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香港觀鳥會 The Hong Kong Bird Watching Society



bulletin
會員通訊

236

Summer 2015 ~ 夏



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白腹鶴 - 雌鳥
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米埔

Eastern Marsh Harrier - female
Lok Ching Wa Kelvin
Mai Po

14/03/2015
DSLR Camera, 400mm f/2.8 lens + 2x teleconverter



白腹鷺 - 雄鳥
駱正華
米埔

Eastern Marsh Harrier - male
Lok Ching Wa Kelvin
Mai Po

12/04/2015
DSLR Camera, 400mm f/2.8 lens + 2x teleconverter



The Hong Kong Bird Watching Society

A charitable organization incorporated in Hong Kong with limited liability by guarantee.

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Thanks again to all the writers, translators and photographers who have contributed to this summer edition of the bulletin. 

John Holmes

Society News and Projects

Members

Affairs

2015 Membership Renewal

Membership stood at around 1870 as at early June. Membership renewal under the new membership criteria is in progress. Renewal letters will be posted about two months before membership expiry date.

Bird Watching Course

The 2nd Waders Identification Workshop was held in late April. In addition to 2 class room lectures, 20 members and birders visited Mai Po, Tsim Bei Tsui and Fung Lok Wai to practise their identification skills in different habitats.



1st Leader Training Program (2013-2014)



Some of the graduates from the 1st Leader Training Program

The program was completed by the end of December 2014 and all 10 trainees graduated from the program successfully. A simple graduation ceremony was held during the bird race prizes presentation on 22nd March.

Crested Bulbul Club

Early Morning Bird Watchers

No. of participants in Hong Kong Park from Feb-Apr 2015: 244

No. of participants in Kowloon Park from Feb-Apr 2015: 342

Bird watching interpretation in Hong Kong Wetland Park

A total of 121 participants from Feb-Apr 2015.

2014 World Animal Day Postcard Fund Raising

Many thanks to “&dear” and ten other local artists for designing postcards to raise fund for the Society. The captioned activity has raised HK\$23,000 for future conservation programmes in Hong Kong. We would like to express our gratitude to all these artists!

Hong Kong Bird Watching Day Cum Bird Race Fundraising Event

This key annual event was held from 21st to 22nd March. There were 19 teams (with 82 members) participating in Challenger and Green Bird categories of the race and a total of HK\$41,604- in donations was received. Top-up with the surplus of \$10,096, bird race income after deduction of all expenses, a total amount of \$51,700- will be allocated to support the China Coastal Waterbird Census. The society would like to express our gratitude to all race teams and donors for their generous support to this bird race fundraising event.

Society News and Projects - (cont.)

2015 HK Bird Watching Day Cum Bird Race Fundraising Event

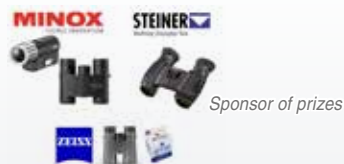
		Amount
Fund raised by race teams	小逸雲雀	\$20,134-
	Aviphilia	\$130-
	Eurasian Hoopoe	\$140-
Personal donation	高榮燴	\$200-
	Apache Lau	\$21,000-
Total Donation		\$41, 604-
Surplus from event income less all expenses		\$10,096-
Total amount allocated to “China Coastal Waterbird Census.”		\$51, 700-

Special thanks are due for support from the following organizations and government departments which helped to make the event a success:

- Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department
- WWF – HK
- Mr. Richard Lewthwaite (Adjudicator)
- Mr. Lee Kwok Shing (Online bird record system)
- Mr. Yu Ying Yui (Bird race tee drawing)

We would like to extend our sincerest thanks and appreciation to the following prize sponsors (in random order):

- Schmidt Marketing Asia Ltd (Sponsor of Winner’s prize for “Challenger Team”)
- Shriro (HK) Ltd (Sponsor of Winner’s prize for “Green Birder Team”)
- Cezet Optical Company Limited (Sponsor of prizes and ducky draw item)



Race teams : Challenger Team



1. *Gyps beibei*
Cheng Nok Ming, Cheung Ka Chun, Wan Chi Ching, Shum Ting Wing, Tse Wai Lun



2. 被神親吻的米酒雞
Law Wing Yee、Law King Wai、Yam Wing Yiu、Lam Ngo Lun、Leung Ka King



3. Agent Scott
Katherine Leung, Lui Tak Hang, Lai Nga Yee, Chik Ying Yuk



4. Asia Potoo
Tong Chun Lok, Zheng Xi, Hui Chung Hong, Tang Hoong Kin Philip, Lau Sin Pang



5. 香港一日遊
Chan Ka Ho, Kwong Chung Yan, Chiu Ming Ho, Ip Tsz Ying, Yang Yao



6. Nightjar Team
Wong Chun Yu Simon, Lo Kar Man, Lee Wai To Andrew, Tam Yiu Leung, Hung Wai Ming



7. 小逸雲雀
Ng Shiu Han, Li Chun Yat, Wan Hung Yu



8. 鴉徒鴿者
Chan Man Ho, Chan Wing Kwan, Yip Yuen Ming, To Pui Wai Olivia, Li Chung Hoi



9. Common Kestrel 2015
Lai Yau Man Philip, Yip Kam Yiu Kenny, Wu Yu Tai, Jor Chi Keung George



10. Panic Black kite
Kwan Hiu Yin, Wong Nga Wing, Ho Sin Yee



11. Aviphilia
Wong Ka Kiu, Lau Ka Ming, Leung Yu Yan



12. Ducking
Chan Tsz Him, Cheung Cheuk Yiu, Lam Pui Yin, Hau Cheuk Yu

Society News and Projects - (cont.)

Race teams : Challenger Team



13. Tell Me Where the Birds are /□\?
Lee Shing Yiu, Tsang Hin Fat,
To Ka Wan, Mang Pui Yan,
Wan Chun Hin



14. Forest Little Birds
Lee Hoi Yee, Lee Wai Ting,
Ho Ming Fung



15. What The Thrush
Chung Yun Tak, Ng Man Ching,
Yeung Ching Kan, Calton Law,
So Ying Kin



16. Chick Catcher
Chan Kai Wai, Yip Chi Lap,
Lam Mui Ki, Irenne, Lo Gar Yee,
Lau Ka Ho



17. Wild Bird 2015
Fong Kin Wa Forrest,
Chan Ming Ming, Li Wai Ki,
Ma Ka Wai, Lau Wai Man Apache

Race teams : Green Birder Team



18. Eurasian Hoopoe
Chui Yung Shing, Poon Chin Pang,
Hon Tak Ming, Cheng Yat Sum,
Yeung Ming Kai



18. 三毛
Lam Mun Chris, Lee Kin Sing,
Li Siu Lan

Prizes	Challenger Team	Prizes	Green Birder Team
Winner	<i>Gyps beibei</i> (144)	Winner	Eurasian Hoopoe (88)
1st Runner-up	被神親吻的米酒雞 (134)	1st Runner-up	三毛 (61)
2nd Runner-up	Agent Scott (132)	-	-
Best Record Award	Asia Potoo (Brown Wood Owl)	Best Record Award	三毛 (Black-naped Oriole)
Best Location Team - Mai Po	被神親吻的米酒雞		
Best Location Team - Long Valley	Tell Me Where the Birds are /□\?		
Best Location Team - Tai Po Kau	小逸雲雀		
Seen Record Team	被神親吻的米酒雞	Seen Record Team	Eurasian Hoopoe
Heard Record Team	Asia Potoo	-	-
Highest Amount of Donation	小逸雲雀	Highest Amount of Donation	Eurasian Hoopoe



