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Ho Kam Wing
Long Valley

25/10/2014

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The Hong Kong Bird Watching Society

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Bulletin 235

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Editorial Note

This edition of the Bulletin should reach you as spring – literally and metaphorically - is “hotting up”. Thanks again to all our contributing writers, and to the photographers whose shots give us all instant reminders of why we like to go birding.

If you feel you have something you'd like to contribute, feel free to drop me a line (johnjemi@gmail.com) with a suggestion. 

John Holmes

Society News and Projects

Members
Affairs

2015 Membership Renewal & Membership Card

Membership stood at around 1892 as at early March. Membership renewal under the new membership criteria is in progress. Renewal letters will be posted about two months before membership expiry date.

Crested Bulbul Club

Early Morning Bird Watchers

No. of participants in Hong Kong Park from Nov 2014 to Jan 2015: 245

No. of participants in Kowloon Park from Nov 2014 to Jan 2015: 352

Bird watching interpretation in Hong Kong Wetland Park

A total of 143 participants from Nov 2014 to Jan 2015.

North District Flower, Bird, Insect and Fish Exhibition

held from 23 to 29 Dec 2014. Thanks to members of Crested Bulbul Club and the volunteer group of the Fishpond Conservation Scheme Project who staffed the Society's stand.

Bird Watching Course

The fourth Raptor Identification Workshop was held in the middle of January while the 18th Elementary Bird Watching Course for Beginners was completed in middle of March. They gave different level of bird watching training to 15 and 33 members and birders respectively.

Mai Po Outing, the 4th Raptor Identification Workshop



Bird Race

Hong Kong Bird Watching Day cum Bird Race Fundraising Event was held on March 21 and 22. Please visit our Discussion Forum for results and details.

Society News and Projects - (cont.)



Hong Kong Park Green Hunt

On 24 and 31 Jan 2015 a total of 40 teams, with 200 students from 19 schools joined in. Thanks again to members of the Crested Bulbul Club for helping to run the event smoothly.

Champion Team_Mandarin Duck from Fung K'ai Liu Yun Sum Mem. Sch



Hong Kong Fishpond Conservation Scheme

Supported by the Environment and Conservation Fund, The Hong Kong Bird Watching Society and the Hong Kong New Territories Fish Culture Association together organised the first "NT Fishpond Festival Carnival" on 14 and 20 Dec 2014. The two-day carnival was held in Yuen Long On Hing Playground and at Tai Sang Wai.

On Hing Playground

We were honoured to have Dr. Ko Wing-man, BBS, JP, Secretary for Food and Health, officiating at the opening ceremony of the event.

Participants learned more about the relationship between local fishponds and conservation through booth games, exhibitions, net-casting games and by sampling local fishermen's food.



Tai Sang Wai

In order to provide an authentic experience of fishponds to the participants, a carnival took place beside fishponds around Tai Sang Wai. Participants took part in daily operations of a fishpond such as fish feeding, grass cutting, and casting nets to catch fish. Participants could also taste some fresh baked Flathead Mullet with salt. Bird watching and fixed point interpretation were provided to introduce birds, and the aquaculture operation and facilities.



2012-2015 Nature Conservation Management for Long Valley

The 9th annual “Harvest Fest” was held successfully on 4th and 10th of January 2015. Over 1,000 people took part. Next year will mark the tenth anniversary of this event and we will aim for more new activities for participants.

The current Long Valley conservation project will be completed by February 2015. The project team has already applied to the Environment and Conservation Fund to continue management work and education programmes in Long Valley.

The 9th Harvest Fest



Study of threatened species including Spoon-billed Sandpiper and Black-faced Spoonbill in South China



*Spoon-billed Sandpiper with a white flag marked “MA”
(Credit: Zhang Wei)*

The importance of coastal areas of southern China to waterbirds has not been well studied compared to areas in the north such as the Yellow Sea. Therefore, in recent years, the Hong Kong Bird Watching Society has placed more conservation effort in southern China. With the support from the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF), small groups of bird watchers have been formed. These groups are actively helping in monitoring birds and discovering more birding areas in this region.

Between 17 and 24 January, our Society coordinated joint surveys with local bird watching groups as well as nature reserves and academics from Guangdong and Guangxi Provinces to participate in

the International Black-faced Spoonbill Census and the International Mid-winter Spoon-billed Sandpiper Census. The result was rewarding: we found at least 4 Spoon-billed Sandpipers at Fucheng, Leizhou, Guangdong (two of them were flagged including one marked as “MA”, which was one of the “head-started” birds from the Spoon-billed Sandpiper Conservation Breeding Programme). There was also one SBS in Xitou, Guangdong and another one found in Beihai, Guangxi Province.

At least 10 Black-faced Spoonbill were sighted at the same place in Fucheng, Leizhou, and 3 individuals were sighted in Dui Zhen Chong, Yangxi, Guangdong, with at least one more BFS at Beihai, Guangxi. The Eurasian Oystercatcher (race: *osculans*) was added to the Zhanjiang bird list as one was found in Leizhou this time.

More encouragingly, we found much fewer illegal mistnets in the survey areas than in the previous years. The existing mistnets were reported immediately to local authorities and were removed. We thank all the participating parties including Zhanjiang Bird Watching Society, Zhanjiang Mangrove National Nature Reserve, South China Institute for Endangered Animals, and bird watchers at Beihai, Guangxi Mangrove Research Center, Jonathan Martinez and Austin Ng for their help in conducting the surveys.



