



# HKBWS

香 港 觀 鳥 會  
The Hong Kong Bird Watching Society





白鶴 Siberian Crane

潘士強 Jason Pun

米埔 Mai Po

11/12/2016

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# The Hong Kong Bird Watching Society

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

## bulletin 243

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### The 3<sup>rd</sup> NT Fishpond Festival ~ 12 Feb 2017

The 3<sup>rd</sup> NT Fishpond Festival has been organised in Tai Sang Wai again to promote the conservation value of the fishpond in Northwest New Territories, Secretary for the Environment Mr KS Wong was invited as the officiating guest. More than four hundred people enjoyed various activities in the festival.



Guests of the opening ceremony (fr. left) Dr. Ng Cho Nam, Mr. Man Ping Nam, Mr. Pang Kwai Hung, The Hon. Stephen Ho, BBS, Mr. Lai Shue Cheung, Mr. KS Wong, GBS, JP, Mr. CY Lam, Dr. Leung Siu Fai, Ms. Candy Chea, Mr. MS Cheung, Mr. Lau Kin Wai



## C O N S E R V A T I O N S C H E M E

**The 3<sup>rd</sup> New Territories Fishpond Festival**

The Society would like to express its deepest gratitude to all the individuals and organisations that supported the festival activities.

Sponsored by: Environment and Conservation Fund



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**The 3<sup>rd</sup> New Territories Fishpond Festival Carnival****Co-organiser:**

Hong Kong N.T. Fish Culture Association

**Supporting Organisations:**

Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department, Tai San Wai Tsuen, WWF For Nature Hong Kong, San Tin Rural Committee, Yuen Long District Council, Kong Yeah, 友誼軍, Lam Pei Sugar Ink Studio, Lai Tak Fai, Larry, Alice Yeung, Gale Lok, Globe Slicker, Hong Kong St. John Ambulance

**Guest of Honour:**

Mr KS Wong, G.B.S., JP, Secretary for the Environment,

Other Guest: Dr. Leung Siu-fai, Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Mr. Lai Loi Chau, Hong Kong N.T. Fish Culture Association

Mr. Lai Shue Cheung, Hong Kong N.T. Fish Culture Association

Mr. Pang Kwai-hung, Hong Kong N.T. Fish Culture Association

Hon Steven Ho Chun-yin, BBS, Lego Member

Mr. Man Ping-nam, MH, San Tin Rural Committee

Mr. Tobi Lau, WWF-Hong Kong Senior Conservation Officer (Local Biodiversity),

Ms. Candy Chea, famous media people,

Mr. Cheung Man-sun, Former Assistant Director, Broadcasting

Mr. Lau Kin Wai, Founder of Kin's Kitchen

Mr. Lam Chiu Ying, Honorary President of HKBWS

Mr. Lau Wai Man, Chairman of HKBWS

Dr. Ng Cho Nam, Vice-chairman of HKBWS

Mr. Kwan Wing-hung, Hong Kong N.T. Fish Culture Association

Mr. Wong Chi Wan, Hong Kong N.T. Fish Culture Association

Mr. To Ka-lun, Yuen Long District Council Member

Mr. Yeung Shui Leung, Yeungs Marine Products Ltd

Mr. Yeung Shui Ping, Yeungs Marine Products Ltd

Ms. Fung Heung-lan & her family members

**Grey Mullet Sponsor:**

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**Famous People like Famous Fish****The chefs:**

Dr Ko Wing-man BBS, JP; Secretary for Food and Health

Dr Leung Siu-fai, Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Mr Wan Tat Kong

Mr Leung Man To

Ms Candy Chea Shuk Mui

Mr C.Y. Lam

**Guests:**

Mr Lai Loi Chau, Mr Lai Shue Cheung, Mr Yeung Shui Leung,

Mr Yeung Shui Ping

**Venue Sponsor:**

Yeungs Marine Products Ltd

**Grey Mullet Cooking Competition****Adjudicators:**

Mr Lau Kin Wai, founder of Kin's Kitchen

Mr Wan Tat Kong, Chef

Mr Lai Shue Cheung, President, Hong Kong N.T. Fish Culture Association

Mr Victor Kwong, Corporate Health, Safety & Environment Department, The Hong Kong and China Gas Company Limited.  
Dr. Ng Cho Nam, Vice-chairman, HKBWS

**Venue Sponsor:**

Town Gas Cooking Centre, The Hong Kong and China Gas Company Limited

**Fishpond cuisine & eco tour**

Chef: KONG YEAH

Venue Sponsor: Mr. Chan Kam-tai

**Volunteer**

Thank you so much for helping us! The event would not have been so successful without your support!

## FARMFEST 2017 ~ 30/12/2016 - 2/1/2017

The highlight of our booth in the Farmfest is the light preserved Grey Mullet. Different to traditional style of preserved fish, this slightly salty and half dried Grey Mullet stimulated our tastebuds with a new flavour.



Volunteers selling preserved Grey Mullet

Drying the Grey Mullet under the sun

## Fishpond Cuisine & Eco Tour 15 Jan 2017

Using Grey Mullet as the main feature to promote local food products, the chef from "Kong Yeah" produced a mouthwatering feast using the best local ingredients.



A fishpond feast with Grey Mullet and other local food source



(Fr. left) Mr. Lai Shue Cheung, Dr. Ng Cho Nam, Mr. Lai Loi Chau, Mr. Leung Man To, Mr. Yeung Shui Leung, Dr. Ko Wing Man, Mr. Wan Tat Kong, Mr. Stephen Yeung, Ms Candy Chea, Mr C.Y. Lam & Dr Leung Siu-fai

## Grey Mullet New Style ~ 19 Dec 2016

Celebrity's Secret Tips - Secretary for Food and Health Dr Ko Wing-man together with Dr Leung Siu-fai, Director of AFCD, Mr Wan Tat Kong, Mr Leung Man To, Ms Candy Chea, Mr C.Y. Lam made three different dishes featuring Grey Mullet in order to promote local freshwater fish and fishponds which are an important part of wetland conservation.



Dr. Ko's style of Grey Mullet using salted lemon



Mr. Leung's "Hakkas" sauce Grey Mullet



Mr. Wan's BBQ Grey Mullet

## Grey Mullet New Style - Cooking Competition ~ 19 Feb 2017

The finale of promoting local freshwater fish was the cooking competition. Fifteen contestants with fifteen distinctive dishes featuring Grey Mullet surprised all the adjudicators. The recipe of all dishes will be announced later.



Adjudicators (from left) Mr. Victor Kwong, Mr. Wan Tat Kong, Mr. Lau Kin Wai, Mr. Lai Shue Cheung & Dr. Ng Cho Nam



The Champion Ms. WM Tang



The 1st runner-up Ms. Chow Ying



The 2nd runner-up Ms. KM Lau



# 2015 - 2017 Nature Conservation Management for Long Valley



@ Sam Chan

**Yellow-breasted Bunting** - Mr John Allcock has made the highest count of 28 Yellow-breasted Bunting in Long Valley last Autumn.

## Research on birds in Long Valley - Citizen scientists recruitment Mar-Apr 2017

Bird research might be regarded as a professional job which general public and students cannot get involved. In fact, by simple observation together with records of surrounding environmental information, data analysis can be conducted. Even secondary school students could become citizen scientists. In order to involve youngsters in bird research, HKBWS and the Conservancy Association have invited secondary schools to participate in this research on birds in Long Valley. 6 schools with 7 teams have joined and learned about the environment, ecology as well as common birds in Long Valley. They will be conducting a bird census to study the relationship of birds and different habitats.



## Harvest Fest 2017 8 & 14 Jan 2017

The annual Harvest Fest was held on 8<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> of January 2017. Over 1,000 participants joined the 11<sup>th</sup> Harvest Fest. Thank you so much for all your support and participation.



Harvest Fest 2017

## The 5<sup>th</sup> Long Valley Eco-guide Basic Training Course Nov 2016 - Apr 2017

The 5<sup>th</sup> Long Valley Eco-guide Basic Training Course is organised in Nov-Dec 2016. 29 students have finished a 4-week training and passed the assessment. They are going to bring secondary school students to visit Long Valley during Jan-Apr 2017.



Eco-guide training

# Discover the Urban Nature of Hong Kong eum City Sparrow Census



## Sparrow Census 2017 May & Jul 2017

By counting their numbers and analysing the trend of changes of Tree Sparrow, we can understand the quality of living environment in a highly developed metropolis such as Hong Kong. Participation is open for application now and you are welcome to join us. The survey dates are on 7<sup>th</sup> May and 2<sup>nd</sup> July.

