白喉紅臀鵲幼鳥

Wong Hok Sze 王學思

Hong Kong Wetland Park 香港濕地公園 10/06/2008

DSLR Camera, 90-300mm/f4.5-5.6 lens



▲ Grey-capped Greenfinch 金翅雀

Thomas Chan 陳士飛

Tsingi Yü Park 青衣公園 09/02/2008

DSLR Camera, 800mm f5.6 lens



▲ Peregrine Falcon 游隼

Isaac Chan 陳家強

Mirs Bay 大鵬灣 18/07/2008

DSLR Camera, 300mm lens + 1.7x teleconverter

enjoy. A surprising fact was that the new look Bulletin was cheaper to produce. Chan Ming Ming edited the Chinese Bulletin and Mike Kilburn took care of the English version. Among the later editors of the English Bulletin were Steve Burrows and John Holmes.

A standard had been set and for the next ten years the Bulletins just got better and better. For me, some of the photographs were incredible. As I write, Bulletin 199 Spring 2006 is sitting on my desk and inside is a wonderful photograph of a Chinese Song Thrush *Turdus mupinensis* taken on Po Toi. This is a species hardly known in South China let alone Hong Kong and it was not just seen through binoculars it was photographed for all to marvel. Local bird photography reached a glorious climax with the publication of *A Photographic Guide to the Birds of Hong Kong* by the Society in 2004.

The website was up and running and in due course, the magnificent *Avifauna of Hong Kong* authored by a clique of ten members was published. In the spring of 2000 the Society opened a small office and hired a Projects Officer. In later years the office expanded and even catered for orders of books and bird related items.

Two exceptional bilingual editions of the Bulletin published in 2000 and 2001 dealt solely with the case to save Long Valley and as is well known, against all odds, the Society's stance prevailed. This, though, was a bitter dispute with several birding personalities, both amateur and professional, attempting to undermine the environmental arguments opposing the proposed railway.

An innovation was the Bulletin editorial written by the Chairman - *Chairman's Word*. New and important regulars were Cheung Ho Fai's *Take a Closer Look*, which provided much useful field identification pointers and Fei Niu's expert advice to the Society's budding legion of bird photographers. Outings were now visiting the remotest corners of the SAR and even overnight camps organised. The few reports of outings mostly covered these new venues. The Society's activities received press coverage and to keep members informed important extracts were reproduced and translated. Projects were high on the agenda and much of the new format Bulletin was keeping members up-to-date on progress and urging participation. Bulletin 182 was a special edition that looked back at what the Society had achieved in 2001 - a well-deserved pat on the back and a necessary prelude to the Society becoming a corporate body in 2002.

During my days as a trustee, WWF/HK led the way in environmental education in Hong Kong. Now it was the turn of HKBWS. Not only were there training and educational programmes for the young but also the elderly. The popular Crested Bulbul Club was formed to encourage retirees to go out and enjoy birds and the countryside - the Portuguese word *reformados* is so much better to describe us pensioners.

In 2004, Lam Chiu Ying stepped down as Chairman and Cheung Ho Fai was elected in his stead. Not one to rest on his laurels, CY became the Society's first President and now keeps a fatherly eye on what is going on.

In all of this change, founding members were not forgotten. *Forty Years On - Birding Recollections and the Society* by Bryan Webster (Bulletin 168 6.1998) was a rare glimpse of birdwatchers and birdwatching in Hong Kong in the late fifties. Following the obituary of Arthur St. G. Walton, Founding Chairman of the Hong Kong Bird Watching Society, Lam Chiu Ying wrote:

"I never met Mr. Walton but through our common interest in birdwatching, I can sense his kindness in his love of nature and his passion for sharing this appreciation. His early efforts marked the origin of the present popularity of birdwatching in Hong Kong. Nearly half a century ago, a gentleman from a distant country planted a seed out of his love for nature. That seed has since flourished and is beginning to bear fruit in this land. It is such a wonder in the scheme of things."

My task was to review the Bulletin in the middle years of the Society and there is little point in trying to find even more superlatives to describe what has happened in recent years. Although I am many miles away and rarely return to the exciting place where I spent my working life and raised my family, Hong Kong is at the core of my being. I am truly proud to be a member of the Hong Kong Bird Watching Society and it is always with eager anticipation that I open the envelope containing the next Bulletin.

Clive Viney  
Tavira, Portugal  
30<sup>th</sup> September 2006

cliveviney@mail.telepac.pt



# Honorary Game Warden - 1954

## — Mr. A O Barretto

Ruy Barretto has kindly sent a copy of the Honorary Game Warden Certificate issued to his late father, Mr. A.O.Barretto, in 1954. Mr Barretto Sr. became an early member of the HKBWS when it formed in 1957.

The legal power still lies with the Chief Executive to appoint any person as a Nature Warden or Honorary Nature Warden for the purposes of the Wild Animals Protection Ordinance, but - as Ruy points out, -

*"this office now only exists on paper. Despite suggestions in past years for this power to be used, there have been no appointments and it appears this section has become rather a dead letter as a result of AFCD decision rather than law... Honorary Nature Wardens are an excellent way to get responsible people involved."*

It appears that the old Agriculture and Fisheries Department (now AFCD) appointed a number of Honorary Game Wardens, who became Honorary Nature Wardens when hunting was finally banned in about 1981. These included HKBWS members such as Mike Chalmers, Gavin Cooper and Clive Viney. A Mai Po Nature reserve Manager in the 1980s, David Melville, was also an Honorary Nature Warden and more recently, Lew Young was appointed as one when he became MPNR Manager in 1991.

It seems true that this means of "outsourcing" observance of the provisions of the Wild Animals Protection Ordinance (Cap.170) has tailed off in recent years. Whether this is due to liability issues or to other reasons we can only guess.

(I'd like to thank the Honorary Nature Wardens, past and present, named above, for their prompt response to my queries - Ed.)



C.O. 4172  
(20.10.1954-1.10.1955)

No. 3/12/3252/55

3rd December, 1954.

Sir,

I am directed to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 21st November, 1954 and to inform you that His Excellency the Governor has been pleased to appoint you to be an Honorary Game Warden.

An Honorary Game Warden's certificate is enclosed.

I am, Sir,  
Your obedient servant,  
  
(A.M.G. Walton)  
For Colonial Secretary.

A.O. Barretto, Esq.,  
Singapore,  
Tai Po Kau,  
New Territories.