The 2nd Borneo Bird Race 2014

Text: Walkman Wong



The Hong Kong Bird Watching Society was invited to participate in the second Borneo Bird Race held from 24 Sept to 3 Oct 2014. As a novice in bird watching, I was so lucky to have the chance to team up with two experienced bird watchers and represent Hong Kong to join the race. We, together with bird watchers from 8 organizations and 6 countries, birded through three places including Sabah, Sarawak and Brunei in ten days to experience a tight journey with blood and sweat, joy and sorrow as well as from mountains to the sea to chase over 400 species of birds. Now, let me share with you some of the highlights from different places.

In Sabah, the race started at the gate of the Kinabalu National Park. We had to go down along the road to search for as many species of birds as we could to win the race. Suddenly, our local guide, who originally walked slowly, ran quickly. We followed immediately and overtook him. After running for around three minutes, we heard another group of participants saying, "It's gone!" We were extremely upset as we missed a Borneo endemic species, Whitehead's Broadbill. Our guide also shook his head and smiled bitterly with us. Just then we walked around a corner and together heard a high frequency bird call. We waited patiently. The sound was from far away and became closer, just like a speaker. Then a Black-capped Babbler appeared. The big contrast between the babbler's body and its voice impressed me deeply, lingering in my mind clearly.




In the tower of the Rainforest Discovery Centre, Sepilok, Sandakan, it seemed quiet, and we all felt strange about the small amounts of bird species. Looking up, we immediately found out the reason for the quiet environment – a Wallace’s Hawk Eagle was roosting. It scared the other birds. Suddenly, a Grey-and-buff Woodpecker appeared on a bare twig. Its quick and detailed action fascinated me. Other participants were also happy to catch a picture of it with the camera. Walking in the woodland, we heard a special voice from far away. When we searched for the bird, two local bird lovers asked us not to move and keep quiet by giving us signal. They had found found a Diard’s Trogon just next to us with a telescope connected to a camera, but we couldn’t see it. We were frustrated, but, shortly afterwards we found another pair of Diard’s Trogons for ourselves. We then exchanged useful information of birds and clapped our hands as we could finally achieve our wish to watch the Trogon. Coming from different countries with different cultures, bird lovers who don’t even know each other before are all thrilled by bird watching. Bird watching can really link up bird lovers!



In the Ulu Temburong National Park, Brunei, I insisted to climb up a canopy walk of 40m height although I am afraid of heights. Many Thanks are due to the guide who took care of me. During the process of climbing, I could see different nests of various sizes. Moreover, I could see the most beautiful bulbul in Borneo – the Scaly breasted Bulbul. It was also the first tick for our local advisor, which made us feel worthwhile! Back to firm ground, we smiled and said that this would be the one and only time in our lives to climb up to such a high place.



In those ten days, we exchanged information with the locals and bird lovers from different countries and we also saw over 100 species of Borneo birds. This trip opened a new world of experience in sensory stimulation watching woodland birds, as they were so rare and colourful. We had to catch sight of them in a moment because they could disappear so quickly. For those who love bird watching, a visit to Borneo is a must ! 

Mai Po Update

Text: Bena Smith

Code of Entry

An update Code of Entry for visitors to Mai Po is now available from the WWF website and HKBWS forum. The Code is intended to protect wildlife and ensure other people can enjoy their visit by making visitors aware of the do's and don'ts on the Reserve.


An important new entry in the Code is a request for photographers not to use aerial camera drones in or near the Reserve. Such cameras would create an enormous disturbance to birds. As yet no such camera has not been observed at the Reserve, but for sure their usage in Hong Kong is on the rise, hence we perceive it as a potential risk.