## Urban eco-ambassadors scheme 2016-17

Around 100 secondary school students from 10 schools are trained on urban ecology and basic identification of urban wildlife. After 2 months training started in October, students are required to conduct a 3-month baseline survey in a selected community and submit a bird nest box proposal and implement the approved proposal afterwards.



**Kindergarten Colouring Contest:** The objective of the colouring contest is to raise awareness of Urban Wildlife in Hong Kong urban areas.

**Primary School Radio Drama Contest:** The theme of the radio drama contest is to encourage students to understand the high biodiversity of Hong Kong urban area which also need our concern in order to conserve it. We are glad to invite Mr. Yip Sai Hung who was the radio drama director of RTHK to give us a valuable talk on radio drama to the students and teachers.

**Secondary School Poster Design Contest:** By holding this poster design competition, we aim to let the students to learn that 'wildlife is all around us'!



Seminar for the Urban Eco-ambassadors



Eco-ambassadors having field study



## Nature Education Diversity in Schools - Kindergartens

Nov 2016 - Oct 2018

As a part of a series of in-school education activities, both indoor and outdoor activities are held in kindergartens to introduce biodiversity and nature of Hong Kong. The activities aim to stimulate children to explore and protect the natural world in everyday life.

This programme is one step forward in child education for The Society. The enrollment of schools for the first activity period was overwhelming. We are going to visit different kindergartens in the coming year and we are looking forward to planting a seed of loving nature in children's minds.



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## The 16th Inter-school Bird Race

Nov - Dec 2016

33 teams from 22 secondary schools joined this year's Bird Race. The winning school has identified 65 bird species.

Trying their best, looking for birds!



Come, here they are!



# 香港鳥類生態藝術

## Hong Kong Bird Eco-Art

「香港鳥類生態藝術」以藝術聯繫人與自然生態，以市民最容易接受的媒介 - 「攝影」為主題，透過視覺藝術的創作，表達對當地保育的關懷。

2017 2月

「跟著港鐵去觀鳥」攝影教育  
Go Bird Watching by MTR Photography Education

3月

鳥類攝影教育普及講座  
鳥類及生物多樣性普及考察活動

4月

生態藝術攝影教育工作坊：動感繪鳥 (四天)  
鳥類攝影教育課程 (七天)

5月

生態藝術攝影教育工作坊：光影圖象

6月1-9日

「跟著港鐵去觀鳥」攝影藝術展  
展覽地點 PopCorn

活動詳情及報名  
踴躍有獎，先到先得

查詢電話 2377 4387

education@hkpbs.org.hk  
(請以中英文填寫表格)

## Hong Kong Park Green Hunt 7 & 14 Jan 2017

A total of 23 teams from 12 primary schools joined this year's event. They finally spotted a nest of Short-nosed Fruit Bat inside the park this year. The bird hats produced by the students became more and more attractive.



The winner: The Verditer Flycatcher of the Fung Kai LYS Mem. Sch.



## The Hong Kong Bird Atlas 2016-19

The Hong Kong Bird Atlas started about a year ago and the survey work is in full swing. About 300 survey grids out of the total 1,591 grids have been finished by our volunteers in the first breeding season and the winter atlas is now on-going. The next breeding season is coming soon, we need more surveyors to conduct the surveys in Sai Kung and Lantau Island, please contact us if you would like to participate, thank you!!



## Explore the Nature in Silence Nov-Dec 2016

In order to raise the awareness of hearing impaired persons towards biodiversity and nature conservation, a series of lectures and outings were held. A workshop was held to instruct the sign language interpreters in the use of ecological words and terms.



## Study of the Day Time Movement of Great Cormorants in the Deep Bay Area in 2016-17 Winter Winter 2016

We have a study of the day time movement of Great Cormorants in the Deep Bay area this winter, which has been commissioned by the AFCD. This study includes night-roost surveys, flightline surveys and daytime activity surveys, in order to study the daytime movement and activity pattern of this abundant winter visitor. If any Great Cormorants outside Deep Bay area, you are welcome to report to us through facebook message or BBS. Such information is very important for understanding the home range and activity pattern of this species.





### Acknowledgement

Your Society is celebrating its 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year with various activities planned. The celebration kicks off with this logo designed by our member Ms Siu Ka Po.

### Special Bird News

A mature and a juvenile Siberian Crane (critically endangered) were seen in Maipo and Deep Bay in Dec 2016. This was only the second record of this species in HK, following a lone juvenile seen in 2002.



### Obituary

We were sorry to learn that Mr. Michael Webster, our former Chairman, Hon. Recorder, Hon. Treasurer and Hon. Member of the Society, passed away in Thailand on 25<sup>th</sup> February 2017. We would like to extend our heartfelt sympathy to the members of Michael's family. His tremendous contributions to the development of the Society will be remembered. Below are the positions Mr Webster held in the society while he was living in Hong Kong:

1966-72	Hon. Recorder
1972-73	Hon. Recorder & Hon Treasurer
1974	Acting Chairman & Hon Treasurer
1975-76	Chairman & Hon Treasurer
1977	Hon Treasurer
1978-81	Chairman & Hon Treasurer

### Bird Watching Course Feb – to Mar 2017

The Elementary Bird Watching Course for Beginners held in Spring 2017 has been completed and given training to 28 birders & members on bird ecology, bird watching and identification skills. The course included four lectures and five outings.

### Fly, Kite Fly ~ 28 Dec 2016

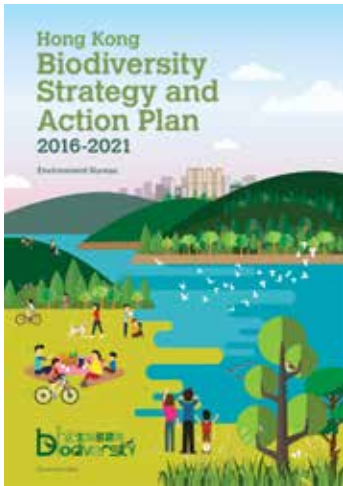
It was our honour to have Mr Liang Chieh-Te, director of the film "Fly, Kite Fly" joining the first featuring of this masterpiece in Hong Kong and sharing a conservation message of Black Kite in Taiwan on 28 Dec. This film is also the winner of the "Best Asian Film" of the 2016 ART&TUR International Tourism Film Festival and the "Environmental Conservation Award" of the 2015 Japan Wildlife Film Festival International.

Director Liang and our staff



Director Leung sharing the happiness and the bitterness of the shooting





## Hong Kong's first city-level BSAP is finalized and launched!

After the Society's years of active participation in the formulation of the plan, the Government finally launched Hong Kong's first Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (BSAP) for 2016 to 2021 on 21 December 2016. The Society welcomes the plan and we are pleased that some of the recommendations put forward by the Society together with various environmental NGOs and academic sectors were adopted in the final plan. We will continue to work with the Government departments and other stakeholders to conserve and promote the biodiversity in and around Hong Kong. At the same time, we will keep monitoring the implementation progress of the BSAP as well as voicing our concerns on various development projects/plans which threaten the city's biodiversity.

Hong Kong Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (2016-21): [http://www.afcd.gov.hk/english/conservation/Con\\_hkbsap/con\\_hkbsap.html](http://www.afcd.gov.hk/english/conservation/Con_hkbsap/con_hkbsap.html)

## Proposed conservation measures finally appear in the CE's Policy Address - but maybe in exchange for the development of Country Parks!

### HKBWS's response to the Policy Address 2017

(18<sup>th</sup> Jan 2017) The Hong Kong Bird Watching Society is pleased that conservation measures proposed by environmental NGOs for years or even decades are finally incorporated in today's policy address, including the non-in-situ land exchange for the conservation of Sha Lo Tung and the establishment of a nature conservation trust. However, we are worried that these measures are actually a compromise to facilitate development of Country Parks.

HKBWS, together with other environmental NGOs, has been actively proposing conservation measures to protect areas of high ecological value in Hong Kong. We are delighted that the Government finally decided to use non-in-situ land exchange to protect Sha Lo Tung and to resolve the decades-long conflict.

Moreover, for the past 12 years or so, environmental NGOs has been actively proposing the establishment of a nature conservation trust, similar to the National Trust in the UK. We strongly support the establishment of a committee to study the resources and legislation required for the fund.

We consider these two measures are important to conserve private lands of high ecological value while respecting the development rights of the landowner.