AMG/rjt

## Herklots to HO Chung 1970-1973

by Clive Briffett

On my arrival in Hong Kong in 1970 I was whisked from Kai Tak airport to HK Central to see the night lights. Instructions were issued for me to appear at the Murray Building PWD building in Victoria around 6am the next morning. A rapid introduction to the arduous work ethic of HK. Little did I know that on the very same day I would meet a working colleague who would steer me towards a rewarding Hong Kong birdwatching career when I was supposed to be here as a Building Surveyor. He described himself as a dormant birder and together we climbed a steep learning curve in looking, listening and identifying our wild feathered friends of the colony over the next three years.

It was probably two years later before we were able to confidently separate a Yellow-browed Warbler from a Pallas's but in the intervening period much shared experience was enjoyed in getting to grips with the local birds. Our only guide in those days was the experience of established birders in the Society and the venerable hardback book by G.A.C. Herklots. Such people as Fred Hechtel, Mike Webster and David Robertson led the outings which we religiously attended to find the best spots and absorb bird biodiversity. Dave Galloway, another friend, was a Police Superintendent based at Plover Cove and Mai Po (how lucky can you get) and he contributed a good range of records and associated photos which adorn the Annual Reports of the early 70's. A report of a Pied Kingfisher and Plumbeous Water Redstart along with Crested Buntings and Red tailed Robin would send us speeding out to the Sai Kung Peninsula to investigate further. It was not surprising therefore that within six months both my PWD colleague and I selected some remote government quarters at Clearwater Bay and Silverstrand respectively. We were later joined by another avid birder John Chapman who confirmed a lack of regular watchers on the Peninsula. This quickly changed and we surveyed all coastal zones, valleys and hills from Kowloon Peak to the end of the Peninsula and along the road to and beyond the Hebe Haven sailing club. At Kowloon Peak guaranteed sightings of Lesser Coucal and vocalizations of Upland Pipit and Chinese Francolin could be enjoyed above the roar of traffic along way below. Other records of Broad-billed Roller, Jay, Hwamei and Yellow-bellied Prinia were also noted for this highland oasis but the Chinese Babax was never to be found...

The jewel in the crown of Sai Kung Peninsula was undoubtedly the Ho Chung fish ponds and the valley above. John Chapman recorded numerous waders in his 1972 account. Many times we spent a good half day from early dawn to midday surveying the river, ponds and rice fields. Despite the purple polluted water discharging downstream from the dye cloth factory at the head of the valley we often saw Daurian Redstart and Grey Wagtail along the stream course and occasionally Yellow Wagtail. We much enjoyed the Black-necked Starlings always to be found in the rice fields with White-backed Munia and on one memorable occasion a Whites Thrush and Pekin Robin were recorded. Black-tailed Hawfinch, Wryneck and Grey-headed Flycatcher were found in the nearby wooded areas.

Further along the road one could traverse a very steep and narrow concrete track constructed during the war and referred to as the "Japanese road" leading to Ma Nam Wat village. What a tranquil joy this place was. It was like walking back fifty years and we half expected to bump into Herklots himself. The Fork-tailed Sunbird was always resident there along with visitors such as the Scarlet Minivet, Grey Bushchat and Blackbird. A good range of buntings, munias, mynahs and wagtails were to be found in the village rice fields. Traditional buffalo ploughing, rice paddy planting and natural gravity irrigation channels flowed through the area and later in the season hand threshing was witnessed on the concrete area in front of the village houses. It was indeed a place you could lose sight of the fact you were still in urbanized HK. Looking through Herklots accounts one had a sense there were many other locations in the 1930's that comprised quiet villages each with their own "fung shui" wood that one could appreciate; - people were working in harmony with nature and the bird biodiversity thrived as a result.

At Silverstrand I was fortunate enough to have a balcony with panoramic views of the bay and Osprey, White-bellied Sea Eagles and Black-eared Kites all got onto my list. Visiting Blue Rock Thrushes and a resident Violet Whistling Thrush which once landed on my balcony rail were also good ticks. On this same balcony I also confirmed a new species to the colony when a bird netted in a nearby seminary was brought to me for identification This turned out to be a Fugitive Hawk Cuckoo, Cuculus Fugax a most exciting find. (Hodgson's Hawk Cuckoo - Ed.)

*(These are unchecked records & members are reminded of the importance of submitting all records on cards or electronically)*

#### ▲ April

Though flycatcher passage was light, good numbers of **Grey-faced Buzzards** and some stunning seabirds sustained interest in the opening week of the month. After a prolonged flat period in mid-month which was relieved by single **Fairy** and **Blue-winged Pittas** at Po Toi, the last week of the month was very good, with a **Grey Phalarope**, record numbers of **Asian Dowitchers** and **Grey-streaked Flycatchers**, a **Great Frigatebird** and a **Himalayan Cuckoo**, a potential first for Hong Kong.

Following a count of 44 on 1<sup>st</sup>, numbers of **Grey-faced Buzzards** at Po Toi (GW) rose to 98 the next day (GW), the highest April count yet. There were also sightings of 21 at Shing Mun (GHo) and two at Brides Pool (RWL) the same day, after which there were up to three at Po Toi on 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> and six at Mai Po on 4<sup>th</sup>.

Spring flycatcher passage, though lighter than usual, was again evident at Po Toi where from 1<sup>st</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> there were up to five **Ferruginous**, two **Narcissus**, two **Blue-and-white** and single **Red-breasted** and **Japanese Paradise Flycatchers**. Other notable sightings from this island in the first week included a photogenic **Sanderling**, single **Brown Hawk Owls** (Northern Boobooks) on three dates, a late **Red-flanked Bluetail** and two late **Daurian Redstarts** (on 5<sup>th</sup>).

A memorable boat trip into southern waters on 5<sup>th</sup> led to sightings of an **Aleutian Tern**, the earliest spring record by 6 days, at least 40 **Long-tailed**, one or two **Pomarine** and three **Arctic Skuas**, including one harrying a **Kittiwake** (LJ, EMSK).

Apart from a smattering of flycatchers at Brides Pool, Cheung Chau, Mai Po, Shing Mun, Tai Po Kau and Tai Po Kau Headland, highlights from other parts of Hong Kong during this period included 260 **Gull-billed Terns** in total over Deep Bay and the Mai Po access road on 1<sup>st</sup>, four **Silver-backed Needletails** and 16 **Black Bulbuls** at Tai Po Kau on 4<sup>th</sup>, an adult **Vega Gull** in front of the Mai Po boardwalk, 32 **Ashy Minivets** at Sam Chung (MLC) and a **Eurasian Jay**, a local rarity, at Tai Lam CP (MLC).

