

# THE HONG KONG BIRD REPORT 1988



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THE HONG KONG BIRD WATCHING SOCIETY

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(A registered society under the Hong Kong Societies Ordinance)

Records compiled by M.L. Chalmers and P.R. Kennerley  
Report edited by V.B. Picken

**Officers of the Society  
(1988)**

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## EDITORIAL NOTE

Bearing in mind both a hoped-for greater participation in Society activities by local birdwatchers and the fact that the annual Hong Kong Bird Report is sent to various bodies in the People's Republic of China, we have decided to provide Chinese summaries of the main papers. These are included in this year's Report for the first time.

It will be noted that the monthly summaries contain records which do not appear in the Records Committee Report. Unfortunately a considerable number of observers, both local and overseas, fail to submit record cards even for those birds for which detailed notes are required by the Records Committee. The result is that an incomplete picture of the year's birds appears in the Report. As many of these sightings, reported verbally, are believed to be accurate and the records significant, it has been decided to retain them in the monthly summaries even though such unsubstantiated records obviously cannot be included in the Records Committee Report. These records should not be quoted in publications elsewhere but are included in order to give a wider overall annual picture. It is hoped that ALL observers will take the trouble to submit records of interest in future.

Our normal policy with regard to rarities is to include papers on first sightings of Category A birds only; this year, however, we include a second record — the reason being that the bird in question, a Chiffchaff of the eastern race *tristis*, is about 2,500 km out of range so it was felt to be particularly noteworthy.

The English bird names in all papers, except those where an editorial note indicates to the contrary, correspond to those used by Chalmers in the *Annotated Checklist of the Birds of Hong Kong* (1986). Not all tables include scientific names — this is simply due to lack of space.

I should like to thank Mike Chalmers, Peter Kennerley and David Melville, as much for the frankness of their advice and opinion as for the grace shown when, on occasion, it is not followed; and Katherine Koo and Molly Chong for their invaluable typing services — all are very much appreciated.

VERITY PICKEN



## REPORT ON THE BIRDS 1988

M.L. Chalmers and P.R. Kennerley

The Society now has three well established ways of comparing the birds seen in one year with another. The first is the waterfowl count in mid-January, the second is the total species count for the Big Bird Race in early April and the third is the Christmas count.

Judged by the Big Bird Race, 1988 was an exceptional year for the variety of spring migrants. The Race total of 237 species was nearly 50 more than the previous highest total, and four of the fourteen teams reached or passed the 150 barrier for the first time. On the other hand, the waterfowl count showed that the numbers and variety of wintering species in Deep Bay were similar to recent years, whereas by contrast the Christmas count, which includes all species, was rather dull with about ten species less than previous years.

Breeding records were also mixed. On the positive side a family of Brown Fish Owls found in August at Discovery Bay was a surprise for everyone, and breeding was proved for Chestnut Bulbuls at Tai Po Kau, but the desertion of the Mirs Bay tern colonies in June was a severe blow.

The flood of new records in 1988 caused the Records Committee to be both busy and controversial. Busy, because the number of new or reclassified species accepted to Categories A to E was 14, and controversial because of the selection of the appropriate category for each species. The conclusions were that five new species should be admitted to Category A and three to Category D, with the remainder being placed in Category E.

The birds admitted to Category A were as follows:

1. Besra. A breeding pair at Mount Davis in April and May.
2. Mountain Hawk Eagle. One at Luk Keng in May.
3. Purple Gallinule. One at Mai Po, first seen in August.
4. Gould's Sunbird. A male in Tai Po Kau in late February and early March.
5. Brambling. Two at Mai Po in April. These combined with the earlier pattern of occurrences led to this species being upgraded from Category D.

The three additions to Category D were:

1. Saker Falcon. One at Tsim Bei Tsui in January. Upgraded from Category E.

2. Burmese Shrike. One at Mount Davis in April.
3. Yellow-cheeked Tit. One at Mount Nicholson in January and subsequently several in widespread areas throughout the year.

In addition to the above, the following new species were added to Category E: Moustached Laughing Thrush, Goffin's Cockatoo, Chukar Partridge, Green-billed Malkoha, Collared Finchbill and Eurasian Nuthatch.

Unresolved records still under review include several claims of Besra, Relict Gull, 'zeebit' *Bradypterus* warblers, Two-barred Greenish Warblers from 1984 to 1987 and the Plain Flowerpeckers in 1988. It is hoped to publish details of these records in the next annual Report.

Apart from firsts, there was a wide range of other notable records in 1988 including a Japanese Night Heron which flew into a window at the Hung Hom Polytechnic and was cared for by David Melville; it was subsequently released at Tai Po Kau where it was seen over a period of a few days. The year also provided an impressive spread of waders, with an unexpected series of Little Stint records in spring, and the second Chiffchaff record for the region.

The assistance of the other members of the Records Committee, Peter Kennerley, David Melville, Clive Viney and Mike Webster, is gratefully acknowledged. The Records Committee Report is based upon written records submitted by the following observers:

M.J. Bishop, D.A. Brookes, J.E. Burton, I.A. and A.D. Callender, M.L. Chalmers, S. Chan, J.I., Chapple, G.C.H. Cooper, T. Davies, S. Earle, J.S.R. Edge, J.M.M. Flegg, M. Fong, N.S. Grimshaw, J. Holmes, P.R. Kennerley, C.Y. Lam, A.R. Lamont, N. and J. Latham, A.B. Lawrence, J.D. Lazell, W.K. Li, M. Lippsmeyer, K. Lo, D.S. and V.J. Melville, D.J. Millin, K. Philipps, V.B. Picken, K.C. Searle, S. Smith, S.P. Smith, G.E. Stevens, R.D.E. Stott, G. Stowe, R.P. Tipper, A. Tse, M. Turnbull, C.A. Viney, A. Walker, F.J. Walker, R. Webster, M.D. Williams, J. Woods, W. Young.

Monthly summaries of records are given below followed by the Records Committee Report and Significant Breeding Records. Updates to the *Annotated Checklist* will not be published this year, but will instead be carried over for publication next year.

**Some of the records included in these monthly summaries, although believed to be accurate, are not substantiated by written notes and should therefore not be quoted in publications elsewhere. See Records Committee Report for details of authenticated records.**

### January

A probable Relict Gull, first sighted at the end of December 1987, was seen again at Mai Po on 2nd. This record is still under review. On 8th



two Ruddy Shelduck were observed at Tsim Bei Tsui and remained throughout January and February while on the same day a Great Spotted Woodpecker was seen at Stonecutters Island. Two Barred Owlets were reported at Beas River on 9th and in Deep Bay 33 Dalmatian Pelicans were noted. On 10th an adult Brown-headed Gull and two first-winter Black-tailed Gulls were present at Mai Po. An immature Saker Falcon was seen at Tsim Bei Tsui on 9th where it gave an impressive display as it hunted the gulls and duck on the Deep Bay mud flats. At one stage it perched on a stick directly over a drake Baikal Teal. On 15th a Eurasian Nuthatch turned up on a bird table at King's Park Rise, Kowloon and was seen until at least 10 February. However, its plumage was badly abraded and it was considered to be of dubious origin. On 16th a walk over the hills between Hok Tau and Fung Yuen produced one Large Grass Warbler and at least five skulking, unidentified bush warblers, a minimum of ten Treepies and a Barred Owlet. A large group of 75 Great Crested Grebes was reported at Fu Tien in Deep Bay the same day. The waterfowl count on 17th produced 38,947 birds of 61 species including high counts of 4,011 Shelduck, 2,888 Teal, 1,067 Grey Heron, a drake Baikal Teal and an unusual group of 23 Baer's Pochard in Deep Bay. Out-of-season winter records included Garganey, Asiatic Golden Plover, Whimbrel, Australian Curlew and Redshank. A possible Glaucous-winged Gull hybrid was also seen then and on several other occasions while a female Pied Harrier and the Saker Falcon were reported at Mai Po on 17th. Two Brown Thrushes were noted at Kadoorie Farm on 23rd and on 24th a male Bull-headed Shrike was observed at the Chinese University where it had first been located in December 1987. Another first turned up at Mount Nicholson on 29th, a very dapper Yellow-cheeked Tit. This species is familiar to those who have birdwatched in the Guangdong forestry areas. A Yellow-cheeked Tit, perhaps the same bird, was subsequently seen at the Peak Tower on 6 and 19 February. Because of the large numbers in the bird shops, these have been accepted to Category D. On 30th at least four Orange-bellied Leafbirds, one Japanese Sparrowhawk and at least two Ashy Drongos were noted at Tai Po Kau, the leafbirds being seen regularly over the following weeks.

## February

The winter continued with more than its fair share of rarities. A European Starling and a female Baikal Teal were located at Tsim Bei Tsui on 7th. A Grey-headed Flycatcher was found at Victoria Barracks and at least one other was present in Tai Po Kau later in the month. Avocet numbers increased to over twice their previous maximum with 463 on 11th in Deep Bay. The next day a Great Spotted Woodpecker was reported from Beas River, the first New Territories record for this species. On 12th two Grey-headed Parrotbills and a Siberian Blue Robin appeared at Mount Nicholson and a Japanese Robin was claimed at Tai Po Kau but no written record was submitted. A white-phase Asian Paradise Flycatcher turned up in the Lam Tsuen Valley on 13th — presumably the same bird as last year — and was seen on several subsequent occasions. A White-bellied Green Pigeon in a cage was seen at a farmer's hut near Shuen Wan on the same day. The farmer

claimed to have caught it nearby; there is only one other record for Hong Kong. Another *Bradypterus* warbler was also found there. On 17th a Two-barred Greenish Warbler was claimed from Tai Po Kau and an Oriental Scops Owl was heard at Victoria Barracks. Unusual winter records of waders at Mai Po included a Whimbrel, Bar-tailed Godwit and ten Greater Sand Plover. A movement of Large White-rumped and Housae Swifts was noted during the middle of the month, and around this time also one Black Bulbul was seen at Tai Tam, five at Lead Mine Pass, and a flock of Yellow-bellied Tits was reported from the Zoological and Botanical Gardens (ZBG). On 19th further wintering records of normally passage waders included four Bar-tailed Godwits and 15 Broad-billed Sandpipers, which, since the installation of the boardwalk hide at Mai Po appear to have become regular winter visitors. However, it is suspected that these birds may have been wintering habitually in the Deep Bay area and it is only the birders who are recent arrivals. On the same day a Japanese Quail was flushed at Ha Tsuen and a Brown Shrike was found at Tai Po Kau. On 23rd a high count of 42 Gadwall was reported from Tsim Bei Tsui. The next surprise and undoubted bird of the month was a male Gould's Sunbird which was first identified at Tai Po Kau on 24th and was still present in early March. This bird appeared faithful to the area between the warden's hut (at the barrier) and the management centre, showing a preference for the red flowering coralbean. This magnificent little bird has been recently recorded in the mountains of northern Guangdong but this is the first for Hong Kong. A Northern Goshawk was reported in Tai Po Kau on 28th and another rarity, a Red-headed Tit, turned up at Mount Davis on 28th.

## March

The Gould's Sunbird was still present at Tai Po Kau until at least 2nd while an unidentified green pigeon was seen there on 5th. Over ten Asian House Martins were sighted at Nam Chung on 6th and this species was regularly seen until early April. A Brown Thrush was found on Lamma on 8th and a leafbird and several Black Bulebuls were seen at Kadoorie Farm on 9th. The male Bull-headed Shrike at the Chinese University was reported regularly until 27th as it flew to roost. On 13th there was one European Starling and several Dusky Thrushes at Tsim Bei Tsui, and two Ruddy Shelduck and 31 Dalmatian Pelicans in Deep Bay. A Water Rail was seen at Nam Chung on 13th and on several subsequent occasions. Wader numbers began to increase from mid-month and the number of Saunders' Gulls remained high in Deep Bay with over 80 on 20th, when the first two of many Spoon-billed Sandpipers were found at Mai Po. Red-necked Phalaropes appeared in coastal waters and remained common throughout the spring. Passage of Japanese Sparrowhawks and Grey-faced Buzzard Eagles was also widespread and regular with many separate sightings. Two *lugens* White Wagtails turned up on Lamma on 19th. Fantail and Pintail Snipe and two Painted Snipe were seen at Mui Wo the same day.

The flycatcher passage was well marked this year with a Hainan Blue recorded at Tung Chung on 19th and the first Blue and White at Bride's



Pool on 20th. An Eagle Owl (possible release) was seen at Tai Po Kau also on 20th. A passage of thrushes, including Grey, Grey-backed and Pale, was noted around the same date. Red-winged Crested Cuckoos were seen and heard in widespread areas. On 23rd 300 Oriental Pratincoles were seen near Green Island, a Brown Thrush was noted on Lantau, and 42 Black-faced Spoonbills were counted at Mai Po. Another Yellow-cheeked Tit was seen at Mount Butler on 24th. On 25th new arrivals on Lamma included one Eye-browed Thrush and one Oriental Cuckoo with a Ferruginous Flycatcher at Tai Tam the same day. On 26th a party of at least five Penduline Tits was found at Mai Po and remained in the reed beds near the hides until early April. A female Mandarin was present at Mai Po on 25th and a large pale unidentified gull, possibly a hybrid, was seen there the next day. On 27th several Orange-bellied Leafbirds were noted at Tai Po Kau, there were several Chestnut Bulbuls in the Lam Tsuen Valley and a Black-naped Monarch Flycatcher was found in Sek Kong Woods. Penduline Tits reached a maximum of at least 12 at Mai Po on 28th. On 29th two Spoon-billed Sandpipers were seen at Mai Po, and the first of many Great Knot. The month ended with more migrants reported on Lamma on 31st including the first of widespread Ashy Minivets, two Black-naped Monarch Flycatchers, a flock of 15 Grey-faced Buzzard Eagles and numerous thrushes.

#### April

This is traditionally the best month for passage migrants and this year was exceptional for the quantity and quality of birds seen. Passage wader numbers built up rapidly at Mai Po with 2,000 on 1st, and remained high all month reaching a maximum of over 10,030 on 16th. All the regular species were recorded, and 45 species of waders were reported on the Big Bird Race on 9th. Highlights included regular Spoon-billed Sandpipers and Nordmann's Greenshanks, with up to four of the former on 16th and 28th and up to 27 of the latter on 16th. Oriental Plovers were a welcome sight with one at Ha Tsuen on 9th and five there on 10th. Ten Little Whimbrel were seen at Kai Tak on 12th with smaller numbers reported at Tsim Bei Tsui and Mai Po during the month. Notable high counts included about 3,000 Red-necked Phalarope in the East Lamma Channel on 14th, 280 Mongolian Sand Plover, 1,600 Greater Sand Plover, 280 Great Knot, 320 Broad-billed Sandpipers, 45 Bar-tailed Godwit, 44 Australian Curlew, 1,100 Spotted Redshank and 350 Terek Sandpipers all on 16th, 1,200 Redshank on 16th and 19th, 3,500 Curlew Sandpipers on 19th, 110 Asiatic Dowitcher and 600 Black-tailed Godwit on 23rd, and 110 Sharp-tailed Sandpipers on 25th. However, the wader speciality of the month was undoubtedly the Little Stints, several of which were seen at Mai Po and Tsim Bei Tsui as follows: two at Mai Po on 10th, one at Tsim Bei Tsui on 11th, four at Tsim Bei Tsui on 17th, one at Mai Po on 19th, and another there on 24th. Before this glut there were only two previous records, and the species thus appears to have been overlooked in the past. Unfortunately some of the observers involved in these sightings did not submit their record cards and therefore, not all the above records have been accepted.



Sharp-tailed Sandpiper *Calidris acuminata*  
Mai Po, April 1988

(Ray Tipper)

There were so many other rarities and exceptional sightings it is difficult to know where to begin! A Von Schrenck's Little Bittern was found at Wah Fu on 1st, a Hoopoe was flushed at Po Toi on 2nd, an adult Brown-headed Gull frequented Deep Bay between 2nd and 9th, and a pair of flowerpeckers, possibly Plain, was seen on 2nd at Ho Sheung Heung, where they were nest-building. The first of several widespread Japanese Yellow Buntings was located at Mai Po on 3rd. Both White-throated and White-vented Needletails and Red-rumped Swallows were seen on several occasions at the beginning of the month. Widespread reports of flycatchers including Ferruginous, Japanese and Asian Paradise, Blue and White, Narcissus and Hainan Blue were received during the month. On 4th flocks of 27 and 13 Crested Honey Buzzards were reported at Tsim Bei Tsui. The same day a sub-adult Glaucous Gull was also seen there while a probable Lesser Frigatebird (immature) was noted at Stanley. This was to be followed by the regular appearance of an immature flying in to roost with the Black Kites at Magazine Gap every evening from 8th onwards. A Yellow-cheeked Tit turned up at Tai Tam on 3rd and another Crested Honey Buzzard was reported, this time at Sek Kong. A female Pied Harrier was seen at Mai Po the same day. On 6th a Great Spotted Woodpecker (old faithful?) was found in Victoria Barracks (and near St. John's Cathedral on 18th) and a Siberian Thrush was reported in the Lam Tsuen Valley. The next day another Crested



Honey Buzzard was seen at Tsim Bei Tsui. On 7th two Bramblings were found at Mai Po, where they remained until 9th and Painted Snipe were located at both Lok Ma Chau and Ha Tsuen. A male Siberian Blue Robin was found in the Lam Tsuen Valley on 8th and the first of many Collared Finchbills (assumed to be escapes/releases) and Vinous-throated Parrotbills were seen at Kowloon Reservoirs. The 9th was the day of that great and legendary epic — the Hong Kong Big Bird Race. This year all records were broken with the winning team clocking 164 species while the aggregate for all teams reached an amazing 237 species. Broad-billed Rollers and Chestnut Buntings (which occurred in unprecedented numbers during the month) became widespread from this time while a Baiton's Crake was claimed at Mui Wo on 13th. A Ring-necked Pheasant was seen in Kowloon and another turned up at Jardine's Lookout on 18th. A flock of 15 Horsfield's Goshawks was seen at Mai Po on 15th, and others were reported elsewhere over the next week including two at Tai Tam on 23rd, and seven in the Aberdeen Country Park and 134 at Tsim Bei Tsui on 24th. A male Merlin was reported at Mai Po on 15th. Another Yellow-cheeked Tit was found, this time at the more respectable address of Tai Po Kau, on 17th. Up to five Pechora Pipits, two Japanese Yellow Buntings and four Little Stints were discovered at Tsim Bei Tsui on 17th, one of the pipits remaining there until at least 23rd. A Citrine Wagtail was found at Tsim Bei Tsui on 20th and was seen up to 23rd. A Japanese Night Heron which had flown into a window in Kowloon was released at Tai Po Kau on 21st. A flock of 16 Broad-billed Rollers at Tai Po Kau, also on 21st, was an unusually high count. Black Bazas were seen in widespread areas and Grey-streaked Flycatchers became relatively common from 23rd, with six reported at Tai Long Wan. Over 100 Chestnut Buntings were present at Mai Po on 24th and another Crested Honey Buzzard was claimed at Sek Kong. On 26th a Green-billed Malkoha was found at Mount Davis. This is the first time that this species has been recorded in Hong Kong but as it is an unlikely migrant its origins are suspect. On 27th there were over 150 Eye-browed Thrushes at Tai Po Kau and 200 Chestnut Buntings at Mai Po. A Lesser Frigatebird was reported from Mai Po on 29th and on 30th. A Ring-necked Pheasant was seen in Wah Fu and a Burmese Shrike (Category D) watched at Mount Davis on 30th — a first for Hong Kong. The same day two Collared Finchbills (possibly from Kowloon Reservoirs) appeared at Tai Po Kau while Silver-eared Mesias (probable escapes) were watched on the Peak on 25th and 26th.