We welcome the Government's pilot active conservation projects in the key areas of high ecological value on Lantau (e.g. Tai O, Shui Hau and Pui O). The designation of the Robin's Nest Country Park, which is an important terrestrial



ecological corridor between Shenzhen and Hong Kong, is also supported.

On one hand, the Government promised to protect more land with high ecological value and increase the area of Country Parks; but on the other hand, the development of public housing and elderly homes at the periphery of country parks with relatively low ecological value will be explored. The Government's track records of rezoning Green Belts of "relatively low ecological value" for development do not give us a cause of confidence or support in such a land use policy.

Furthermore, the whole context is framed to create an unnecessary dilemma between protection of country parks and housing development. We worry that this would mislead the public that country park is an important and key land resource for the development of public housing and social facilities.



## CEPF Civil Society Organization Development Training Workshop

The Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) supported project "Empowerment of Local Communities to Address the Problem of Illegal Hunting in South China" is now coming to the third year. The programme has aided the rise of some of the bird watching groups. The last training workshop under the programme was held in Haikou, Hainan, between 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> December, 2016, with a theme of "Organizational Development". In total, 22 participants came from 11 newly established bird watching societies and groups from South China completed the workshop. We were honoured to invite Ms. Dong Jiangtian from the Shenzhen Bird Watching Society, Mr. Shen You from Chengdu Bird Watching Society and Mr. Yu Yat-tung, our research manager, as the workshop tutors. The workshop used real life examples from the bird watching societies to demonstrate strategic planning and management for organizations, fund raising and finance management, followed by in-depth discussions and sharing of real situations. A Wechat group was set up after the workshop so that participants could keep in contact and enhance the connectivity of different societies in the region. Here, we also express our gratitude to the volunteers from the Hainan Bird Watching Society for co-organising the workshop.



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Group discussion during the training workshop



Team building exercise during the training workshop

## Another good year for Spoon-billed Sandpiper in South China

After three years of capacity building in South China, we can see the growth of the local bird watching societies and volunteers who can continue to help promoting bird conservation in the area. This year, we conducted the joint international Spoon-billed Sandpiper Winter Census again with the Zhanjiang Bird Watching Society and Zhanjiang Mangrove National Nature Reserve. We were glad to have students from the Sun Yat-sen University to join us this time. The survey was carried out between 13<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> January this year. During the six days' survey in Southwest Guangdong, we recorded a total of 23 Spoon-billed Sandpipers:

- 2 from Xitou, Yangjiang, Guangdong
- 1 from Dong Hai Island, Zhanjiang, Guangdong
- 20 from Leizhou, Guangdong (recorded by 3 teams)

In addition to these results, there was one SBS sighted in Beihai and another one found in Beilun Estuary National Nature Reserve in Guangxi Province. Good news from this trip was that there was no single mist net spotted in the surveyed area in Leizhou area! Although one threat can now be considered as removed in this area, another emerged. We found that there is a sign of invasion of cordgrass *Spartina alterniflora*, which is posing a potential threat to this important Leizhou mudflat.

We thank the Zhanjiang Bird Watching Society, Zhanjiang Mangrove National Nature Reserve, students from Sun Yat-sen University to help with the survey in bad weather and working long hours in the field!



Survey at Leizhou mudflat

## Major Habitat Restoration Work – Summer 2017

### Gei wai #16/17

Gei wai #16/17 could well be the most popular gei wai for waterbirds within Mai Po Nature Reserve. It not only serves as the high-tide roosting site, but also attracts ducks and Black-faced Spoonbill during the winter. However, terrestrial vegetation has invaded to the open shallow water area and the artificial islands have been gradually washed away by strong winds and water currents, hence reducing the favourable habitat for waterbirds. Large-scale restoration work is going to be carried out this summer. The existing islands will be restored and new small islands will be built in front of the bird watching hides. Vegetation invading open water areas will be cleared and one side of the perimeter channel will be desilted. The restoration is anticipated to start after the spring passage shorebirds depart, and is expected to be completed within 3 months.

### Gei wai #11

This Gei wai supports vast numbers of fish, shrimp and other aquatic fauna, which are an important food source for waterbirds. In order to bring nutrients into the gei wai for the fish, shrimps, and so on, water exchange is carried out twice a month in each gei wai. Unfortunately, the water current also brings sediment from Deep Bay into the gei wai, and the gei wai water channel has gradually become shallow and unsuitable habitat for shrimp and fish. This summer, the water channel in Gei wai #11 is going to be desilted. At the same time, some open water areas in front of Hide #8 which has been invaded by reeds is going to be restored.



Satellite image of GW#16/17 in 2005, when islands in front of Hide #7 first made.  
(Source: Google Earth)



Satellite image of GW#16/17 in 2016, islands in front of Hide #7 heavily washed away.  
(Source: Google Earth)



Waterbirds roosting at GW#16/17 during high tide (Credit: Neil Fifer)

### Pond #15b

The pond is going to be drained at the beginning of February and earthmoving work is expected to start in April. The perimeter bund will be strengthened and the middle island will be restored to attract more waterbird roosting. Open water areas invaded by vegetation will also be restored. It is anticipated that the work will finished before the wet season, so that the pond can be refilled with rainwater.



## 德國視得樂

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黑枕黃鸝 Black-naped Oriole

李偉仁 Li Wai Yan  
米埔 Mai Po  
25/09/2016  
DSLR Camera  
600mm f/4 lens



噪鵲 (先天性色素缺乏) Asian Koel (Leucistic)

陳兆源 Chan Siu Yuen  
米埔 Mai Po  
24/09/2016  
DSLR Camera  
800mm f/5.6 lens + 1.25x teleconverter



黃胸鷸 Buff-breasted Sandpiper

余伯全 Ractis John

新田 San Tin

23/12/2016

DSLR Camera

600mm f/4 lens + 1.4x teleconverter



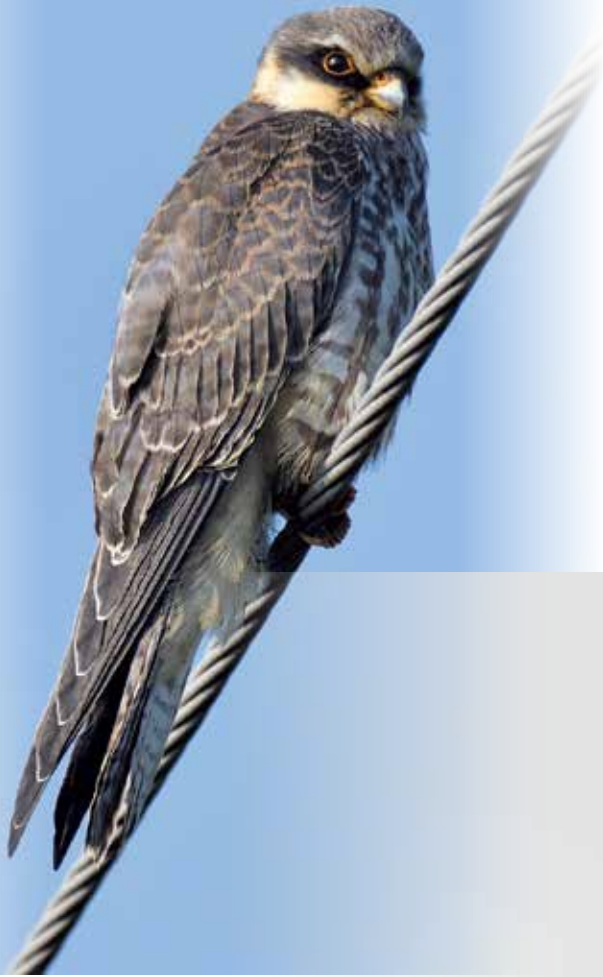
細嘴鷗 Slender-billed Gull

駱正華 Lok Ching Wa Kevin  
米埔 Mai Po  
28/10/2016  
DSLR Camera  
400mm f/2.8 lens + 2x teleconverter



遺鷗 Relict Gull

余伯全 Ractis John  
米埔 Mai Po  
24/12/2016  
DSLR Camera  
600mm f/4 lens + 1.4x teleconverter



**阿穆爾隼 Amur Falcon**

何錦榮 Ho Kam Wing  
壟原 Long Valley  
14/11/2016  
DSLR Camera  
600mm f/4 lens + 1.4x teleconverter



**燕隼 Eurasian Hobby**

梁振邦 Leung Chun Pong  
米埔 Mai Po  
22/10/2015  
DSLR Camera  
800mm f/5.6 lens

Uganda forest



021

## Unforgettable moment

*Baglafecht Weaver*

Text/Photo: Samson So

Natural ecology in East Africa is not limited to savanna and animal migration, this piece of land is one of the most biodiverse places on our globe. There are sea shores, lakes and wetlands at one extreme, on the other, mountains and savannas can also be found. Tropical rainforest and cloud forest are among the mysterious elements of the region, and I have been longing to visit these areas, too.