By 8<sup>th</sup>, Po Toi was described as quiet. An **Oriental Plover** was found in front of the Mai Po Tower Hide on 9<sup>th</sup> (TH) and remained there through much of the month, and a **Pectoral Sandpiper** was noted in front of the boardwalk the same day.

A **Fairy Pitta** at Po Toi on 10<sup>th</sup> (HTH) was the earliest ever by 9 days. Also seen there were a **Grey Nightjar**, three **Ashy Minivets** and a **Japanese Paradise Flycatcher**. Another **Japanese Paradise Flycatcher** was present at Mai Po the same day (KB).

Passage, however, remained unusually weak for the time of year. Among few highlights were a **Citrine Wagtail** at the Mai Po access road, three **Blue-tailed Bee-eaters** at Mai Po, single **Hodgson's Hawk Cuckoos** at Hok Tau (PJL) and Tai Po Kau (P&AC), all on 11<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> and a **Slender-billed Gull**, possibly the individual noted in March, in front of the Mai Po boardwalk on 13<sup>th</sup> (YYT).

My work colleague and I ranged very widely across the New Territories having been allocated building site locations that extended into the closed area and across to the outlying islands. When work commitments were completed the binoculars came out to record the birds. Tai Po Kau could be visited early on route to work locations but was probably more rewarding with more time spent on a Saturday or Sunday morning. John Chapman was first to spot a Black Baza here to add to the Hong Kong list in 1972 and I was always pleased to hear the Large Hawk Cuckoo issuing its distinctive calls in the forest.

Mai Po in those days was exceedingly difficult and dangerous to traverse not only due the lack of safe access from the incoming tides but due to the unpredictable presence of duck hunters. Dave Bradford, a most resourceful birder related his good duck day in the 1973 report but few would be brave enough to achieve this.

As Secretary of the Society I had some dealings with the media which resulted in a Chinese TV interview conducted in my office. The topic discussed was our society's view of duck hunters and having expressed concern about the lack of control and government's apparent inability to identify the best habitat in HK as a nature reserve I thought I had done a good job. It was only later when I spotted myself on the local news looking like a Mexican bandit with dark skin, drooping moustache and long sideburns talking with a Chinese dubbed voice that the strength of my anti-hunting argument diminished! Better success was attained at another event in Sek Kong which was the annual Agricultural Show where we had some good bird charts initiated by David Robertson to hand out. (see Annual Report 1972). A surprisingly interested couple who wanted copies for themselves turned out to be the Governor Murray MacLehose and his wife. This interest was later rekindled by my working colleague and much support from central government sources towards better nature conservation control on developments and improved recreational paths across the NT developed in later years.

The Society in 1970 was in a poor state of finance and suffering from to a lack of recognition for its conservation efforts. Within three years however things began to change for a number of reasons. Increased publicity brought along new members including much needed local Chinese people, the Mai Po hunting was stopped in 1973 and conservation plans started to get drawn up by the Ag. and Fish Department. Looking at Mai Po now it is hard to believe what a struggle it was to get anything conserved in times past.

Another improvement was the publication of Mike Webster's book on the Birds of Hong Kong in 1976 and the numerous articles he wrote for the South China Morning Post on all aspects of birdwatching and bird species. Karen Philips the illustrator later joined forces with another author to produce the Colour Guide to Hong Kong Birds who also happened to be Societies Recorder of the day. I should know his name for he was no less than the working colleague that I had accompanied on so many bird outings---- Clive Viney. The fact that this book is now in its sixth edition is a major credit to Clive's efforts both for the Society and for progressing birdwatching to higher professional standards in Hong Kong.

On leaving Hong Kong in October 1973 I happened to mention to a few friends some days before that I was on 199 species and would like to make the 200th before I go. Due to a few false alarms I clambered aboard the Marco Polo boat in the harbour still without my elusive 200th species. I was instructed to open a file in mid channel after we embarked and found a double breasted, bare rumped, long legged bird from the centre page of Playboy with 200 written across the vital parts. As this certainly would not count, I mused at the Herklots accounts - of which I had learnt so many off by heart over the previous three years. There was a record sent in by the redoubtable Mrs Davies of a Resplendent Shag seen in her home island of Cheung Chau. Now that might well be worth looking out for on the way home. I thought!



# ***Finding***

## ***White-speckled Laughingthrush***

### ***(*lanthocincla bieti*)***

*by John and Jemi Holmes*



*The HKBWS Annual Reports of the late 1980s had a number of accounts of visits to exotic places in China by Ben King. He went to Pangquanguo in Shanxi to look for Brown-eared Pheasant (1984/5 report), Wuyanling in Zhejiang for Cabot's Tragopan (1986 report), and, to me, most memorably of all, to Mahuang Gou in Muli County in southwest Sichuan Province where he observed and recorded White-speckled Laughingthrush (1988 report).*

"*Bieti*" was originally considered a race of Barred Laughingthrush, and this status was maintained in Prof. CHENG Tso-hsin's (ZHENG Zuoxin's) landmark English version of "A synopsis of the avifauna of China" published in 1987. However, a number of authorities had already "split" it including Meyer De Schauensee who, in his 1984 "The Birds of China" noted of *bieti* that "...this interesting species combines the characters of the Barred Laughingthrush and the Giant Laughingthrush". The Chinese ornithological authorities recognized *bieti* as a species in 1996.

The original specimen was taken in 1897 by Monsignor Francois Biet, (a French Missionary Naturalist) near "Cigu" on the upper Mekong Valley in what is now Balma Xue Shan National Nature Reserve. Biet himself died in 1901, aged 63. The Catholic church at Cigu was destroyed during civil unrest in 1905, when the two French Missionaries were

among those killed, and George Forrest – then a twenty-six year old plant hunter – narrowly escaped with his life. The church was rebuilt at Cizhong in 1907 and still stands today, surrounded by vineyards.