Winner of Challenger Team:
Gyps beibei



Best Record Award of Green Birder Team:
三毛



Highest Amount of Donation, Challenger Team:
小逸雲雀



Adjudicator:
Mr. Richard Lewthwaite (left)

2015 - 2017 Nature Conservation Management for Long Valley

A new phase of Nature Conservation Management for Long Valley began in March this year. The project will last for 30 months until August 2017. We would like to express our heartfelt thanks to stakeholders, farmers, advisors, bird watchers, photographers and all the supporters of Long Valley. Your continuous support to the project and Long Valley is important!

Breeding bird surveys will be conducted in Long Valley this summer. If bird watchers and photographers observe any breeding behavior (nest building, chick feeding, display etc), please submit the record with photos (if any) to yvicky@hkbws.org.hk.

Conservation News

The Land Use Zoning of Po Toi Island

The Draft Po Toi Island Outline Zoning Plan No. S/I-PTI/1 was gazetted in February 2015, and the public inspection period has just ended 27 April 2015. The HKBWS objects to the Plan and made a submission focused mainly on the high ecological value of the island for migratory birds and the potential risks of the proposed zoning.



As of April 2015, we have recorded 328 bird species on Po Toi, which accounts for over 60% of all bird species in Hong Kong. The mature trees and woodland at Tai Wan and Wan Tsai are important foraging and roosting grounds for migratory birds that have just travelled great distances. Our recent record of the Globally Vulnerable Ijima's Leaf Warbler (*Phylloscopus ijimae*) in March 2015, the first record for mainland China and for Hong Kong, indicates that these woodland habitats are actively used and crucial to migratory birds.

However, in the current planning proposal, a "Residential (Group D)" zoning is placed at the woodland in Wan Tsai. We are concerned any residential development in this area will destroy the habitat for migratory birds, and such zoning is not compatible with the surrounding environment of Po Toi. Given the conservation importance and the uniqueness of Po Toi, the Society urges the Town Planning Board to zone the area as Site of Special Scientific Interest for better protection of the area, and ultimately designate Po Toi Islands as Country Park.

During the public inspection period of the Plan, the Society also launched an online petition for the general public express their comments and concerns. Over 7,000 people participated in the event and objected to the Plan. We would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for supporting our petition.

Please feel free to "Like" our "Support Po Toi Country Park" Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/SupportPoToi>

Hong Kong Fishpond Conservation

Hong Kong Fishpond Conservation Scheme 2013-2015 was completed successfully by February. Funded by the Environment and Conservation Fund, a continuation of the programme has been launched in March for another 2 years. YOUR support Count!

Fishpond Sketching



We are very pleased to have volunteer from our volunteer scheme to organize a sketching workshop on 19 April at Education Kiosk in Nam Sang Wai. To promote fishpond conservation,

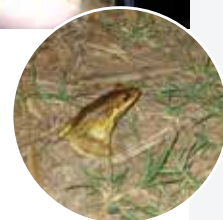
participants were taught to sketch fishpond scenery in a skillful way.

Opening dates and hours of Education Kiosk

Date	Time
14/06/2015 (Sun)	14:00-17:00
19/07/2015 (Sun)	14:00-17:00
16/08/2015 (Sun)	14:00-17:00
13/09/2015 (Sun)	14:00-17:00

Amphibians and reptiles night survey and safari

Amphibians and reptiles night surveys were held in Tai Sang Wai, San Tin, Ma Tso Lung and Fung Lok Wai, Yuen Long in April. In order to increase the knowledge towards fishpond animals including birds, snakes and dragonflies, a total of 7 volunteers were guided by our surveyors and experienced an unforgettable night.



Night safari tours will be held from Jun to Aug this year. Please visit our Facebook page later on.

Facebook: HK Fishpond Conservation Scheme

Updates on CEPF programme on capacity building to civil societies in southern China

Training workshop on Bird Monitoring



Mr. Yu Yat Tung, our Research Manager, giving a talk on bird monitoring methodology

The second training workshop for the CEPF programme was about bird monitoring. It was held between 13th and 14th March, 2015 at Guangxi Mangrove Research Center in Beihai, Guangxi

Province. A total of 39 participants from Guangdong, Guangxi and Hainan Provinces with a background of local civil societies and nature reserves joined the workshop. We had invited Dr. Liu Yang from Sun Yat-sen University, Mr. Bai Qingqun of China Coastal Waterbird Census Team as well as Mr. Yu Yat Tung, our Research Manager to take the lead of the workshop. Workshop on the first day were lectures covering importance of bird monitoring, migration of birds, waterbird survey methodology and identification, landbird survey methodology and identification, case study, survey design and report writing. The second day was field practical of landbird and waterbird monitoring, in which the participants were divided into groups to experience bird monitoring followed by reports of results on data collected. We were thankful that some coordinators of China Coastal Waterbird Census Team also came to contribute as team leaders for the field practical. We would also like to give our greatest gratitude to Guangxi Mangrove Research Center to co-organize this workshop and volunteers of Beihai to help organizing the workshop!



Field practical of landbird surveys on the second day of the training workshop.

“Bird Loving Week” activities in Zhanjiang and Beihai

“Bird Loving Week” is a government initiated activity for promotion of bird appreciation and protection in mainland China. With the support of CEPF, a one-day workshop for about 200 Biology teachers in Leizhou peninsular on environmental education was held on 28th March, in which famous environmental education expert Prof. Liao Xiao-dong and Mr. Wu Kang-song from Guangzhou as well as Vivian Fu from our society gave lectures to the teachers. This is also the first time we and Zhanjiang Bird Watching Society worked with local forestry department and education department. On 29th March, a large promotional event was organized. There were exciting bird knowledge quiz competition, dance show by kindergarten kids, fashion show with a theme on birds and bird photo exhibition to help raising awareness of bird and wildlife protection to the public. On 30th, we gave a talk to border police in Beihai, Guangxi on bird protection.



Prof. Liao Xiaodong giving lecture on how to bring kids into nature

Our General Manager, Mr. Lo Wai-yan giving opening speech to the “Bird Loving Week” activity.