Tropical rainforest is distributed between a range of twenty degrees of North and South latitudes. There are three main areas, namely the Central South American region, South Asia and South East Asia region, and the Madagascar and African region. Mankind marks boundaries for these places, a man-made method to delineate different countries, yet natural ecological systems do not have borders. The African tropical rainforest starts with the equator, from Guinea in west Africa, to Congo and Democratic Republic of the Congo, further extends eastward to eastern Africa, Rwanda, Uganda, Tanzania and western Kenya. As this tropical rainforest is situated on hills, the

higher ground causes air moisture to precipitate as cloud and mist which differentiates it from lowland rainforest in South East Asia.

On my most recent East African forest trip, I had two main objectives. One of them, of course, was to see for myself the mountain gorillas (*Gorilla beringei beringei*) in the wild here in highland forest. Secondly, I wanted to observe more the unique forest bird species in this region. I departed from Kenya, and after two flights and an SUV for another two hours, I finally found myself at Virunga National Park, where the forest intersects western Uganda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. This piece of forest is the edge in the east connecting west African countries from Guinea to the equator forest in Congo Basin. From an ecological environment and biodiversity point of view, this region (comprising Uganda, Democratic Republic of the Congo and Rwanda) is the last habitat for the mountain gorilla now numbering less than 900 individuals. The area is

*Cinnamon chested Bee eater*



*Mountain gorilla is a completely vegetarian primate*





*Gorilla mother and her baby*



*Eastern Double collared Sunbird*

also the eastern fringe habitat for the East African subspecies of Chimpanzee.

Bird species depending on this forest environment include families commonly found in African and Asian areas, like hornbills, woodpeckers, barbets, sunbirds, bulbuls, and babblers. And I also hoped to see various turacos with their various eye-catching plumage colors. Turacos are birds endemic to the African continent. Savanna populations acquire greyish colours, whereas

those in forest are mainly green and purple-blue. They are embellished with red and yellow feathers, and bare skin. Although turacos have bright plumage and loud calls, they are forest-born and active in dense tree tops, it is not an easy thing to discover or photograph them.

It was still dark when I moved forward with the SUV along the winding mountainous trail to go to meet the tour guide and other team members at the entrance of the forest conservation zone. The air in the forest was exceptionally fresh in the morning, and the hills were shrouded in mist. The calls of Black-and-white Casqued Hornbills echoed through the woods, joyful laughter waking up all other wild animals and birds.

Amidst the chorus, the tour guide briefed us prior to hiking up the mountain gorilla track. Out of courtesy, I restrained myself from using binoculars to observe birds nearby while the introduction was underway, but I could not help noticing insects caught by Cinnamon-chested Bee-eaters and African Blue Flycatchers nearby. I also split a second to search the sky for all types of predators that might appear. While I was admiring a Mosque Swallow's lightning preying skill, the staff of the National Park had already begun to lead the team to walk into the dense wood.

*African Blue Flycatcher*



*Yellow rumped Tinkerbird*





Young mountain gorilla is eating now

I bumped up and down to get through the hilly slopes and could not help but respect the forest and wild animal protection people or research office staff. Through sun and rain, they had to work in this rugged terrain every single day. Suddenly I noted there was fresh faeces on the ground, meaning that an animal had just passed by. Judging from the shape and size (and plant debris contained), it belonged to an adult mountain gorilla. They are vegetarian animals, and will graze on over 140 types of vegetation, mainly leaves, buds and stems.

Dense bushes provide sufficient food for mountain gorillas and they also function as a protective shield for them, as an extremely endangered primate. After sliding down a steep slope, I peeped through twigs to see a young gorilla fetching leaves on a tree, there were two other baby gorillas on the same spot. A baby-carrying mother showed that the group has a chance to develop healthily. Nearby are family members at different ages, including the leader of the group – the male “silver-back” gorilla. Male gorillas weigh over 200 kilograms, the heaviest primate in the world. Being able to observe this gentle beast, being truly accepted by the real owner of the forest as a guest was the greatest of honours for a nature lover. Mountain gorillas have 98% of genes in common with humans, eye contact with them caused me to feel their spirits and reminded me that we human being are actually just another type of ape.

Every single nature journey I have made came with new experiences and understandings in a process of discovery and observation. I have promised myself that I must go back to this piece of forest, to search again for mountain gorillas (and the birds I missed, including the Great Blue Turaco that I was distracted from this time).

### Poem

Stay in the mountains for just for seven days, and world life will pass a thousand years.  
The blink of an eye in paradise, an age in earthliness.

Even though I was with the Mountain Gorillas for just an hour, it was an unforgettable bonding moment between humans and wildlife.



Note: Samson So has visited various African places more than 30 times since 2001.


For more pictures and passages shared by Samson So, please browse "Samson So Photography" and "Eco Institute Ecology" on Facebook.

Great Blue Turaco



Black and White Casqued Hornbill





*Upland forest at Baiyunzhang municipal level nature reserve. A wildlife corridor could connect such isolated forests with others.  
(by Captain Wong)*

## Hong Kong 'Breaking from Independence' — after connecting with Wutong Shan

Text/Photo: Captain Wong, Matthew Kwan and Siu Yuen

In December 2016, the Environment Bureau released its Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan. We believe conservationists are in a better position to comment on the plan as a whole. While the focus of this article is on the proposed “Enhance habitat connectivity and establish ecological corridors across the boundary” (Specific Action 4a, measures to enhance habitat connectivity for wildlife in Robin’s Nest/Wutong Shan and Deep Bay). This idea is nothing more than putting old wine in new bottles, it was first raised by the public back in 2003, then proposed officially by the government in 2010 (Planning Department’s Feasibility Study on “Land Use Planning for the Closed Area” -- Administrative Summary, page 11). Nonetheless, if the plan can be successfully executed, it will bring great benefit to wildlife living around that area.

The next question is, even if Wutong Shan and Robin’s Nest can be connected successfully, will the ecology of Hong Kong be able to “re-unify itself” (i.e. be connected once again with the other hill areas in Guangdong?) Will Hong Kong’s pythons, pangolins be able to travel through Wutong Shan and reunite with their relatives in Guangdong’s inner mountains? Will Silver Pheasants in Guangdong be able to travel through Wutong Shan and rebuild their homes here in Hong Kong? To find the answer, let’s turn to almighty Google and have a look at the land use pattern around the Wutong Shan region.

Prior to the map reading, please bear in mind that although Hong Kong, is a highly-urbanised city, it has been included by scientists as a part of the “Indo-Burma Biodiversity Hotspot” for its rich diversity of animals and plants, together with Guangdong and Guangxi, Yunnan, Southeast Asia, and Indochina. Therefore, if wildlife within this hotspot can be connected, it will surely be more effective in conserving these valuable species.