Specimens of *bieti* were obtained in the 1920s and 1930s in northwest Yunnan and Muli County in Sichuan by foreign collectors, but civil disorder in the 1930s followed by World War II brought bird-collecting to a halt for a long time. Some post-war specimens were taken by Prof. CHENG Tso-hsin and a colleague at Yulong Xue Shan near Lijiang in the early 1960s. Logging and other forms of habitat destruction continued from the 1960s onwards, destroying a lot of potential *bieti* habitat





Among summer visitors starting to arrive at this time were **Hainan Blue Flycatchers**, which became unusually numerous in shrubland in the Wu Kau Tang-Brides Pool-Plover Cove area, with 10 occupied territories found there during 11<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> (RWL).

An arrival of migrant flycatchers was noted at Po Toi on 13<sup>th</sup>, including four **Narcissus**, two **Ferruginous**, two **Blue-and-white**, an adult male **Yellow-rumped**, very rare in spring, and a **Japanese Paradise** (MDW). Also present were five **Grey-faced Buzzards**, four **Chinese Goshawks**, a **Savanna Nightjar**, a **Chinese Blackbird** and two **Chestnut-cheeked Starlings**.

A **Blue-winged Pitta**, only the second for Hong Kong, was found at Po Toi on 17<sup>th</sup> (H+H) and seen again the next day (GW). Also noted on 17<sup>th</sup> were 5500 **Curlew Sandpipers** and two **Spoon-billed Sandpipers** at Mai Po (YYT). The latter were seen again two days later (CC). An unexpected sighting, possibly the first Mai Po record, was a **Wild Boar** near the gate to the boardwalk on the Deep Bay side of the security fence on 18<sup>th</sup> (AY).

Reports during 19<sup>th</sup>-23<sup>rd</sup> included two **Black Bazas** at Ping Kong (KJ), two **Grey-faced Buzzards** at Po Toi (GW), single **Brown Hawk Owls** off Cape d'Aguilar (GJC, PJJ) and Lamma, a **Eurasian Eagle Owl** at Mai Wo (PS), a **Citrine Wagtail** at Nam Chung, a **Pheasant-tailed Jacana** and 20 **Oriental Pratincoles** at the Mai Po access road, two **Chinese Blackbirds** (thought potentially a nesting pair), a **White's Thrush** and **Japanese Yellow Bunting** at Mai Po (MDW, JAA, P&MW) and a very late **Verditer Flycatcher** (K&RB) at Chinese University. The **Brown Hawk Owl** off Cape d'Aguilar on 19<sup>th</sup> was the only significant sighting there on a wet and windy day when STS Neoguri made landfall west of Hong Kong.

As passage intensified in the last week of the month, there were reports of 52 **Long-toed Stints** at San Tin (JAA) and 48 **Brown Skrikes** at Po Toi (GW) on 24<sup>th</sup>, a **Himalayan Swiftlet**, 50 **Pale Martins** (*fohkiensis*) and 40 **Yellow-breasted Buntings** at the Mai Po access road (DAD) on 25<sup>th</sup>, 181 **Gull-billed Terns** in Deep Bay (RWL), very high numbers for late April, a **Siberian Thrush**, the latest spring record by 5 days, and 17 **Grey-streaked Flycatchers** at Dong Ping Chau on 26<sup>th</sup>, a **Great Frigatebird** in southern waters (PJJ), the first record since 1987 and hugely appreciated, a **Little Stint** at Shui Hau (PS), 15 **Sanderlings** at Dong Ping Chau (MDW), 20 **Grey-streaked Flycatchers** at Siu Lek Yuen (KF), the highest ever count, on 27<sup>th</sup>, and seven **Blue-throated Bee-eaters** at Shuen Wan (RWL) and a **Brown Hawk Owl** and six **Blue-tailed Bee-eaters** at Mai Po (BS) on 28<sup>th</sup>. Record numbers of **Asian Dowitchers** were present at Mai Po, with 340 on 25<sup>th</sup> (PJJ) rising to 428 (YYT) on 27<sup>th</sup>.

On 29<sup>th</sup>, a **Grey Phalarope**, the first since 1996, was found at Nam Chung and a **Himalayan Cuckoo** was present at Tai Mei Tuk (RWL). The latter, potentially a Hong Kong first following the splitting of the former Oriental Cuckoo complex into the northerly Horsfield's Cuckoo *Cuculus horsfieldi* and the southerly Himalayan Cuckoo *C. saturatus*, was initially behaving as a bird on territory and remained into early May.

The last day of the month saw a **Pechora Pipit** and **Narcissus Flycatcher** at Mai Po (YYT), three **Blue-tailed Bee-eaters** at Lamma and a **Short-tailed Shearwater** off Po Toi (GW).

Following a single 1988 sight record near Lijiang and Ben King's report from Muli there had been no known *bieli* sighting for nearly twenty years.

Against this colourful background, Jerni and I went to Lijiang (Yunnan) in December 2006. We spent time at scenic Lugu Lake area before getting a series of local buses across the provincial boundary to Muli county in Sichuan.

We found it harder than expected to pinpoint exactly where Ben King had been in 1989. Armed with a copy of his report and my altitude watch we soon found which points of the road north of the county town passed through suitable elevation with the right habitat nearby. We discovered that "Mahuang Gou" meant "Leech Valley", but luckily there was no sign of these in December. We bashed around a few frosty valleys, and saw Giant, Elliot's and Black-faced Laughingthrushes, but no "*bieli*".

We hired a local jeep and went out to Wachang (site of the original "Muli Lamasery", near where a 1929 specimen of *bieli* was taken), but found the hillsides very deforested. Snow somewhat curtailed our exploration of some other potential sites in the area. So we left, but vowed to return.

We knew that Bjorn Anderson (BA) – based in Beijing – was also interested in "*bieli*" and exchanged E-mails with him. We found that BA had sponsored a survey by some Sichuan researchers in April 2005 which had been unsuccessful. He kindly forwarded the report which we found interesting in the context of our own ramblings, but we were confident we had narrowed down the area to look. More importantly, BA had met Ben King quite recently, and Ben had sent him a copy of his recording of the calls of *lanthocincla bieli*.

Having decided that the May Day Holiday in 2008 would be the time to "have a go" for this bird, we agreed with BA to make our separate ways to Muli and meet up there. Jerni and I took a new route for us, flying to Xichang from Chengdu on April 29<sup>th</sup>. Bjorn and Nick Dymond flew to Xichang early on May 1<sup>st</sup>, and were picked up there by driver "Sid" Francis and Putonghua-speaking guide Roland Zoidler, both based in Chengdu.