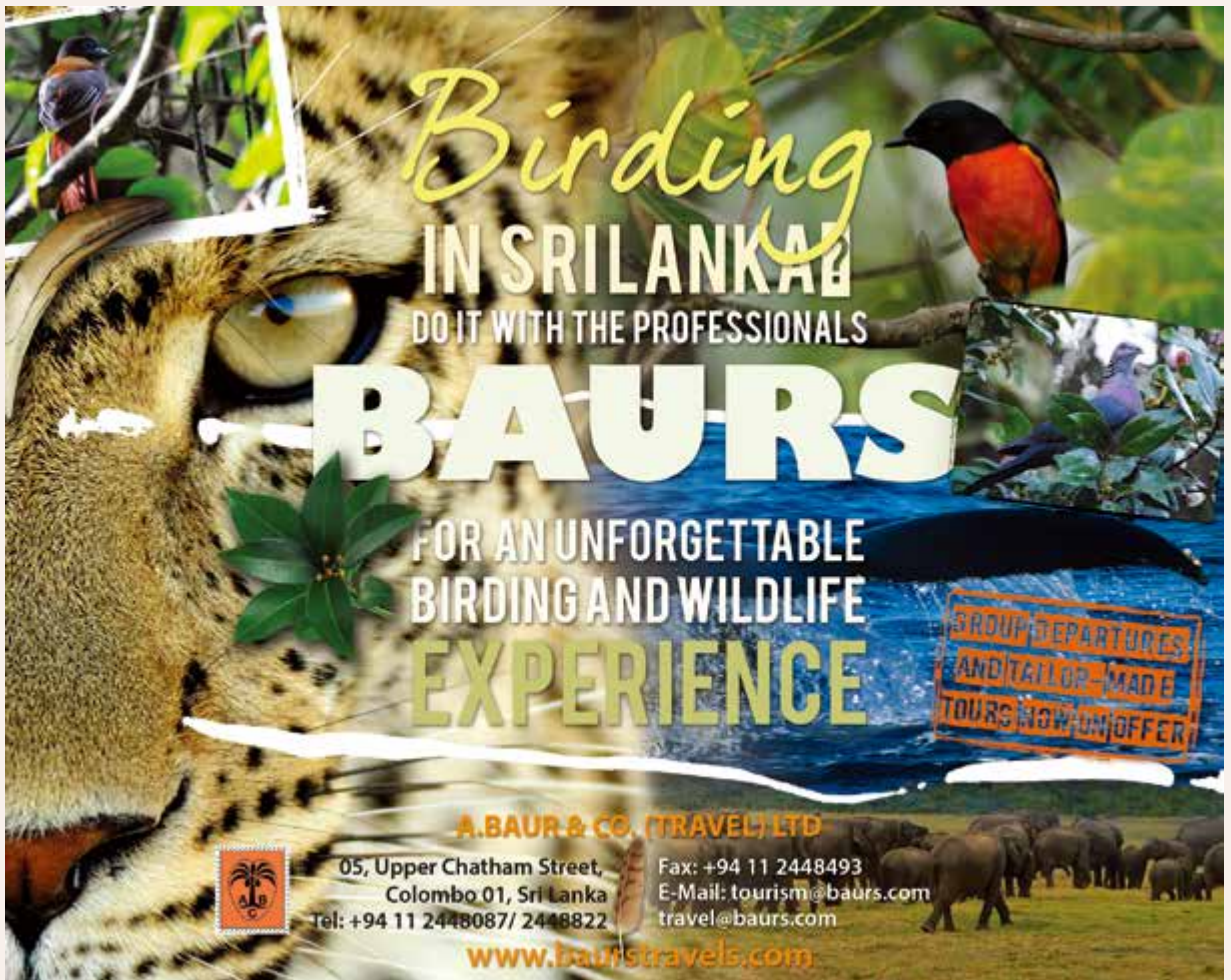
Southern Hide

In 1996 the southernmost floating birdwatching hide was built using funds raised by the Hong Kong Birdwatching Society and a generous donation from Cathay Pacific Airways. The hide overlooks the Mai Po and Inner Deep Bay Ramsar Site inter-tidal mudflats and provides birdwatchers and photographers with spectacular views of migratory waterbirds.

In recent years repair to floor panels, hide shutters and roofing sheets have become substantial and the main wooden structure is now showing signs of decay. The floats are old and most likely leak, affecting the hide's buoyancy. Thus the hide is in need of an urgent major rebuild if it is to remain safe and usable.

Starting late spring and into summer the hide is to be rebuilt using sustainably sourced wood and any reusable timber from the dismantled hide. The roof and side walls of the hide are to be constructed using green Onduline sheets similar to other bird hides on the reserve. The rebuild is being used as an opportunity to reconfigure the hide's interior in order to optimize conditions for users.


Your patience and understanding is appreciated during the work period when the hide will be closed off to all visitors. 



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Peggy and Wilson Dring

Japanese Yellow Bunting
Peggy and Wilson Dring
Po Toi

08/11/2014

DSLR Camera, 800mm f/5.6 lens



鳳頭鷓
陳巨輝
塋原

Crested Bunting
Sam Chan
Long Valley

26/12/2014

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葦鷀
麥江帆
壟原

Pallas's Reed Bunting
kfmak
Long Valley

08/11/2014

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白頭鵪
潘士強
塋原

Pine Bunting
Jason Pun
Long Valley

15/11/2014
DSLR Camera, 600mm f/4 lens



Hornbills

Photos and Text : Samson So

The Black Hornbill's body, vent and tail are all black



In Mindanao, Tarictic Hornbill can only be found on a few small islands.

Hornbills belong to the family Bucerotidae, and most species have a casque on the forehead. There are 54 species of hornbills, of which 29 are found in Asia, 24 found in Africa and 1 in Arabia and 1 in Oceania.

There are no hornbills now in Hong Kong. I have been to Yunnan and Guangxi many times in the hope of seeing hornbills within China but failed. To see one I had to travel abroad. Finally, in 2004, I saw Oriental Pied Hornbill (*Anthracoceros albirostris*) in Singapore. Although I didn't take any photos, the very sight of my first hornbill has driven me to study more about the family in the past few years.

During my postgraduate studies on the relationship between plants and birds I read a lot about hornbills. I was fascinated by the way these birds breed and raise their young. Their bill casques and their breeding ecology are unique among birds, inspiring the interest of many birdwatchers. In addition, many species have distinct sexual dimorphism, and their appearance changes with their age. These all provide useful clues for birders and field researchers to study their ecology and populations.



The casque of female Oriental Pied Hornbill is less prominent than that of the male

It is an eye-opening experience to see how a hornbill handles its food. Despite having a very large bill, the hornbill maneuvers its food with the tip of the beak, and tosses the food to swallow. In South East Asia, hornbills are mainly frugivorous and are major contributors to seed dispersal and forest regeneration. On the other hand, the hornbills depend on primary forest for foraging and breeding. The status of the birds is therefore a good indicator of the long-term healthiness of the forest.