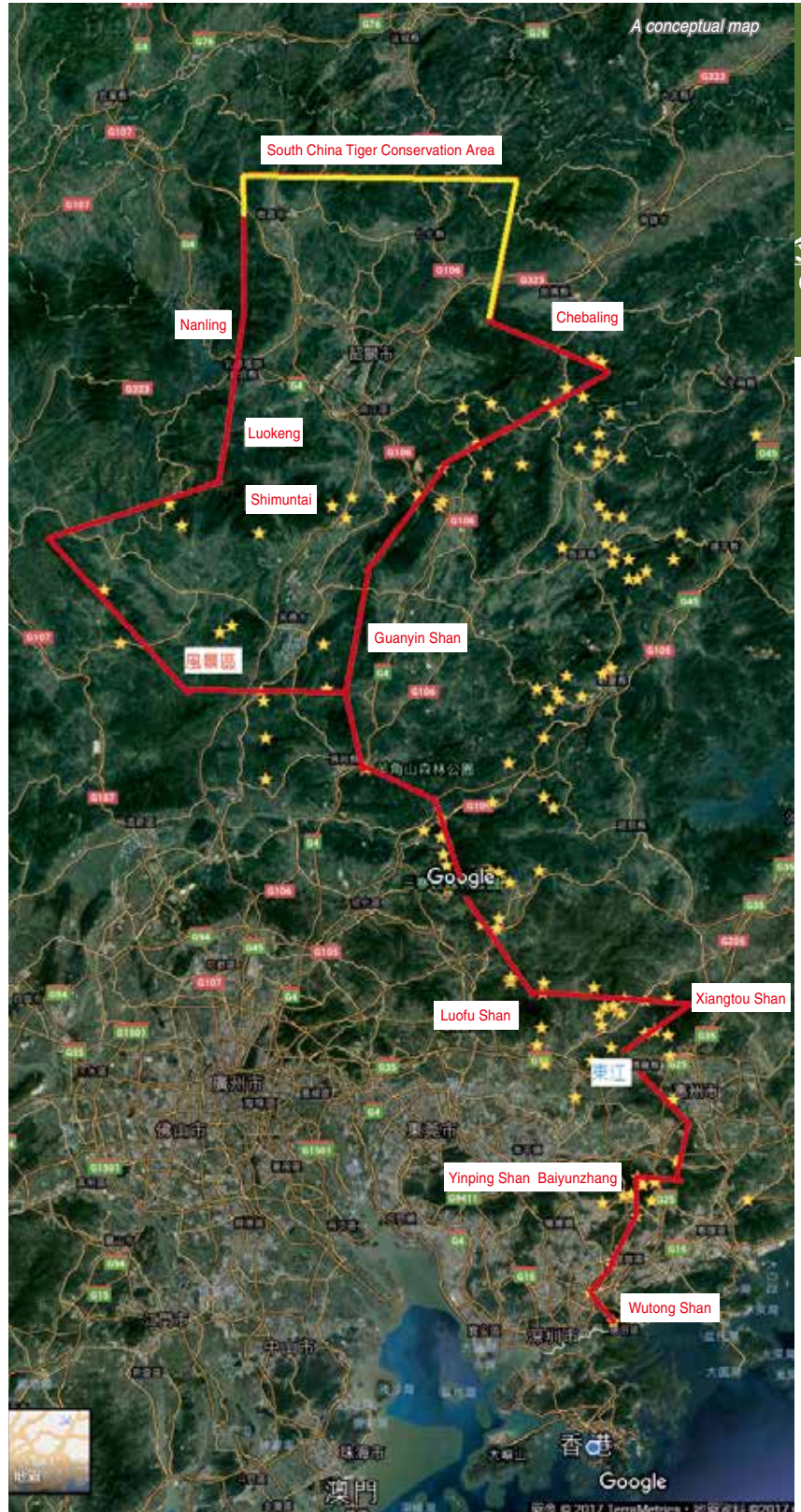
Now back on our focus: Is Wutong Shan connected to the inner mountain regions of Guangdong? Before the War, Hong Kong/Shenzhen is certainly ecologically connected with Guangdong inland (the classic case is the wintering of South China Tiger in Hong Kong every year). However, since Shenzhen’s development 40 years ago, almost every piece of lowland has already been urbanised. As seen from the Google map, the lowland behind Wutong Shan (ie Shenzhen Metro’s Longgang Line) is also urbanised. There is, however, still a possibility: the degraded northern slope of Wutong Shan (i.e. along Highway G25), can be linked with Yantian Reservoir and Qinglinjing Reservoir, and then further connected with Dongguan’s Yin Ping Shan Forest Park and Huiyang Baiyunzhang Municipal Nature Reserve (40km from Hong Kong Robin’s Nest). The problem is that, there are at least two barriers standing in the connecting corridor (1. Wutong Shan – Yantian Reservoir near Bainikeng Park; 2. Jiahui Filming Studios – Guanjingtou Reservoir). Furthermore, as we pass-by these areas, we notice that plantations near reservoirs are mostly eucalyptus or commercial fruit trees such as lychee/longgan.



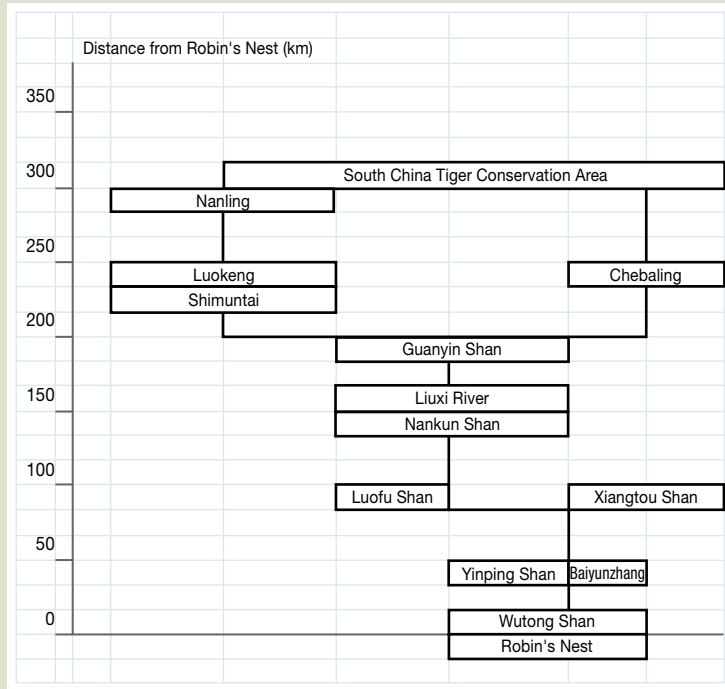
After Yin Ping Shan in Dongguan and the eastern part of Baiyunzhang in Huiyang, we can go north via Huangsha/Guandong Reservoir. The route will then hit Dongjiang River, a natural barrier. In this part of alignment, however, it appears that a highway has cut through Yin Ping Shan/ Baiyunzhang. After crossing Dongjiang, the route can continue through Tangquan Forest Farm and arrives at the Xiangtoushan National Nature Reserve, which is 85km away from Robin's Nest. Apart from the challenge posed by Dongjiang River, finding a route linking Xiangtou Shan with Luofu Shan, via the mountains around Xiangang Reservoir and Xinweicun Forest Farm is also an issue. Moreover, the stretch from Dongjiang river bank to Tangquan Forest Farm appears urbanised. Arriving at this point represents the successful completion of 1/3 of the entire route, which is also the most built-up section (distance between Robin's Nest, Hong Kong and Nanling, Northern Guangdong is about 300km).

It's a relatively easy route travelling from Luofu Shan to Nankun Shan Nature Reserve and Liuxi River Forest Park (140km from Robin's Nest, Hong Kong), via Lanxi Forest Park. Based on our observations, this natural corridor is already in use; for instance, the White-necked Partridge, whose flying ability is low, was recorded in Luofu Shan in 2016, and there was no record in the 1990s, therefore, we think this bird might have travelled by land from Nankun Shan, the nearest known recorded site. If our guess is correct, then it may prove that the forest between Nankun Shan and Luofu Shan is indeed connected.

Travelling north from Liuxi River through Yangjiao Shan Forest Park, we reach Guanyin Shan Provincial Nature Reserve. Although Guanyin Shan



## An Ecological Corridor between Nanling and Hong Kong



Reserve is not rich in biodiversity, it is an important hub in this proposed corridor: to the north is Xiaokeng Forest Park and after passing through some mountain ranges we arrive at Chebaling. To the west is Jinji Forest Farm, some scenic areas, then arriving at reserves including Shimuntai, Luokeng and Nanling. This completes our postulated connective corridor between Hong Kong and the Nanling Mountain range.

Another similar ecological corridor is also proposed in Northern Guangdong. In order to save the critically endangered South China Tiger, Shaoguan Municipal Government proposed a 400km corridor linking 13 reserves stretching through Northern Guangdong, Hunan and Jiangxi. The stated aim of this proposal is to provide a safe passage for South China Tigers to enhance easy breeding, migration and a wider distribution.

It is easy to fly on paper but it's difficult to open an ecological corridor. There are technical issues that need to be dealt with:

1. How do we define the target users of this corridor, are they mammals or large birds? Are amphibians included?
2. How many cities and natural barriers would the corridor pass through? And how to overcome these obstacles?
3. What are the land rights and management issues, especially those inside forest farms and leased areas.

4. How do we improve the ecological value of the eucalyptus forest and commercial woods along the corridor?
5. Who will manage the corridor after establishment?
6. How will its effectiveness be monitored?