Last-minute doubts loomed. The authorities had restricted access by foreigners to "Tibetan" parts of west Sichuan after disturbances in March. It was impossible to get a clear picture of where travel was permitted, and where it wasn't. However Jerni rang a couple of contacts in Muli Town and they didn't think there was any problem. And so it proved, there was no official roadblock to this Tibetan part of Sichuan because hardly any foreigners ever go there anyway.

Jerni and I arrived at Muli on April 30<sup>th</sup> and went up to Mahuang Gou the following day. However, we missed contact with the others due to absence of mobile phone coverage. On the

evening of May 1<sup>st</sup> we must have actually passed each other on the dusty road, only picking up Bjorn's text messages when we arrived back at the northern outskirts of Muli.

On May 2<sup>nd</sup> we set out to Mahuang Gou again in a hired minivan. Jerni spotted an unusual car in the yard of a forestry department plant nursery station. We found out where the visitors had gone and set off after them.

To cut a long story short, we met Bjorn and Nick Dymond in the late morning. BA had already had a brief glimpse of a "*bieli*" and they had heard several more. Almost immediately after we met, a "*bieli*" called. A spot of playback by BA and we saw one bird in the open across a gully. A second came in close behind us. We both got what must be the first photos ever taken of "*bieli*" in the wild.

It made for a very memorable few minutes to bump into the other birders in this remote corner of China, and, as if pre-ordained, have an immediate appearance by a co-operative pair of these magnificent laughingthrushes. After this initial success we explored other valleys in the area but none was as productive as the one we tried on the 2<sup>nd</sup>. Indeed it was all a bit of an anti-climax after that!

Bjorn Anderson's note about the trip and this species is in Birding Asia 9 (the Bulletin of the Oriental Bird Club). There is also his trip report at: [http://www.travelingbird.com/birdwatching/birding\\_China.php?from=1&to=12](http://www.travelingbird.com/birdwatching/birding_China.php?from=1&to=12).

Photos of White-speckled Laughingthrush by both BA and ourselves appear on the Oriental Bird Images Website.



The Catholic church at Cizong, northwest Yunnan. Monsignor F. Biet shot the original specimen nearby.



# Seeing Life through Birds



- Fai

A conversation with Dr. HF Cheung had me started thinking about writing a book. It's not for the money but the wish to express myself through words. Thanks to the advice of Gary, I took a step forward in realizing my wish with this article. Not a very skilled writer myself, I beg your tolerance.

It's been almost 5 years since I first encountered bird watching. 5 years, not a long time, but I did learn things which were not taught in the 9 years one spends in school.

Books are dead, birds are alive. Words alone cannot describe the liveliness of a Japanese White-eye, pictures alone cannot paint the true colours of a Common Kingfisher. "Reading ten thousand scrolls is not as good as walking ten thousand miles", one can only appreciate the gift of nature through personal experience.

Bird watching is unpredictable, like in life, it is full of surprises. A visit at the everyday Hong Kong Park may be frustrating when not even a White-rumped Munia is in sight, but instead there appears in the shade of the pond, a Yellow Bittern. And just when you're mesmerised by the sight of the Night Herons in Kowloon Park, suddenly they take off and disappear into the blue sky. Like in life, one can witness life and death in a same day; or be a billionaire one day and lose everything in the next.

There is another insight from watching birds. Seeing the Barn Swallow diligently nest building, feeding the chicks; or the Black-winged Stilt sparing nothing to defend its family, one cannot help but be touched by the power of parental love. Now whenever I quarrel with my family, a little swallow will come to mind and act as our "mediator".

I grew up with very few friends, and when I see the Masked Laughingthrushes always playing happily in parties of 6 or 7, I envy them. This in turn becomes a force that pushes me out of my shell and to begin to strike up conversations with others.

When I met with failure, the sight of a Little Egret not giving up on finding a catch despite numerous attempts, puts me back on my feet and I vow anew to succeed.

All these and more, are experiences gained only after I began life as a bird watcher. Mr. Chiu-ying Lam once said, "Feathers open a door in my heart, through which my mind soars far and high in freedom." From my own personal experience, it's often me watching birds, birds watching me. The interflow between man and bird may not seem extraordinary, but it helps lift me up when I'm down, show me the rainbow in my rainy days. I learn to see life in its full colours, and open up my eyes to the world.

No words can describe the inspiration that birds have brought unto the human race. I thank you all for staying with me to this part, your comments and advice will be of great benefit to me. I shall continue to march on the path of my life.

On a final note, I feel grateful for nature which allows me to write my own life's score, and for sending the birds as an instrument that adds rhythm to the flow of my music. May man and birds live in harmony, may nature be preserved forever.





### ▲ May

For the third successive year, May was full of interest, highlights this year being two species of pitta at Po Toi, big numbers of Dollarbirds, the first tropicbird for Hong Kong, seabird passage in southern waters and record numbers of small bitterns late in the month.

A visit to Po Toi on 1<sup>st</sup> turned up a **Blue-winged Pitta** (P&MW), possibly the bird found in mid April. Also present were a **Chinese Goshawk**, a late **Narcissus Flycatcher** and six **Grey-streaked Flycatchers** (GJC). Highlights of a boat trip into southern waters the same day were a **Short-tailed Shearwater**, 18 **Aleutian Terns** and a **Pomarine Skua** (MT, P&MW et al).

Amongst other reports on 1<sup>st</sup> were a **Himalayan Cuckoo** again at Tai Mei Tuk and a **Grey-faced Buzzard** at Ping Long (EMSK), the latest in spring by 3 days. In a good spring for **Dollarbirds** there were 15 in total at Ping Long, Tai Long Wan and Lamme on 1<sup>st</sup>, 10 at Wu Kau Tang on 2<sup>nd</sup> and 10 more at Ho Chung and Nam Chung on 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Migrants present in the Deep Bay area on 2<sup>nd</sup> included 12 **Blue-tailed Bee-eaters** at Mai Po (BS), 90 **Pale Martins** and two **Pechora Pipits** at the Mai Po access road (DAD), and a **Baillon's Crake**, 25 **Long-toed Stint** and two **Pechora Pipits** at San Tin (JAA). Flocks of **Cattle Egrets** also became apparent at this time.

A late **Fairy Pitta** was found at Po Toi on 3<sup>rd</sup> along with five **Blue-tailed Bee-eaters** (P&MW).