Following Spoony to migrate - Spoon-billed Sandpiper Postcard Exchange Project

In 2013 we had made an animation to promote conservation of Spoon-billed Sandpiper (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=INu1Z5x-HeWQ>) along its flyway with kids from different countries helped colouring the animation. This year, we are organizing another activity along the flyway to spread the message, via postcards this time. The idea of this project is to send postcards of Spoon-billed Sandpiper prepared by kids from its wintering grounds in South East Asia to the places along Spoon-billed Sandpiper’s migratory route, up to the breeding ground in Russia. Now the postcards from Thailand and Myanmar are already in hands of Chinese kids, and they will send out postcards to kids in other parts of China, Japan and South Korea to tell them to help protect Spoony together. Keep an eye on this project with this facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Following-Spoonies-to-migrate-Spoon-billed-Sandpiper-Flyway-Exchange/1597030960551716>



Kids in Zhanjiang received postcards from Myanmar and Thailand

Mai Po Update

Text: Bena Smith

Enhancing Pond #24 to attract wagtails and pipits

Buffaloes are now a familiar sight at Mai Po having grazed the rain-fed marshes since the first management trial in 2006. The herd now numbers 5 individuals and any birder venturing into Southern Mai Po tends to be greeted by one or more of the inquisitive beasts.

The management trials concluded buffalo can have a beneficial impact upon bird diversity in the areas they graze and save management resources by controlling vegetation. A win-win for all concerned parties. The visual impact of a 9-year continuous period of grazing on the 12 hectare Pond #24 is quite striking, and vegetation, particularly emergent aquatic plants, has changed in both composition and structure.

Surprisingly though, an analysis of bird data collected through regular WWF monitoring at Pond #24 reveals usage by wagtails and pipits, birds commonly encountered at the former Kam Tin buffalo fields, has not increased over time. A probable reason is the smaller area of wet and short grassland habitat inside Pond #24 compared to Kam Tin. This is because as a former fishpond, Pond #24 has high bunds, steep banks and is predominantly deep water.

To address this, several of the larger internal bunds will be lowered in height to around 10cm above the pond waterlevel then allowed to naturally vegetate over. The removed spoil will then be spread at the base of the former bund to create gentle sloping edges for wet grassland to establish.


It will take a couple of years before the enhanced areas become vegetated and attractive to the target birds. If the work proves successful, then other areas inside Pond #24 will be identified for enhancement in the future.

A new egretty at Gei wai #14

At the time of writing this bulletin, there is a sense of excitement among the Mai Po Team about the prospect of an egretty becoming established in the Gei wai #14 mangroves. Surveyors are finding it difficult to count the actual number of birds nest building at the egretty due to dense mangrove foliage, but for sure over 50 pairs of egrets and herons are in the mangrove stand including 40 Great Egret, 10 Black-crowned Night Heron, 2 Cattle Egret and 1 Little Egret.

The last known nesting attempt by ardeids was in 1994 from Gei wai #21 and their absence from the Reserve over the last 20 years has been something of a mystery. Readers may recall a 2011 bulletin article concerning the planting of trees and bamboo on an island inside Pond #8a to attract ardeid nesting. This was WWF's attempt to attract them back. Alas there is no Pond #8a nesting activity so far, but this may be because the planted vegetation is yet to mature.

The question of why the nesting ardeids have suddenly arrived in 2015 is an interesting one. I would like to chalk it up to WWF's management of the Reserve, but to be honest no one really knows for sure. The critical thing is to give these egrets and herons the best possible chance to complete their nesting and raise young in an undisturbed and safe environment.

If this can be achieved, the birds may return next year to breed again. 



(Credit: Neil Fifer)
A Great Egret carrying nesting material.





Everglades National Park, Florida

Text / Photo: Alvin Hui

Last year I visited a friend living in a city near “Everglades National Park”, which is the third biggest national park in the U.S. This is a national park built for protection of the local ecosystem, which is different from other national parks that are usually set up for protection of geological scenery.

The area of the park is 6104 sq km, which is nearly six times of that of Hong Kong. The park is so huge that it contains four visitor centres, and it takes at least one to two hours to travel between the centres even by car. Some of the habitats in the park are similar to Hong Kong as the park enjoys a subtropical climate and is situated at low altitude close to the ocean.

Most areas of the park are wetlands drained by rivers from a large lake in South Florida. Starting from the shoreline, the park can be divided into several distinct ecosystems: shoreline habitat, mangroves, coastal lowlands (with floods), freshwater slough, cypress, pinelands and hardwood hammock. In fact, the place where the park is located is flat, and the thickness of soil is at most a few inches only. However, it is this tiny difference which affects the various habitats.

(Reference of habitats: <http://www.nps.gov/ever/learn/nature/naturalfeaturesandecosystems.htm>)

Shark Valley visitor centre is located at the northern part of the Everglades National Park, and is the closest visitor centre to my friend’s home. The place is relatively small and the view is not as good as the others, but it is the one that you can have closest contact with the wild animals. There is a bicycle trail and a few hiking trails built along the river nearby. Wild birds and alligators are not afraid of humans and frequently can appear as close as two meters, therefore this is a good place for observation of the animals and taking photographs. We hired a bicycle that day and slowly rode along the river, which was a very pleasant experience. As the most important attractions of the park are waterbirds, I had prepared briefly before the trip and identified a few local “target species”.

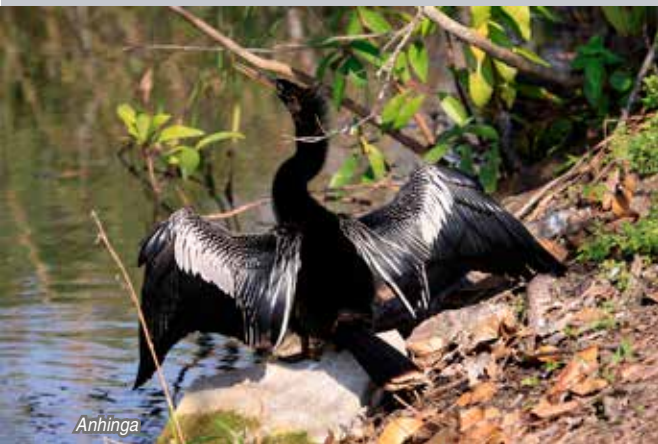
The first eye-catching bird was the Anhinga. This is a common bird in the Everglades, and is easily confused with our familiar Great Cormorant. However, they belong to different families. The



American White Ibis



Roseate Spoonbill



Anhinga

Anhinga is very good at diving, and their bones are different from most other birds in that they are not hollow in structure, increasing their diving ability to catch fish underwater. Its body lacks a gland to waterproof their feathers, therefore they behave like Great Cormorants - that is, they dry their feathers with wings stretched out under the sun. That day I was lucky enough to see a chick born only three weeks before.