In the initial concept, this eco-corridor will be 200m wide, with native tree planting. If there are roads or other barriers, wildlife flyovers will be built. This type of flyover has already being used in some reserves in Canada. As this corridor spans a long distance, we suggest carrying out the plan in phases, beginning with the easier sections. The project could be divided as follows:

- a. Nanling – Luokeng – Shimuntai
- b. Guanyin Shan – Chebaling
- c. Liuxi River – Guanyin Shan
- d. Liuxi River – Nankun Shan – Luofu Shan
- e. Luofu Shan – Xiangtong Shan

We know that this Nanling to Hong Kong ecological corridor may sound unrealistic now, but a dream can be the fuel for progress. We wish to collect more information for fine tuning the plan. Fellow birders and naturalists who are familiar with the conservation system in this part of mainland China, or have comments and suggestions for the planned corridor, are welcome to contact us (email: [wongcaptain@yahoo.com](mailto:wongcaptain@yahoo.com)).

(Readers are reminded that this Bulletin Bird News account is not part of the Society's official record, and reports and/or URFs may need to be submitted regarding some species – URFs for those species highlighted in yellow on the list downloadable from the BWS website – Ed.)

## Updates from September

- ▶ The “Sykes’s Warbler” at Mai Po on 23<sup>rd</sup> is now thought to be a **Booted Warbler**, and an **Ashy Drongo** of the subspecies *hopwoodi*, a taxon which is rather poorly documented in Hong Kong, was at Shek Kong Catchwater on 30<sup>th</sup> (MK).

## October

- ▶ With the summer heat dissipating only very slowly and rain bands associated with four different tropical cyclones drenching Hong Kong, this was not only the hottest October on record but also the second wettest, and very good indeed for rarities, with two potential first records and seven other rarities (2<sup>nd</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> records) reported.
- ▶ Super Typhoon Megi, which tracked through Taiwan and made landfall on the Fujian coast at the end of September, appears to have brought two Taiwan-breeding hirundines to Hong Kong - a **Pacific Swallow** photographed at Tai Sang Wai on 3<sup>rd</sup> (WST) and a **Grey-throated Martin** seen over Mai Po NR on 6<sup>th</sup> (JAA), potential first and second Hong Kong records, respectively. Though not obviously typhoon-related, an unusual shrike, which at the time of writing remains unidentified but is thought to be an **Isabelline Shrike** *Lanius tsaidamensis* or a **Red-tailed Shrike** *L. phoenicuroides*, either of which would be a first for Hong Kong, was ringed and photographed at Mai Po on 4<sup>th</sup> (PJJ, JAA).
- ▶ The next weather event, Tropical Storm Aere, passed south of Hong Kong on 6<sup>th</sup> and was followed by a short spell of dry weather in which three rarities were found - an **Emei Leaf Warbler** (JAA) at Ng Tung Chai on 10<sup>th</sup>, only the second for Hong Kong, up to three **Greater White-fronted Geese** (two adults and a juvenile) at Mai Po and San Tin on 13<sup>th</sup> (PJJ), the fifth record for Hong Kong and the earliest in autumn by 20 days, and one or two **Cotton Pygmy Geese** at Mai Po on 14<sup>th</sup> (DAD), the ninth record for Hong Kong. Subsequently another **Cotton Pygmy Goose** was found at Lok Ma Chau on 24<sup>th</sup> (PJJ) and the three **White-fronted Geese** were reported in the Mai Po-San Tin area to the end of the year and into 2017.
- ▶ Super Typhoons Sarika and Haima approached closest to Hong Kong within 5 days of each other on 17<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup>, causing serious flooding in parts of Kowloon and on Hong Kong Island. A moribund **Sooty Tern** was found at Hung Hom on 20<sup>th</sup>, a ninth record for Hong Kong, and a single **Wedge-tailed Shearwater**, only the third record for Hong Kong, remained off Cape d’Aguilar for much of the morning of 21<sup>st</sup> in company with 12 **Streaked Shearwaters** (GT). The latter were on the latest autumn date for the species by 25 days.
- ▶ In a very warm period towards the end of the month, a first-winter **Slender-billed Gull**, only the sixth record for Hong Kong and the first ever in autumn, was found in front of the Mai Po boardwalk on 28<sup>th</sup>-29<sup>th</sup> (GT). Also present on the Deep Bay mudflats at this time were two **Swinhoe’s Egrets** (CFL), four **Caspian Gulls** and a possible **Vega Gull** or hybrid (RWL), all rare in autumn. By contrast, **Black-headed Gulls**, which normally arrive in quite large numbers during the month, were unusually late, with none reported until 30<sup>th</sup> when a single individual showed in front of the Mai Po boardwalk (MLT).
- ▶ In addition to birds already mentioned, two flycatchers which are regular in spring but quite rare in autumn, were both found on 2<sup>nd</sup> - a **Ferruginous Flycatcher** at Ho Man Tin (KPC) and a female **Narcissus Flycatcher** at Siu Lek Yuen (KF), the latter also on the earliest ever autumn date for the species by 5 days, whilst a **Mugimaki Flycatcher** at Po Toi on 6<sup>th</sup> (GW) was by 4 days the earliest ever in autumn. This period also brought reports of a **Little Curlew** in front of the Mai Po boardwalk on 3<sup>rd</sup> (JGH) and a **Slaty-legged Crake** at Ma Tau Wai on 4<sup>th</sup> (per AB), both unusual in autumn. A **Grey Nightjar** was at Tin Shui Wai on 5<sup>th</sup> (WD), quite an early autumn date for a bird on passage.





- ▶ In the short dry spell following Tropical Storm Aere, a series of rarer farmland birds were found at Long Valley - a **Pechora Pipit** and two **Yellow-browed Buntings** on 10<sup>th</sup> (MK, DAD), a **Russet Sparrow** on 15<sup>th</sup> (SY), two **Eurasian Skylarks** on 16<sup>th</sup> (AB), and six **Oriental Skylarks** and three **Grey-capped Greenfinches** on 17<sup>th</sup> (BdS).
- ▶ Subsequent reports of note included a **White-throated Rock Thrush** at Tai Po Kau on 19<sup>th</sup> (DT), a **Lesser Cuckoo** at Po Toi on 20<sup>th</sup> (LS), two **Pomarine Skuas** off Po Toi on 22<sup>nd</sup> (CM), two **Amur Falcons** at Tsim Bei Tsui on 24<sup>th</sup> (JGH), the first of the autumn, and two **Mandarin Ducks** were at Po Toi on 27<sup>th</sup> (GW). The same day a **Bull-headed Shrike**, the first of the autumn, and a very late **Brown-chested Jungle Flycatcher** were at Ng Tung Chai (JAA).
- ▶ The last week of the month produced two new high counts – five **Black-winged Cuckooshrikes** at Shek Kong Catchwater on 24<sup>th</sup> (JC) and 27 **Lanceolated Warblers**, all trapped, at Mai Po on 28<sup>th</sup> (PJJ).

## November

- ▶ With the weather remaining unusually warm and wet for the time of year, the month was memorable for its strong and late passage of **Amur Falcons**, with more than 200 reported in the NT and on Lantau between 6<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>, including counts of 75 at Long Valley on 9<sup>th</sup> (P&MW), 70 at Shek Kong Catchwater on 12<sup>th</sup> (JC), 30 at Long Valley the same day (BdS), and 34 at Ng Tung Chai on 13<sup>th</sup> (JAA). In previous years, passage has been strongest in October, with only a few stragglers coming through in November.
- ▶ In addition, some rarer house martins were identified, a wide range of buntings turned up, and a **Barred Cuckoo Dove** was found at Tai Po Kau Headland on 27<sup>th</sup> (RB), about the eighth for Hong Kong, the third in three years, and the earliest in autumn by 9 days. Coverage of the Mai Po-San Tin area, Ng Tung Chai and Po Toi also led to further records of the **Greater White-fronted Geese**, **Emei Leaf Warbler** and **Mandarin Ducks** found the previous month.
- ▶ A gathering of house martins over fishponds at Tai Sang Wai on 10<sup>th</sup> contained two **Common House Martins** (JGH, JW), the seventh for Hong Kong and the earliest in autumn by 10 days. These were among 30 **Asian House Martins**. Subsequent analysis of photographs taken of the latter (PJJ on HKBWS website) revealed that first-winter birds of two Asian House Martin subspecies were present - the southern subspecies *nigrientalis*, which breeds in Southeast China including Guangdong and is thought to account for almost all Hong Kong records, and the more northerly-breeding subspecies *dasyptus*, for which only two previous records are known, the last in 1996. Following these, there were reports of two **Common House Martins** at Pak Nai on 11<sup>th</sup> (JAA), 70 **Asian House Martins** at Shek Kong Catchwater on 12<sup>th</sup> (JC), quite a large number for the time of year, and one **Common House Martin** at Tai Sang Wai again on 27<sup>th</sup>-28<sup>th</sup> (KH, TC).
- ▶ Though not heavy, passage of buntings was diverse, with at least 11 species reported. Long Valley was once again the key site. In addition to **Little**, **Yellow-breasted**, **Chestnut-eared**, **Yellow-browed**, **Black-headed** and **Black-faced Buntings**, five other species were reported there, all singly – **Common Reed** possibly of the previously unrecorded subspecies *minor* on 5<sup>th</sup> (JAA), **Rustic** on 13<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> (MLT, GT) and 30<sup>th</sup> (WD), **Japanese Yellow** on 15<sup>th</sup> (DT), and both **Crested** and **Yellow-throated Buntings** on 29<sup>th</sup> (KW, TKK). In a very good month for **Rustic Buntings**, two further individuals were found at Mai Po on 15<sup>th</sup> (PJJ) and 29<sup>th</sup> (RWL). One of the two Long Valley birds was photographed in the jaws of a village cat on 30<sup>th</sup> (WD), highlighting the threat that these efficient hunters pose to rare migratory buntings.
- ▶ Among other birds found at Long Valley were a **Baillon's Crake** and **Pheasant-tailed Jacana** on 4<sup>th</sup> (JAA, BdS), five **Crested Honey Buzzards** and a **Russet Sparrow** on 6<sup>th</sup> (EMSK, P&MW), a **Ruddy-breasted Crake** on 7<sup>th</sup> (BdS, MLT), a **Yellow-legged Buttonquail** on 9<sup>th</sup> (JL), a **Citrine Wagtail** on 10<sup>th</sup> (JL), and a **Brambling** on 19<sup>th</sup> (JL). The large mixed flocks of munias, sparrows and buntings in the rice-fields which stimulated the predatory instincts of the village cats also attracted aerial predators, including **Japanese Sparrowhawks**.