Mature trees are essential for hornbills to breed, particularly those that live in forest. In the breeding season the paired birds will find suitable a tree hole by searching through the forest, or utilize the cavity used in previous years. The male will use soil, plant materials and saliva to seal the entrance and the imprisoned female will lay the eggs in the chamber. The male will deliver food to the female and the chicks through a tiny opening. When the chicks are ready to fledge the family will break the seal. This breeding method is unique to all hornbills.

Human hunting of these beautiful birds for their casques, feathers and for specimens jeopardizes their survival. Although traditional tribespeople may use the feathers or bones of hornbills in their ceremonies or daily rituals, overhunting is not a serious problem as the demand is very localised. In addition, such ritual artefacts are handed down the generations.

In a conservation area of Borneo, nest boxes have been set up to attract hornbills



Traditional practices are unlike the phenomenon of commercial hunting, done to feed the greed of consumers worldwide. Since exploitation for wildlife products causes pressure on the hornbills, four species are now listed in Appendix I (trading is prohibited) of CITES, including Rufous-necked, Great, Helmeted and Plain-pouched Hornbills. There are also 23 species of hornbill listed in Appendix II (trading is restricted). But poaching goes on when there is a market demand. Saying “NO” to wildlife products can help to stop the poaching.

The casque of female Oriental Pied Hornbill is less prominent than that of the male



Rhinoceros Hornbill is vulnerable to unsustainable trophy-hunting






A pair of Rufous Hornbills living in Philippines primary forest

The breeding strategy and their large body size mean there few natural enemies for hornbills. Their reproduction rate is therefore relatively slow compared with other birds. Apart from hunting, deforestation is another major threat. Commercial logging for timber, charcoal and paper, slash-and-burn agricultural practice, unsustainable coffee and oil palm plantations are all leading to the shrinking range of hornbills. All of these products are related to our daily life. Our way of consumption and reduction of wastage can help.

In South East Asia and South China the forests have been logged at an alarming rate. And the vanishing of primary forest hasn't automatically turned into long-term economic growth. The aftermath of deforestation is the disappearance of biodiversity. I cannot comment on where the boundary lies between human basic living needs and the urge for better living. However, as a member of the human race, facing the vanishing forest and knowing the plunging number of hornbills I really feel sad.

Hornbills are among the major sighting targets on each of my trips. I pay particular attention to their calls and sound of flapping wings. The extraordinary casque and beak look prehistoric to me. Their way of foraging and breeding show how they have adapted and survived. I admire the hornbills not only because of their sheer beauty, they also remind me that human beings are not the only living species in the world.

The calls and wing beats are the rhythmic pulses of the forest. Venturing into the forest one can truly feel the heartbeat of nature. I treasure every amazing encounter with hornbills. I do hope future generations will still be able to appreciate these beautiful and unique birds.

Please visit Samson So's facebook<Eco Institute> and <Samson So Photography> for more articles and photos by Samson So (Director and Founder of Eco Institute) 

Text: Richard Lewthwaite

(Please note that this account does not include outcomes of RC decisions and is not the "official" record, you'll have to read the 2014 Annual report for that. - Ed.)

October

- ▶ This was a rather flat month, in which a **Blyth's Pipit** at Mai Po on 22nd (JAA) and a **Yellow-streaked Warbler** there on 27th (PJL) were the only rarities and passage of both scarcer and commoner migrants such as **Blue-tailed Bee-eater** and **Yellow-browed Warbler** was much weaker than usual. Nevertheless, a wide variety of migrants were reported, including relatively good numbers of **Amur Falcons** (including 12 at Tsim Bei Tsui on 19th and 14 at Mai Po the next day, P&MW, PJL) and **Lanceolated Warblers** (peak counts 10 at Mai Po on 3rd and 27th, DJS, PJL) The latter warbler was also reported at Tai Wai MTR Station, Yung Shue O, Chek Lap Kok and Po Toi between 12th and 28th (JL, DT, EMSK, GW). One or two **Orange-headed Thrushes** showed well at Ho Man Tin, Shing Mun, Tai Po Kau and Kowloon Walled City between 3rd and 21st (JY, SLT, KPK, WD). Two species were noted on earliest ever autumn dates: a **Brambling** at Po Toi on 12th (GW) and a **Rufous-tailed Robin** at Ho Man Tin on 13th (name?), the earliest by 9 and 3 days, respectively.
- ▶ In addition, the following were found in the Mai Po area: a **Little Stint** on 1st (WD), a **Chestnut-winged Cuckoo** on 4th (DAD), a **Von Schrenck's Bittern**, a **Yellow-legged Buttonquail** and a **Pallas's Reed Bunting** on 7th (PJL), single **Long-billed** and **Asian Dowitchers** and also a probable **Northern Hawk Cuckoo** on 10th (TML, PJL), a **Baillon's Crake** on 13th (WWF), three **Crested Honey Buzzards** on 20th (PJL), the only report of the autumn, 77 **Greater Sand Plovers** on 21st (WWF), quite a large number for the time of year, and a **Himalayan Swiftlet** on 31st (WWF).
At Long Valley, the **White-browed Crake** found in September was seen again until 4th (MH, TML) and the ponds and ricefields again attracted a good variety of migrants, including single **Yellow-legged Buttonquails** on 4th and 14th (KJ, YWH), single **Black-headed** and **Yellow-browed Buntings** on 7th and 10th (inca, CYT), the first **Chestnut-eared Bunting** of the autumn on 11th (esther), a female **Mandarin Duck** on 19th (TML), a **Baillon's Crake** on 20th (esther), a **Slaty-breasted Rail** on 26th (KH, LYM) and four **Russet Sparrows** on 27th (TML).
- ▶ Coverage of Po Toi led to sightings of a **Crested Serpent Eagle** on 14th, a **Greater Spotted Eagle** on 26th and a **Grey Nightjar** on 28th (GW).
Reports from Tai Po Kau included a **Spectacled Warbler** *Seicercus sp* on 5th (KPK), a **Ferruginous Flycatcher** on 16th (ken 2012) and a **Siberian Thrush** on 17th (Vivian).
- ▶ Elsewhere, an **Asian Koel** at Pak Sha O on 4th was apparently new to the site (GJC), a **Bay Woodpecker** turned up beside Sai Sha Road, Sai Kung on 9th (AH), a **Black Bittern** and a **Eurasian Hoopoe** were at Shek O Golf Course on 11th (DB), a **Brown Fish Owl** was at Cheung Chau on 17th (MDW), and a **Black-faced Spoonbill** was at Plover Cove on 25th (PJL).