## May

The wader passage continued with up to four Spoon-billed Sandpipers, two Little Stints and eight Nordmann's Greenshank. A late Eurasian Bittern was observed at Mai Po on 1st and that day there were also high counts of 120 Knot, 505 Greenshank and 300 Broad-billed Sandpipers while a Little Whimbrel was present on 3rd. Other migrants included Grey-streaked Flycatcher, Von Schrenck's Reed Warbler and Chestnut Bunting. An immature Mountain Hawk Eagle was watched at rest and in flight at Luk Keng on 7th. This is the first accepted sighting of this species in Hong Kong although its occurrence has been suspected for a long time.

A Watercock and a Von Schrenck's Reed Warbler were also seen at Luk Keng on the same day. In Mirs Bay Black-naped Terns returned to the breeding sites with 40 on 8th and 50 on 15th. On the latter date one Roseate, two Common and two Bridled Terns were also noted, together with a large heavily-built immature gull. On 14th at least six pairs of Hainan Blue Flycatchers were found established at Shing Mun with others at Tai Po Kau, where Orange-headed Ground Thrushes were also seen. The usual passage of White-winged Black Terns occurred with over 100 in Mirs Bay on 15th and others in Deep Bay. A House Crow (escape) was seen at Mount Nicholson on 19th while two White-bellied Yuhinas were observed at Tai Po Kau on 22nd. A Von Schrenck's Little Bittern was found in the rather unlikely locality of Victoria Barracks on 27th whilst a survey of Tai Po Kau the next day produced two Silver-eared Mesias. 22 species of wader were recorded at Mai Po on 29th including a first-summer Ruff, which had first been sighted there on 21st. Also recorded at Mai Po on 29th were 13 Nordmann's Greenshank, over 150 Terek Sandpiper, 80 Curlew Sandpiper and nine Caspian Terns.

## June

A visit to Tai Mo Shan on 4th produced the expected specialities including Large Grass Warbler, Crested Bunting, Upland Pipit and Chinese Babax. A count at Tsim Bei Tsui egretty on 18th yielded an estimated breeding population of 300 pairs of Little Egrets, six pairs of Great Egrets, five pairs of Cattle Egrets, 45 pairs of Night Herons and at least one pair of Chinese Pond Herons. The Society outing to the Mirs Bay tern colonies on 25th revealed to everyone's dismay that both sites had been deserted, although birds had been present as usual in late May. Human interference is assumed to be the reason and protection for Hong Kong's only seabird colony is being requested from the Government for the future. Two House Crows were seen in Kowloon Tong on 26th. An Eagle owl was seen at Fung Head, Mirs Bay on the last day of the month.

## July

A Crested Kingfisher was seen on several occasions around the end of the month at Bride's Pool. One or two Black-faced Spoonbills and a White Ibis remained at Mai Po with small numbers of summering waders. On 30th 28 Curlew, seven Whimbrel and five Bar-tailed Godwit were counted with small numbers of Green and Wood Sandpiper, Redshank, Grey Plover and Grey-rumped Sandpiper. Seven White-headed Munias were also seen and these were to remain a feature of the late summer munia flocks until at least September. The next day an early Turnstone was recorded at Mai Po.

## August

The month began with a most welcome surprise — the finding of three Brown Fish Owls at Discovery Bay. These seemed to be a family group comprising two adults and one juvenile, and appeared each evening at dusk to feed on the foreshore. This is the first record of this species since 1970 and suggests that this large owl may still breed in suitable areas of the Territory. Sightings continued regularly throughout the month. At



Mai Po wader numbers grew rapidly. On 7th there were 350 birds of 21 species including three Asiatic Dowitchers and good numbers of Black-winged Stilts. At Magazine Gap the immature frigatebird reappeared and was amazingly joined by a second similar bird. This coincided with a separate report of two frigatebirds over Chung Hom Kok. A juvenile Crested Goshawk was found dead on the Peak around this time after having flown into a closed window. On 12th 350 Greenshank were counted at Mai Po and the next day 280 Redshank and four Asiatic Dowitchers were reported out of a wader total of 800 birds. At least one, possibly two, White-winged Black Terns, two Black-faced Spoonbills and a White Ibis were also present the same day. On 19th a Tri-coloured Munia and four Golden Bishops were found amongst the mixed Spotted/Chestnut/White-headed Munia flocks at Mai Po and remained until September. A Black-headed Gull and two drake Garganey were also reported from Mai Po in mid to late August. On 24th a Purple Gallinule was reported at Mai Po — the first for Hong Kong. On 28th the Crested Kingfisher was seen again at Bride's Pool, and ten Common Terns were observed in Mirs Bay. The first returning Grey Wagtails were also noted at this time. Also on 28th 800 waders including 11 Asiatic Dowitchers were counted at Mai Po and several Banded Rails were watched on the scrape. On 29th a Rufous-necked Scimitar Babbler was heard at Black's Link and two juvenile accipiters were seen at Mount Nicholson on that date.

## September

Wader netting at Mai Po on 2nd produced 90 birds including three Asiatic Dowitchers and one Knot. The next day three Golden Bishops and at least seven White-headed Munias were reported there and continued to be seen over the following weeks. A strong passage of Great Reed and Arctic Warblers commenced at the beginning of the month and both species were numerous throughout September. On 4th 24 Common Terns were observed near the Ninepins while on 6th the Purple Gallinule was seen again at Mai Po on gei-wai 19. The first of many Hobbies was reported at Mai Po on 8th — these continued to be seen in ones and twos in widespread areas throughout the month. Also on 8th the first Marsh Harrier was reported from Mai Po, and a Forest Wagtail and three Horsfield's Goshawks were seen at Mount Nicholson. Wader numbers increased at Mai Po and 27 species were present on 10th including 17 Bar-tailed Godwit and 13 Asiatic Dowitchers as well as two Knot and 15 Great Knot. On 11th 15 Bridled Terns and two Common Terns were found in Mirs Bay and an Asian Paradise Flycatcher was noted in Tai Po Kau. Both species of paradise flycatcher were subsequently recorded from widespread areas during the month. A male Tricolour Flycatcher was found at Mong Tseng on 11th; birds in this plumage are reported very infrequently, the majority being in female/immature plumage. Also on 11th a Watercock was seen at Tsim Bei Tsui. Pale-legged Leaf Warblers were widely reported between the middle and end of the month, especially at Tai Po Kau. On 16th 25 White-winged Black Terns were counted at Mai Po and the next day a frigatebird, possibly one of the two seen earlier on the Peak, was reported from Stonecutters Island. Also on 17th an immature Siberian Blue Robin was seen at Cheung Chau, four Asian Paradise Flycatchers, three Tricolour Flycatchers and an Eastern

Crowned Warbler were reported at Tai Po Kau, and a Black-necked Starling with young and 40 Java Sparrows were seen in Victoria Park. On 18th 12 Black Bazas, an estimated 60 Arctic Warblers, three Pale-legged Leaf Warblers, two Asian Paradise Flycatchers, several juvenile Chestnut Bulbuls being fed by adults and a possible Mountain Hawk Eagle were reported at Tai Po Kau. The same day an unidentified storm petrel was seen from a boat in West Lamma Channel. Single Black-winged Cuckoo Shrikes were noted in widespread localities from mid-September. Another Forest Wagtail was located on 22nd in Lam Tsuen Valley and on 24th new migrants included four Brown and one Grey-streaked Flycatcher at Lam Tsuen, a Sooty Flycatcher at Cheung Chau, a Horsfield's Goshawk at Stanley and a Red-winged Crested Cuckoo, a Broad-billed Roller and four Black-naped Orioles at Po Toi. On 25th a Rufous-necked Scimitar Babbler was heard and well seen at Tai Tam and four Black Bazas and at least five Asian Paradise Flycatchers were reported from Tai Po Kau. At Mai Po wader numbers on 25th totalled about 1,300 birds of 30 species and included 60 Great Knot (a new autumn high), 11 Knot, 24 Bar-tailed Godwit, two Australian Curlew, three Turnstone and two Asiatic Dowitchers. Garganey were still much in evidence and Teal numbers had begun to rise. The next day 14 Black Bazas, two Sooty Flycatchers and at least 15 Chestnut Bulbuls were noted at Tai Po Kau and a Treepie at She Shan. Pale-legged Leaf Warblers continued to be seen at several localities. On 28th another Tricolour Flycatcher was found at Tsim Bei Tsui. On 30th a Thick-billed Warbler was identified at Mount Nicholson and was seen again there on 1 October.



Great Knot *Calidris tenuirostris*  
Mai Po, October 1988

(Peter R. Kennerley)



## October

The month began with a Crested Honey Buzzard at Tai Po Kau on 1st. The first arrivals of winter visitors such as Olive-backed Pipits and Stonechats occurred around this time, and reports of Pale-legged Leaf Warblers and Hobbies continued until mid-month. On 2nd 25 Black Bazas were counted at Tai Po Kau and ten at Tai Mei Tuk while later the same day 24, possibly the same birds, were seen at Tsim Bei Tsui. The Black Bazas at Tai Mei Tuk were being mobbed by three small accipiters, possibly Japanese Sparrowhawks. On the same day a Hoopoe and a Broad-billed Roller were reported at Mount Davis. On 8th 28 species of wader were present at Mai Po including a juvenile male Ruff along with 14 Great Knot, 15 Knot, two Grey-rumped Sandpipers, 80 Asiatic Golden Plover, 231 Black-winged Stilts, a Sharp-tailed Sandpiper, a single Australian Curlew, 12 Bar-tailed Godwit and 51 Black-tailed Godwit. A male and female Pied Harrier were observed at Tsim Bei Tsui on the same day when four Sand Martins and two Asiatic House Martins were also seen. On 9th Tai Po Kau produced five more Black Bazas and an Ashy (White-cheeked) Drongo whilst the next day a male Japanese Paradise Flycatcher was seen at Ho Sheung Heung. An immature Bonelli's Eagle spent the afternoon of 9th on an island on the Mai Po scrape. On 15th a Watercock was reported at Luk Keng and a Northern Goshawk was seen at Cheung Chau. Records of immature Black-naped Orioles were widespread during this period. On 16th a possible Mountain Hawk Eagle was seen at Tai Po Kau and on 22nd a Yellow-cheeked Tit was located there. A trip to Luk Keng on 19th produced a Painted Snipe, two Grey-headed Buntings, a late Yellow Bittern and a rather intriguing but frustratingly silent pipit. A male Japanese Sparrowhawk was watched at close quarters at Tai Tam on the same day and a Brown Shrike was also noted there. At Mai Po two Nordmann's Greenshank were seen on 22nd and 23rd. Two Lapwing at Mai Po on 22nd were unusually early while a juvenile Whiskered Tern, also at Mai Po, was rather late. Many typical winter visitors had settled into their wintering quarters by this date and Dusky Warbler, Chinese Bush Warbler, Red-throated and Richard's Pipits and Siberian Rubythroat were all seen around this time. Late migrants included Sand Martin, Von Schrenck's and Great Reed Warblers, Black-naped Oriole and a male Japanese Sparrowhawk at Mai Po on 29th. At least one Yellow-cheeked Tit was found at Tai Po Kau on 29th and single birds continued to be seen through November while two other Yellow-cheeked Tits were reported at Bride's Pool on 30th. A Grey Bushchat was seen at Mount Davis on 30th and up to two Brown Fish Owls continued to be seen regularly on Lantau.

## November

The month was characterised by sunny, clear weather with strong surges of the winter monsoon bringing waves of winter visitors to Hong Kong. An immature Brahminy Kite was seen at Mai Po on 1st and remained there until well into 1989. Two Chestnut Bulbuls were recorded in the Lam Tsuen Valley on 3rd and this species was also regularly reported from Tai Po Kau with an apparent increase in numbers at the end of the month. On 5th a Chestnut-flanked White-eye was netted at

Mai Po. On the same day a Yellow-cheeked Tit, Orange-bellied Leafbird and several Chestnut Buntings were noted in Tai Po Kau, and two Grey-headed Flycatchers, a Yellow-eyed Flycatcher Warbler and a Chestnut-crowned Warbler were all found on a walk near Fan Lau, Lantau. On 6th three Eye-browed Thrushes were seen at Tai Po Kau, a male Golden Bishop turned up at Tung Chung, Lantau and a late Yellow Bittern and flock of 30 Silky Starlings were seen at Shuen Wan. On 9th late passage waders at Mai Po included four Great Knot and one Knot. A Java Sparrow, Painted Snipe and at least 12 Long-toed Stints were seen at Lok Ma Chau the same day. The stints and up to three Painted Snipe continued to be seen there all month. The 12th proved to be an exceptional day for the variety and numbers of birds seen. At Mai Po a Water Pipit, 50 Sand Martins, two Red-rumped Swallows, a Skylark (Northern?), three Common Pochard, one Baer's Pochard and 42 Tufted Duck were recorded. Black-winged Stilts still numbered over 200 and the Asiatic Golden Plover flock over 80. Many of the common wintering passerines had arrived including Dusky Warbler, Stonechat, Blackbird and Masked Bunting. At least five Ashy Minivets were present at Beas River whilst at Tai Po Kau four Orange-bellied Leafbirds, a Woodcock, a Red-tailed Robin, a Grey-headed Flycatcher, Sooty, Brown and Grey-streaked Flycatchers and a Yellow-cheeked Tit were reported. On the Peak a Yellow-cheeked Tit, Chestnut-flanked White-eye, several Short-tailed Bush Warblers and many Yellow-browed and Pallas's Warblers were seen. On 13th a Short-eared Owl (only the third for Hong Kong) was caught in wader nets at Mai Po where it was ringed and released. Tristram's Buntings, Red-tailed Robins, Short-tailed Bush Warblers and Robin Flycatchers were regularly seen at Tai Po Kau from about this time. Also on 13th the Sooty Flycatcher and Yellow-cheeked Tit were seen again at Tai Po Kau, an Ashy Minivet was noted at She Shan and a Japanese Sparrowhawk was reported from Nam Chung. On 15th two Robin Flycatchers and a Northern Goshawk were found at Tai Po Kau while Woodcock were seen in several areas including Tai Po Kau around mid-month. On 20th at least four Robin Flycatchers, a Blue and White Flycatcher (female) and a Brown Thrush were recorded at Braemar Hill. A Styan's Grasshopper Warbler was seen and heard at Mai Po the same day. During the month several Imperial and Spotted Eagles were intermittently seen at Mai Po while over ten Saunders' Gulls, 250 Black-winged Stilts and a European Spoonbill were regular features. A Crested Honey Buzzard was seen in Tai Po Kau again on 26th — this may have been the same bird as that first noted on 1 October. Black-faced Spoonbills increased to 28 on 26th, making Mai Po one of the most important sites in the world for this highly endangered species. Also at Mai Po on 26th and 27th the sub-adult Bonelli's Eagle was seen again as it hunted the duck flocks on the marsh.





Immature Bonelli's Eagle *Hieraaetus fasciatus*  
Mai Po, October 1988 (Peter R. Kennerley)

#### December

On 2nd at least two Blyth's Leaf Warblers were found at Tai Po Kau and irregular reports of this species continued there throughout the winter months. On 3rd a tame Chukar Partridge (Category E) was seen at Sek Kong Catchwater, following a previous sighting at Tai Mo Shan on 30 November. Several Grey-throated Minivets, Chestnut Bulbuls and Jays were also reported on 3rd on the Kap Lung Forest Trail from the top of Route Twisk to Sek Kong. On the same day a Black Stork was seen at Mai Po. On 4th the juvenile Brahminy Kite was sighted again at Mai Po and filmed for an RTHK programme on the Mini Bird Race held that day. A *Phylloscopus* warbler showing the characteristics of a Chiffchaff was also seen at Mai Po on 4th and this identification was confirmed when a Chiffchaff of the race *tristis* was trapped there on 10th. Also on 4th a Northern Goshawk was reported from Tai Po Kau and a 'zeebit' *Bradypterus* warbler was heard at Hok Tau. About this time a Lapwing was reported at Lung Kwu Tan near Castle Peak Power Station. On 11th a Verditer Flycatcher appeared at Mount Nicholson, two Robin Flycatchers were found at Bride's Pool and a Wryneck and Japanese Grosbeak were identified at She Shan. During this period a Grey-headed Flycatcher was regularly seen in the ZBG and a Yellow-eyed Flycatcher Warbler was found at Tai Po Kau on 10th. On 11th a Shelduck was picked up dead at

Kai Tak, the first record away from Deep Bay. A nondescript immature Ruddy Crane was first seen on 13th at Mai Po where it remained for at least five days. A pair of Baikal Teal was also noted there on the same day. On 15th an immature Great Black-headed Gull was located at Mai Po. The 17th was an interesting day at Mai Po: Deep Bay, from the boardwalk hide produced a first-winter Black-tailed Gull, over 300 Avocet and a spectacular display of a Peregrine repeatedly stooping on an unfortunate Black-headed Gull; the reserve held six Lapwings while duck numbers had increased markedly by this date and there were over 150 Falcated Teal at Mai Po and several thousand Pintail, Shoveler and Teal in Deep Bay. Also on 17th a Crested Honey Buzzard was reported again at Tai Po Kau, apparently the same bird as that recorded in November. On 19th a Mountain Bush Warbler was seen well at Hok Tau, a Coal Tit was claimed at Pak Nai (a first for Hong Kong if submitted and accepted), several Yellow-bellied Tits were found at Lok Ma Chau and 13 Lapwing were counted at Mai Po. At least two Blyth's Leaf Warblers were seen in the Lam Tsuen Valley on 23rd and the next day a Ruddy Shelduck turned up at Mai Po. The Christmas count records on 27th included several Grey-headed Parrotbills at Beacon Hill, a Red-headed Tit at Wah Fu, a Black Vulture at Sek Kong and a Mountain Bush Warbler at Mong Tseng.



Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus* eating Terek Sandpiper *Xenus cinereus*  
Mai Po, September 1988 (Sue Earle)



## RECORDS COMMITTEE REPORT 1988

M.L. Chalmers and P.R. Kennerley

CATEGORY A. SPECIES WHICH HAVE BEEN RECORDED IN AN APPARENTLY WILD STATE IN HONG KONG WITHIN THE LAST FIFTY YEARS.

[ **Storm Petrel** *Oceandroma* sp.  
A small dark petrel seen from a boat in the West Lamma Channel on 18 September may have been Swinhoe's Storm Petrel *O. monorhis*.]

**7 Dalmatian Pelican** *Pelecanus crispus*  
Recorded irregularly in Deep Bay up to 14 April and from 30 November with a maximum of 37 on 27 February. Continued disturbance from mud-scooter fishermen resulted in the birds resting along the north shore at Fu Tien or leaving the Deep Bay area completely.

**[8/9 Frigatebird** *Fregata* sp.  
A single immature seen regularly flying in to roost in the evenings with Black Kites *Milvus migrans* at Magazine Gap from 8 April until 3 June. This individual had white axillaries which, according to Harrison (*Seabirds: an identification guide*, 1983), indicates Lesser Frigatebird *F. ariel* as opposed to Great Frigatebird *F. minor*. It was then recorded intermittently until late August. Two immatures with white axillaries were seen there on 12 August.

A single immature at Rocky Harbour, Sai Kung on 5 May had black axillaries, which according to Harrison is diagnostic of Great Frigatebird.]