The excitement of two pitta species in the first three days of the month was eclipsed by the discovery of a tropicbird off Waglan Island on 4<sup>th</sup> (MT). The bird was seen well by all 40 birders and photographers on board the HKBWS-chartered boat, and the superb photos subsequently posted on the HKBWS website (PHo, P&MW et al) indicated that it was a juvenile **White-tailed Tropicbird**, a first for Hong Kong and continental China. Other seabirds found during this outing, which was also attended by mainland birders coming in from Shenzhen and Guangzhou, included a **Short-tailed Shearwater**, a **Streaked Shearwater**, 30 **Aleutian Terns**, a **Bridled Tern** and an **Arctic Skua**, whilst landbirds seen on Po Toi itself included an **Asian Lesser Cuckoo** (KJ) and a **Blue-winged Pitta** once again (GJC).

The next day a **Spoon-billed Sandpiper** was at Mai Po (YYT) and 53 **Brown Shrikes** and ten **Arctic Warblers** were counted at Po Toi (GW).

Numbers of **Blue-tailed Bee-eaters** at Mai Po continued to rise through the first week, from 12 on 2<sup>nd</sup> to 17 on 4<sup>th</sup>, peaking at 23 on 7<sup>th</sup>, the latter flying into a mangrove roost at 1900h (BS, KL). A **Black Bittern** was also noted at Mai Po on 7<sup>th</sup>.

Late afternoon seawatches from Po Toi during 7<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> brought reports of up to 15 **Short-tailed Shearwaters** as well as an unidentified **Frigatebird** (GW), whilst coverage of the island itself up to 16<sup>th</sup> led to sightings of single **Chestnut** and **Black Bitterns**, two **Black Bazas**, a very late **Common Buzzard** (on 10<sup>th</sup>), a **Brown Hawk Owl**, a **Brown Crake**, a **Pechora Pipit** of the taxon *menzbieri* (on 12<sup>th</sup>), a late migrant **Russet Bush Warbler**



and the latest ever spring records of **Yellow-browed Warbler** (on 8<sup>th</sup>) and **Japanese Paradise Flycatcher** (SL, on 12<sup>th</sup>).

Highlights at other localities during this period (MDW, EMSK, YYT, BS, KL, KJ, GT, RWL, GJC) were a **Chestnut-winged Cuckoo** (local rarity), three **Chinese Grosbeaks** and a **Black-naped Oriole** at Cheung Chau on 10<sup>th</sup>, two **Black Bazes**, a **Chinese Blackbird** and a late **Silky Starling** at Long Valley on the same date, a **Pectoral Sandpiper**, a **Common Buzzard** (on 13<sup>th</sup> - 22 days later than the latest spring record listed in *The Avifauna of Hong Kong*) and a late **Saunders's Gull**, all at Mai Po during 12<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup>, a **Pheasant-tailed Jacana**, the long-staying **Grey Phalarope**, a **Eurasian Eagle Owl** and a **Brown Fish Owl** at Nam Chung during 7<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup>, a **Hodgson's Hawk Cuckoo** at Chung Mei on 15<sup>th</sup>, a migrating **Osprey** over Tai Mo Shan (on 15<sup>th</sup>) and a **Hodgson's Hawk Cuckoo** and **White-throated Needletail**, the latest spring record by 4 days, at Robin's Nest also on 15<sup>th</sup>.

Seabirds sighted during a boat trip into southern waters on 17<sup>th</sup> comprised one **Short-tailed** and two **Streaked Shearwaters**, 280 **White-winged**, five **Common**, ten **Aleutian**, three **Roseate** and 30 **Black-naped Terns**, whilst chief amongst the landbirds found on Po Toi the same day were six **Silky** and six **White-cheeked Starlings**, a **Black-naped Oriole** and a late **Little Bunting**.

The largest influx of small bitterns ever recorded in Hong Kong occurred at the end of the third week of the month. At Po Toi, 14 **Yellow**, two **Schrenck's** one **Black** and one **Chestnut Bittern** were noted on 20<sup>th</sup>, totals rising to 44 **Yellow**, 29 **Schrenck's** (by far the largest number yet reported in Hong Kong) including a single flock of 22 flying in off the sea, eight **Black** and two **Chestnut** on 21<sup>st</sup> (GW). Numbers then fell to 17 **Yellow**, three **Schrenck's** and two **Black Bitterns** the next day. Elsewhere, a count of 50 **Yellow Bitterns** at Lok Ma Chau on 22<sup>nd</sup> (PJL) was the highest in Hong Kong since 1982, whilst up to six small bitterns were also reported at Long Valley, Shek O, Cheung Chau and Mai Po (YHS, DB, MDW, BS, KL). Also, a flock of at least 15 unidentified small bitterns, either **Schrenck's** or **Yellow**, was seen over the sea in southern waters on 24<sup>th</sup>.

Among a series of unusual records in this period were a **Brown-headed Thrush**, at Po Toi on 20<sup>th</sup> (GW), more than a month later than the latest spring record listed in *The Avifauna of Hong Kong*, a first-summer **Amur Falcon** at Kam Tin on 20<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup> (KL), the first ever spring record, a **Malayan Night Heron**, two **Brown Hawk Owls**, an **Ashy Minivet**, the latest in spring by 8 days, a count of 89 **Brown Shrikes** (presumably all/nearly all *luoiensis*), two late **Lanceolated** and one **Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler**, all at Po Toi on 21<sup>st</sup>, a **Himalayan Swiftlet** there on 22<sup>nd</sup> (GW), and a **Chinese Penduline Tit**, the latest in spring by 6 days, at Mai Po on 23<sup>rd</sup> (PJL). Two rare spring migrants/summer visitors heard in the closed area at Un Ma Hang on 22<sup>nd</sup> were a **Hodgson's Hawk Cuckoo** and an **Asian Lesser Cuckoo** (GJC), whilst a vocal **Bay Woodpecker** was present at Tai Po Kau Headland on 23<sup>rd</sup> (R&KB).

An excellent month came to an end with small bitterns at Long Valley, Po Toi and Hong Kong Park (EMSK, RB, GW), a **Red Turtle Dove** at Po Toi on 27<sup>th</sup> (GW), **Greater Painted Snipe** chicks at Mai Po (FB), adult **Pheasant-tailed Jacanas** at Mai Po and Lok Ma Chau, bringing hope that they might breed (PJL, KL), two **Orange-headed Thrushes** at Tai Mo Shan (JGH/WAP) and an **Ancient Auklet**, near Tap Mun on 31<sup>st</sup> (MT).