November

- ▶ An exciting month saw three potential first records for Hong Kong and brought reports of six rare species. The potential additions were **Pine Bunting** (one at Long Valley from 11th to 19th; JP, TML), **Snowy-browed Flycatcher** (single males at Mount Davis on 17th-18th and Lau Shui Heung on 28th; DJS, DAD) and **Asian Short-toed Lark** (one at Lok Ma Chau on 24th; PJL).
The rarities were a **Japanese Reed Bunting** at Mai Po on 18th (PJL), only the 2nd for Hong Kong, a **Red-backed Shrike** at Long Valley from 2nd to 4th (WD, TML), a **Varied Tit** at Mai Po on 4th (per TML), a **Long-billed Plover** at Long Valley on 6th (JL), a redheaded **Smew** at Lok Ma Chau on 17th (PJL) and a male **Chinese Blue Flycatcher** at Mai Po on 29th-30th (YLT, JGH), all potential 4th or 5th records.

A count of 25 **Common Starlings** at Tai Shang Wai on 23rd (WAP) is the highest on record. Other reports involving large numbers of a species included 70 **Black-browed Reed Warblers** at Lok Ma Chau on 3rd (PJL), 55 **Amur Falcons** at Mai Po on 6th (WWF), 429 **Black-faced Spoonbills** at Mai Po on 6th (PJL), probably the highest single-site count of the species in Hong Kong, 60 **Dusky Warblers** and 120 **Yellow-breasted Buntings** at Long Valley on 8th (EMSK, RWL, DAD), 60 **Common Blackbirds** at Hang Tau Tsuen the same day (JGH) and 80 **Red-rumped Swallows** at Sai Kung on 17th (AH).