**12 Von Schrenck's Little Bittern** *Ixobrychus eurhythmus*  
A female seen along a nullah in Victoria Barracks from 27 to 30 May.

**15 Japanese Night Heron** *Gorsachius goisagi*  
An adult found stunned after flying into a window at Hong Kong Polytechnic, Hung Hom on 19 April was taken to Island House and kept there until 21 April when it was released at the dam in Tai Po Kau.

This was the fifth record of this elusive species in Hong Kong.



Japanese Night Heron *Gorsachius goisagi* prior to release at Tai Po Kau, April 1988  
(David S. Melville/WWF Hong Kong)



Upperwing of Japanese Night Heron *Gorsachius goisagi*  
Tai Po Kau, April 1988  
(David S. Melville/WWF HK)



- 20 Swinhoe's Egret** *Egretta eulophotes*  
One at Tsim Bei Tsui Fence on 17 and 23 April and one on rocks in Tathong Channel, near Joss House Bay on 24 April.
- 27 Black Stork** *Ciconia nigra*  
A juvenile at Mai Po on the island in gei-wai 16/17 (the scrape) on 3 December.
- 31 European Spoonbill** *Platalea leucorodia*  
A maximum of five recorded with Black-faced Spoonbills *P. minor* at Mai Po up to 29 April and one there from 13 November.
- 32 Black-faced Spoonbill** *Platalea minor*  
A maximum of 42 at Mai Po on 23 March is a new high count for Hong Kong. Recorded in the Deep Bay area up to 7 May and from 13 August until the end of the year, with up to 28 there in November. Also two immature birds remained throughout the summer at Mai Po.
- [ **Goose** *Anser* sp.  
Two unidentified geese seen to land in Penfold Park, Shatin Race Course during a race meeting on 11 December.]
- 36 Ruddy Shelduck** *Tadorna ferruginea*  
One at Mai Po on 2 January and Tsim Bei Tsui on 3 January and two there from 8 January until 13 March. One at Mai Po from 24 December.
- 39 Mandarin** *Aix galericulata*  
A female at Mai Po on 25 March.
- 41 Falcated Teal** *Anas falcata*  
Up to 60 at Mai Po and in Deep Bay until 16 April and up to 150 there from 23 October until the end of the year.
- 43 Baikal Teal** *Anas formosa*  
The drake found in December 1987 at Tsim Bei Tsui remained until 5 March. A female was also seen there on 17 January and 7 February. A pair was noted at Mai Po on 13 December.
- 50 Common Pochard** *Aythya ferina*  
A female/immature at Mai Po on 5 November, and three birds in similar plumage there on 12 November. An adult male was also recorded there on 27 and 28 December.
- 51 Baer's Pochard** *Aythya baeri*  
A flock of 23 in Deep Bay off Tsim Bei Tsui on 17 January and one male in eclipse at Mai Po between 31 October and 23 November.
- 53 Scaup** *Aythya marila*  
Four at Mai Po on 5 November and two female/immature birds at Nam Chung between 9 and 19 November.

- 58 Crested Honey Buzzard** *Pernis ptilorhynchus*  
An adult seen intermittently in Tai Po Kau from 1 October until 17 December. Differences in plumage suggest that two separate birds may have been present.  
There was also a series of reports of migrating raptors in April with flocks of 27 and 13 being reported over the Mong Tseng peninsula on 4 April and at least one in Tai Po Kau on 7 April. These were considered by the observers to be Crested Honey Buzzard but the descriptions provided were not sufficiently detailed to permit specific identification.
- 60.1 Brahminy Kite** *Haliastur indus*  
An immature at Mai Po from 1 November was still present in 1989.  
This is only the fourth record for Hong Kong and the second record since 1966. It has now appeared in consecutive years (1987 and 1988).
- 62 Black Vulture** *Aegypius monachus*  
One at Sek Kong Catchwater on 27 December was also seen on several occasions near Lo Wu in January 1989.  
This is the first record since 1985.
- 66 Pied Harrier** *Circus melanoleucos*  
A female at Tsim Bei Tsui on 3 January, and another female there on 8 October.
- 67 Northern Goshawk** *Accipiter gentilis*  
Single birds at Mai Po on 28 February and Cheung Chau between 15 and 18 October. Also recorded at Tai Po Kau on 6 April (immature), 15 November (female/immature), 18 November (adult male) and 4, 16 and 17 December (adult male) — an unprecedented series of records. It was interesting to note that the resident Crested Goshawks *A. virgatus* in Tai Po Kau became extremely elusive while the Northern Goshawks were in residence.
- 68 Japanese Sparrowhawk** *Accipiter gularis*  
An immature male at Tai Po Kau between 30 January and 27 February, and single birds at Silvermine Bay on 19 March and Mount Nicholson on 30 January and 24 March. Single males at Mai Po on 8 and 29 November and one caught there on 19 November. There were several records of small unidentified accipiters which were probably this species during the autumn including three reported on the Tai Mei Tuk catchment on 2 October mobbing several migrating Black Bazas *Aviceda leuphotes*.
- 68.1 Besra** *Accipiter virgatus*  
A pair attempted to breed at Mount Davis in April but by late May the nest had been deserted.  
At least three juveniles at Mount Nicholson in late August and early September may have been the product of local breeding. One adult male was reported in Tai Po Kau on 4 September.  
These are the first accepted records of this species which has long



been suspected of occurring. It breeds in Guangdong Province. See separate paper in this Report.

Other unidentified accipiters which the Records Committee believe may have been this species were recorded in the Lam Tsuen Valley on 14 January and Tai Po Kau on 25 February.

**71 Horsfield's Goshawk** *Accipiter soloensis*

One at Mai Po on 16 April and two at Tai Tam on 23 April. A movement of this species was noted on 24 April with a flock of seven at Mount Kellett, one at Tai Tam and one in Pok Fu Lam Country Park. There were also reports of three at Mount Nicholson on 8 September, one at Stanley on 24 September and one at Mai Po on 5 November.

Unsubstantiated but interesting reports of this species were 15 at Mai Po on 15 April and a movement of 134 migrating northwards between 0902h and 1040h at Tsim Bei Tsui on 24 April.

**72 Grey-faced Buzzard Eagle** *Butastur indicus*

Up to six reported from widespread parts of the New Territories between 1 and 10 April and one at Tai Long Wan on 22 October. A flock of 20 unidentified raptors at Plover Cove on 5 April may have been this species.

**74 Spotted Eagle** *Aquila clanga*

Up to three in the Deep Bay area until 9 April and one or two there from 2 November.

**75 Imperial Eagle** *Aquila heliaca*

A maximum of four in the Deep Bay area up to 17 April. Recorded again from 9 October with up to two there in December. Six immatures reported on 27 December at Sek Kong Catchwater.

**76.1 Mountain Hawk Eagle** *Spizaetus nipalensis*

An immature seen well at rest and in flight at Luk Keng on 7 May during an HKBWS field trip.

This is the first accepted record for Hong Kong but follows a series of sightings of large raptors, probably this species, at Tai Po Kau and elsewhere during the previous two years. This species is widespread but uncommon in the forest reserves in Guangdong Province and has long been expected to occur in Hong Kong. In view of the fact that the Mountain Hawk Eagle occurs widely throughout the region, it has been decided to accept the 1988 record into Category A. See separate paper in this Report.

**92 Ruddy Crane** *Porzana fusca*

An immature at Mai Po from 13 to 17 December was extremely confiding.

**96.1 Purple Gallinule** *Porphyrio porphyrio*

One first seen at Mai Po in reed beds on gei-wai 18 on 24 August and subsequently seen again in the same area on 6 and 11 September and on gei-wai 14 on 21 October. The plumage and frontal shield were in good condition and the bird was considered to be wild.

This is the first record for Hong Kong. See separate paper in this Report.

**101 Painted Snipe** *Rostratula benghalensis*

Two at Mui Wo on 19 March. A pair at Lok Ma Chau on 20 March and a female there on 28 April. A male with three partly-grown juveniles seen there on 4 July indicated the first breeding record for Hong Kong. Subsequently, up to six birds were regularly recorded there until the end of the year. Also a male at Ha Tsuen on 7 April and one at Luk Keng on 19 October.

**111 Oriental Plover** *Charadrius veredus*

A female at Ha Tsuen on 9 April and two males (in breeding plumage) and three females there the next day. Also one female at Mai Po on 9 April and a male at Kai Tak on 12 April, followed by two females on 14 April.

**116 Great Knot** *Calidris tenuirostris*

Regular at Mai Po between 29 March and 29 May, and between 28 August and 19 November. The maximum count in spring was 280, a new high, on 16 April, and the maximum in autumn was 60 on 25 September. Also isolated winter records of five at Tsim Bei Tsui on 3 January and three off Mai Po boardwalk on 29 December.

**119.1 Little Stint** *Calidris minuta*

Two at Mai Po on 10 April, at least four at Tsim Bei Tsui Fence on 17 April, two at Mai Po on 1 May and one there on 7 May.

Prior to this year there had been only two previous records, of single birds, in Hong Kong. The apparent rush of records in 1988 is probably due, at least in part, to greater observer awareness and improved identification skills. It is also believed that other birds were claimed during the spring migration period but notes on these individuals have not been submitted for review.

**125 Spoon-billed Sandpiper** *Eurynorhynchus pygmaeus*

Reported regularly at Mai Po between 20 March (a new early date) and 28 May with a maximum of four on 16 and 28 April and 1 May. Also one at Tsim Bei Tsui Fence on 21 May. It is considered that a minimum of 19 individuals was recorded during the spring migration period.

**127 Ruff** *Philomachus pugnax*

One at Mai Po on 14 April and then from 21 to 29 May. Also an immature there on 8 October and a winter-plumaged bird on 29 December. All the above records refer to males.

**131 Swinhoe's Snipe** *Gallinago megala*

At least two at Lok Ma Chau on 10 April and one there on 28 April. One at Ha Tsuen on 9 October.

**134 Asiatic Dowitcher** *Limnodromus semipalmatus*

Regular at Mai Po from 9 April until 29 May and from 7 August, a new early date, until 25 September. Numbers rose in spring to 30 on 9



April and then to 110 on 23 April, dropping to 73 on 25 April. The maximum in autumn was 13 on 10 September.

**138 Little Whimbrel**

*Numenius minutus*

On 9 April three in flight over Shuen Wan and three at Mai Po the same day and next day. Also ten at Kai Tak on 12 April, four there on 14 April and two there on 16 April. Five at Tsim Bei Tsui Fence on 17 April, and up to six there between 20 and 24 April.

**141 Australian Curlew**

*Numenius madagascariensis*

One at Tsim Bei Tsui on 17 January. Numbers rose rapidly at Mai Po from 9 April to a new high count of 44 on 16 April. The last spring record was on 21 May. In autumn, the only records were of singles at Mai Po on 26 September and 8 October and three there on 9 October.

**146 Nordmann's Greenshank**

*Tringa guttifer*

Relatively large numbers regularly reported again from Mai Po with spring records between 10 April and 9 June. The maximum count was 27, a new high, on 16 April. The only autumn record was two juveniles at Mai Po on 22 and 23 October. It is considered that a minimum of 55-60 individuals occurred during the spring.



Nordmann's Greenshank *Tringa guttifer*  
Mai Po, October 1988

(Peter R. Kennerley)

**157 Saunders' Gull**

*Larus saundersi*

Regular in Deep Bay until 10 April, with counts of at least 28 in January, 51 in February, 80 in March and six in April. In autumn first reported on 19 November with 12 from the boardwalk, and then recorded regularly until the end of the year.

**159 Brown-headed Gull**

*Larus brunnicephalus*

Single adults at Tsim Bei Tsui on 9 January and at Mai Po on 10 January, and 2, 4 and 9 April.

**[ Gull**

*Larus* sp.

A large immature gull at Gau Tau, Mirs Bay on the late date of 15 April showed many of the characters of a Slaty-backed Gull *L. schistisagus*.

A large pale-winged first-winter gull at Tsim Bei Tsui on 17 January appeared to be a Glaucous-winged hybrid *L. glaucescens* x ? because of its medium-brown primaries with darker secondary bar and tail band.]

**165 Glaucous Gull**

*Larus hyperboreus*

A first-winter bird flew past the boardwalk at Mai Po on 3 April. This is the third record for Hong Kong since 1974.

**170 Black-naped Tern**

*Sterna sumatrana*

Numbers increased from three in Tolo Channel on 23 April to 50 near Tap Mun on 15 May and 75 at Gau Tau on 5 June. However, visits to the two breeding colonies on 26 June revealed that both had been deserted. Only two birds were noted that day at the breeding sites, with 30 more seen in Tolo Harbour. The last record was four on 10 July.

**171 Roseate Tern**

*Sterna dougallii*

Single birds near Tap Mun and Gau Tau on 15 May and three at Gau Tau on 5 June.

**172 Common Tern**

*Sterna hirundo*

Four in Shelter Cove on 14 May and two in Mirs Bay the next day. Reported in Mirs Bay and the Ninepins area between 28 August and 11 September with a maximum of 24 on 4 September. At least 100 seen from the Cheung Chau ferry on 8 September. A single late record of one in Mirs Bay on 6 November.

**173 Bridled Tern**

*Sterna anaethetus*

Up to five in Mirs Bay between 15 April and 26 June. Also 15, including juveniles, there on 11 September.

**184 White-bellied Green Pigeon**

*Treron seiboldii*

A male found in a converted animal cage at a smallholding at Shan Lui, near Plover Cove, on 13 February. The bird was very nervous and appeared to have been recently caught. The occupant indicated that the bird had been found nearby. Since this bird was a captive individual its origins are suspect.

An unidentified green pigeon (*Treron* sp.) was also seen briefly in Tai Po Kau on 5 March.



- 192 Oriental Cuckoo** *Cuculus saturatus*  
Up to two at Tsim Bei Tsui between 20 and 23 April.  
Other cuckoos, probably this species, were as follows: one at She Shan on 9 April, up to three near Chek Keng on 23 April, one at Mount Davis on 27 April and 1 May.
- 197 Oriental Scops Owl** *Otus sunia*  
One heard calling from 2200h on 17 February to about 0200h the next day at Victoria Barracks.
- 198 Eagle Owl** *Bubo bubo*  
One flushed from a gully near Fung Head on 3 July.
- 199 Brown Fish Owl** *Ketupa zeylonensis*  
Three birds, assumed to be a family of two adults and one immature, seen regularly at dusk at Discovery Bay from 5 August until well into 1989.  
This is the first record since 1970 and was especially exciting as it indicated that this species may still be breeding in Hong Kong.
- 200 Barred Owlet** *Glaucidium cuculoides*  
Two at Beas River on 9 January and three there on 6 April. Single birds at Cheung Uk, above Fung Yuen, on 16 January, Hok Tau on 1 April, Tai Po Kau on 2 April, Ma Tseuk Leng on 3 April, Mount Nicholson on 4 April, Lam Tsuen Valley on 9 April and Tai Long, Sai Kung on 23 April.
- 201 Brown Hawk Owl** *Ninox scutulata*  
One near Hong Kong University, Pokfulam on 9 April.
- 203 Short-eared Owl** *Asio flammeus*  
One caught at Mai Po at 0300h on 13 November, ringed and released. Because its plumage was in excellent condition, it was considered to be a wild bird, the third record for Hong Kong.  
The same day at 0630h an unidentified medium-sized owl, possibly this species, was flushed from a grassy hillside on Cheung Chau.
- 206 White-throated Needletail** *Hirundapus caudacutus*  
Two at Mai Po on 3 April and several in a mixed needletail flock of over 30 birds with White-vented Needletails *H. cochinchinensis* at She Shan on 9 April.
- 207 White-vented Needletail** *Hirundapus cochinchinensis*  
At least ten at Mai Po on 3 April and four there on 5 April. Over 100, a new high count, at She Shan on 8 April, over ten there and up to three at Mai Po the next day, and singles at Mai Po and Tai Po Kau on 10 April.  
Other needletail swifts, not specifically identifiable, were one at Mai Po on 3 April, one at Black's Link on 5 April, three at Deep Water Bay on 6 April, 30 at She Shan on 7 April, two at Shek O on 14 April and three at Mai Po on 23 April.

- 214 Crested Kingfisher** *Ceryle lugubris*  
One near Bride's Pool on 28 August.
- 222 Great Spotted Woodpecker** *Dendrocopos major*  
One at Stonecutters Island on 8 January, one at Beas River on 12 February and a male at Victoria Barracks on 11 February, 19 May and 15 June.
- 233 Pechora Pipit** *Anthus gustavi*  
Five at Tsim Bei Tsui on 17 April and one still there on 23 April.
- 238 Citrine Wagtail** *Motacilla citreola*  
A female on drained ponds at Tsim Bei Tsui Fence between 20 and 23 April.  
This is the third record for Hong Kong.
- 240 White Wagtail** *Motacilla alba*  
A male of the distinctive race *lugens* (known as Black-backed Wagtail) photographed at Tsim Bei Tsui Fence on 10 January. This form breeds in Japan and is considered by some authorities to be a separate species *M. lugens*.



White Wagtail (Black-backed) *Motacilla alba lugens*  
Tsim Bei Tsui, January 1988

(Ray Tipper)



- 243 Rosy Minivet** *Pericrocotus roseus*  
At least two in the Lam Tsuen Valley on 9 April.  
This is the third record for Hong Kong.
- 251.1 Orange-bellied Leafbird** *Chloropsis hardwickii*  
A maximum of four in Tai Po Kau up to 5 June and from 29 October.  
Also one at Kadoorie Farm on 9 March.
- 258 Siberian Blue Robin** *Luscinia cyane*  
A male at Mount Nicholson on 12 February and another near She Shan on 8 April. A juvenile at Cheung Chau on 17 September.
- 269 Orange-headed Ground Thrush** *Zoothera citrina*  
One at Tai Po Kau on 14 May.
- 271 Siberian Thrush** *Zoothera sibirica*  
A male at Tai Po Kau on 9 and 10 April.
- 274 Brown Thrush** *Turdus chrysolaus*  
Single females at She Shan on 9 April and Sek Kong on 17 April.
- 282 Mountain Bush Warbler** *Cettia fortipes*  
One at Hok Tau Reservoir on 18 December and one at Mong Tseng on 27 December. Both of these were first located by the distinctive and diagnostic call — a constant soft ‘tutting’ in ‘morse-code’ bursts.  
Other unidentified bush warblers (*Cettia/Bradypterus* sp.) were at least five at Hok Tau on 16 January and one there on 30 November. Similar unresolved records from 1987 were single birds at Wu Kau Tang, Lai Chi Wo and Tai Po Kau on 17 January and Wu Kau Tang on 30 January.  
The committee is currently attempting to solve the problems relating to the identity of the ‘zeebit’ *Bradypterus* warblers and is in contact with several overseas experts on this genus. Records of birds giving the characteristic ‘zeebit’ song were reported at Mount Nicholson on 4 and 5 March 1987, Nam Chung on 15 November 1987 and Wu Kau Tang on 9 January 1988 and remain under review.
- 287 Styan’s Grasshopper Warbler** *Locustella pleskei*  
One feeding on the ground around the base of *Phragmites* reeds at Mai Po on 20 November.
- 291 Thick-billed Warbler** *Acrocephalus aedon*  
One in lantana scrub at Mount Nicholson on 30 September and 1 October.  
This is the third record for Hong Kong.
- 292 Yellow-eyed Flycatcher Warbler** *Seicercus burkii*  
One at Fan Lau, Lantau on 5 November and singles at Tai Po Kau on 3 February and 10 and 11 December.
- 293 Chestnut-crowned Warbler** *Seicercus castaniceps*  
One in a bird wave in fung shui woods at Fan Lau, Lantau on 5 November.  
This is the third record for Hong Kong.