## Outings

Date	Duration	Time and site	Difficulties (1...3)	Target species
08/11/2008 (Sat)	0800 - 1300	Tai Sang Wai (Crested Bulbul Club Activity) (08:00 Hang Heung Cake Shop, Yuen Long)	★★	Waterbirds
09/11/2008 (Sun)	1500 - 1800	Kam Tin (15:00 Exit B, Kam Sheung Road West Rail station)	★★	Farmland birds
16/11/2008 (Sun)	0800 - 1200	Shing Mun (08:00 Hang Seng Bank, Tsuen Wan MTR station)	★★	Forest birds
23/11/2008 (Sun)	0800 - 1200	Mui Tse Lam (08:00 Exit B, Tai Shui Hang Ma On Shan Rail station)	★★	Forest birds
06/12/2008 (Sat)	0800 - 1300	Sha Tin Pass (Crested Bulbul Club Activity) (08:00 Hang Seng Bank, Wong Tai Sin MTR station)	★★	Forest birds
14/12/2008 (Sun)	0800 - 1200	Pui O (08:00 Exit B, Tung Chung MTR station)	★★	Wintering forest & farmland birds
28/12/2008 (Sun)	0800 - 1200	Tai Po Kau (08:00 Tai Po Kau carpark, end 12:30)	★★	Wintering forest & farmland birds
03/1/2009 (Sat)	0800 - 1200	Tsim Bei Tsui (Crested Bulbul Club Activity) (08:00 Tin Shui Wai, Tin Chak Estate Shopping Centre, exit near Tin Yat LT)	★★	Wintering forest birds
04/1/2009 (Sun)	0800 - 1200	Long Valley (08:00 Exit D, Sheung Shui MTR Station)	★★	Waterbirds
11/1/2009 (Sun)	0800 - 1200	Tai Po Kau (08:00 Tai Po Kau carpark)	★★	Farmland birds
18/1/2009 (Sun)	0800 - 1200	Tai Lam Chung Reservoir (08:00 Intersection of Siu Lam Road)	★★	Forest birds
25/1/2009 (Sun)	0800 - 1600	Shek Kong catchment (08:00 Exit C, Kam Sheung Road West Rail Station)	★★	Wintering forest & farmland birds
01/2/2009 (Sun)	0800 - 1600	Mai Po Nature Reserve (08:00 Kowloon Tong MTR Station (Kent Road exit), OR 09:00 Mai Po carpark, end 15:00 Mai Po, 16:00 Kowloon Tong)	★★	Waterbirds
07/2/2009 (Sat)	0800 - 1300	Nam Sang Wai (Crested Bulbul Club Activity) (08:00 Happiness Restaurant, Yuen Long MTR West Rail station)	★★	Waterbirds
08/2/2009 (Sun)	0800 - 1600	Shing Mun Country Park (08:00 Exit C, Hang Seng Bank, Tsuen Wan MTR station)	★★	Forest birds
15/2/2009 (Sun)	0800 - 1600	Mai Po Nature Reserve (08:00 Kowloon Tong MTR Station (Kent Road exit), OR 09:00 Mai Po carpark, end 15:00 Mai Po, 16:00 Kowloon Tong)	★★	Waterbirds
22/2/2009 (Sun)	0800 - 1200	Wun Yiu (08:00 Taxi terminal access, Tai Po Market MTR Station)	★★	Forest birds
01/3/2009 (Sun)	0800 - 1200	Tai Po Kau (08:00 Tai Po Kau carpark)	★★	Forest birds
07/3/2009 (Sat)	0800 - 1300	Tai Sang Wai (Crested Bulbul Club Activity) (08:00 Hang Heung Cake Shop, Yuen Long)	★★	Waterbirds
15/3/2009 (Sun)	0800 - 1600	Mai Po Nature Reserve (08:00 Kowloon Tong MTR Station (Kent Road exit), OR 09:00 Mai Po carpark, end 15:00 Mai Po, 16:00 Kowloon Tong)	★★	Waterbirds
22/3/2009 (Sun)	0800 - 1200	Tai Mo Shan (08:00 Exit C, Hang Seng Bank, Tsuen Wan MTR Station)	★★	Grassland species
29/3/2009 (Sun)	0800 - 1600	Po Toi and HK South Waters <i>Note: This will be a long trip on open waters. The ride could be quite rough and some people may be seasick.</i>	★★★	Seabirds

## Indoor Meetings

Date	Duration	Topic	Speaker(s)	Venue	Remarks
25/11/2008 (Tue)	1900 - 2100	Identification of Thrush (in Cantonese)	Dr. HF Cheung	Room 901, Scout Asso. of HK, Austin Rd	
30/12/2008 (Tue)	1900 - 2100	A Review of the Wild Animal Trade in Hong Kong (in Cantonese)	Dr. Michael Lau Kadoorie Garm & Botanic Garden	Room 901, Scout Asso. of HK, Austin Rd	
21/01/2009 (Wed)	1900 - 2100	The Birds of Po Toi (in English)	Mr. Geoff Welch	Room 901, Scout Asso. of HK, Austin Rd	

## Code of Conduct for Birdwatching and Bird Photography .....

The objective of HKBWS is to promote the study, appreciation and conservation of birds in Hong Kong. In addition, the Society also facilitates the exchange of experience and information related to birdwatching. In recent years, more and more people in Hong Kong become interested in birdwatching and bird photography. Since birds are sensitive to disturbance, special care is required to avoid bringing disturbance to their lives. In order to provide a model for good practices in birdwatching and bird photography, the Society's Executive Committee has drawn up the following code. It is intended to be a reference and guide to both HKBWS members and the general public.

### 1. The Welfare of Birds Comes First

Birdwatching and bird photography should be carried out with minimum interference to the birds. Disturbance must be avoided as far as possible.

- Stop if the birds appear disturbed begin to move away or exhibit other abnormal reaction
- Exercise additional precautions when the activity is undertaken with a large group of people
- Do not attempt to influence the behaviour of birds, e.g. by flushing, chasing or baiting
- Use flash only sparingly
- Do not damage the natural environment

### 2. Protect Sensitive Sites

The roost of rarities are particularly vulnerable. Take extra care to minimize disturbance.