- ▶ Passage of buntings, especially in the first three weeks of the month, was unusually good, with 16 species reported, 12 of which came to the ricefields at Long Valley. In addition to the **Pine** and **Yellow-breasted Buntings** already mentioned, these were **Japanese Yellow** from 3rd to 9th (WD, GT), **Pallas's Reed** from 4th to 9th (IT, GT, WD), **Black-headed** on 4th and from 13th to 15th (TML, dawnleaf, Allen), **Yellow-browed** on 14th (DAD), **Rustic** on 14th and 20th-21st (DAD, LH, WD), and **Crested Bunting** on 16th and 20th (JLeung, LH), all singly, as well as up to four **Little**, **Black-faced**, **Chestnut-eared** and **Chestnut Buntings** during this period (LCF, AB, WY).
- ▶ Po Toi was another good site for buntings, with single **Tristram's**, **Yellow-throated** and **Yellow-browed Buntings** and up to three **Japanese Yellow Buntings** between 4th and 13th (GW, AB, esther, WD). Reports from other sites included single **Common Reed Buntings** at Mai Po on 10th and 12th (PJL, JAA), a **Yellow-throated Bunting** at Tsim Bei Tsui on 15th (per YYT) and a **Chestnut-eared Bunting** at Yi O on 18th (MDW).
- ▶ Among other migrants attracted to the ricefields, ponds and wet and dry fields at Long Valley were single female **Bull-headed Shrikes** on 2nd (LCF) and from 18th to 23rd (RWL, P&MW), a **Ruddy-breasted Crane** from 2nd (LCF), a **Crested Honey Buzzard**, a **Japanese Sparrowhawk**, 10 **Amur Falcons** and a **Himalayan Swiftlet** on 4th (IT, LCF), two **Grey-capped Greenfinches** on 5th (esther), two **Pheasant-tailed Jacanas** and an **Eastern Water Rail** from 8th (KJ), a **Dunlin** on 15th (CKF), possibly the first for the site, a female **Russet Sparrow** from 16th to 21st (coconutcat, LH, TML), a **Dusky Thrush** from 21st to 23rd (TML, P&MW) and a **Von Schrenck's Bittern** and a **Brambling** on 23rd (P&MW).
- ▶ Elsewhere in the Deep Bay area, there were reports of two **Baillon's Crakes** and a juvenile **Rosy Starling** at Lok Ma Chau on 3rd (PJL), two **Pheasant-tailed Jacanas** and an **Eastern Water Rail** at Mai Po on 5th-6th (WWF), an Oriental Stork there on 6th (per TML), a **Black Stork** there on 18th (PJL), a **Long-billed Dowitcher**, a **Brown-headed Gull** and a **Pallas's Gull** off the Mai Po boardwalk on 21st (IT), the latter the earliest autumn record by 4 days, a possible hybrid **Eastern x Western Marsh Harrier** at Lok Ma Chau on 24th (PJL), 34 **Black Bulbuls** at Nam Sang Wai on 25th (JGH) and a late **Terek Sandpiper** off the boardwalk on 29th (IT).
- ▶ At Po Toi, in addition to birds already mentioned, reports were received of one or two **Bramblings** between 4th and 20th (GW, AB), a **Bianchi's Warbler** and two **Pale Thrushes** on 9th (AB), a **Red-breasted Flycatcher** on 13th and from 25th to 27th (GW, KK), five **Scarlet Minivets**, two **Fork-tailed Sunbirds** and a **Sulphur-breasted Warbler** on 16th (AB), an **Eyebrowed Thrush** and 24 **Daurian Redstarts** on 18th (GW), and an **Amur Falcon** on 25th (GW), the latest autumn record by 4 days.
- ▶ Notable birds from other sites included an **Orange-headed Thrush** at Kowloon Park on 1st (web), a **Speckled Piculet**, a **Bay Woodpecker** and a rather late **Eastern Crowned Warbler** at Tai Po Kau the same day (KPK), a **Radde's Warbler** at Yung Shue O on 2nd (DT), four **Amur Falcons** at Cheung Chau on 12th and five at Chek Lap Kok the same day (MDW, Morten), a **Forest Wagtail** and a full-tailed **Asian Paradise Flycatcher** at Tai Po Kau on 13th (leo2012), a **Black-naped Monarch**, two **Grey-headed Canary Flycatchers**, two **Dark-sided**, two **Asian Brown**, a **Red-throated**, three **Mugimaki** and a **Verditer Flycatcher** all at Shing Mun on 17th (SLT), a **Chestnut-flanked White-eye** and a **Sulphur-breasted Warbler** at Tai Po Kau on 22nd (KPK), five **Goodson's Leaf Warblers** at Pak Sha O on 23rd (GJC), and a male **Small Niltava** at Shing Mun on 27th (Mon) followed by a female there on 29th-30th (AB, WD).
- ▶ The only nightbirds of note reported in the month were a **Savanna Nightjar** at Po Toi on 4th (GW) and a **Grey Nightjar** at Ma Tau Wai on 30th (coconutcat).

December

- ▶ Highlights of another exciting month were a **Chinese Barbet** at Tai Po Kau on 31st (YYT), a 1st for Hong Kong if accepted, a **Japanese Night Heron** at Sai Kung from 4th to 16th (Jake), only the 6th record and the first since 1988, a redhead **Smew** at Mai Po from 18th (per JAA), the second individual of the winter and the 6th Hong Kong record, single **Short-eared Owls** at Lamma (found moribund) on 18th (HKBWS) and at Mai Po on 21st (JAA), the 4th and 5th records and the first since 2005, a **Greylag Goose** at Mai Po on 21st (per TML), the 6th or 7th record, a female **White-bellied Green Pigeon** at Po Toi on 25th-26th (esther, GW), a potential 7th record, and a female **White-tailed Robin** at Pak Sha O from 29th to 31st (GJC), which is one of a small number of records of this species which has recently been promoted to Category I on the Hong Kong list.
- ▶ Also, if accepted as wild, a **Brown-chested Jungle Flycatcher** at Wo Chai Shan, Kowloon from 28th into early January 2015 (jsk_ppp) would be the first winter record of a species whose known wintering range lies well to the south of Hong Kong.
- ▶ In the Mai Po area, which was again well watched, other notable birds found during the month included a **Common Shelduck** on 1st (JAA), possibly the only record of the winter of this once abundant visitor, a **Red-breasted Flycatcher** on 1st and 6th (JAA, AB), a **Baikal Bush Warbler** on 3rd (WWF), a **Dusky Thrush** on 5th (quertyalex), a **Ferruginous Duck** and 19 **Common Pochards** (close to a record count) beside the access road on 6th (P&MW), 712 **Grey Plovers** and a **Pallas's Gull** off the boardwalk on 7th (WWF, IT), a **Pied Harrier**, a **Ruddy-breasted Crake** and a **Pallas's Reed Bunting** on 10th (WWF), a late **Cinnamon Bittern** beside the access road on 14th (AB) and a Himalayan Swiftlet there on 27th (MDW).
- At Long Valley, which had gone quiet after a memorable passage of buntings in November, reports came through of single **Crested** and **Chestnut Buntings** on 6th (CKF), a female Bull-headed Shrike on 13th and 28th (lexusjohn, MK) and a **Ruddy-breasted Crake** and an **Eastern Water Rail** from about 13th (kfm).
- ▶ Coverage of four-weekrest and shrubland areas showed that **Pallas's Leaf Warblers** were unusually widespread. Among the rarer warblers reported were a **Sulphur-breasted Warbler** on 5th (JenL), a **Radde's Warbler** on 6th (AB), a Chestnut-crowned Warbler on 7th (Allen) and a **White-spectacled Warbler** on 21st (KPK), all at Tai Po Kau, four **Goodson's Leaf Warblers** at Brides Pool on 9th (MK) and a **Chestnut-crowned Warbler** there on 23rd (TML), and an **Eastern Crowned Warbler** at Fung Hang on 30th (JAA), the latter one of a handful of winter records of this species.
- In addition, single unidentified **Spectacled Warblers** were found at Brides Pool on 10th (TML) and Pak Sha O on 14th (GJC).
- ▶ The rarest flycatchers reported were a male **Small Niltava** (showing signs of possible cage damage) at Brides Pool on 7th-8th (tomatofamily, TML) and a **Rufous-gorgeted Flycatcher** at Lung Fu Shan on 8th (LL).
- Though photographed and seen well, a **mystery flycatcher** at Brides Pool on 7th-8th (tomatofamily) remained unidentified.
- ▶ It was a poor month for **Grey Treepies**, but **Mountain Bulbuls** were reported from several sites, the highest number being 10 at Brides Pool on 8th (TML).
- ▶ Thrushes were reported in only moderate numbers, but Po Toi hosted at least 15 **Pale Thrushes** through the month (GW) and also a Brown-headed Thrush on 18th (GW).
- ▶ Reports from other localities included a **Northern Lapwing** at Chek Lap Kok on 8th and 22nd (Morten, EMSK), up to 40 **Grey-Capped Greenfinches** at Lai Chi Wo on 17th and 19th (per IT) and 15 at Kuk Po on 30th (JAA), a male **Bull-headed Shrike** at Ng Tung Chai on 20th (JAA), and a **Speckled Piculet** at Ho Pui on 27th (JAA). 