- 295 Large Grass Warbler** *Graminicola bengalensis*  
Up to two at Tai Mo Shan between 4 June and 7 July. Also single birds reported from grassy hillsides at new localities near Hok Tau Reservoir on 16 January and at the top of Tai Po Kau on 31 May.
- 298 Blyth’s Leaf Warbler** *Phylloscopus reguloides*  
Recorded in Tai Po Kau on 20 January, and 3 and 7 February. One in full song at May Road on 4 April was an unusual record for Hong Kong Island. Up to three at Tai Po Kau from 20 November until the end of the year, and up to four seen in a flock of *Phylloscopus* warblers on 22 December in the Lam Tsuen Valley.
- 299 Eastern Crowned Warbler** *Phylloscopus coronatus*  
Single birds in Tai Po Kau on 9 April and 17 September.
- 300 Pale-legged Leaf Warbler** *Phylloscopus tenellipes*  
One at Tai Po Kau on 9 April and at least three there on 18 and 19 September. One recorded in the Lam Tsuen Valley on 24 September, one at Mount Nicholson on 1 October, one near Tai Mei Tuk on 2 October, and singles at Mong Tseng on 2 and 8 October.
- 305.1 Chiffchaff** *Phylloscopus collybita*  
A bird of the eastern race *tristis* was seen at Mai Po on 4 December and subsequently caught, ringed and released there on 10 December.  
This is the second record for Hong Kong, the first also having been caught at Mai Po, on 16 March 1986. See separate paper in this Report.
- 311 Sooty Flycatcher** *Muscicapa sibirica*  
One at Mount Nicholson on 11 and 12 September and one at Cheung Chau on 24 September. Most records, as usual, came from Tai Po Kau with two there on 26 September, one on 11 and 12 November and one on 18 November.  
The clouds surrounding the identification of this species seem to be lifting and we are now getting a better picture of its true status.
- 322 Chinese Babax** *Babax lanceolatus*  
Single birds at Tai Mo Shan on 6 and 9 April. Heard at Tai Mo Shan on 25 April. Three seen there on 4 June and one on 28 June.
- 334 Penduline Tit** *Remiz pendulinus*  
A flock present in the reed beds around the scrape at Mai Po between 26 March and 9 April. The maximum count was at least 12 on 28 March. This species is now being recorded regularly in the spring and this may be related to the ever-increasing numbers which are being recorded at Beidaihe, Hubei Province, China in the spring and autumn.





Penduline Tit *Remiz pendulinus*  
Mai Po, April 1989

(Sue Earle)

**334.1 Gould's Sunbird** *Aethopyga gouldiae*  
A male seen regularly near the management centre in Tai Po Kau from 24 February until 2 March.

This is the first record for Hong Kong. This species breeds as close to Hong Kong as northern Guangdong. See separate paper in this Report.

**338 Chestnut-flanked White-eye** *Zosterops erythropleura*  
One caught, ringed and released at Mai Po on 5 November. Single birds also seen at Severn Road, Hong Kong Island on 12 November and Tai Po Kau on 20 November.

**341 Bull-headed Shrike** *Lanius bucephalus*  
The male found roosting at the Chinese University in December 1987 was regularly seen up to 27 March.  
This is the second record of this species in Hong Kong, the first having been recorded at Mai Po in 1986.

**355 Purple-backed Starling** *Sturnus sturninus*  
Three immatures at She Shan on 19 and 20 October, a new late date.

**358 European Starling** *Sturnus vulgaris*  
One at Tsim Bei Tsui paddy on 7 and 13 February and 13 March. Two at Tsim Bei Tsui Fence on 8 November and one at Tsim Bei Tsui paddy on 29 December.

**366.1 Brambling** *Fringilla montifringilla*  
A pair near the casuarinas at Mai Po from 7 until 9 April were in excellent plumage and showed no signs of having been held in captivity.

There are now five late autumn records (12 November to 8 December) and two spring records (7 to 12 April) of this species. As these dates coincide with peaks of passage migration of similar species, i.e. finches and buntings, it has been decided to promote this species to Category A, despite the fact that many are imported as cage birds.

**370.1 Japanese Grosbeak** *Coccothraustes personatus*  
A male at She Shan on 11 December seen with a flock of Black-tailed Hawfinches *C. migratorius*.

This is the third record of this species since 1985 when it was first recorded. All the records have been from the She Shan bamboo stand — clearly the place to look if you want to see this magnificent finch.

**372 Japanese Yellow Bunting** *Emberiza sulphurata*  
This species is now being recorded regularly during early April and this year produced a bumper crop of records.

Single females at Mai Po village on 3 April and Shuen Wan on 4 April were followed by single males at Tsim Bei Tsui and Mai Po on 9 April. Two males were found at Mai Po on 13 April, followed by a female the next day and a pair on 16th. Two females were located at Tsim Bei Tsui on 17 April and one continued to be seen there until 19th. Finally, a male at Mai Po on 29 April.

CATEGORY B. SPECIES WHICH HAVE BEEN RECORDED IN AN APPARENTLY WILD STATE IN HONG KONG, BUT NOT WITHIN THE LAST FIFTY YEARS.

**501 Ring-necked Pheasant** *Phasianus colchicus*  
A male in a vegetable garden at Wah Fu on 30 April was assumed to be an escape.

CATEGORY D. SPECIES WHICH HAVE OCCURRED IN AN APPARENTLY WILD STATE IN HONG KONG BUT FOR WHICH THE POSSIBILITY OF ESCAPE OR RELEASE FROM CAPTIVITY CANNOT BE SATISFACTORILY EXCLUDED.

**701.1 Saker Falcon** *Falco cherrug*  
An immature in Deep Bay seen from Tsim Bei Tsui Fence on 9



January and Mai Po boardwalk on 17 January. The bird, seen well at close quarters, appeared in excellent plumage and was watched hunting in high-speed horizontal flight among the duck and wader flocks.

This is the second record for Hong Kong, the first being at Mong Tseng on 11 October 1953. Because it was far from its normal range and openly traded at that time, the first record was placed in Category E. This second record suggests a wild bird, and the species has therefore been promoted to Category D, the intermediate step between Category A and Category E, despite its normal wintering range not extending south of the Yangtze River according to Cheng (*A Synopsis of the Avifauna of China*, 1987).

**702 Grass Owl** *Tyto capensis*

A bird found in poor physical condition at Yuen Long Industrial Estate on 5 August subsequently died. Another weak bird picked up on a footpath at Lower Shing Mun on 29 October also died shortly afterwards. In both cases the plumage was in good condition, not showing obvious signs of captivity. Disease or poisoning is suspected as the cause of death.

**704 Red-breasted Parakeet** *Psittacula alexandri*

The male previously seen regularly near the Zoological and Botanical Gardens was reported there again on 9 April.

**707 Rufous-necked Scimitar Babbler** *Pomatorhinus ruficollis*

One at the highest point of the Yellow Walk in Tai Po Kau on 5 June. Also heard calling at Black's Link on 29 August and Mount Nicholson on 3 and 24 November.

**712.1 Yellow-cheeked Tit** *Parus spilonotus*

A male at Mount Nicholson on 29 January was the first record for Hong Kong. This was followed by a series of sightings with a female at Victoria Gap, the Peak on 6 and 19 February, Mount Butler Road on 24 March, and a male at Tai Tam on 3 April. An apparent influx of this species occurred in the autumn with at least one male at Tai Po Kau from 29 October to the end of the year, and two at Bride's Pool on 30 October. There were subsequently many more records in the early months of 1989 and these will be summarised in the 1989 annual Report.

The Hong Kong Island records coincided with a period when this species was being traded in the bird shops. It has therefore been placed in Category D. However, the subsequent records in the winter of 1988/89 are more likely to have been wild birds and its status will therefore be kept under review.

**712.3 Burmese Shrike** *Lanius collurioides*

One seen and photographed on a fence on the summit of Mount Davis on 30 April.

This is the first record for Hong Kong. Although this species' range just includes Hong Kong, according to Cheng (*A Synopsis of the Avifauna of China*, 1987), quite a few were reported in the bird trade in 1988.

**713 Red Avadavat** *Amandava amandava*

The only record submitted was a female at Ho Chung on 17 April.

**CATEGORY E. SPECIES FOR WHICH ALL PUBLISHED RECORDS ARE SUSPECTED OF BEING BIRDS WHICH HAVE ESCAPED OR HAVE BEEN RELEASED FROM CAPTIVITY.**

**801.1 Chukar Partridge** *Alectoris chukar*

A tame bird at Sek Kong Catchwater on 11 September and 3 December and nearby on Route Twisk on 30 November.

**801.2 Green-billed Malkoha** *Phaenicophaeus tristis*

One at Mount Davis on 9 May.

This is the first record for Hong Kong. The bird showed no signs of captivity, but although its known range extends to west Guangdong, it is believed to be non-migratory. For these reasons it has been placed in Category E.

**802.1 Goffin's Cockatoo** *Cacatua goffini*

One at Mount Nicholson on 23 November and 14 December.

**808 Budgerigar** *Melopsittacus undulatus*

One at Conduit Road on 6 October.

**810.05 Collared Finchbill** *Spizixos semitorques*

Over 100, many in very poor condition, at Kowloon Hills between 8 and 10 April. Subsequently two at Tai Po Kau on 30 April.

Although this species breeds in Guangdong, all the above records are assumed to refer to escapes.

**815 Rufous Laughing Thrush** *Garrulax poecilorhynchus*

A flock of about 12 at Bride's Pool on 9 April.

**815.2 Moustached Laughing Thrush** *Garrulax cineraceus*

A flock of at least ten at Lower Bride's Pool on 9 April contained some birds in very tatty condition.

**816 Silver-eared Mesia** *Leiothrix argentea*

One at Victoria Gap, the Peak on 25 and 26 April. At least two in Tai Po Kau on 28 May with a group of Pekin Robins *L. lutea*. One at Lung Ha Wan, Clearwater Bay on 25 September.

**816.1 Eurasian Nuthatch** *Sitta europaea*

One seen daily at a bird table in King's Park, Kowloon between 15 January and 10 February.



This is the first record for Hong Kong. Although this species is resident in parts of northern Guangdong, the bird's dishevelled body plumage and urban locality were considered to indicate that it was probably an escape.

- 817 House Crow** *Corvus splendens*  
One of the eastern race *C.s. insolans* at Mount Nicholson on 19 May and two at Kowloon Tong on 26 June.
- 821 White-vented Mynah** *Acridotheres javanicus*  
Three at Mai Po near the Education Centre on 9 January and two there on 19 November and 4 December.
- 824 Baya Weaver** *Ploceus philippinus*  
A sub-adult male caught in an illegal bird net at Ma Tso Lung on 26 January subsequently died.
- 825 Golden Bishop** *Euplectes afer*  
Up to four males at Mai Po in August and September.
- 829 White-headed Munia** *Lonchura maja*  
Regular in small numbers at Mai Po between 6 August and 8 October, with a maximum count of over ten on 29 August.
- 830 Java Sparrow** *Padda oryzivora*  
A flock of 40 in Victoria Park on 18 September, two at Cape D'Aguiar on 8 October, one at Tai Long Wan on 22 October and one at Lok Ma Chau on 12 November.

THE FOLLOWING RECORDS WERE SUBMITTED BUT NOT ACCEPTED BY THE RECORDS COMMITTEE:

- 20 Swinhoe's Egret** *Egretta eulophotes*  
One at Po Toi on 8 April.
- 27 Black Stork** *Ciconia nigra*  
One seen over Tsim Bei Tsui from the Mai Po Education Centre on 5 November.
- 51 Baer's Pochard** *Aythya baeri*  
Two at Mai Po on 3 January.
- 65 Hen Harrier** *Circus cyaneus*  
Singles at Mai Po on 8 and 20 April.

- 66 Pied Harrier** *Circus melanoleucos*  
An immature at Tsim Bei Tsui on 3 and 9 January and a female at Mai Po on 17 January. Descriptions of single males reported on 24 February and 9 October did not preclude male Marsh Harrier *C. aeruginosus*.
- 67 Northern Goshawk** *Accipiter gentilis*  
Singles at Tai Po Kau on 24 February and Mai Po on 2 November.
- 68 Japanese Sparrowhawk** *Accipiter gularis*  
One at Mui Wo, Lantau on 18 April.
- 127 Ruff** *Philomachus pugnax*  
One at Mai Po on 2 April.
- 131 Swinhoe's Snipe** *Gallinago megala*  
Two at Luk Keng on 28 August and three there on 4 September.
- 133 Long-billed Dowitcher** *Limnodromus scolopaceus*  
One at Mai Po on 8 April.
- 163 Slaty-backed Gull** *Larus schistisagus*  
Two immatures at Tsim Bei Tsui on 1 January and one adult in the East Lamma Channel on 21 January.
- 165 Glaucous Gull** *Larus hyperboreus*  
One off Cheung Chau on 2 March.
- 225 Oriental Skylark** *Alauda gulula*  
One at Plover Cove on 19 June.
- 241 Large Cuckoo Shrike** *Coracina novaehollandiae*  
One on Lantau on 18 April.
- 258 Siberian Blue Robin** *Luscinia cyane*  
One at Lady Clementi's Ride water catchment on 28 December.
- 266 Chestnut-breasted Rock Thrush** *Monticola rufiventris*  
A male at Tung Chung, Lantau on 28 November and a female at Tai O, Lantau also on 28 November.
- 304 Radde's Warbler** *Phylloscopus schwarzi*  
One on the Peak on 26 April.
- 708 Pygmy Wren Babbler** *Pnoepyga pusilla*  
One in Tai Po Kau on 19 February.
- **Two-barred Greenish Warbler** *Phylloscopus plumbeitarsus*  
One in Tai Po Kau on 24 February.



## SIGNIFICANT BREEDING RECORDS 1988

M.L. Chalmers

- 11 Yellow Bittern** *Ixobrychus sinensis*  
A nest with at least two young was found 3.5m high in a *Kandelia* mangrove tree in the outer mangroves at Mai Po on 24 July.
- 17 Little Green Heron** *Butorides striatus*  
Several recently fledged juveniles noted with adults at Mai Po on 7 August.
- 26 Purple Heron** *Ardea purpurea*  
A juvenile seen at Mai Po on 19 July, 1 and 2 August strongly suggests that breeding occurred.
- 46 Yellow-nib Duck** *Anas poecilorhyncha*  
Two adults with three ducklings seen at Mai Po on 14 August.
- 90 Banded Rail** *Rallus striatus*  
An adult with two juveniles seen at Mai Po on 29 August.
- 101 Painted Snipe** *Rostratula benghalensis*  
A male with three partly grown juveniles at Lok Ma Chau on 4 July was the first confirmed breeding record for Hong Kong.
- 106 Little Ringed Plover** *Charadrius dubius*  
Mating noted at Mai Po scrape on 29 May. Birds giving 'scraping display' observed at east end of Plover Cove on 22 May and 5 June.
- 199 Brown Fish Owl** *Ketupa zeylonensis*  
A family of two adults and one juvenile at Discovery Bay from 5 August may have bred locally.
- 250 Chestnut Bulbul** *Hypsipetes castanonotus*  
An adult feeding young at Tai Po Kau on 18 September was the first confirmed breeding record.
- 307 Hainan Blue Flycatcher** *Cyornis hainana*  
At least six singing males at Shing Mun on 14 May and five at Tai Po Kau on 28 May.
- 328 Pekin Robin** *Leiothrix lutea*  
Juveniles noted with adults at Tai Po Kau on 28 May.

## INTERNATIONAL WATERFOWL COUNT IN DEEP BAY, HONG KONG, 1988

M.L. Chalmers

The ninth annual co-ordinated count of wintering waterfowl organised by the Hong Kong Bird Watching Society was held in the Deep Bay area over the weekend 16 and 17 January 1988. This year virtually all the counting was carried out on 17 January, with only limited inputs from Fu Tien and San Tin on 16 January. Most of the counts on the first day did not exceed those on the second, the only records to be carried forward or added being those for Little Grebe, Great Crested Grebe, Coot and Little Ringed Plover.

As before, counts along Tsim Bei Tsui Fence are included under Deep Bay. The former survey area at Lo Wu was rechecked this year and the few birds seen were added to the total for Ma Tso Lung.

The results are summarised in Table 1. A total of 38,947 birds of 61 species was recorded. This compares with totals of 38,766 and 37,835 in the last two years and, although it is the highest number ever recorded, it indicates a reasonably consistent total over this period. Sub-totals by major groups of species are as follows:

Group	Number	Species
Cormorants	1,634	1
Hérons, egrets etc.	4,609	12
Duck	11,755	14
Rails, Coots, Moorhens and others	2,154	7
Waders	3,781	22
Gulls and terns	15,014	5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>38,947</b>	<b>61</b>

Of particular note were the new high counts for Great Crested Grebe (75), Shelduck (4,011), Teal (2,888), Grey Heron (1,067) and Saunders' Gull (43). Other significant high counts included Night Heron (1,000), a species often not found on the count during mid-winter, Great Egret (604), and a series of wader records including Black-winged Stilt (212), Avocet (275), Black-tailed Godwit (48), Curlew (350), Marsh Sandpiper (202) and Greenshank (119). The large flocks numbering several thousand Kentish Plover and Dunlin noted in previous years were not found this year. Reports of irregular wintering species included Garganey, Asiatic Golden Plover, Whimbrel, Australian Curlew and Redshank. Rarities included two Ruddy Shelduck, a flock of 23 Baer's Pochard and a drake Baikal Teal. A large immature gull seen at Tsim Bei Tsui had pale primaries and showed many of the characters of a Glaucous-winged Gull, but because of its dark tail band and secondary bar was considered to be a hybrid. In addition a grey-phase Little Egret was seen at San Tin.



Although the extensive fish traps which had been erected last winter over the mudflats in front of Mai Po had been removed by Government, there remained a high level of disturbance in this area due to boats and mud-scooters (subsequently removed). The result was that the pelican flock, which had thankfully returned in good numbers, was forced to take refuge on the Fu Tien side of the bay. Fu Tien itself has been cut by a new road along its edge, which actually reaches the mangroves at one point, and many spent cartridges were noted as evidence of continued shooting. On the Hong Kong side the area at Ma Tso Lung has been reduced by fish pond construction, development was proceeding nearby on the Shenzhen side of the river, and the river itself was grossly polluted. Similar depressing reports from Lo Wu and Tin Shui Wai indicate that the wetland habitat outside Mai Po continues to be diminished and degraded and, if not checked, this will inevitably reduce the variety and numbers of birds in the future.

The co-operation of the Guangdong Forestry Bureau is gratefully acknowledged for providing access to Fu Tien. The following observers took part in the count: D.N. Bakewell, M.L. Chalmers, G.C.H. Cooper, J.S.R. and P. Edge, P.R. Kennerley, A.R. Lamont, M. Lau, V.B. Picken, R.D.E. and J. Stott, C.A. Viney, Wan Yip-fat, S. and A. Wilks and W. Young.