Also I saw the Roseate Spoonbill. Of course, I could not see Black-faced Spoonbill in the everglades, but it was still pleasing to see related birds. Other waterbirds seen included Little Blue Heron, American White Ibis, Wood Stork, Tricolored Heron, Great Egret, Night Heron, Great Blue Heron (similar to our Grey Heron) and Snowy Egret (similar to our Little Egret). Besides birds, the national park is full of American Alligators. It is the top predator in the ecosystem, and can often be seen lying down lazily sunbathing. Although records of them attacking humans are rare, I somehow feel that local people have a mixed feeling of love and fear towards them. A local TV station even has a show about how experts catch those alligators that accidentally wandered into people's homes.

The Ernest F. Coe and Flamingo visitor centres are the two most remote visitor facilities of the park. There is no transport in the core area of the park, and the park authority also offers no transport for visitors. It is basically impossible to travel inside the park without driving (which I am a bit concerned about as the carbon footprint will be very huge if every visitor needs to drive their own car).

Situated in Royal Palm, the Ernest F. Coe visitor centre is the park headquarters. It takes a nearly 30-minute-drive from the nearest Florida town. Royal Palm is the earliest protected area of the park, hence it is well-equipped with various facilities. There is a trail named the "Anhinga trail", which is a wooden boardwalk built along a wetland (similar to that in the Hong Kong Wetland Park). Visitors can view the water birds and alligators walking along the trail. Besides egrets and Anhinga, vultures such as Turkey Vulture and Black Vulture, as well as Double-crested Cormorant are also easily seen. There are a few small ponds as you go from here to the Flamingo visitor centre, where Green-winged Teal, Blue-winged Teal and Black-necked Stilt can be seen. Walking towards the shore, Willet, Laughing Gull and Osprey can then be observed.

The National Park offers various types of guided tours. I joined a cross-country bike tour and the guide was a not very tall lady with white hair, yet she was very energetic. Though retired, she still walked and rode the bike pretty fast, and talked in a lively manner. As in the Hong Kong Wetland Park, the national park will invite volunteers to lead the guided tours, and this lady is one of the volunteers. She stayed in a national park in Hawaii for several years as a volunteer, but still loved the Everglades the most. Therefore she comes back in the dry season every year as a



Little Blue Heron



Tricolored Heron

volunteer. She explained that the ecologists found that periodic fire is important for the conservation of the woodland, noting that the woodland that was being burnt grows better than those parts not burnt. The park authorities will now periodically set fires in certain areas within the park, helping the growth of the primary forest. As in many other ecosystems in the world, the Everglades also faces the problem of invasive species, such as the Burmese Python, beefwood trees (a kind of casuarina) and the Brazilian Pepper tree. The management team here will use machines to remove the exotic plants, therefore it is not uncommon to find patches of bare land in the park.

My friend's home was at the northern edge of Everglades NP, and there is a state park nearby. As the state park is a bit farther from the coast and is located on higher elevations with thicker soils, the bird species seen here were a bit different from those in the Everglades National Park. The most interesting bird I saw was Limpkin, which is a brown waterbird similar to an ibis, it can only be seen in Florida in the whole U.S. Besides, I also saw the Mottled Duck and the Boat-tailed Grackle, and for the first time saw a huge woodpecker – the Pileated Woodpecker.

The Everglades National Park is at the southernmost part of the Florida peninsula. After visiting the national park, I started to travel down a chain of islands (the “Keys”) extending from the peninsula. The islands extended southwards from the southeastern Florida peninsula, and gradually move westwards to a city named “Key West” located at the end of the chain. This is the only area in the continental U.S with coral reefs. Together with its comfortable climate and numerous beautiful beaches, the Keys are hotspots for Americans for vacations. The government has already declared much of the ocean surrounding the islands as protected zones to protect the coral reef and seabirds in the area.

The islands can be divided into three parts - the upper, middle and the lower Keys. I chose to travel to the middle and the lower Keys, and the first stop was a small island that fewer people stop – Big Pine Key. This was because there was a refuge that shelters a threatened subspecies of the White-tailed Deer – The Key Deer. White-tailed Deer is a common deer that is widely distributed in U.S and Canada. Many people are not particularly fond of them as they destroy the crops and can spread disease, many states even allow deer hunting.

However, the subspecies in the Keys are different. Their body sizes are smaller compared to their counterparts on the continent as they live in small islands. They are also capable of swimming between the islands. Moreover, White-tailed Deer in the continent are frequently afraid of humans. I have viewed and tried to approach them several times while going birding, but they were so vigilant that they immediately ran into the bushes once they



Brown Pelican



Mottled Duck

felt my presence, making them not easy to observe. However, Key Deer have got used to having close contact with humans, and are not particularly afraid of people. Sometimes they even actively approach you.


Similar to the fate of many species, as the islands were more developed, their habitats were shrinking at the same time. They almost went extinct in the 1950s, but the U.S government set up the National Key Deer Refuge around Big Pine Key and No Name Key in 1957. Deer numbers have been gradually increasing over the years, but are still only around 800 restricted to the refuge. Therefore their future is still far from being settled. This refuge is among one of the reserves that is closest to human settlement that I have ever been to, basically there are people living in the whole refuge, and you can often see deer foraging in the backyards of people's homes, and residents here seem to get accustomed to their presence as well. I encountered Key Deer several times during my visit, twice when there were not many people nearby, and they approached me actively sniffing, which was a very interesting experience.

After entering the Keys, I saw bird species different from the main continent, mainly various seabirds. Brown Pelican is one of most commonly seen species, they always gather in the piers or along the shore, many people will share their catches with them after fishing. Though they are big in size, they are good fliers. Royal Tern, Pied-billed Grebe, Semipalmated Plover and the national bird of U.S - Bald Eagle were also seen. But the most special bird I saw was a Magnificent Frigatebird.



Royal Tern

The southernmost island of the Keys (also the southernmost island of the U.S continent) is named Key West. This is a small city that is opposite to Cuba, and is the most populated city in the Keys. As the city developed relatively early, there are quite a lot of historical sites in the city, and it is also well-equipped with various facilities, attracting many visitors for a short trip.

I initially planned to stay in Key West for one day only. As the main attraction here was not natural habitats, therefore I did not expect to see special birds here, and did not bring my binoculars when going out. There are street performances in the pier every day at around sunset, and many visitors will gather there. To my surprise I saw a group of Black Skimmers from such a crowded pier! I have been dreaming of seeing this bird with a longer lower beak, and I met it this way! Also when I walked along the beach, I saw a group of Ruddy Turnstones, which I have never seen in Hong Kong before, but I saw in Key West. Unlike much of the eastern and northern U.S, the sunshine, the environment and lifestyle in south Florida make people feel relaxed. Together with the diverse ecosystems and natural resources, it is a good place for wildlife travelling. 