- Keep a suitable distance to avoid stressing the birds
- Do not land on islands with breeding colonies
- Do not disturb nests and their surrounding vegetation, or the nest could be abandoned or become exposed to predators
- Share information about the sites with discretion and do not reveal it casually in public. Explain clearly to those who may not understand the Code, to avoid bringing disturbance to the site
- Beware that your actions may attract unwanted attention and hence disturbance to the site

### 3. Report Disturbances

If you find people disturbing or causing harm to birds, advise against the act when it is safe to do so. If they cannot be stopped, take photos and report to the AFCD as soon as possible. Post a report at the Society's online Forum.

### 4. Respect Others

- Share the fun-avoid disturbing other birdwatchers or photographers on site.
- Take care not to damage facilities or crops at the site.

# HKBWS Activity Booking Slip

I would like to register the following HKBWS activities: (Please ☒ as appropriate)

## ▲ Mai Po Outings

- ☐ 1 Feb 2009 (Sun) ( \_\_\_ member(s), \_\_\_ non-member(s)) No. of person(s) using the coach is \_\_\_\_\_ )  
☐ 15 Feb 2009 (Sun) ( \_\_\_ member(s), \_\_\_ non-member(s)) No. of person(s) using the coach is \_\_\_\_\_ )  
☐ 15 Mar 2009 (Sun) ( \_\_\_ member(s), \_\_\_ non-member(s)) No. of person(s) using the coach is \_\_\_\_\_ )

## ▲ Po Toi and Hong Kong South waters

- ☐ 29 Mar 2009 (Sun) ( \_\_\_ member(s), \_\_\_ non-member(s)) No. of person(s) is \_\_\_\_\_ )

\* We will confirm the participants whether their application is accepted or not about 2 weeks before the outing.  
 Once confirmed, no refund will be made no matter they can attend the outing or not. If we cancel the outing due to inclement weather or special reason, all participants will be refunded.

According to the requirement of the Hong Kong Police and the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department, participants entering Mai Po should provide their full name and Hong Kong ID Number (passport number for overseas visitors) in order to access to the Frontier Closed Area and Mai Po Marshes.

## ▲ Mai Po Outings

(Members not using the coach do not need to pay. Non-members will have to pay the coach fare of HK\$60 disregard of whether they make use of the coach.)

[Coach Fare: Member: HK\$40 Student Member: HK\$20 Non-member: HK\$60]

## ▲ Po Toi and Hong Kong South waters

[Boat Fare: Member: HK\$160 Non-member: HK\$200]

Date	Destination	Name	Membership No.	HK ID No. (for entering Maipo)	Mobile Phone	Email Address	Coach Fare

Enclosed please find a Cheque of HK\$\_\_\_\_\_ (Payable to **The Hong Kong Bird Watching Society Limited**)

(For our administrative convenience, please do not put the registration fee of different outings into one cheque.)

Name : \_\_\_\_\_ Membership no: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Mobile Phone No. : \_\_\_\_\_ Date : \_\_\_\_\_ Signature : \_\_\_\_\_

Please send this slip together with a crossed cheque to:

Floor 14, Ruby Commercial Building, 480 Nathan Road, Yau Ma Tei, Kowloon

### Notes :

- Application should be made at least two weeks before the date of the outing and on the first come first served basis. HKBWS Members have a high priority to participate the activities.
- Any changes of the activities will be announced in our Website: ([www.hkbws.org.hk/phpBBS/forumdisplay.php?fid=11](http://www.hkbws.org.hk/phpBBS/forumdisplay.php?fid=11)).
- Arrangement during bad weather: When Tropical Cyclone Warning Signal No.3 or above or Rainstorm Warnings Red or Black are hoisted by the Hong Kong Observatory at 7:00 am on the event day, the activity will be cancelled. If Thunderstorm Warning is announced during the activity, Team Leader will decide if the activity should be continued or cancelled. You can call the team leader at 9457 3196 during the event day if you have any query about the weather.

**Disclaimer:** The Hong Kong Bird Watching Society shall have no responsibility, financial or otherwise, for expenditure or other liabilities arising from the activities. Participants are recommended to purchase relevant insurance.



▲ Greater Necklaced Laughingthrush 黑領噪鵲

Herman Ip 葉紀江

Lung Fu Shan 龍虎山 26/07/2008

DSLR Camera, 100-400mm lens

*Herman 08*



▲ Grey Treepie 灰樹鵲

Ken Fung 高漢城

Shutik Yuen, Shatin 沙田外灘 07/05/2008

toSBR Camera, 400mm f/5.6 lens

▲ Black-throated Laughingthrush 黑喉噪鵲

Christina Chan 陳燕明

Lung Fu Shan 龍虎山 15/06/2008

DSLR Camera, 300mm lens + 1.4x teleconverter



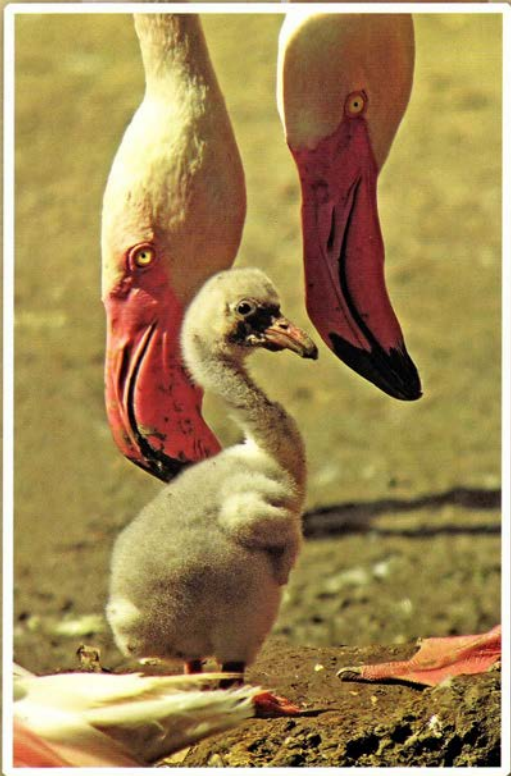


▲ Greater Painted Snipes 彩鹬

Cherry Wong 黃卓研

Mai Po 米埔 11/06/2005

DSLR Camera, 50-500mm f/4-6.3 lens



▲ Greater Flamingo Chick 大紅鸛幼鳥

Bob Thompson

Kowloon Park 九龍公園 13/08/2008

Digiscoping