Female Baikal Teal *Anas formosa* in flight  
Tsim Bei Tsui, January 1989

(Peter R. Kennerley)

#### 摘要:

一九八八年香港水禽數目統計於一月十六日和十七日舉行。文章內介紹了新的最高數目紀錄，一些突出的大數目和異常的觀察紀錄。詳細的統計結果記載在附表裏。今次錄得61個品種，合共38,947頭，是一個新的高值。可是幾個地區出現了拓展和污染，令人對后海灣地區的前景感到憂慮。

TABLE 1

#### SUMMARY OF WATERFOWL COUNT 1988

Species	Fu Tien	Ma Tso Lung Lo Wu	San Tin Lok Ma Chau	Mai Po	Deep Bay	Ha Tsuen Tin Shui Wai	Nim Wan Tsim Bei Tsui	Total
Little Grebe	24	10	3	56	-	1	-	94
Great Crested Grebe	75	-	-	-	*	-	*	75
Cormorant	32	-	2	*	800	10	790	1,634
Dalmatian Pelican	33	-	-	-	-	-	-	33
Bittern	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Yellow Bittern	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
Night Heron	-	1,000	-	-	-	-	-	1,000
Chinese Pond Heron	50	62	10	149	47	45	49	412
Cattle Egret	-	-	8	145	-	2	-	155
Little Egret	200	3	40	700	216	140	47	1,346
Intermediate Egret	2	-	-	-	3	-	-	5
Great Egret	*	12	30	500	42	-	20	604
Grey Heron	6	-	-	600	461	-	-	1,067
Purple Heron	3	-	-	2	-	-	-	5
White Ibis	2	-	-	2	-	-	-	4
Black-faced Spoonbill	2	-	-	7	-	-	-	9
Ruddy Shelduck	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	2
Shelduck	11	-	-	*	4,000	-	-	4,011

Continued ...



TABLE 1 continued

Species	Fu Tien	Ma Tso Lung Lo Wu	San Tin Lok Ma Chau	Mai Po	Deep Bay	Ha Tsuen Tin Shui Wai	Nim Wan Tsim Bei Tsui	Total
Wigeon	-	-	-	73	400	-	30	503
Falcated Teal	-	-	-	3	30	-	-	33
Gadwall	-	-	-	2	15	-	-	17
Baikal Teal	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Teal	278	82	35	272	2,200	1	20	2,888
Mallard	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	2
Yellow-nib Duck	2	-	-	140	70	-	-	212
Pintail	182	1	-	-	1,600	-	2	1,785
Garganey	-	-	15	-	1	1	-	17
Shoveler	800	-	-	3	1,420	2	-	2,225
Baer's Pochard	-	-	-	-	23	-	-	23
Tufted Duck	-	-	-	36	-	-	-	36
Banded Rail	-	1	-	6	1	-	-	8
White-breasted Waterhen	4	6	-	13	1	3	3	30
Moorhen	-	35	7	43	13	11	19	128
Coot	547	161	166	819	80	13	-	1,786
Black-winged Stilt	-	-	-	212	-	-	-	212
Avocet	-	-	-	-	275	-	-	275

Continued ...

TABLE 1 continued

Species	Fu Tien	Ma Tso Lung Lo Wu	San Tin Lok Ma Chau	Mai Po	Deep Bay	Ha Tsuen Tin Shui Wai	Nim Wan Tsim Bei Tsui	Total
Little Ringed Plover	20	-	-	30	2	-	1	53
Kentish Plover	13	-	-	150	-	-	305	468
Small wader sp.	-	-	-	-	1,000	-	-	1,000
Asiatic Golden Plover	-	-	-	63	-	-	-	63
Grey Plover	-	-	-	70	*	-	-	70
Grey-headed Lapwing	-	-	-	-	7	-	-	7
Temminck's Stint	-	-	-	-	6	-	-	6
Dunlin	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	2
Fantail Snipe	3	4	25	3	-	6	-	41
Pintail Snipe	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	2
Snipe sp.	-	1	1	2	1	3	-	8
Black-tailed Godwit	-	-	-	48	-	-	-	48
Whimbrel	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	5
Curlew	*	-	-	350	*	-	-	350
Australian Curlew	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
Spotted Redshank	-	2	-	430	200	-	-	632
Redshank	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
Marsh Sandpiper	-	-	-	197	5	-	-	202

Continued ...



TABLE 1 continued

Species	Fu Tien	Ma Tso Lung Lo Wu	San Tin Lok Ma Chau	Mai Po	Deep Bay	Ha Tsuen Tin Shui Wai	Nim Wan Tsim Bei Tsui	Total
Greenshank	14	-	-	60	30	-	15	119
Green Sandpiper	4	6	1	9	2	4	-	26
Wood Sandpiper	-	3	60	66	-	9	-	138
Common Sandpiper	11	10	1	20	2	3	5	52
Saunders' Gull	-	-	-	15	28	-	-	43
Black-headed Gull	*	50	90	500	13,800	-	104	14,544
Black-tailed Gull	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
Herring Gull	*	-	-	*	420	2	-	422
Large gull sp.	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
Caspian Tern	-	-	-	3	*	-	-	3

\* Indicates total deleted to avoid possible double count

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## TAI PO KAU BREEDING BIRDS SURVEY 28 MAY 1988

Clive Viney

Tai Po Kau Nature Reserve is situated in the central New Territories on rising ground between 100m and 350m above sea level. North and south of the general area are the heavily populated centres of Tai Po and Sha Tin. A kilometre to the east is the fiord-like Tolo Harbour and to the west grassy hills culminate in the Territory's highest mountain, Tai Mo Shan (957m). Three kilometres to the southwest is the Shing Mun Reservoir, which has extensive plantations of introduced trees in its catchment areas.

The reserve proper has an area of approximately 500 ha. Most of the reserve comprises dense and relatively undisturbed woodland. The trees are a mix of native and introduced trees planted in two major exercises conducted some 60 and 40 years ago. A fast-flowing and unpolluted stream, with several tributaries, bisects the reserve. A restricted road leads to a small headquarters and well-marked paths allow access to the forest. Habitat diversity is provided by several small clearings, used for recreational purposes, an orange grove, a nursery and at the highest levels the trees give way to open grassland.

The recreational areas and paths close to the headquarters are much frequented by visitors on public holidays. Access is unrestricted.

### OBJECTIVES OF THE SURVEY

- to survey all species occurring within the reserve on 28 May 1988
- to estimate the abundance of species recorded
- to determine which species are or are likely to be breeding
- to provide a yardstick for future surveys

### METHOD

Eight participants took part (John Boughey, Robert Ferguson, Richard Lewthwaite, Verity Picken, Peter Stevens, Clive Viney, Don Weidemann, Wendy Young). Four walks (red, blue, brown, yellow) and the forestry road were covered on foot. Observers either worked independently or with a companion. The main survey was conducted between 0600h and 1300h, with a return visit by one observer in the early evening to record owls. A supplementary visit was made by two observers during the morning of 31 May. The coverage was satisfactory.

### WEATHER

Mostly cloudy and humid. Occasional light drizzle on high ground. Cool at first becoming hot (25-29°C). Good visibility and light easterly winds.



## RESULTS

The variety of breeding species was much as anticipated. Perhaps the only omission was the Orange-headed Ground Thrush, which is considered a probable breeding species (Chalmers 1986) and was recorded in the reserve on 14 May 1988.

The results have been tabulated below. Nomenclature corresponds to Chalmers (1986); for abundance the 'order of magnitude' method was used, as follows:

Number	'Order'
1 — 9	1
10 — 99	2
100 — 999	3

Breeding status is given by the following codes in accordance with the recommendations of the European Ornithological Atlas Committee (Sharrock 1976) and also used by Chalmers (1986):

- A — present
- B — possible breeding
- C — probable breeding
- D — confirmed breeding

TABLE 1

Species	'Order'	Breeding status	Remarks
Chinese Pond Heron	1	A	
Black Baza	1	B	
Serpent Eagle	1	C	displaying
Crested Goshawk	1	C	carrying prey
falcon sp.	1	A	probably Peregrine
Chinese Francolin	1	B	
White-breasted Waterhen	1	B	
Spotted Dove	2	C	
Emerald Dove	1	C	
Red-winged Crested Cuckoo	1	B	
Large Hawk Cuckoo	1	C	
Plaintive Cuckoo	1	B	
Indian Cuckoo	1	B	
Koel	1	C	
Greater Coucal	1	C	
Lesser Coucal	1	B	
Collared Scops Owl	1	C	
Barred Owlet	1	B	
House Swift	1	A	
Black-capped Kingfisher	1	C	

Species	'Order'	Breeding status	Remarks
Great Barbet	2	C	
Swallow	1	A	
Richard's Pipit	1	B	
Grey-throated Minivet	1	C	
Scarlet Minivet	2	C	
Crested Bulbul	2	D	
Chinese Bulbul	3	D	
Chestnut Bulbul	1	C	
Magpie Robin	1	D	
Violet Whistling Thrush	1	C	
Yellow-bellied Wren-warbler	2	D	
Large Grass Warbler	1	B	
Long-tailed Tailorbird	2	D	
<i>Phylloscopus</i> warbler sp.	1	A	probably Arctic
Hainan Blue Flycatcher	1	D	4 + pairs
Greater Necklaced Laughing Thrush	1	C	
Hwamei	2	D	
Black-faced Laughing Thrush	1	C	
Pekin Robin	2	D	
White-bellied Yuhina	1	C	
Great Tit	2	D	
Fork-tailed Sunbird	2	C	
Scarlet-backed Flowerpecker	2	D	
White-eye	2	C	
Black-naped Oriole	1	B	
Hair-crested Drongo	2	C	
Blue Magpie	1	C	
Treepie	1	B	
Magpie	1	C	
Jungle Crow	1	D	
Black-necked Starling	1	C	
Crested Mynah	1	B	
Tree Sparrow	1	C	
White-backed Munia	2	D	
Spotted Munia	1	B	
Orange-bellied Leafbird	1	C	
Silver-eared Mesia	1	B	escape?
Totals: Present	5		
Breeding possible	15		
Breeding probable	25		
Breeding confirmed	12		
	57	species	

A Rufous-necked Scimitar Babbler was heard and seen a week later on 5 June.



## 摘要：

一九八八年五月廿八日對香港大埔灣的鳥類進行了一次調查。文章以列表方式簡報有關各個品種的分佈和繁殖情況的調查結果。一共錄得57個品種，其中12種肯定繁殖，25種頗有可能繁殖，15種有可能繁殖，還有5種是不繁殖的遷徙鳥。

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- Chalmers, M.L. 1986. *Annotated Checklist of the Birds of Hong Kong*. Hong Kong Bird Watching Society.
- Sharrock, J.T.R. 1976. *The Atlas of Breeding Birds in Britain and Ireland*. Poyser, Berkhamstead.

Clive Viney  
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## HONG KONG CHRISTMAS COUNT 1988

C.Y. Lam

## INTRODUCTION

The fourth Hong Kong Christmas Count organised by the Hong Kong Bird Watching Society took place on 27 December 1988. It was modelled after the three previous counts in 1985 (Viney 1987), 1986 and 1987 (Lam 1987, 1988). The objectives of the count were:

- a) to survey all species occurring within Hong Kong on the selected day
- b) to estimate the abundance of the species recorded

The 'selected day' so far has been a day shortly after Christmas, either a Sunday or a public holiday, hence the name 'Christmas Count'.

## METHOD

Following the pattern set by previous counts, Hong Kong was divided into 15 areas. A co-ordinator was appointed to cover each area, either alone or with the help of other birdwatchers. The co-ordinators then submitted a return on the counts made. Reports from individual observers were also separately received. All returns gave the estimated number of birds seen. In a small number of cases, birds heard but not seen by experienced birdwatchers were accepted on the advice of the Society's Recorder.

The returns were analysed and the numbers merged in eight regions with boundaries as defined in Viney (1987). The boundaries of these regions are shown in Figure 1. In this report, these regions are referred to as:

Region	Name
1	Hong Kong Island
2	Kowloon
3	Offshore Islands
4	Lantau
5	Central New Territories
6	Eastern New Territories
7	Western New Territories
8	Northern New Territories



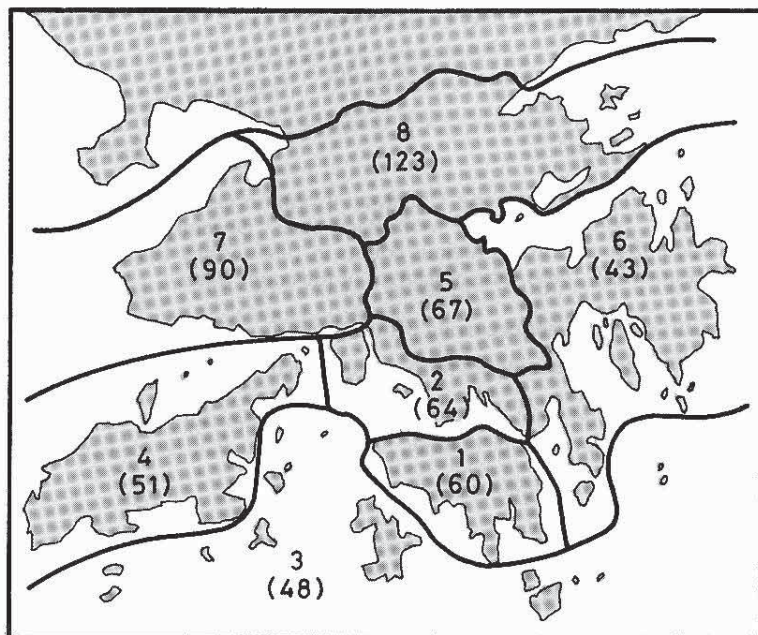


Figure 1. Christmas Count Regions. The number of bird species seen in each region is indicated in brackets.

#### COVERAGE

About 40 people contributed to the count. For logistic reasons, Lantau Island was visited on 28 December 1988, one day later than the scheduled date. The places visited by birdwatchers included:

*Hong Kong Island* — various locations on the southern side from Big Wave Bay to Wah Fu, catchwaters from Chi Fu to Wong Nei Chung Gap, Lady Clementi's Ride, Mount Davis, Mid-Levels, Braemar Hill.

*Kowloon* — Kowloon Tong, Yau Yat Chuen, Beacon Hill, Stonecutters Island.

*Offshore Islands* — Cheung Chau, Lamma Island.

*Lantau* — Silvermine Bay, Pui O, Tung Chung.

*Central NT* — Lam Tsuen Valley, Tai Po Kau, villages near Fo Tan.

*Eastern NT* — Ho Chung, Hebe Haven, Tai Mong Tsai, Tai Long, Tolo Harbour.

*Western NT* — Sek Kong Catchment, Mong Tseng, Tsim Bei Tsui.

*Northern NT* — Mai Po, San Tin, Lok Ma Chau, Wo Hop Shek, Wo Hang, Luk Keng, Wu Kau Tang, Plover Cove, Tai Mei Tuk, Ting Kok.

The Castle Peak area, places south of Lau Fau Shan Road and Sai Kung West Country Park, which were covered in the 1987 count, were not covered this time. The reduced coverage had some discernible impact on the number of bird species seen in the Eastern and Western New Territories.

#### WEATHER

It was a fine day with 9.3 hours of bright sunshine and a mean cloud cover of 44%. Temperatures were in the comfortable range of 15.5-19.7°C as recorded at the Royal Observatory. The mean relative humidity was 68% and no rain was reported. The prevailing wind was a moderate breeze from the northeast.

#### RESULTS

In conformity with the practice adopted for the 1987 count, only bird species in Categories A-D in the *Annotated Checklist of the Birds of Hong Kong* (Chalmers 1986) were counted. Birds suspected of being escapes or released from captivity (Category E) were excluded.

A total of 163 species was recorded. This is the lowest figure for a Christmas count so far. The numbers of species recorded in all the Christmas counts to date with breakdown figures for individual regions are given in Table 1. In this table and elsewhere in this report, 1985 and 1986 figures have been adjusted to remove Category E species.

TABLE 1. Number of species recorded in the various regions

Region	29.12.85	28.12.86	27.12.87	27.12.88
1 Hong Kong Island	61	36	69	60
2 Kowloon	35	23	59	64
3 Offshore Islands	34	43	58	48
4 Lantau	75	63	66	51
5 Central NT	74	74	64	67
6 Eastern NT	68	55	55	43
7 Western NT	109	117	122	90
8 Northern NT	125	104	98	123
All	183	175	173	163

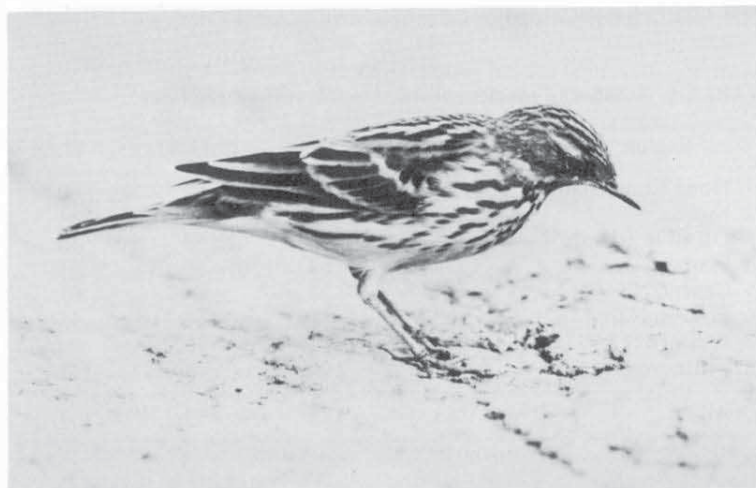
One alarming trend is the continued decline in the total number of species seen in each count. Although there is always an element of chance in a one-day count, that the number has decreased in four consecutive years is too strong a signal to be ignored. The increasing population in the New Territories and offshore islands is probably resulting in the destruction of habitats suitable for birds.

On the number of species seen in individual regions, Hong Kong Island is more or less stable (the low figure in 1986 was due to incomplete coverage). The figure for Kowloon has been boosted by the inclusion of Stonecutters Island since 1987, but unfortunately changes are fast taking place there due to reclamation. Human disturbance is making its effect felt on Lamma Island and Lantau. This was reflected in the lower 1988 figures for Offshore Islands and Lantau in comparison with 1987. Other parts of the New Territories have apparently not yet lost as much ground in spite of extensive development and population pressures.

The estimated numbers of birds recorded are tabulated by species and by region in Table 2. The checklist numbers (in the first column) and species names correspond to those used by Chalmers (1986). In the table, the estimates are represented by an 'order of magnitude' number as follows:

Number	'Order'
1 — 9	1
10 — 99	2
100 — 999	3
1,000 — 9,999	4
10,000 +	5

To facilitate comparison with previous counts, Table 2 also shows whether a species was recorded in 1985, 1986 and 1987.



Red-throated Pipit *Anthus cervinus*  
Mai Po, October 1987

TABLE 2. Number of birds by species and by region

	1-9	10-99	100-999	1,000-9,999	10,000 +	order 1	order 2	order 3	order 4	order 5
1						Little Grebe				
2						Great Crested Grebe				
6				2		Cormorant				
7						Dalmatian Pelican				
[8,9]						Frigatebird sp.				
10						Bittern				
11						Yellow Bittern				
13						Chestnut Bittern				
16				1		Night Heron				
17				1		Little Green Heron				
18						Chinese Pond Heron				
19						Cattle Egret				
21				1		Reef Egret				
22						Little Egret				
23						Intermediate Egret				
24						Great Egret				
25				1		Grey Heron				
26						Purple Heron				
27						Black Stork				
30						White Ibis				
31						European Spoonbill				
32						Black-faced Spoonbill				
34						Bean Goose				
36						Ruddy Shelduck				

Continued ...