- ▶ Apart from the **Greater White-fronted Geese**, which were seen on several dates, and the **Rustic Buntings** mentioned above, rather few birds of interest were reported in the Mai Po area. A mistnetting session yielded a **Yellow-streaked Warbler** on 4<sup>th</sup> (MRL), a **Pallas's Gull** from the Mai Po boardwalk on 12<sup>th</sup> (JGH) set a new earliest autumn record by 9 days. Other visits to the boardwalk turned up a **Ruff**, a **Nordmann's Greenshank** and a **Far Eastern Curlew** on 1<sup>st</sup> (DAD, RWL) and the first **Long-billed Dowitcher** of the autumn on 17<sup>th</sup> (JGH).
- ▶ Despite being trashed in preparation for construction of a shopping mall, the "Magic Roundabout" and nearby areas of wooded and grassy habitat at Chek Lap Kok hosted a number of migrants during the month, including a **Baillon's Crake** on 14<sup>th</sup> (EMSK), a **Dusky Thrush** on 27<sup>th</sup>, a **Brown Crake** on 29<sup>th</sup>, and a **Red-breasted Flycatcher** on 30<sup>th</sup> (EMSK, KK).
- ▶ Among birds of interest reported elsewhere were a **Lesser Frigatebird** over North Lantau on 4<sup>th</sup> (JAMC), a **Black Stork** over Pok Fu Lam on 8<sup>th</sup> (BdS), possibly the first for Hong Kong Island, an **Ashy Drongo** of the subspecies *hopwoodi* and a female **White-throated Rock Thrush** at Tai Lam Chung on 9<sup>th</sup> (JAA), a **Red-breasted Flycatcher** at Po Toi on 10<sup>th</sup> (GW), a male **Siberian Thrush** at Chung Chau on 11<sup>th</sup> (MDW), six **Common Starlings** at Tai Sang Wai on 12<sup>th</sup> (GT), the peak count of the autumn, a **Red-breasted Flycatcher** along the Tai O-Yi O trail on the same day (AB), five **Eurasian Jays**, now very rare, at Tai Mo Shan on 13<sup>th</sup> (HM), two **Orange-headed Thrushes** at Ho Man Tin on 15<sup>th</sup> (KPC), a female **Chestnut-bellied Rock Thrush** at Ng Tung Chai on 22<sup>nd</sup> (JAA), a male **White-throated Rock Thrush** on South Lamma on 24<sup>th</sup> (JAA), and single **Radde's Warblers** at Airfield Road and Ho Man Tin on 24<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> (JC, KPC).
- ▶ Finally, it was a good month for **Bull-headed Shrikes**, with singles at Long Valley on 6<sup>th</sup> (P&MW), Pak Nai on 11<sup>th</sup> (JAA), Ho Man Tin on 15<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> (KPC), Cheung Chau on 16<sup>th</sup> (MDW) and Chek Lap Kok on 18<sup>th</sup> (EMSK).

## December

- ▶ In another very warm month which produced a long series of rare birds, the undoubted highlight was Hong Kong's second record of **Siberian Crane**. An adult and a juvenile were initially found on the inter-tidal mudflats in front of the Mai Po boardwalk on 2<sup>nd</sup> (DAD), then flew onto Mai Po NR, settling on Pond 23, where they were both regularly sighted together until 4<sup>th</sup>. Despite much searching, the juvenile was not seen again after this date, though the adult remained at Mai Po, with occasional flights to Nam Sang Wai (per JC), to the end of the year and into 2017. A report of two adults in flight on 17<sup>th</sup> (per KL) suggests that a third bird (or possibly even a fourth one) also occurred.
- ▶ A **Black-throated Thrush** at Chek Lap Kok on 4<sup>th</sup> (EMSK) was a potential first record for Hong Kong. A further nine species with fewer than 10 records were also found in the month, all in the northern NT, with Mai Po and the San Tin fishponds especially favoured sites. The rarities, arranged by date, were as follows: a **Common Chiffchaff** at Mai Po on 1<sup>st</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> (MT, JAA), the eighth for Hong Kong, a **Short-eared Owl** at Long Valley on 4<sup>th</sup> (SY), the sixth or seventh record, a **Water Pipit** at San Tin on 6<sup>th</sup> (PJL), the fourth record, a **Blyth's Reed Warbler** at Mai Po on 10<sup>th</sup> (per CM), the tenth record, a **Smew** at Fung Lok Wai on 13<sup>th</sup> (per DJS), the eighth record, a **Buff-breasted Sandpiper** at San Tin from 20<sup>th</sup> (CYH) to the end of the year, only the second record, a **Relict Gull** in front of the Mai Po boardwalk on 24<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> (KCWL), the eighth or ninth record, a **Common House Martin** at San Tin on 24<sup>th</sup> (MK) followed by three at Long Valley on 26<sup>th</sup> (MK), the eighth-ninth records, and a **Booted Warbler** at San Tin from 28<sup>th</sup> to the end of the month (EMSK), the third record. In addition, the three **Greater White-fronted Geese** first found in October were regularly sighted in the Mai Po-San Tin area throughout the month, and three other grey geese, seen too briefly to be identified, flew past Tai Mong Tsai, Sai Kung on 2<sup>nd</sup> (RM).
- ▶ Among other notable reports from the Deep Bay area and hinterland were a **Brambling** and **Rustic Bunting** at Long Valley on 2<sup>nd</sup> (WKN), a **Mandarin Duck** at Mai Po on 6<sup>th</sup> (per MLT), a **Eurasian Jay** at Long Valley on 10<sup>th</sup> (LC), six **Northern Lapwings** at San Tin on 16<sup>th</sup> (IT), 50 **Red-rumped Swallows** and a **Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler** there on 24<sup>th</sup> (EMSK), and a **Himalayan Swiftlet** also there on 26<sup>th</sup> (MK).