Limpkin



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飯島柳鶯
關朗曦
蒲台

Ijima's Leaf Warbler
Matthew Kwan
Po Toi

03/04/2015

DSLR Camera, 400mm f/4 lens + 1.4x teleconverter



小仙鶉 - 雌鳥
潘士強
城門

Small Niltava - female
Jason Pun
Shing Mun

30/11/2014
DSLR Camera, 600mm f/4 lens



小仙鶺 - 雄鳥
蘇志偉
新娘潭

Small Niltava - male
So Chi Wai
Bride's Pool

11/12/2014
DSLR Camera, 500mm f/4 lens



鴉嘴卷尾
何建業
蒲台

Crow-billed Drongo
Kinni Ho Kin Yip
Po Toi

14/09/2014
DSLR Camera, 600mm f/4 lens + 1.4x teleconverter

Whooper Swan



Eurasian Coot



Eurasian Coot



Birding à la française

Text / Photo: Stanley Chan

At Charles De Gaulle Airport, we went straight to the connecting terminal and took the train to Lyon in southern France where we planned to stay with our friend Jacques. At Lyon train station I looked but didn't find any books on the subject of birds in France.

Jacques lives in a wooden house, with a spacious garden with unfamiliar flowers and plants everywhere, a comfortable and quiet environment. From the balcony of our room I saw two Eurasian Collared Doves standing on a nearby roof, and heard unfamiliar bird calls from the surrounding area. I'm sure any bird lover would come alive with excitement in this environment, but after 12 hours flight plus time difference, we were simply too exhausted and had to rest even though it was one o'clock in the afternoon.

Around five o'clock Jacques woke us with a gentle knock on the door. He already had the bikes ready. After our first cup of espresso, still a bit sleepy, we set off.

The surrounding area is mostly made up of wheat fields and farms with France's unique black and white dairy cows, and chickens reared behind fences. On our way, we saw more Eurasian Collared Doves and some Common Redstarts. We finally stopped beside a small lake with a pair of swans floating gracefully in the middle of the glimmering blue surface. We didn't bring our binoculars, so we could not confirm any species, but I could say for sure that in that moment, we found ourselves in a european fairy tale world.

In France in May, the sun is still high in the sky even at 9 p.m., no wonder the birds won't quieten down until almost ten.

The next day we decided to revisit the previous days' bike route. Our choice was right, birding conditions were good! We recorded Common Starling, Goldfinch, Middle Spotted Woodpecker, Wood Pigeon, Blackbird, Carrion Crow, Redstart, Common Linnet and some unknown species. We planned to find a guide book for reference when we got back to Paris the following week.

The following day, Jacques arranged for us to go hiking in the nearby foothills of the Alps. We didn't see any special birds along the way, but the scenery was extremely beautiful. The forest in France was so quiet, unlike our country parks, which are very noisy in comparison.



Common Linnet



Wood pigeon



Goldfinch



Pheasants



After dinner, still wet and cold from afternoon rain, we went to a nearby town, Saou, for the night. Although we noticed a small stream running by the house, we felt too tired for further exploration and went to bed early.

The following day, we walked to the town's only small square, bought some bread and postcards and went to a café. We ordered two espressos and sat down to write our postcards while munching on our bread. We enjoyed a slow French-style morning while waiting for Jacques to come take us to his grandfather's old country house.

After a long walk we arrived at Jacques's ancestral home, a 200 year-old stone building on a slope. No one lives in the house any more, and some places had collapsed. Framed by turquoise window sills, we enjoyed a picturesque blue sky view joined with wide purple fields, and a simple lunch.

We spent the next few days touring Lyon city. In Lyon's biggest park we saw many Mallard, Chaffinches, and Greylag Geese. The birds were very friendly, they even allowed us to sit next to them and take big close up shots with a mobile phone.

On our penultimate day in Lyon, we went to the peak of Mont St Michel at an altitude of almost 2,000 metres. Even in May, the top of this popular skiing area was still covered in part by snow. We enjoyed the view of Mont Blanc from far away, and stared face-to-face with a dauntless Alpine Chough. As space was perilously narrow at the peak, man and bird were so close that pictures could only be taken with mobile phones. Village houses below us looked the size of matchboxes. After a pleasant few days we took the TGV train back to Paris, bidding farewell to beautiful Lyon.

In Paris, we stayed at a neat B&B called "Pearl", run by a friend Yi Jing. Yi Jing is Taiwanese, her French husband Mark who works at the Paris Observatory, is also a birder. Yi Jing has been living

in Paris for over ten years, she speaks French fluently. Being our thoughtful hosts, they had made arrangements for us to go by train to Le Crotoy, a birding destination on the north coast. We would depart the next day and stay there for four days. With our bulky luggage stored at "Pearl", we could travel light.

Two hours by train from Paris, we arrived at a small town called Abbeville. The B&B owner Rosanne was already waiting outside the station in her Citroen, she is a graceful, outgoing, funny lady who is also a painter. Shortly in town, Rosanne pointed to us a small house and told us it was residence of novelist Jules Verne.

We stayed at the attic on the top floor of Rosanne's house. It was interesting to walk around in a hundred year-old wooden building, with the floor boards squeaking as if recounting its long history.

After we settled our luggage, we went for a walk on the waterfront. At a small square a bronze statue of Joan of Arc stared out at the wide bank in deep thought. On a sunny day, it takes about three



Middle Spotted Woodpecker

Chaffinch

hours to walk across the bay, Mark told us, but it's important to check the tide and have someone to guide, one can get lost easily on the sand flats when no points of reference are in sight.

Gathered by the shore were flocks of Black-headed Gulls and Mallards. We sat at the open terrace of a restaurant and ordered

one big portion of local fresh green mussels each. Black-headed Gulls in full breeding plumage kept flying close over our heads like feral pigeons. We strolled along the bank while seeing flying White Storks. Mark said we would be going to the nearby wetland park the next day on bikes, where we would see more of them.

Our destination was Parc du Marquenterre, a wetland park similar to Mai Po Nature Reserve, with an area of 650 hectares. The park has recorded 350 bird species and is a place where the European Spoonbill breeds. We followed the bike path and were outside town in a breeze. On a big piece of open wetland, Whooper Swans were building nests by the roadside. They stretched out their long necks and arranged the nest materials carefully, allowing us at times to peek at their white eggs. Other swans which did not have nests to tend to swam close to us in curiosity, chicks of Common Moorhen and Common Coot also approached without fear. At that moment, I realised why Mark looked so surprised when he saw my 400mm lens, all he had was a fully automatic compact camera, but his pictures were just as good. I had never expected bird watching could be done with such ease, I was touched beyond expression. As we continued our way, we were greeted by Northern Lapwings, Greylag Geese, and crowds and crowds of Black-headed Gulls and the unbelievable noise that they created.



Greylag Goose



Eurasian Spoonbill



Black Redstart

As we had made several stops on the way, it was already noon when we arrived at the main entrance to the park. We were famished after the morning's excitement and thought we were going to have lunch in the restaurant by the park, but Mark led us to the other side of the park into a forest with big tall oak trees. Yi Jing took

out some baguettes, cheese and red wine which she had brought along, we sat on the ground and enjoyed our picnic. While we were chatting, a Common Pheasant appeared about 50 meters away from us. Mark and I got up immediately and went on our chase. The pheasant must be aware of its own value as meat and was very wary, I couldn't get a clear shot even with my long lens.