TABLE 2 continued

		Hong Kong Island	Kowloon	Offshore Islands	Lantau	Central NT	Eastern NT	Western NT	Northern NT	1985	1986	1987
37	Shelduck	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	3	+	+	+
40	Wigeon	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	3	+	+	+
41	Falcated Teal	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	3	+	+	+
42	Gadwall	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	+
44	Teal	-	-	-	1	1	-	3	3	+	+	+
45	Mallard	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	+	+	+
46	Yellow-nib Duck	-	1	-	-	-	-	2	3	+	+	+
47	Pintail	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	3	+	+	+
48	Garganey	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+		
49	Shoveler	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	2	+	+	+
50	Common Pochard	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	+	+	+
51	Baer's Pochard	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	+	+	+
52	Tufted Duck	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	+	+	+
53	Scaup	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	
56	Red-breasted Merganser	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+		
60	Black Kite	2	3	2	2	1	2	2	2	+	+	+
60.1	Brahminy Kite	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1			
61	White-bellied Sea Eagle	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	+	+	+
62	Black Vulture	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-			
63	Serpent Eagle	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	+	+	+
64	Marsh Harrier	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	+	+	+
68	Japanese Sparrowhawk	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	
69	Sparrowhawk	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	+	+	+
70	Crested Goshawk	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	+	+	
73	Buzzard	1	1	-	-	1	-	1	1	+	+	+
74	Spotted Eagle	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1		+	+
75	Imperial Eagle	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	+	+	+
76	Bonelli's Eagle	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	+	+	+

Continued ...

TABLE 2 continued

		Hong Kong Island	Kowloon	Offshore Islands	Lantau	Central NT	Eastern NT	Western NT	Northern NT	1985	1986	1987
77	Osprey	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	+	+	+
79	Kestrel	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	+
83	Peregrine Falcon	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	+
84	Chinese Francolin	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	
85	Japanese Quail	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+		
89	Water Rail	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+		
90	Banded Rail	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1		+	+
95	White-breasted Waterhen	1	-	1	1	1	1	1	2	+	+	+
96	Moorhen	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	2	+	+	+
97	Watercock	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+		
98	Coot	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	3	+	+	+
101	Painted Snipe	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		+	+
103	Black-winged Stilt	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	+		+
104	Avocet	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	+
106	Little Ringed Plover	1	1	-	1	-	-	-	2	+	+	+
108	Kentish Plover	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	3	+	+	+
110	Greater Sand Plover	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	
112	Asiatic Golden Plover	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1		+	+
113	Grey Plover	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	1	+	+	+
114	Grey-headed Lapwing	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	+	+	+
116	Great Knot	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+		
119	Red-necked Stint	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	
120	Temminck's Stint	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+		+
121	Long-toed Stint	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	+		+
124	Dunlin	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	3	+	+	+
127	Ruff	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1			
129	Fantail Snipe	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	2	+	+	+
130	Pintail Snipe	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	+	+	+

Continued ...

TABLE 2 continued

		Hong Kong Island	Kowloon	Offshore Islands	Lantau	Central NT	Eastern NT	Western NT	Northern NT	1985	1986	1987
135	Woodcock	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	+	+	+
136	Black-tailed Godwit	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	1	+	+	+
140	Curlew	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	2	+	+	+
142	Spotted Redshank	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	3	+	+	+
144	Marsh Sandpiper	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	+	+	+
145	Greenshank	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	2	+	+	+
147	Green Sandpiper	-	-	-	1	1	-	1	2	+	+	+
148	Wood Sandpiper	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	2	+	+	+
150	Common Sandpiper	1	2	1	1	1	-	1	2	+	+	+
153	Red-necked Phalarope	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+		
157	Saunders' Gull	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		+	
158	Black-headed Gull	-	4	3	2	-	3	4	5	+	+	+
160	Black-tailed Gull	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	
162	Herring Gull	-	-	2	2	-	-	2	3	+	+	+
168	Caspian Tern	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	
179	Red Turtle Dove	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	2		+	+
180	Rufous Turtle Dove	1	1	-	-	3	1	2	2	+	+	+
181	Spotted Dove	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	+	+	+
183	Emerald Dove	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	+		+
189	Plaintive Cuckoo	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	+	+	+
193	Koel	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	+
194	Greater Coucal	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	+	+	+
195	Lesser Coucal	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	+	+	+
196	Collared Scops Owl	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	
209	House Swift	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	3	+	+	+
210	White-breasted Kingfisher	1	2	2	1	1	-	1	2	+	+	+
211	Black-capped Kingfisher	1	1	1	1	-	-	1	1	+	+	+
212	Common Kingfisher	1	1	1	1	1	-	1	2	+	+	+

Continued ...

TABLE 2 continued

		Hong Kong Island	Kowloon	Offshore Islands	Lantau	Central NT	Eastern NT	Western NT	Northern NT	1985	1986	1987
213	Pied Kingfisher	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	+	+	+
218	Great Barbet	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	+	+	+
219	Wryneck	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-		+	
225	Oriental Skylark	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+		
227	Swallow	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	+
228	Red-rumped Swallow	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1			+
229	Asian House Martin	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1			
230	Richard's Pipit	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	1	+	+	+
231	Upland Pipit	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+		
232	Olive-backed Pipit	2	2	2	2	2	1	2	2	+	+	+
234	Red-throated Pipit	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	+	+	+
235	Water Pipit	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+		
237	Yellow Wagtail	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	2	+	+	+
239	Grey Wagtail	2	1	2	-	1	1	1	1	+	+	+
240	White Wagtail	2	2	2	1	1	-	1	2	+	+	+
242	Black-winged Cuckoo Shrike	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	
245	Grey-throated Minivet	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	
246	Scarlet Minivet	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	+
247	Crested Bulbul	3	2	3	2	3	2	2	2	+	+	+
248	Chinese Bulbul	3	3	2	2	3	2	3	3	+	+	+
249	Red-vented Bulbul	2	2	2	1	1	2	1	1	+	+	+
250	Chestnut Bulbul	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	+	+	+
251	Black Bulbul	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		+	
251.1	Orange-bellied Leafbird	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-			+
255	Red-tailed Robin	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	+		
256	Rubythroat	1	1	-	1	1	-	1	1	+	+	+
257	Bluethroat	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	+	+	+
259	Red-flanked Bluetail	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	1	+	+	+

Continued ...



TABLE 2 continued

		Hong Kong Island	Kowloon	Offshore Islands	Lantau	Central NT	Eastern NT	Western NT	Northern NT	1985	1986	1987
260	Daurian Redstart	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	+	+	+
261	Plumbeous Water Redstart	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	+	+	+
262	Magpie Robin	2	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	+	+	+
263	Stonechat	-	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	+	+	+
264	Grey Bushchat	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	+
267	Blue Rock Thrush	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	1	+	+	+
268	Violet Whistling Thrush	2	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	+	+	+
269	Orange-headed Ground Thrush	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	+
270	White's Thrush	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	+
272	Grey Thrush	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	+
273	Blackbird	1	2	2	1	2	1	1	2	+	+	+
275	Grey-backed Thrush	1	2	1	-	-	-	1	1	+	+	+
276	Pale Thrush	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	+
277	Eye-browed Thrush	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	+
278	Dusky Thrush	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	+
280	Short-tailed Bush Warbler	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	+	+	+
281	Chinese Bush Warbler	1	-	1	1	1	-	1	1	+	+	+
282	Mountain Bush Warbler	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	+	+	+
283	Fantail Warbler	-	-	-	2	1	1	1	2	+	+	+
284	Brown Wren-warbler	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	3	+	+	+
285	Yellow-bellied Wren-warbler	2	2	1	2	2	1	2	3	+	+	+
290	Great Reed Warbler	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	+	+	+
292	Yellow-eyed Flycatcher Warbler	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	+
296	Long-tailed Tailorbird	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	+	+	+
297	Sulphur-breasted Warbler	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	+
302	Pallas's Warbler	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	+	+	+
303	Yellow-browed Warbler	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	2	+	+	+
305	Dusky Warbler	1	-	1	1	1	-	1	2	+	+	+

Continued ...

TABLE 2 continued

		Hong Kong Island	Kowloon	Offshore Islands	Lantau	Central NT	Eastern NT	Western NT	Northern NT	1985	1986	1987
309	Verditer Flycatcher	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	+
313	Brown Flycatcher	1	-	-	-	1	1	-	1	+	+	+
314	Red-breasted Flycatcher	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	+
315	Robin Flycatcher	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	+
318	Grey-headed Flycatcher	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	+
321	Black-naped Monarch Flycatcher	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	+
324	Black-throated Laughing Thrush	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	+
325	Hwamei	2	1	2	1	1	-	1	1	+	+	+
326	White-cheeked Laughing Thrush	1	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	+
327	Black-faced Laughing Thrush	2	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	+	+	+
328	Pekin Robin	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	+
331	Red-headed Tit	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	+
332	Yellow-bellied Tit	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	+
333	Great Tit	2	2	-	1	2	1	2	2	+	+	+
335	Fork-tailed Sunbird	1	1	1	1	1	1	-	1	+	+	+
336	Fire-breasted Flowerpecker	1	1	-	1	-	1	1	-	+	+	+
337	Scarlet-backed Flowerpecker	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	1	+	+	+
339	White-eye	3	2	3	2	2	2	3	3	+	+	+
340	Black-naped Oriole	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	+
342	Brown Shrike	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	+	+	+
343	Rufous-backed Shrike	1	1	2	2	1	1	1	2	+	+	+
345	Black Drongo	-	2	1	1	-	-	-	-	+	+	+
346	Ashy Drongo	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	+	+	+
347	Hair-crested Drongo	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	+	+	+
348	Jay	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	+
349	Blue Magpie	2	1	-	1	1	-	-	-	+	+	+
350	Treepie	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	+
351	Magpie	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	+	+	+

Continued ...

TABLE 2 continued

	Hong Kong Island	Kowloon	Offshore Islands	Lantau	Central NT	Eastern NT	Western NT	Northern NT	1985	1986	1987
352	Jungle Crow	2	2	-	1	1	2	2	+	+	+
353	Collared Crow	-	1	-	-	-	1	1	+	+	+
354	Silky Starling	-	-	-	1	-	1	2	+	+	+
357	Chinese Starling	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	+
358	European Starling	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	+
360	Grey Starling	-	-	-	-	-	3	2	+	+	+
361	Black-necked Starling	2	1	1	2	1	2	2	+	+	+
362	Crested Mynah	3	3	3	2	2	3	3	+	+	+
363	Tree Sparrow	2	3	3	2	2	2	2	+	+	+
364	White-backed Munia	2	2	-	2	1	2	2	+	+	+
365	Spotted Munia	1	2	-	2	2	2	2	+	+	+
367	Chinese Greenfinch	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	+	+	+
369	Common Rosefinch	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	+	+	+
370	Black-tailed Hawfinch	-	-	-	2	-	2	2	+	+	+
371	Masked Bunting	2	1	1	2	1	2	2	+	+	+
374	Tristram's Bunting	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	+	+	+
376	Little Bunting	1	-	1	2	-	-	2	+	+	+
380	Crested Bunting	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	+
601	Feral Pigeon	2	2	1	1	1	1	2	+	+	+
602	Rainbow Lorikeet	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	+
603	Sulphur-crested Cockatoo	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	+
604	Rose-ringed Parakeet	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	+
605	Common Mynah	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	+
606	Azure-winged Magpie	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	+
711	Grey-headed Parrotbill	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	+
712.2	Yellow-cheeked Tit	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
713	Red Avadavat	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Number of species seen in each area											
		60	64	48	51	67	43	90	123		

Total number of species seen throughout Hong Kong: 163

Species recorded for the first time in a Christmas Count included:

- 36 Ruddy Shelduck  
60.1 Brahminy Kite  
62 Black Vulture  
127 Ruff  
229 Asian House Martin  
282 Mountain Bush Warbler  
331 Red-headed Tit  
711 Grey-headed Parrotbill  
712.1 Yellow-cheeked Tit  
713 Red Avadavat (10 species)

Following established practice, species seen in all eight regions are labelled as 'common and widespread'. Table 3 lists the common and widespread species in all four counts to date. Red-vented Bulbul and Feral Pigeon joined the list for the first time while Olive-backed Pipit reappeared in the list after a lapse of two years. Only 11 species managed to be common and widespread in all four counts and might be considered to be the commonest birds in Hong Kong, at least around this time of the year. They are:

- |     |                             |
|-----|-----------------------------|
| 60  | Black Kite                  |
| 181 | Spotted Dove                |
| 247 | Crested Bulbul              |
| 248 | Chinese Bulbul              |
| 296 | Long-tailed Tailorbird      |
| 303 | Yellow-browed Warbler       |
| 327 | Black-faced Laughing Thrush |
| 339 | White-eye                   |
| 351 | Magpie                      |
| 362 | Crested Mynah               |
| 363 | Tree Sparrow                |



TABLE 3. Common and widespread species

Species	29.12.85	28.12.86	27.12.87	27.12.88
60 Black Kite	+	+	+	+
95 White-breasted Waterhen				
150 Common Sandpiper				
181 Spotted Dove	+	+	+	+
194 Greater Coucal				
210 White-breasted Kingfisher				
212 Common Kingfisher				
232 Olive-backed Pipit	+			
239 Grey Wagtail	+			
240 White Wagtail	+			
247 Crested Bulbul	+	+	+	+
248 Chinese Bulbul	+	+	+	+
249 Red-vented Bulbul				
262 Magpie Robin	+			
273 Blackbird	+			
285 Yellow-bellied Wren-warbler	+			
296 Long-tailed Tailorbird	+			
303 Yellow-browed Warbler	+			
305 Dusky Warbler	+			
327 Black-faced Laughing Thrush	+			
333 Great Tit	+			
339 White-eye	+			
343 Rufous-backed Shrike	+			
351 Magpie	+			
362 Crested Mynah	+			
363 Tree Sparrow	+			
371 Masked Bunting	+			
601 Feral Pigeon	+			
Number of species	19	11	23	20

Some interesting records are given below:

16	Night Heron	large winter flock of 140 birds at Tsim Bei Tsui
22	Little Egret	up to 2,000 birds at Mai Po
36	Ruddy Shelduck	vagrant
44	Teal	a flock of 30 birds at Ho Pui Reservoir
60.1	Brahminy Kite	vagrant
62	Black Vulture	vagrant
127	Ruff	scarce winter visitor
229	Asian House Martin	unusual end of December record
282	Mountain Bush Warbler	vagrant
290	Great Reed Warbler	unusual end of December record
331	Red-headed Tit	vagrant

Taking together all the four counts so far, the total number of species recorded is 219.

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#### 摘要:

香港觀鳥會組織的第四屆香港聖誕雀鳥普查於一九八八年十二月廿七日舉行。四十多位觀鳥者踏遍港、九、新界各地，共錄得163個品種。四年以來，每次普查錄得的品種數目不斷下降，令人憂慮。

首次在普查錄得的品種計有赤麻鴨、栗鳶、禿鶯、流蘇鶯、烟腹毛脚燕（亞毛脚燕）、山樹鶯、紅頭山雀、灰頭鶯雀、黃頰山雀和紅梅花雀。歷年的聖誕雀鳥普查累積共錄得219個品種。

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## REPORT ON BIRD RINGING IN HONG KONG IN 1988

*David S. Melville*

1988 was another very successful year with a total of 2,602 birds of 86 species ringed, compared with 1,749 birds of 64 species in 1987. Almost all ringing was carried out at the WWF Hong Kong Mai Po Nature Reserve, a very few birds being caught at the Island House Conservation Studies Centre, Tai Po. Species totals are given in Table 1, together with totals for previous years. Previous ringing reports have been given by McClure and Leelavit (1972) and Melville (1981, 1987, 1988).

Captures during the year included a number of interesting records including the second Chiffchaff for Hong Kong and eastern China (Melville and Viney 1989), and the first record of a live Short-eared Owl for Hong Kong. This bird was caught during a wader-catching session at 0300h after attacking a Dunlin already in the net. There are two previous records of this species for Hong Kong but both were found dead (Chalmers 1986). Some very successful catches were made of waders roosting on the 'scrape' at Mai Po, with no apparent effects on the numbers of birds subsequently using the site. Among the November and December catches were a number of birds which one would expect to be further south at that time, e.g. Great Knot and Curlew Sandpiper.

Despite the large number of birds caught there were only two overseas movements (Table 2). One was the first record of an overseas-ringed Bar-tailed Godwit controlled in Australia, although there have been six records of the species ringed in Australia and recovered in Asia — five from China and one from South Korea (Australian Bird and Bat Banding Schemes, per K. Lowe *in litt.*). The other, a Terek Sandpiper, was our first record of a bird from Malaysia. This bird, a juvenile, weighed 88g when ringed in Hong Kong and 65.2g 42 days later when controlled in Malaysia. The date (23 November) and the low weight suggest that the bird was likely to have been going to spend the winter in Malaysia rather than to move further south. The winter range extends to southern Australia (Lane 1987) and one ringed near Newcastle, New South Wales has been recovered near Shanghai (Anon 1987).

There was a pleasing increase in the number of following-season recaptures of species which are known migrants. These are detailed in Table 3.

I wish to thank the Ringing Committee of the British Trust for Ornithology for permission to use their rings in Hong Kong. Trapping of birds is carried out under a permit issued by the Director of Agriculture and Fisheries. Many people have helped with ringing during the year and I thank them all, especially Carmen Anderson, Robert Bezuijen, Simba Chan, Mary Ketterer, Paul Leader, Michael Lau and my wife Vicky.



TABLE 1. Birds ringed in Hong Kong 1966 – 1988

Species		MAPS*	1975–1987	1988	Total
Little Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>		1		1
Bittern	<i>Botaurus stellaris</i>			1	1
Yellow Bittern	<i>Ixobrychus sinensis</i>	15	19	8	42
Chestnut Bittern	<i>Ixobrychus cinnamomeus</i>	1	1	1	3
Night Heron	<i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>		1	1	2
Teal	<i>Anas crecca</i>		2	16	18
Garganey	<i>Anas querquedula</i>			3	3
Black Kite	<i>Milvus migrans</i>		37		37
Japanese Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter gularis</i>	1		1	2
Imperial Eagle	<i>Aquila heliaca</i>	1**			1
Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	4**			4
Chinese Francolin	<i>Francolinus pintadeanus</i>	7**			7
Japanese Quail	<i>Coturnix japonica</i>	1**			1
Yellow-legged Button Quail	<i>Turnix tanki</i>	1**			1
Barred Button Quail	<i>Turnix suscitator</i>	1			1
Baillon's Crake	<i>Porzana pusilla</i>	1			1
White-breasted Waterhen	<i>Amaurornis phoenicurus</i>	1	2	1	4
Avocet	<i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>			1	1
Oriental Pratincole	<i>Glareola maldivarum</i>		2		2
Little Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius dubius</i>		2		2
Kentish Plover	<i>Charadrius alexandrinus</i>		20	2	22
Lesser Sand Plover	<i>Charadrius mongolus</i>		11	11	22
Greater Sand Plover	<i>Charadrius leschenaultii</i>		57	39	96
Asiatic Golden Plover	<i>Pluvialis fulva</i>		7	27	34
Grey Plover	<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>		2	33	35
Great Knot	<i>Calidris tenuirostris</i>			24	24
Knot	<i>Calidris canutus</i>		2	12	14
Red-necked Stint	<i>Calidris ruficollis</i>	6	159	7	172

Continued ...