The Hong Kong Bird Watching Society Bird Watching Tours Apr - Sep 2015

Outings				
Date	Duration	Time and site	Difficulties (1...3)	Target species
4/4/2015 (Sat)	0800 - 1300	Tsim Bei Tsui (Crested Bulbul Club Activity) (08:00 Tin Chak Estate Shopping Centre Exit, near Tin Yat Light Rail Station, Tin Shui Wai)	★	Waterbirds
11/4/2015 (Sat)	0800 - 1600	Po Toi and HK South Waters (08:00 Aberdeen public pier, near Ocean Court) Note: This will be a long trip on open waters. The ride could be quite rough and some people may be seasick.	★★★	Seabirds and migrants
19/4/2015 (Sun)	0800 - 1600	Mai Po Nature Reserve (12yrs old & above only) (08:00 Kowloon Tong MTR Station (Kent Road /F Exit), OR 09:00 Mai Po carpark, end 15:00 Mai Po, 16:00 Kowloon Tong)	★★	Waterbirds
26/4/2015 (Sun)	0800 - 1600	Po Toi and HK South Waters (08:00 Hang Seng Bank, Sai Wan Ho MTR Station) Note: This will be a long trip on open waters. The ride could be quite rough and some people may be seasick.	★★★	Seabirds and migrants
2/5/2015 (Sat)	0800 - 1300	Aberdeen Reservoir (Crested Bulbul Club Activity) (08:00 Bus #7 Bus-stop at Connaught Road Central outside Hang Seng Bank Head Office)	★	Forest birds
3/5/2015 (Sun)	0800 - 1200	Tai Mo Shan (08:00 Exit B near Hang Seng Bank, Tsuen Wan MTR Station)	★★★	Grassland birds
10/5/2015 (Sun)	0800 - 1600	Mai Po Nature Reserve (12yrs old & above only) (08:00 Kowloon Tong MTR Station (Kent Road /F Exit), OR 09:00 Mai Po carpark, end 15:00 Mai Po, 16:00 Kowloon Tong)	★★	Waterbirds
16/5/2015 (Sat)	TBC	Wild Card Day (Details will be announced on May 14 on Discussion Forum)		
24/5/2015 (Sun)	TBC	Wild Card Day (Details will be announced on May 22 on Discussion Forum)		
6/6/2015 (Sat)	0830 - 1300	Shing Mun (Crested Bulbul Club Activity) (08:30 Kiosk at Pineapple Dam, Shing Mun Reservoir)	★	Forest birds
7/6/2015 (Sun)	0800 - 1200	Nam Chung and Luk Keng (08:00 Pavilion at junction of Nam Chung Rd & Luk Keng Rd)	★★	Forest birds & Waterbirds
18/7/2015 (Sat)	0830 - 1630	Mirs Bay and Eastern Waters (08:30 Ma Liu Shui New Pier, end 16:30 Sai Kung Old Pier) Note: This will be a long trip on open waters. The ride could be quite rough and some people may be seasick. Those who want to leave at lunchtime may take the ferry (departing hourly) at Tap Mun for Wong Shek Pier. The fare is non-refundable irrespective of early departure at Tap Mun.	★★★	Seabirds (Terns)
5/9/2015 (Sat)	0800 - 1300	Aberdeen Reservoir (Crested Bulbul Club Activity) (08:00 Bus #7 Bus-stop at Connaught Road Central outside Hang Seng Bank Head Office)	★	Forest birds
13/9/2015 (Sun)	0800 - 1200	Shing Mun (08:30 Kiosk at Pineapple Dam, Shing Mun Reservoir)	★★	Forest birds
19/9/2015 (Sat)	TBC	Wild Card Day (Details will be announced on Sep 17 on Discussion Forum)		
28/9/2015 (Mon)	0800 - 1600	Mai Po Nature Reserve (12yrs old & above only) (08:00 Kowloon Tong MTR Station (Kent Road /F Exit), OR 09:00 Mai Po carpark, end 15:00 Mai Po, 16:00 Kowloon Tong)	★★	Waterbirds