There was a souvenir shop near the park entrance selling bird related items. I went happily looking for a bird book, but was disappointed to find they were all in French.

Soon after we went into the park, where there were many park guides in green uniforms, most of them quite young, they walked around carrying telescopes and setting them up to show birds to visitors. Unfortunately our French was not good enough so we could only look at each other and communicate with smiles and nods.

Our record for that day was 23 species, including Bewick's Swan, Mute Swan, Black Swan, House Sparrow, Blue Tit, Great Black-backed Gull, many White Storks, and a Great Crested Grebe in a nest.

We began to make our way back around six o'clock heading towards the sinking sun. We passed the wetland again, but without stopping this time. When we arrived in town, there was a flock of Song Thrushes on a front yard, their features looked particularly distinctive in the fading light.

White Stork



After another unforgettable Le Crotoy breakfast, Mark took us to the beach with a certain target bird in mind. As he only knew it by its French name, even with Yi Jing around, we still had no idea which species he's looking for.

The beach was terribly long, we walked the whole morning on sand dunes in blazing sunlight. It was quiet with no one around,

and the sun was still high, but our bodies were covered in sand and we were exhausted. Fortunately Mark knew a short cut to the road and we were so happy to see Rosanne's white Citroen waiting for us.

Our last day in Le Crotoy began just like the last few days with an unforgettable breakfast. We followed Mark's plan and went rowing. We rented a catamaran which could sit four persons in each hull, the coach/captain saw my telephoto lens and let me sit in the front, also the toughest spot. We were each given an oar and a lidded pail for storing valuables and other non-waterproof items which we put beside our feet for safe keeping. The rest of our stuff and day packs were left in the locker room.

After a brief technical introduction, our catamaran quickly cut through the quiet sea. I saw many Oystercatchers on a sandbar, but we couldn't get very close. Eventually, we alighted and walked to



Parc du Marquenterre



and only some White Wagtails in view. It was very windy on the sand dunes, many Herring Gulls were struggling as much as we did to steer their flight straight against the harsh wind. We continued to walk with heavy feet, but still, Mark's wish was not fulfilled. During our beach search, we saw a herd of watchful deer, and the remains of old German-built fort sites used during WWII to guard the shore.

Our search on the dunes lasted over ten hours, but Mark's mysterious target was still nowhere in sight. It was early evening



Black-headed Gull



the snowy white sand. We discovered some lovely seals swimming around the water surface, and they popped their heads up at times to look at us. It is at times like these the binoculars showed their true worth, we were able to see very clearly the cute expressions on the faces of the seals.

We returned to Rosanne's place in the afternoon and bid farewell to her, then took the night train to Paris, where we spent another week but wrapped up our trip without further bird watching activity.

Afterword: While in Paris, I searched large bookstores, second-hand book stores along river Seine banks, and vintage book stores in the covered passages, but all I found were bird guides in French. Two days before we left, Mark sent a message saying that a lady was selling some bird books on the net, her birder husband passed away not long ago leaving bundles of books, her asking price was reasonable. In the long list I noticed one titled Birds of Europe, and asked Mark to get it for me, plus another one called Birds of Africa, one for the future! 🐦



House Sparrow (female)



Northern Lapwing



Mute Swan



The Hornbill family

Photos / Text: Samson So

Silvery-cheeked Hornbill

In my last article, I shared my experience in observing hornbills in the South East Asia region. Recently, I have been observing them in Africa too. Among the Bucerotidae, 29 of the 54 species are found in Asia, 24 species of them are found in Africa, and 1 of them is found in Oceania (including New Guinea and the Solomon Islands).

Hornbill eating habits show their diversity and adaptability. Asia's tropical rainforests have provided good sources of fruit to hornbills where the birds move according to the availability of fruiting trees. In Africa's grassland habitats, hornbills mainly eat meat such as insects, reptiles, birds and small mammals.

Africa's Southern Ground Hornbill (*Bucorvus leadbeateri*) has a red face and throat, and is a solidly-built one metre in length. Male birds are larger than female birds and can be as heavy as 6 kilograms. The Southern Ground Hornbill can live for several decades. Birds in captivity have lived as long as 70 years.

Southern Ground Hornbills usually need the help of family members in caring for their young. They only produce one offspring every three years. This is a "K-select" strategy (Google it - I had to!, Ed.) where the species will spend many resources on a single offspring in order to raise the likelihood of survival. This reproduction strategy can protect the species population as well as avoiding the possibility of lack of resources due to over population by the species.

African Ground Hornbill





African Grey Hornbill



Red-billed Hornbill

Apart from Southern Ground Hornbill, I have observed other species of hornbills in my various African journeys. The African Grey Hornbills (*Tockus nasutus*) in Masai Mara National Reserve are using their low-key voices to call their partners. At Kenya's Great Rift Valley lake side, the Red-billed Hornbills (*Tockus erythrorhynchus*) are flying between Acacia trees to bring food back to the nest and feed their offspring and partners. In Tanzania, I observed Crowned Hornbill (*Tockus alboterminatus*) catching millipedes as food or using its toxic secretion to kill parasites.

In Africa, birds are relatively approachable, which shows that there is less hunting or harassment by humans. Bird watching's objective is not only to learn about the wildlife but also learning about people's living habits and how they treat wildlife in the region.

Hunting is one of the reasons why many animal species are threatened, and the destruction of habitat has made the situation worse. Whether in the grasslands or in the forests, a presence of hornbills may show the wholeness of the biodiversity of the region, and established National Parks and Nature Reserves help in continuing this. Eco-travel and environmental education as a means to earn financial income for the country are used in some countries as substitute for hunting and other unsustainable methods.

In my African journeys, not only famous mammals but a wide diversity of birds have enriched the experience. The Ground Hornbills' unique appearance, strong voice, unique reproduction method, distribution and diversity beautified my birding activities. In the world of birds, raptors are famous hunters, and hornbills are also ranked top of the food chain. Flying raptors show modern sense and hornbills show ancient sense.

My journey following hornbills will continue. I am expecting to meet them in my every journey to Asia and Africa, as well as hoping that the species and their habitats can be protected in the long term.

(To learn more about Samson So and his photos, please visit his facebook page on Eco Institute and Samson So Photography.)

<http://www.eco-institute.com.hk>

https://www.flickr.com/people/samsonso_photography/ 

Crowned hornbill



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 2015 Annual report for that. - Ed.)