- ▶ Birds of interest found in forest or shrubland sites included a **Small Niltava** at Wonderland Villas, Kwai Chung on 6<sup>th</sup> (TL), a dark morph **Crested Honey Buzzard** at Tai Po Kau between 7<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> (KPK), two **Chestnut-bellied Rock Thrushes** at Ng Tung Chai on 10<sup>th</sup> (JAA), 66 **Hair-crested Drongos** at Shek Kong Catchwater on 13<sup>th</sup> (JC), one of the highest winter counts of the species on record, and a male **Fujian Niltava** at Tai Po Kau on 17<sup>th</sup> (HKBWS).
- ▶ In addition to the Black-throated Thrush mentioned above, coverage of Chek Lap Kok turned up an **Oriental Pratincole**, a **Red-breasted Flycatcher** and a **Chestnut-eared Bunting** on 4<sup>th</sup> (EMSK).
- ▶ Possibly reflecting the unusually warm weather conditions, there were first-ever December records of three species: **Baillon's Crane** - one at Long Valley on 4<sup>th</sup> (JP), the latest by 7 days, **Amur Falcon** - one at San Tin on 8<sup>th</sup> (AL) and two at Mai Po on 11<sup>th</sup>, the latest by 16 days, and **Chestnut-winged Cuckoo** - one at Ho Man Tin on 12<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> (KPC), the latest by 24 days. In addition, up to three **Brown-flanked Bush Warblers** were in song on the ridge tops of Pat Sin Leng on 10<sup>th</sup> (RWL) and Tai To Yan on 19<sup>th</sup> (JAA).
- ▶ Finally, the run of records of **Bull-headed Shrikes** continued from November, with singles at Kowloon Park on 3<sup>rd</sup> (JW), Tai Hang Tung on 9<sup>th</sup>, Ng Tung Chai on 10<sup>th</sup> (JAA) and Cheung Chau on 10<sup>th</sup> (MDW), all new sites for the autumn-winter period, and three individuals, a record count, present at Ho Man Tin on 7<sup>th</sup> (KPC).

## List of observers & initials 2016

*Initials of observers whose reports/messages/photographs helped in preparation of HK Bird News for the period are as follows:*

Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department staff (AFCD), John Allcock (JAA), Paul Aston (PA), Abdel Bizid (AB), Karen Barretto (KB), Ruy Barretto (RB), Chris Champion (CC), Geoff Carey (GJC), K.F. Chan (KFC), S.Y. Chan (SYC), Thomas Chan (TC), K.K. Chang (KKC), Esther Chau (EC), J.A.M. "Kwok-Jai" Cheung (JAMC), Louis Cheung (LC), T.M. Cheung (TMC), Vivian Cheung (VC), Owen Chiang (OC), Kenneth Chiu (KC), Gary Chow (GKLC), K.P. Chow (KPC), Francis Chu (FC), W.K. Chung (WKC), Y.T. Chung (YTC), John Clough (JC), David Diskin (DAD), Wilson Dring (WD), Y.W. Fong (YWF), Ken Fung (KF), Martin Hale (MH), Carla van Hasselt (CvH), C.Y. Ho (CYH), Kinni Ho (KH), Peter Ho (PH), Tiffany Ho (TH), unknown Hong Kong Bird Watching Society members (HKBWS), Jemi Holmes (JH), John Holmes (JGH), Derek Hon (DH), Hermann Ip (HI), Kadoorie Farm and Botanical Garden staff (KFBG), E. Hui (EH), Mike Kilburn (EMSK), Koel Ko (KK), K.C. Kong (KCK), Matthew Kwan (MK), P.K. Kwan (PKK), T.K. Kwok (TKK), Paul Leader (PJL), Kenny Lee (KHL), S.Y. Lee (SYL), Jennifer Leung (JL), Katherine Leung (KL), Mike Leven (MRL), Richard Lewthwaite (RWL), Benjiman Li (BLi), T.C. Li (TCL), Morten Lisse (ML), Aaron Lo (AL), C.F. "Fai-jai" Lo (CFL), Brenda Lo (BLo), Kevin Lok (KCWL), Carrie Ma (CM), Jonathan Martinez (JM), Guy Miller (GM), Harry Miller (HM), Roger Muscroft (RM), Yann Muzika (YM), Benjamin Ng (BN), L.Y. Ng (LYN), W.K. Nip (WKN), Alan Pong (AP), Jason Pun (JP), Bart de Schutter (BdS), Leo Sit (LS), Dave Stanton (DJS), Y.H. Sun (YHS), Swallows and Swifts Research Group members (SSRG), Graham Talbot (GT), C.S. Tam (CST), Meiling Tang (MLT), Wing-sze Tang (WST), Dylan Thomas (DT), Hugo To (HT), Ivan Tse (IT), Mike Turnbull (MT), Geoff Welch (GW), Martin Williams (MDW), C.Y. Wong (CYW), H.S. Wong (HSW), K. Wong (KW), L.C. Wong (LCW), Michelle & Peter Wong (M&PW), Ondy Wong (OW), Thelma Woodward (TW), Tim Woodward (TJW), World Wide Fund for Nature Hong Kong staff (WWF), W.Y. Yam (WYY), H.K. Ying (HKY), W.H. Yip (WHY), Sherman Young (SY), John Yu (JY), Y.T. Yu (YTY).



Outings				
Date	Duration	Time and site	Difficulties(1...3)	Target species
1-2/4/2017 (Sat - Sun)	24 hrs	<b>Hong Kong Bird Watching Day 2017 Cum Bird Race Fundraising Event</b> (Details to be announced on Discussion Forum)		
1/4/2017 (Sat)	0800 - 1300	<b>Long Valley</b> (Crested Bulbul Club Activity) (08:00 Outside Maxim's MX, Sheng Shui Rail Station)	☆☆	Farmland and water birds
9/4/2017 (Sun)	0800 - 1600	<b>Po Toi and HK South Waters</b> (Registration required) (08:00 Hang Seng Bank, Sai Wan Ho MTR Station) <i>Note: This will be a long trip on open waters. The ride could be quite rough and some people may be seasick.</i>	☆☆☆	Seabirds and migrants
14/4/2017 (Fri)	0800 - 1600	<b>Mai Po Nature Reserve</b> (12yrs old & above only & registration required) (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
23/4/2017 (Sun)	TBC	<b>Wild Card Day</b> (Details will be announced on Apr 21 on Discussion Forum)		
29/4/2017 (Sat)	0800 - 1600	<b>Po Toi and HK South Waters</b> (Registration required) (08:00 Aberdeen public pier, near Ocean Court) <i>Note: This will be a long trip on open waters. The ride could be quite rough and some people may be seasick.</i>	☆☆☆	Seabirds and migrants
6/5/2017 (Sat)	0800 - 1300	<b>Nam Sang Wai</b> (Crested Bulbul Club Activity) (08:00 V Cuisine Restaurant, Exit G2, Yuen Long West Rail Station)	☆	Waterbirds
14/5/2017 (Sun)	0800 - 1200	<b>Tai Mo Shan</b> (08:00 Exit B near Hang Seng Bank, Tsuen Wan MTR Station)	☆☆☆	Grassland birds
21/5/2017 (Sun)	TBC	<b>Wild Card Day</b> (Details will be announced on May 19 on Discussion Forum)		
3/6/2017 (Sat)	0800 - 1330	<b>Tap Mun</b> (Crested Bulbul Club Activity) (08:00 Ma Liu Shui Ferry Pier, end 13:30 at Tap Mun Pier) <i>Note: Return ferry departs at 13:45 and arrives in Ma Liu Shui at 15:00. Participants have to pay for their own ferry fee.</i>	☆	Residents & Terns
4/6/2017 (Sun)	0800 - 1200	<b>Nam Chung and Luk Keng</b> (08:00 Pavilion at junction of Nam Chung Rd & Luk Keng Rd)	☆☆	Forest birds & Waterbirds
23/7/2017 (Sun)	1445 - 1900	<b>Tolo Harbour &amp; Sai Kung</b> (14:45 Ma Liu Shui Ferry Pier, end 19:00 at Sai Kung) <i>Note: 1500-1700 Terns watching on public ferry from Mal Liu Shui to Tup Mun &amp; then Wong Shek Pier 1700-1900 Bus from Wong Shek Pier to Sai Kung for Black Kite Watching. Participants have to pay for their own ferry &amp; bus fare.</i>	☆☆	Breeding Terns & Black Kite

Member: Free of Charge

Member: Free of Charge

Member: HK\$ 60 (Student Member: HK\$ 30)

Member: HK\$160

Non-member: Free of Charge

Non-member: HK\$ 30 (HK\$ 10 for age under 19 student)

Non-member: HK\$ 120

Non-member: HK\$200

(Registration not required)

(Registration not required)

(Registration required)

(Registration required)



# 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

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**北短翅鶯** Baikal Bush Warbler

陳士飛 Thomas Chan  
德福花園 Telford Garden  
22/01/2017  
DSLR Camera  
350mm lens



**小蝗鶯** Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler

何建業 Kinni Ho Kin Yip  
德福花園 Telford Garden  
20/01/2017  
DSLR Camera  
600mm f/4 lens + 1.4x teleconverter



灰腳田雞 Slaty-legged Crake

房遠榮 Fong Yuen Wing  
和黃公園 Hutchison Park  
30/03/2016  
DSLR Camera  
120-300mm f/2.8 lens

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潘士強 Jason Pun  
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04/12/2016

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