TABLE 1 continued

Species		MAPS*	1975–1987	1988	Total
Long-toed Stint	<i>Calidris subminuta</i>		10	7	17
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	<i>Calidris acuminata</i>		20	11	31
Pectoral Sandpiper	<i>Calidris melanotos</i>		1		1
Curlew Sandpiper	<i>Calidris ferruginea</i>	1	172	90	263
Dunlin	<i>Calidris alpina</i>			185	185
Spoon-billed Sandpiper	<i>Eurynorkhynchus pygmaeus</i>		2		2
Broad-billed Sandpiper	<i>Limicola falcinellus</i>		13	36	49
Fantail Snipe	<i>Gallinago gallinago</i>	1	33	4	38
Pintail Snipe	<i>Gallinago stenura</i>		1		1
Swinhoe's Snipe	<i>Gallinago megala</i>		7	1	8
Asiatic Dowitcher	<i>Limnodromus semipalmatus</i>		2	8	10
Black-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa limosa</i>		1	13	14
Bar-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa lapponica</i>		30	20	50
Whimbrel	<i>Numenius phaeopus</i>		62	122	184
Curlew	<i>Numenius arquata</i>			9	9
Spotted Redshank	<i>Tringa erythropus</i>		4	2	6
Redshank	<i>Tringa totanus</i>		171	213	384
Marsh Sandpiper	<i>Tringa stagnatilis</i>		8	14	22
Greenshank	<i>Tringa nebularia</i>		3	2	5
Wood Sandpiper	<i>Tringa glareola</i>		24	31	55
Terek Sandpiper	<i>Xenus cinereus</i>		110	94	204
Common Sandpiper	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>	4	47	15	66
Grey-rumped Sandpiper	<i>Heteroscelus brevipes</i>		10	15	25
Turnstone	<i>Arenaria interpres</i>		8	9	17
Red-necked Phalarope	<i>Phalaropus lobatus</i>		7		7
Rufous Turtle Dove	<i>Streptopelia orientalis</i>		1	1	2
Spotted Dove	<i>Streptopelia chinensis</i>	2	5	13	20
Rose-ringed Parakeet	<i>Psittacula krameri</i>	1			1

Continued ...

TABLE 1 continued

Species		MAPS*	1975–1987	1988	Total
Greater Coucal	<i>Centropus sinensis</i>		3	5	8
Lesser Coucal	<i>Centropus bengalensis</i>	2			2
Oriental Scops Owl	<i>Otus (scops) sunia</i>	2			2
Short-eared Owl	<i>Asio flammeus</i>	2**		1	3
White-breasted Kingfisher	<i>Halcyon smyrnensis</i>	24	2	6	32
Black-capped Kingfisher	<i>Halcyon pileata</i>	5	4	1	10
Common Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>	104	118	117	339
Pied Kingfisher	<i>Ceryle rudis</i>		1		1
Wryneck	<i>Jynx torquilla</i>	21	3	2	26
Sand Martin	<i>Riparia riparia</i>	1			1
Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	11	41	12	64
Richard's Pipit	<i>Anthus novaeseelandiae</i>	13			13
Olive-backed Pipit	<i>Anthus hodgsoni</i>	86	2		88
Grey Wagtail	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>	6		1	7
White Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>	18	4	4	26
Crested Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus jocosus</i>	80	22	18	120
Chinese Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus sinensis</i>	895	198	171	1,264
Red-vented Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus aurigaster</i>	95	1	2	98
Chestnut Bulbul	<i>Hypsipetes castanonotus</i>	2			2
Black Bulbul	<i>Hypsipetes madagascariensis</i>	1			1
Red-tailed Robin	<i>Luscinia sibilans</i>	6			6
Rubythroat	<i>Luscinia calliope</i>	95	11	4	110
Bluethroat	<i>Luscinia svecica</i>	9	6	4	19
Red-flanked Bluetail	<i>Tarsiger cyanurus</i>	30	3		33
Daurian Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus aureoreus</i>	16			16
Magpie Robin	<i>Copsychus saularis</i>	2	1	3	6
Stonechat	<i>Saxicola torquata</i>	48	24	1	73
Grey Bushchat	<i>Saxicola ferrea</i>	1			1

Continued ...

TABLE 1 continued

Species		MAPS*	1975–1987	1988	Total
Violet Whistling Thrush	<i>Myiophonus caeruleus</i>	11			11
White's Thrush	<i>Zoothera dauma</i>	2			2
Grey Thrush	<i>Turdus cardis</i>	53		1	54
Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>	1			1
Brown Thrush	<i>Turdus chrysolaus</i>	1			1
Grey-backed Thrush	<i>Turdus hortulorum</i>	209	5	5	219
Pale Thrush	<i>Turdus pallidus</i>	15			15
Dusky Thrush	<i>Turdus naumanni</i>	3			3
Short-tailed Bush Warbler	<i>Cettia squameiceps</i>	1			1
Chinese Bush Warbler	<i>Cettia diphone</i>	19	48	15	82
Fantail Warbler	<i>Cisticola juncidis</i>		1		1
Brown Wren-warbler	<i>Prinia subflava</i>	12	106	59	177
Yellow-bellied Wren-warbler	<i>Prinia flaviventris</i>	39	150	96	285
Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler	<i>Locustella certhiola</i>	5			5
Styan's Grasshopper Warbler	<i>Locustella pleskei</i>	8	4		12
Von Schrenck's Reed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus bistrigiceps</i>	21	86	18	125
Great Reed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus arundinaceus</i>	251	358	221	830
Blyth's Reed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus dumetorum</i>		1		1
Long-tailed Tailorbird	<i>Orthotomus sutorius</i>	11	1	3	15
Arctic Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus borealis</i>	12	13	14	39
Pallas's Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus proregulus</i>	5			5
Yellow-browed Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus inornatus</i>	19	5	2	26
Dusky Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus fuscatus</i>	104	199	91	394
Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>		1	1	2
Ijima Willow Warbler?	<i>Phylloscopus ijimae?</i>		1		1
Brown Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa latirostris</i>	6	6	1	13
Red-breasted Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula parva</i>	1			1
Tricolour Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula zanthopygia</i>	2	1		3

Continued ...



TABLE 1 continued

Species		MAPS*	1975–1987	1988	Total
Grey-headed Flycatcher	<i>Culicicapa ceylonensis</i>	1			1
Asian Paradise Flycatcher	<i>Terpsiphone paradisi</i>			1	1
Black-naped Monarch Flycatcher	<i>Hypothymis azurea</i>	1			1
Black-throated Laughing Thrush	<i>Garrulax chinensis</i>	2			2
Hwamei	<i>Garrulax canorus</i>	7**			7
Black-faced Laughing Thrush	<i>Garrulax perspicillatus</i>	18		1	19
Pekin Robin	<i>Leiothrix lutea</i>	9**			9
Vinous-throated Parrotbill	<i>Paradoxornis webbiana</i>		1		1
Great Tit	<i>Parus major</i>	34			34
Fork-tailed Sunbird	<i>Aethopyga christinae</i>	1		1	2
Chestnut-flanked White-eye	<i>Zosterops erythropleura</i>			1	1
White-eye	<i>Zosterops japonica</i>	217	454	355	1,026
(Bull-headed Shrike)***	<i>(Lanius bucephalus)***</i>	1			1
Brown Shrike	<i>Lanius cristatus</i>	6	1	1	8
Rufous-backed Shrike	<i>Lanius schach</i>	39	5	6	50
Black Drongo	<i>Dicrurus macrocercus</i>		3		3
Hair-crested Drongo	<i>Dicrurus hottentottus</i>	1			1
Jay	<i>Garrulus glandarius</i>			1	1
Blue Magpie	<i>Urocissa erythrorhyncha</i>	4			4
Magpie	<i>Pica pica</i>	2**			2
Chinese Starling	<i>Sturnus sinensis</i>	2		1	3
Crested Mynah	<i>Acridotheres cristatellus</i>	2			2
Tree Sparrow	<i>Passer montanus</i>	92**	22	60	174
Baya Weaver	<i>Ploceus philippinus</i>		4		4
Spotted Munia	<i>Lonchura punctulata</i>	34	130	94	258
Chestnut Munia	<i>Lonchura malacca</i>	1		5	6
White-headed Munia	<i>Lonchura maja</i>			1	1
Red Avadavat	<i>Amandava amandava</i>	5			5

Continued ...

TABLE 1 continued

Species		MAPS*	1975–1987	1988	Total
Chinese Greenfinch	<i>Carduelis sinica</i>	1			1
Common Rosefinch	<i>Carpodacus erythrinus</i>	12			12
Black-tailed Hawfinch	<i>Coccothraustes migratorius</i>	9			9
Masked Bunting	<i>Emberiza spodocephala</i>	219	218	68	505
Grey-headed Bunting	<i>Emberiza fucata</i>	1	1		2
Tristram's Bunting	<i>Emberiza tristrami</i>	4			4
Little Bunting	<i>Emberiza pusilla</i>	2	21	18	41
Chestnut Bunting	<i>Emberiza rutila</i>			5	5
Yellow-breasted Bunting	<i>Emberiza aureola</i>	28	4	1	33
TOTAL		3,190	3,371	2,602	9,163

\* The Migratory Animals Pathological Survey (MAPS) programme ran from 1964-1971. Ringing was done in Hong Kong between 1965 and 1968. Details of MAPS birds are from McClure and Leelavit (1972) and from F.O.P. Hechtel's personal records. In the few cases where there is a discrepancy the higher figure has been taken.

\*\* Some or all of these birds released from captivity by the ringer.

\*\*\* The identification of all pre-1986 records of Bull-headed Shrike *Lanius bucephalus* has been questioned by Chalmers (1986).

TABLE 2. Overseas movements of ringed birds during 1988

Bar-tailed Godwit <i>Limosa lapponica</i>			
DR53416	ringed	12 September 1987	Mai Po, Hong Kong
	controlled	24 March 1988	Roebuck Bay, Broome, Western Australia 18°0'S 122°22'E
		(distance* 4,569 km SSW)	
Terek Sandpiper <i>Xenus cinereus</i>			
XS31469	ringed	12 October 1988	Mai Po, Hong Kong
	controlled	23 November 1988	Kuala Selangor, Selangor, West Malaysia 3°24'N 101°12'E
		(distance* 2,531 km SW)*	

\* Minimum great circle distance between ringing and control sites



Terek Sandpiper *Xenus cinereus*  
Mai Po, April 1988

(Ray Tipper)

TABLE 3. Following-season recaptures of known migrants 1988\*

Curlew Sandpiper <i>Calidris ferruginea</i>	
NB19649	ringed 26 April 1987/recaptured 27 April 1988
Redshank <i>Tringa totanus</i>	
DR53323	ringed 23 April 1986/recaptured 31 August 1988
DR53408	ringed 23 May 1987/recaptured 13 May 1988
DR53454	ringed 12 September 1987/recaptured 20 August 1988
Common Sandpiper <i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>	
BV70272	ringed 7 May 1986/recaptured 27 April 1988
Von Schrenck's Reed Warbler <i>Acrocephalus bistrigiceps</i>	
C995045	ringed 25 April 1987/recaptured 1 May 1988
Great Reed Warbler <i>Acrocephalus arundinaceus</i>	
VA23250	ringed 21 April 1986/recaptured 10 December 1988
VA23269	ringed 30 April 1986/recaptured 23 April 1988
VA23395	ringed 17 April 1987/recaptured 23 April 1988
VB32616	ringed 25 April 1987/recaptured 1 May 1988
VB32642	ringed 12 September 1987/recaptured 17 September 1988
VB32651	ringed 12 September 1987/recaptured 26 December 1987, 17 September 1988
VB32722	ringed 3 October 1987/recaptured 25 September 1988
VB32703	ringed 26 September 1987/recaptured 17 and 25 September 1988
VB32737	ringed 3 October 1987/recaptured 7 November 1987, 8 October 1988
Dusky Warbler <i>Phylloscopus fuscatus</i>	
1K2781	ringed 7 April 1985/recaptured 17 April 1985, 9 January 1988, 3 December 1988
1K2994	ringed 30 April 1986/recaptured 5 May 1986, 26 November 1988
Masked Bunting <i>Emberiza spodocephala</i>	
C405074	ringed 9 March 1986/recaptured 5 April 1988
C405075	ringed 9 March 1986/recaptured 3 December 1988
C405137	ringed 16 March 1986/recaptured 23 April 1988
C405307	ringed 8 March 1987/recaptured 23 April 1988
C995182	ringed 21 November 1987/recaptured 3 December 1988
C995192	ringed 13 December 1987/recaptured 10 December 1988

\* All birds caught at Mai Po.



## 摘要：

一九八八年內，香港環志了雀鳥86種，共 2,602 頭。文章介紹了異常的紀錄、海外遷移的紀錄和於下一季度再次捕獲的紀錄。附表總結一九六六至一九八八年之間環志雀鳥的種類和總數。

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## BIRDS NEW TO HONG KONG

### NOTES ON THE FIRST RECORDED BREEDING ATTEMPT OF BESRA IN HONG KONG

Steven Smith

A pair of Besras *Accipiter virgatus* attempted to breed at Mount Davis, Hong Kong in 1988. It is probable that eggs were laid; however the nest appeared to have been deserted between 24 and 38 days after incubation is assumed to have started.

### BEHAVIOUR OF THE BIRDS AT THE NEST

The birds were first observed on 19 April 1988 (by SS and Peter Kennerley); both birds were active, moving around in a small stand of trees on the south-facing slope of Mount Davis, but were seen persistently to return to one particular tree where it was noted that a nest was sited.

On subsequent observations, activity by the birds was considerably less, although on 20 April (SS, PRK and Mike Chalmers) the birds were again seen together, one in pursuit of the other and on 21st (SS and Stewart Smith) one bird (sex unknown) was flushed from the nest. Laying and incubation is assumed to have started at about this time. During each of five subsequent observations the female remained sitting on the nest, while the male remained discreetly present in the wood. The last observation at the nest was on 14 May. By 28 May the site had been abandoned.

### RANGE AND STATUS

The Besra ranges from northern India, eastwards through Indochina to western and southern China including Guangdong Province. It also occurs in Sri Lanka, the Andamans, Java, Sumatra, Borneo and the Philippines. It is known as a species which favours wooded, hilly country.

The status of small accipiters in southeast China has been confused in the past. Cheng (1987) gives the resident race of Besra as *A.v. nisoides*, but others such as de Schauensee (1984) and Mees (1980) consider *nisoides* to be synonymous with Japanese Sparrowhawk *A. gularis*. This latter view has been adopted in Hong Kong and it is considered that the migratory small accipiter passing through southeast China is *A. gularis* and that the resident species is Besra *A. virgatus* of the race *affinis*.

Several previous sightings of small accipiters in Hong Kong may in fact have been Besra; however, the only accepted records refer to up to three juveniles between 29 August and 1 September 1988 on Hong Kong Island (Mount Nicholson) and of an adult male at Tai Po Kau on 4 September.

## 摘要：

這篇文章詳細介紹松雀鷹 *Accipiter virgatus* 在香港嘗試繁殖的首次紀錄。一九八八年四月十九日於摩星嶺錄得一頭松雀鷹和牠的巢。到五月廿八日，松雀鷹已經棄巢而去。

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\* \* \*

It is hoped to publish a discussion paper which will include a review of all accepted sightings in Hong Kong to date in next year's Report.

## MOUNTAIN HAWK EAGLE AT LUK KENG – A NEW SPECIES FOR HONG KONG

*Richard Lewthwaite*

On 7 May 1988 an immature Mountain Hawk Eagle *Spizaetus nipalensis* was located perched in a dead tree at Luk Keng during an outing of the Hong Kong Bird Watching Society. Among those present were David Bakewell, Peter Kennerley, Verity Picken, Stewart Smith, Mike Turnbull and myself. The bird remained perched in view at a range of 200 metres or so for about 20 minutes, mostly facing away from the observers, but occasionally turning around and giving side and front views. No other raptor was present to give a size comparison but several Black Drongos *Dicrurus macrocerus* were perched on the same tree and these appeared roughly one-third of the length of the Mountain Hawk Eagle. This would suggest that the bird's length was within the 660-740 mm range usual for this species. Finally, for a further 10 minutes, the bird was watched in flight moving from tree to tree along the hillside before flying off into the distance.

## DESCRIPTION

Essentially it was a large, surprisingly slender, crested raptor, with a heavy bill, and long, slender, fully-feathered legs. The whole of the upperparts were dull brown, darker on the mantle, paler on the nape, and fairly uniform except for pale fawn streaking on the nape and narrow cream fringes to the scapulars. There was a contrasting pale panel across the closed wing, produced by creamy-buff edges to the median coverts, and a narrow line above the closed primaries and secondaries, produced by pale tips to the greater coverts. The folded wings only extended to the base of the tail. The head was brown and marked by a fairly obvious crest, tipped black on the longest feathers. There was a dark malar stripe that ran from the base of the bill and broadened under the eye, contrasting with the pale cheeks. The throat and chin were white. No mesial was noted for certain, but there was a clearly marked whitish supercilium. The eye was pale and the bill was deep-based and eagle-like, grey in colour; no contrasting cere colour was noted. Five dark and four light brown bands, the terminal one dark, marked the tail, the underside of which appeared grey with a black subterminal band. When seen head on, the underparts were a uniform buffish-white, unstreaked except for a few marks which gave a slightly darker tone to the side of the flanks. The lack of streaking on the breast or barring on the belly were key features that determined the age of the bird as immature. The legs were closely feathered to the feet, the feathering being the same unbarred buffy-white as the rest of the underparts, and sleek, giving a long-legged appearance. The feet were pale yellow. At 200m it was not possible to see the feathering extending to the base of the toes; this is a diagnostic feature separating Mountain Hawk Eagle from other hawk eagles and the source of an alternative name: Feathertoe Hawk Eagle.



In flight, the bird appeared broad-winged and long-tailed, the tail narrow and equalling, or almost equalling, the breadth of the wing at base. The head protruded on a thick neck and seemed large. The underwing coverts were a delicate peach/apricot colour, and contrasted with the grey secondaries and the whitish bases and black tips of the primaries. The banding on the uppertail was clear in flight, as was the subterminal black band to the grey undertail.

This was the first record of Mountain Hawk Eagle to be accepted into Category A by the Records Committee. A series of previous records dating back to February 1987 are under review. There were also doubts about released birds following the discovery that the Agriculture and Fisheries Department had released an immature Mountain Hawk Eagle at Tai Po Kau on 30 May 1986 (this bird had been identified as a Serpent Eagle *Spilornis cheela* by AFD but D.S. Melville subsequently identified it as a Mountain Hawk Eagle from a photograph taken prior to its release).

#### SIMILAR SPECIES

There should be no problem in identifying and ageing a Mountain Hawk Eagle, given a good view of a perched bird, when the large size, long crest, heavy eagle-like bill, fully-feathered legs and distinctive plumage are all apparent. However, flight views present the possibility of confusion with three locally-occurring species.

##### **Serpent Eagle** *Spilornis cheela*

An immature Serpent Eagle in flight may resemble a Mountain Hawk Eagle in showing a pale body, and pale tail marked by several thick dark bands. However, the flight profile is quite different. Serpent Eagle can at all times be separated from Mountain Hawk Eagle by the length of the tail, which rarely exceeds two-thirds of the wing-base and never looks long and narrow.