January

- ▶ A curious feature of the previous year was the number of “blockers” (species not recorded in many years) which turned up – seven in all. The present year started in the same vein, with two further blockers in the first month - a **Eurasian Black Vulture** (sadly found moribund) near Stanley on 15th, the first record since 1996, and a **Common Swift** at San Tin from 19th-26th (PJL), the first since 1997 and only the 3rd for Hong Kong. The month also yielded three other rarities - a **Purple Swamphen** at Long Valley from 9th to 14th (hdm, PMW et al), the 4th for Hong Kong, a first-winter **Relict Gull** in front of the Mai Po boardwalk from 11th to 20th (JGH, TML et al), a 7th record, and a female **White-tailed Robin** at Tai Lam CP on 19th (JAA), a potential 3rd-8th record pending results of a review – and brought further reports of three rarities found in the previous month, the **Brown-chested Jungle Flycatcher** at Wo Chai Shan, Kowloon again on 3rd (WD), the redhead Smew at Mai Po on several dates up to 17th (JL) and the **Short-eared Owl** at Mai Po again on 21st (JAA).
- ▶ Other rarer species reported were a **Japanese Grosbeak** at Airfield Road, Sek Kong from 10th to the end of the month (jsk, PMW, JGH et al), a superb male **Japanese Robin** at Tai Po Kau on 11th (John C) and a **Baikal Bush Warbler** trapped at Mai Po on 21st (PJL), the third individual there since September, whilst the **White-spectacled Warbler** found at Tai Po Kau the previous month was again seen there on several dates up to 31st (JAA, CT, TML, AB).
- ▶ Waterbird numbers were again low in Deep Bay, but sightings from the Mai Po boardwalk included two **Pallas’s Gulls** and a **Slaty-backed Gull** on 11th (IT). At Long Valley, a **Ruddy-breasted Crake** and up to two **Eastern Water Rails** were seen on several dates up to at least 17th (KK).
- ▶ Coverage of shrubland and forest areas brought reports of an **Orange-headed Thrush** and four **Mugimaki Flycatchers** at Mui Wo, Lantau on 1st (JAA), 17 **Pale Thrushes** at Po Toi on 8th (GW), a **Forest Wagtail** near Tai Po Kau on 12th (KB), 20 **Tristram’s Buntings** at Tai Lam CP on 19th (JAA), seven **Common Rosefinches** at Airfield Road on 21st (AB) and a **Bay Woodpecker** at Ng Tung Chai on 31st (JAA). **Pallas’s Leaf Warblers** and **Daurian Redstarts** were widespread, but **thrushes** (except for Pale on Po Toi), **Red-flanked Bluetails** and **Rufous-tailed Robins** were all hard to come by.
- ▶ Among other birds reported in the month were five **Ancient Murrelets** in the East Lamma Channel on 6th (GW), a female **Bull-headed Shrike** and a **Dusky Thrush** at Ho Man Tin also on 6th (starfish), single **Red-breasted Flycatchers** at Cheung Chau on 10th (MDW) and Mai Po on 17th (PJL), a **Brown Wood Owl** at Lam Tsuen on 29th (DT) and a **Buff-bellied Pipit** at Chek Lap Kok on 30th (EMSK).


February

- ▶ With the weather remaining pleasantly dry and mild, it turned out to be a good month for rare warblers, with a **Grey-crowned Warbler** found near Pak Sha O on 22nd (GJC), a potential 2nd record, and a **Chinese Leaf Warbler**, a potential 4th record, at Pak Ngau Shek on 9th (JAA).
There were also reports of a **Hume’s Leaf Warbler** at Lead Mine Pass on 10th (JAA) and a **Pale-footed Bush Warbler** at Luk Keng on 24th (JAA), both potential 9th-10th records on latest ever winter dates, the former by 5 days and the latter by 7 weeks.
- ▶ Other rarities were a **Barred Cuckoo Dove** at Kadoorie FBG on 6th (JAA), a female **White-bellied Green Pigeon** at Airfield Road the same day (per PJL), and a **Long-billed Plover** at Lok Ma Chau on 16th (PJL), all potential 6th-7th records.
In addition, the discovery of a pristine first-winter **White-capped Redstart** at Pak Mong, North Lantau on 12th (per AB), which remained until at least 21st (EMSK), raised hopes of an upgrade to Category I for the species, whilst a small falcon, probably a **Merlin**, was seen briefly at Mai Po on 4th (PJL). **Merlins** are extremely rare south of the Yangtse and as yet unrecorded in Hong Kong.
- ▶ Following the Tai Po Kau record in January, the month brought two further reports of **Japanese Robin**, at Kadoorie FBG on 3rd (per TML) and at Sunset Peak, Lantau on 14th (EMSK), making this one of the best winters for the species since the early 1990s.



- ▶ Other notable forest/shrubland birds found included an **Orange-headed Thrush** at Shing Mun on 5th (act130), a **Red-breasted Flycatcher** at Cheung Chau the same day (MDW), a female **Chestnut-bellied Rock Thrush** at Kadoorie FBG on 6th (JAA), a female **Fujian Niltava** at Pak Sha O on 7th (GJC), and a pale-phase **Crested Honey Buzzard** at Tai Po Kau on 12th (TML, YM) followed by a dark-phase individual there on 15th (P&MW).
- ▶ Up to three puzzling laughingthrushes which resembled **Black-throated Laughingthrush** but were browner and may have been of the distinctive Hainan subspecies *monachus* ("**Swinhoe's Laughingthrush**"), in which case they were of ex-captive origins, were noted at Tai Po Kau Headland, Sunset Peak and North Lantau on various dates in the month and also in January (RB, EMSK, AB, JAA). At open-country sites, single **Bull-headed Shrikes** were found at Pak Sha O on 14th (GJC) and Long Valley on 28th (MK), and a **Long-billed Dowitcher** was at Mai Po on 19th and 21st (JAA, JGH).
- ▶ Key birds which remained into February from earlier in the winter included the **Smew** at Mai Po until at least 8th (IT), the **Chestnut-crowned** and **White-spectacled Warblers** at Tai Po Kau until 4th (DAD) and 15th (P&MW), respectively, the **White-tailed Robin** at Pak Sha O on 5th (JAA) and 14th (GJC), one or two **Northern Lapwings** at Mai Po until 21st (DT, JGH), the **Relict Gull** and two **Pallas's Gulls** in Deep Bay to the end of the month (TML, Morten) and at least one **Eastern Water Rail** and one **Ruddy-breasted Crake** at Long Valley until 28th (MK).
- ▶ The month concluded with a report of a **Grey Nightjar** vocalising at Pak Sha O on 28th (GJC), quite an early date.