Member: Free of Charge
 Member: Free of Charge
 Member: HK\$60 (Student Member: HK\$30)
 Member: HK\$160 (TBC)

Non-member: Free of Charge
 Non-member: HK\$30 (HK\$10 for age under 19 student)
 Non-member: HK\$120
 Non-member: HK\$200 (TBC)

(Registration not required)
 (Registration not required)
 (Registration required)
 (Registration required)

Hong Kong Bird Watching Society Outing Booking Slip

I would like to register the following HKBWS outings:

** We will confirm participants whether their application is accepted or not about 5 days before the outing. Once confirmed, no refund will be made no matter they can attend the outing or not. Refund will be made only if the outing is cancelled officially due to inclement weather or special reason.

Information of Participant(s)

Date	Outing	Name (First one will be considered contact person)	Membership No.	Mobile Phone	Outing Fee*	Required information for Mai Po Outing only	
						Meeting Point (Kln Tong / MP)	Age Group (✓ where appropriate)
							<input type="checkbox"/> 12 yrs & above <input type="checkbox"/> Below 12 yrs
							<input type="checkbox"/> 12 yrs & above <input type="checkbox"/> Below 12 yrs
							<input type="checkbox"/> 12 yrs & above <input type="checkbox"/> Below 12 yrs
							<input type="checkbox"/> 12 yrs & above <input type="checkbox"/> Below 12 yrs
							<input type="checkbox"/> 12 yrs & above <input type="checkbox"/> Below 12 yrs
							<input type="checkbox"/> 12 yrs & above <input type="checkbox"/> Below 12 yrs

** Activity payment are processed individually, please use separate cheques for different outings.

Enclosed please find a Cheque of HK\$ _____ Contact person's email : _____

(Payable to The **Hong Kong Bird Watching Society**)

Applicant : _____ Date : _____ Signature : _____

Please send this slip together with a crossed cheque to: **7C, V Ga Building, 532 Castle Peak Road, Lai Chi Kok, Kowloon**

Notes for Mai Po Outing:

- **Participants below age of 12 yrs will not be accepted for Mai Po Outing visiting floating boardwalks.**
- 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 oversea visitors) that day in order to access to the Frontier Closed Area and Mai Po Marshes.

Mai Po Outing Fee	Meeting Point at Mai Po	Meeting Point at Kowloon Tong
Member	HK\$30-	HK\$60-
Student Member	HK\$15-	HK\$30-
Non-Member	HK\$120-	

Other Notes:

- HKBWS members have a high priority to join four weeks before the activity. Thereafter, registration will be made on first come first serve basis.
- Any changes of the activities will be announced on our Discussion Forum: <http://www.hkbws.org.hk/BBS>
- 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 7:00am on the event day, the activity will be cancelled. If Thunderstorm Warning is announced during the activity, Team Leader will decide whether the activity should be continued or cancelled. You can contact the outing leader at 9457 3196 during the event day if you have any query about the weather.

Disclaimer

The Hong Kong Bird Watching Society ("the HKBWS") assumes no responsibility, liability or obligations, whether financial or otherwise, for losses, injuries, death, damages, whether to the person or property, arising or occurring in the course or as a result from the activities, outings or training courses ("the Activities") organized by the HKBWS. Persons who participate in the Activities must ensure that they are medically fit to do so. If in doubt, they should consult qualified medical practitioners before participating. Participants are recommended to purchase relevant insurance for their own protection. By participating in the Activities, the participants impliedly agree that they will not hold the HKBWS, its Executive Committee members, other committee members, its officers, employees, volunteers, agents or subcontractors responsible or liable for any losses, injuries, death damages arising or occurring in the course or as a result from the Activities.



黑頭蠟嘴雀
何建業
石崗

Japanese Grosbeak
Kinni Ho Kin Yip
Shek Kong

17/01/2015
DSLR Camera, 600mm f/4 lens + 1.4x teleconverter

紅背伯勞
路人乙
塋原

Red-backed Shrike
passerby-b
Long Valley

02/11/2014
DSLR Camera, 600mm f/4 lens + 1.4x teleconverter





白眼潛鴨
鍾永乾
米埔

Ferruginous Duck
Chung Wing Kin
Mai Po

18/08/2014

DSLR Camera, 300mm f/2.8 lens + 2x teleconverter



紅頭潛鴨
余伯全
米埔

Common Pochard
Ractis John
Mai Po

30/11/2014

DSLR Camera, 400mm f/2.8 lens +1.4x teleconverter



田鷀
葉紀江
壟原

Rustic Bunting
Herman Ip Kee Kong
Long Valley

20/11/2014

DSLR Camera, 300mm f/2.8 lens + 2x teleconverter