March

- ▶ A period of sustained easterly winds at the month's end brought two potential additions to the Hong Kong list - an Ijima's Leaf Warbler photographed at Po Toi on 29th (WYY) and seen again on 31st (MW, WAP) and into early April and a Brown-eared Bulbul at Chai Wan on 31st (photographer?). [Ed. Unclear at present whether photo of latter is definitely from HK. GW is on the case]
- ▶ Other rarities and sub-rarities found in the month were a **Purple Swamphen** at Nam Chung from 15th-17th (RWL, JGH, MH), the second individual of the year and possibly only the 4th record for Hong Kong, a male **Fujian Niltava** at Ng Tung Chai on 2nd (JAA), two adult **Vega Gulls** in front of the Mai Po boardwalk on 11th and 13th (RWL, JGH), up to two **Mrs Gould's Sunbirds** at Tai Po Kau and Kadoorie FBG between 13th and 17th (peter2014, jsk.ppp, leo2012) and a female **Chestnut-bellied Rock Thrush** at Kadoorie FBG on 14th (jsk.ppp).
- ▶ One record count was reported - 24 **Mountain Tailorbirds**, all heard, beside sections of the Red, Blue and Brown Walks at Tai Po Kau on 24th (RWL) - and three species were found on earliest or latest dates - a **Radde's Warbler** at Magazine Gap on 13th (MT), the latest in winter by 12 days, a **Grey-faced Buzzard** at Sam A Tsuen on 10th (GW) and an **Asian Dowitcher** at Mai Po on 21st (KL), the earliest in spring by 3 days and 1 day, respectively. In addition, a **Hodgson's Hawk Cuckoo** heard at Tai Po Kau on 21st (RWL) equalled the earliest spring date and a **Hainan Blue Flycatcher** singing at Pak Sha O on 7th (GJC) was on an unusually early date for such behaviour.
- ▶ Among first reports of the year of regular spring migrants and summer visitors were single **Large Hawk Cuckoos** at Ng Tung Chai and Yung Shue O on 4th (JAA, DT), five **Oriental Pratincoles** at Mai Po on 2nd (MH), a **Blue-and-white Flycatcher** at Tai Po Kau on 18th (GW), a **Slaty-legged Crake** at Wu Kau Tang on 21st (HKBWS), a **Black-naped Oriole** at Mai Po on 22nd (HKBWS), a **Ferruginous Flycatcher** at Po Toi on 24th (GW), six **Blue-tailed Bee-eaters** at Mai Po on 28th (WWF), a **Grey Nightjar** at Pak Sha O on 29th (GJC) and a **Narcissus Flycatcher** at Chek Lap Kok on 30th (EMSK).
- ▶ Migrants seen at sea off Po Toi included a **Grey-headed Lapwing** on 5th and eight **Streaked Shearwaters**, three **Ancient Murrelets**, 95 **Heuglin's Gulls**, one **Mongolian Gull** and five **Black-tailed Gulls** on 6th (GW).
- ▶ Two of the rarer owls reported were a **Brown Fish Owl** at Yung Shue O on 17th (DT) and a **Brown Wood Owl** at Tai Po Kau on 21st (HKBWS).
- ▶ An **Eastern Marsh Harrier** was photographed preying a **Little Egret** at Mai Po on 14th (oldcar), an unusually large prey item, though there is a previous instance of a **Eurasian Wigeon** being taken.
- ▶ Finally, birds recorded earlier in the winter which remained into March included the **White-spectacled Warbler** and **Chestnut-crowned Warbler** at Tai Po Kau on 1st (P&MW), the **hybrid harrier** at Mai Po on 2nd (DAD), the female **Bull-headed Shrike** at Ho Man Tin up to 17th (web), the **Relict Gull** in Deep Bay on 4th (DAD), the **White-tailed Robin** at Pak Sha O on 7th (GJC), the **Red-breasted Flycatcher** at Cheung Chau on 8th and 9th (MDW), the **Eastern Water Rail** at Long Valley until 28th (web), the **Chinese Barbet** at Tai Po Kau from 19th to the end of the month (IT), up to three **Pallas's Gulls** in Deep Bay throughout the month (P&MW) and the **White-capped Redstart** at Pak Mong again on 31st (YM). 

Indoor Meetings				
Date	Time	Topic	Speakers	Venue
6/8/2015 (Thu)	1915-2115	Magic Moths - An Introduction to Moths (English with English powerpoint)	Mr. Roger Kendrick -Consultant, C & R Wildlife -Co-founder, HK Lepidopterists' Society -Founder, Asian Lepidoptera Conservation Symposium	HKBWS office

HKBWS office : 7C, V Ga Building, 532 Castle Peak Road, Lai Chi Kok, Kowloon

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The Hong Kong Bird Watching Society Bird Watching Tours Jul – Dec 2015

Outings				
Date	Duration	Time and site	Difficulties (1...3)	Target species
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	Nam Sang Wai (Crested Bulbul Club Activity) (08:00 V Cuisine Restaurant, Exit G2, Yuen Long West Rail Station)	☆	Waterbirds
13/9/2015 (Sun)	0800 - 1200	Shing Mun (08:00 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 exit), OR 09:00 Mai Po carpark, end 15:00 Mai Po, 16:00 Kowloon Tong)	☆☆	Waterbirds
3/10/2015 (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
11/10/2015 (Sun)	0800 - 1600	Po Toi Island (08:00 Aberdeen Pier (Public Ferry Pier to Po Toi Island)) Note: Participants have to pay for their own ferry fee. The returning time is not fixed, so participants may decide their own returning time.	☆☆	Migrants
18/10/2015 (Sun)	0800 - 1200	Long Valley (08:00 Pavilion beside public toilet at Yin Kong Village)	☆☆	Farmland and water birds
25/10/2015 (Sun)	TBC	Wild Card Day (Details will be announced on Oct 23 on Discussion Forum)		
31/10/2015 (Sat)	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
7/11/2015 (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
8/11/2015 (Sun)	0800 - 1600	Po Toi Island (08:00 Aberdeen Pier (Ferry pier to Po Toi Island)) Note: Participants have to pay for their own ferry fee. The returning time is not fixed, participants can decide their own returning time.	☆☆	Migrants
15/11/2015 (Sun)	0800 - 1200	Tai Po Kau (08:00 Tai Po Kau carpark)	☆☆☆	Forest birds
21/11/2015 (Sat)	TBC	Wild Card Day (Details will be announced on Nov 19 on Discussion Forum)		
29/11/2015 (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
5/12/2015 (Sat)	0800 - 1300	Long Valley (Crested Bulbul Club Activity) (08:00 Outside Maxim's MX, Sheng Shui Rail Station)	☆☆	Farmland and water birds
13/12/2015 (Sun)	0800 - 1200	Pui O (08:00 Exit B, Tung Chung MTR Station)	☆	Wintering forest & farmland birds
19/12/2015 (Sat)	0800 - 1200	Tai Po Kau (08:00 Tai Po Kau carpark)	☆☆☆	Forest birds
27/12/2015 (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

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.



漁鷗
何建業
米埔

Pallas's Gull
Kinni Ho Kin Yip
Mai Po

21/03/2015
DSLR Camera, 600mm f/4 lens + 1.4x teleconverter



鬚浮鷗
譚錫朋
米埔

Whiskered Tern
Tam Sik Pang
Mai Po

27/09/2014
DSLR Camera, 150 - 600mm f/5-6.3 lens



遺鷗
陳士飛
米埔

Relict Gull
Thomas Chan
Mai Po

22/01/2015

DSLR Camera, 350mm lens + 2 (1.4x teleconverter)



藍喉太陽鳥
Mandy Chan
嘉道理農場

Mrs. Gould's Sunbird
Mandy Chan
Kadoorie Farm and Botanic Garden

21/03/2015
Camera, 500mm f/4 lens