##### **Bonelli's Eagle** *Hieraetus fasciatus*

Bonelli's Eagle may exhibit a long-necked, long-tailed, broad-winged profile, similar to Mountain Hawk Eagle but it lacks the latter's prominent secondary bulge which is very obvious when Mountain Hawk Eagle is soaring but less so when gliding. Bonelli's Eagle in adult plumage is relatively easy to identify, but young birds with rufous wing-lining and body may be more confusing. The best feature to separate Bonelli's Eagle in this plumage is the lack of thick banding on the flight feathers and tail which a Mountain Hawk Eagle would show.

##### **Crested Honey Buzzard** *Pernis ptilorhynchus*

Crested Honey Buzzard, which is a rare bird in Hong Kong, presents the greatest problems of separation in flight on account of its very similar profile and its great variety of underwing patterns. The distinctive tail

pattern of two dark bars at the base and one at the tip shown by an adult is diagnostic, but it is believed that some Crested Honey Buzzards exhibit an evenly-barred tail which could lead to confusion with Mountain Hawk Eagle. Although the Crested Honey Buzzard is larger than the European Honey Buzzard *Pernis aviporus*, averaging 50-80 mm longer, it still has a relatively thin neck and small Buzzard-like bill, and not the powerful neck and heavy bill of a Mountain Hawk Eagle, which has altogether a more impressive eagle-like profile.

#### RANGE AND DISTRIBUTION

The Mountain Hawk Eagle has a broken distribution from the southern Himalayas eastwards across southern China with insular populations in Hainan, Taiwan and Japan (Brown and Amadon 1968). Although Brown and Amadon (1968) state that 'It is resident where it occurs and does not migrate, though some may drift to lowlands' Vaurie (1965) indicates winter movements in Thailand, Burma and northern India. Cheng (1987) notes the race *orientalis* (which also breeds in Japan) as a migrant in Nei Mongol Autonomous Region, and there are reports of up to 85 birds migrating northwards over Beidaihe, Hebei in spring 1985 (Williams 1986).

The race occurring in south and east China is considered to be *fokiensis* and that on Hainan *whiteheadi* by some recent authors including de Schauensee (1984) and Cheng (1987); however Brown and Amadon (1968), Etchécopar and Hüe (1978) and Stresemann and Amadon (1979) regard both as synonyms for *nipalensis*.

Cheng (1987) records the Mountain Hawk Eagle as resident in south Anhui, Zhejiang, Fujian, Taiwan and Guangdong. It has been recorded within about 150 km of Hong Kong at Nan Kun Shan, Guangdong (Viney 1986).

It is normally a forest eagle and its appearance in an atypical habitat of scrub and scattered pines at Luk Keng strongly suggests a wandering bird.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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#### 摘 要：

這篇文章介紹首個在香港獲得接納的鷹鵟 *Spizaetus nipalensis* 觀察紀錄。一頭未成年鳥於一九八八年五月七日在鹿頸錄得。文章討論羽毛和分布的情況，又跟三個可能混淆的品種作出比較。



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## PURPLE GALLINULE AT MAI PO – THE FIRST RECORD FOR HONG KONG

A.B. Lawrence, David S. Melville and David J. Millin

On 24 August 1988 DJM was visiting Mai Po when he observed a Purple Gallinule *Porphyrio porphyrio* in gei-wai 18. The bird was watched from a hide at a distance of about 20m walking across an open area of mud for about one minute before it disappeared into the *Phragmites*. The bird did not reappear during the following 20 minutes. Being familiar with the species in Bangladesh and Sri Lanka he had no difficulty in identifying the bird and it was not until later that he became aware that this was the first record for Hong Kong. Notes made subsequently were:

‘About the size of a Chinese Pond Heron *Ardeola bacchus* but much plumper with a much shorter neck and bill. The head and neck were pale greyish-blue shading to a much darker blue on the rest of the body with a greenish sheen to the wings; undertail feathers white; heavy bill and knob on forehead bright red; legs and feet nondescript greyish-brown, which I took to be due to a coating of mud. The plumage generally appeared to be in good condition but the head and neck seemed to be distinctly paler than birds seen previously in the Indian Sub-Continent.’

On the afternoon of 8 September ABL was visiting Mai Po when he observed a Purple Gallinule in the same area as DJM, whose record he was unaware of. The bird was watched through 8 × 32 binoculars in good light for five minutes down to 20m; it then disappeared into the *Phragmites*. The bird appeared to be at least 50 per cent larger than a Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*. It stood somewhat upright and frequently flicked its tail, showing the white undertail coverts. The bill and frontal shield were bright red and the head a light grey. The neck was turquoise and this gradually changed to dark blue on the body and wings. The legs were strong and long, with long toes, and coloured orange. This colour appeared to be uniform but could have been affected by mud.

What was undoubtedly the same bird was photographed by Sue Earle in gei-wai 18 on 11 September. It was not seen again until 21 October when DSM and M. Lau watched it for four minutes down to 40m in good light in gei-wai 14. The good condition of the plumage and the frontal shield were noted. Plumage characters were as noted by other observers; on this occasion the legs were recorded as brick red with the intertarsal joint being dusky. The bird continued to be seen intermittently into 1989.





Purple Gallinule *Porphyrio porphyrio*  
Mai Po, September 1988

(Sue Earle)

The bird appeared to be typical of the *poliocephalus* group (Baker 1929, Cramp and Simmons 1979). However de Schauensee (1984) records the race *poliocephalus* from southwest Yunnan and notes the race *viridis* as a resident from 'south Fujian south to Guangdong, Guangxi, and east to Guizhou, and in Hainan'. La Touche (1925-34) notes 'The Chinese Purple Moorhen appears to be only very occasionally met with. Swinhoe obtained it twice, near Canton and near Amoy, and Dr. Mell records two living specimens seen in the Canton Market'. Liao (1983) does not record the species from Hainan. Cheng (1987) records the race *poliocephalus* as resident in the southwest part of Yunnan, as a migrant in western Yunnan, and as accidental in Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region where he notes it as 'probably an escaped cage bird'.

Purple Gallinules are occasionally found in trade through Hong Kong (K.C. Searle pers. comm. to DSM); however the fact that this bird was in good plumage, and especially the fact that the frontal shield did not appear to be damaged suggest that the bird was wild. Freshly caught captive birds frequently damage the forehead while trying to escape and this would be particularly noticeable on the soft covering of the frontal shield. Against this, however, is that the species is not known to be migratory in East Asia (Ali and Ripley 1983, Baker 1929, Medway and

Wells 1976, Deignan 1963), although the previous records from southeast China noted above could refer to wandering individuals. The skulking habits of this bird make it very difficult to see — as evidenced by the fact that periods of four to six weeks elapsed between sightings, yet the bird must surely have remained at Mai Po.

#### 摘要：

一九八八年八月至一九八九年初，米埔間歇地錄得一頭紫水雞 *Porphyrio porphyrio*。這是香港首次的紀錄。文章對這頭鳥作出介紹，並討論分布的詳細情況。

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GOULD'S SUNBIRD IN TAI PO KAU –  
A NEW RECORD FOR HONG KONG

Wendy Young

On 24 February 1988 Jane Woods and I were walking along the road towards the dam in Tai Po Kau forest when, on glancing around at the coralbean trees to our right, we spied a small bright movement in the trees beyond. After a few moments a bird with the distinctive shape and jizz of a sunbird came out into the open, and for several minutes we had excellent views. Although we were unaware of the bird's identity at the time, subsequent referral to guide books indicated it was a Gould's Sunbird *Aethopyga gouldiae*.

We noted the following details: small size almost identical to the Forktailed Sunbird *Aethopyga christinae* and with a similar length bill; a metallic purple crown, chin and spot on the side of the neck; upperparts and back red, throat and upper breast also red, gradually changing to orange and then yellow on the belly; wings dark olive and the longish tail purplish-blue, darker at the tip and the central tail feathers being elongated. The bird was feeding with a pair of Forktailed Sunbirds and its call was very similar to that of that species. The only identifying feature that we did not note was the yellow rump but on returning with Verity Picken the next day we obtained good views of this. The bird remained in Tai Po Kau until at least 2 March and was seen by a number of other observers.

The range of Gould's Sunbird extends from the Himalayas through Assam and Burma into southwest China as far east as Guangxi Province and north to Hupeh Province (de Schauensee 1984). According to Cheng (1987) the race *dabryii* (the one seen in Hong Kong) is found in Guangxi. Several birds were found by members of the Hong Kong Bird Watching Society at Ba Bao Shan, northern Guangdong (c360km distant from Hong Kong) during June in both 1987 and 1988. There they frequented open woodland and forest edge — similar habitat to that where the bird was found in Tai Po Kau.

摘 要：

這篇文章介紹一頭於一九八八年二月在大埔坳首次錄得的雄性藍喉太陽鳥 *Aethopyga gouldiae* 這是香港的一個新品種。文章又給出分布的詳細情況。

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## SECOND RECORD OF CHIFFCHAFF FOR HONG KONG AND EASTERN CHINA

David S. Melville and Clive Viney

On the morning of 4 December 1988 CAV was escorting the Island School team participating in the RTHK/WWF HK 'Mini Bird Race' when he observed a small grey-brown *Phylloscopus* warbler feeding about three metres above ground level in trees near the Agriculture and Fisheries Department Nature Warden Post, Mai Po Marshes. The bird was notable for its lack of plumage features and dark legs. Brief notes were made at the time (participating in Bird Races is not conducive to detailed note taking!):

'Very plain greyish-brown *Phylloscopus* with greenish wash to coverts. No wing bars, dark legs and creamy supercilium. In UK, typical Willow Warbler/Chiffchaff.'

Later that day CAV advised other observers of his sighting, suggesting that the bird was a Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita*.

On 10 December 1988 DSM was netting birds at the WWF HK Mai Po Marshes Nature Reserve when at about 1545h he caught a Chiffchaff some 400m from the area of CAV's sighting. Whilst extracting the bird from the net DSM's reaction was 'eastern Chiffchaff' and subsequent examination in the hand confirmed this. The bird was ringed, photographed and released having also been examined by Rob Bezuijen, Michael Lau and Vicky Melville.



Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita tristis*  
Mai Po, December 1988

(Michael Lau)



Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita tristis*  
Mai Po, December 1988

(Michael Lau)

Details of the bird are given below:

wing	55 mm
bill (to skull)	11 mm
tarsus	18 mm
tail (centre rectrices)	42.5mm
weight	6.5g
wing point 4, 3 = 5, 6, 7, 2 = 8	
emarginated 6th primary	
1st primary = longest primary covert + 5mm	

The plumage was dull grey-brown, with a short, rather indistinct supercilium and whitish underparts. The alula was noticeably darker brown than the rest of the wing. The bend of the wing and wing lining

(underwing coverts) were a bright primrose yellow. In bright sunlight a very faint olive green wash could be seen on the lesser coverts. The iris was dark brown, the bill dark horn, pale horn along cutting edges, the legs very dark brown (appearing blackish) and the soles of the feet were a strong ochre-yellow. Structural and plumage characters confirmed that the bird was a Chiffchaff of the eastern race *Phylloscopus collybita tristis* (c.f. Svensson 1984, Ticehurst 1938, Williamson 1967).

The most likely confusion species is the Mountain Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus sindianus* (regarded as a race of *collybita* by some authors, e.g. Vaurie 1959, Ticehurst 1938, Ripley 1982, Cheng 1987, but as a full species by Williamson 1967 and Voous 1977). *Sindianus* appears similar to *tristis* but has 'hardly any olive green wash in the plumage' (Ticehurst 1938). The underwing of *sindianus* can be white, yellowish-white or pale yellow. Structurally *sindianus* differs from *tristis* in having a comparatively large first primary and a shorter second primary, thus giving the wing a more rounded appearance than in *tristis*. Although the colouration of the upperparts of the Mai Po bird appear to tend towards *sindianus* (no specimens of which have been examined by the authors) the bright yellow underwing and wing structure indicate that the bird was *tristis*, as does the dark alula which apparently is not present in *sindianus* (Shirihai 1987).

It is likely that the bird seen by CAV and that captured by DSM were the same individual. This constitutes the second record of the species for Hong Kong and eastern China, the first having been caught at Mai Po on 16 March 1986 (Melville 1987).

The 1988 bird differed from the 1986 one in having much less obvious greenish colouration in the upperparts, however the plumage of the 1988 bird appeared to be in more worn condition and this may account for the difference, the green possibly being lost through abrasion. Adult Chiffchaffs undergo a complete post-nuptial moult on the breeding grounds and there is a partial pre-nuptial moult of body feathers, sometimes including the middle rectrices and tertials in late winter (January — late March), thus the 1986 bird would be expected to have fresher plumage than the 1988 one.

The breeding range of *tristis* extends across south-central Siberia northward to the treeline. It winters from the Himalayas southwards through Pakistan, western Bangladesh and the plains of India. Cheng (1987) notes it as a rare migrant in 'Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region (northern part — Fuyun, western part — Kashi, Aksu, and Tianshan Mt.)', in the extreme west of China.

#### 摘要:

一九八八年十二月十日在米埔網捕和環志了一頭棕柳鶯 *Phylloscopus collybita* 的東方亞種 *tristis*，是中國東部及香港的第二次紀錄。文章給出羽毛的詳情和各部份的尺寸。又跟最可能混淆的品種及香港首次的紀錄作出比較。

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## HAINAN ISLAND BIRD NOTES

*Ben King and Liao Wei-ping*

We visited Hainan Island from 15 to 27 April 1988 for the purpose of a brief bird survey, particularly to find the Hainan Partridge *Arborophila ardens* and the White-eared Night-Heron *Gorsachius magnificus*. Three areas were visited: (1) Dongzhaigang (20°04'N, 110°30'E), a mangrove forest reserve in Qiongzhusan County about 35 km east of Haikou (16 April); (2) Wuzhishan (Five Finger Mountain, 18°51'N, 109°37'E), a natural reserve in south central Hainan, about eight hours' drive from Haikou (17-20 April); and (3) Bawangling (19°05'N, 109°05'E), a natural reserve in west central Hainan, about four hours' drive from Haikou (20-25 April).

### DONGZHAIGANG RESERVE

This is a new reserve of 2,600 hectares established in 1980, consisting of some scruffy second growth mangroves, extensive mudflats, secondary scrub, cultivation and villages. It is said to be an important area for wintering waterfowl and is likely to be a good reserve if protected.

### WUZHISHAN RESERVE

This reserve of 18,644 hectares is centered around the highest peak on Hainan at 1,867 metres elevation. Its slopes are completely forested from about 1,000 metres up, with a mosaic of forest, second growth, grass, cultivation and villages from 550 to 1,000 metres. No evidence of protection for the forest or its wildlife was seen. Local men with homemade rifles were seen in the forest every day and civet and wild Red Junglefowl *Gallus gallus* were on sale at the local market.

The Hainan Gibbon *Hylobates concolor hainanus* was apparently extirpated from this reserve some years ago and no mammals other than squirrels were seen. No large birds were seen, either pheasants or diurnal raptors. Only one of the endemic Hainan Partridge was heard; a few Mountain Imperial Pigeons *Ducula badia* were heard, but none seen. One local man told us that pesticides had been used in the streams to kill fish for food. Our observations gave us the depressing picture of a depauperate fauna in what was still beautiful forest (what was left).

It is likely that in the distant past when the local natives hunted and trapped mammals and birds for their own use, some kind of rough equilibrium was maintained. However the local hunters now hunt both for themselves and the market. Since there are now many more people on Hainan, the diminishing supply of wild animals can never meet the demand. In fact, complete extirpation of all edible wildlife on Hainan within a very few years is likely if the hunting and trapping of the pitifully small remnant of Hainan's wildlife is not terminated immediately.

## BAWANGLING RESERVE

This reserve of 2,100 hectares was established in 1980 and encompasses forest from 500 to 1,400 metres elevation. A major portion of the reserve is primary forest. The reserve is one of two created for the protection of the Hainan Gibbon – there are now only sixteen gibbons left at Bawangling. The survival of these remaining gibbons, the last on Hainan, is tenuous at best, but the effort to save them must be made.

The Hainan Partridge is common at Bawangling and the Silver Pheasant *Lophura nycthemera* is fairly common. However, the excessive shyness of the two Silver Pheasants I saw suggests that if hunting has ceased on the reserve, it was only a short time ago. The Grey Peacock-Pheasant *Polyplectron bicalcaratum* is said to exist here in small numbers.

The forest at Bawangling is exceedingly beautiful and birds are plentiful there. The forest and its wildlife seem in much better shape there than at Wuzhishan. We feel that a large buffer zone of reserve should be added around the current reserve area to provide added protection to the core area of primary forest and its animals. This would mean bringing its western boundary right down to the 150 metre level at the reserve headquarters area. This would encompass a large area of low elevation secondary forest which will be quite good reserve in the coming years.

In 1981 only 7.2% (2,420 square kilometres) of Hainan remained forested, down 72% from 1949 when there was 25.7% (8,630 square kilometres) forest cover (Guangming Ribao, p.2, July 1980, quoted in Smil, 1983).

## RESULTS

An annotated list of birds observed during our visit is given below. Our more interesting observations are outlined here.

One species new to the China list was observed, the Yellow-billed Nuthatch *Sitta solangiae*. While the bird in question, formerly regarded as *Sitta frontalis chienfengensis*, is not new to Hainan or China, its bright yellow bill indicates it belongs with *S. solangiae* rather than *S. frontalis*. *Sitta solangiae* was previously known only from Vietnam (Peters 1967). A fuller account will be published elsewhere.

Several species were recorded apparently for the first time on Hainan: Whiskered Tern *Chlidonias hybridus*, White-throated Needletail *Hirundapus caudacutus*, Siberian Blue Robin *Erithacus cyane* and Eyebrowed Thrush *Turdus obscurus*. All have been recorded in Guangdong (Cheng 1987) and were to be expected on Hainan. Several other species were recorded for the first time in over eighty years on Hainan: Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus*, Hodgson's Hawk-Cuckoo *Cuculus fugax*,



Mountain Scops-Owl *Otus spilocephalus*, Eye-browed Wren-Babbler *Napothera epilepidota* and Japanese Paradise-Flycatcher *Terpsiphone atrocaudata*.

The status and distribution of Hainan birds is based on Liao (1983).

Insect life seemed abundant in the forest. The din created by the cicadas all day long was overpowering and a strong deterrent to tape recording bird calls. Only on a couple of foggy, drizzly days were the cicadas quiet enough for good tape recordings to be made. April is the cicada's peak activity time according to Professor Liao. Butterflies also were numerous.

A number of species of birds were observed nesting or with fledged young: White-crowned Forktail *Enicurus leschenaulti*, Greater Racket-tailed Drongo *Dicrurus paradiseus*, Greater Necklaced Laughingthrush *Garrulax pectoralis*, Grey-cheeked Fulvetta *Alcippe morrisonia*, Streak-breasted Scimitar-Babbler *Pomatorhinus ruficollis*, Eye-browed Wren-Babbler *Napothera epilepidota*, Grey-headed Parrotbill *Paradoxornis gularis*, Yellow-billed Nuthatch *Sitta solangiae* and Rufous-faced Warbler *Abroscopus albogularis*. These are all insectivorous birds.

The number of nesting or recently nested insectivorous forest birds suggests a peak of nesting for these species in March and April. The insect abundance noted further suggests that the insectivorous forest birds time their nesting so as to be feeding their young at the time of major insect abundance, similar to that noted in Malaysia (Fogden 1972 and Medway and Wells 1976).

We found no trace of the White-eared Night-Heron on our visit, even in its type locality, Wuzhishan. It is thought to breed on Hainan and to disperse to Southeast China and Vietnam in the non-breeding season (Collar and Andrew 1988). This species' forest habitat and nocturnal habits make it one of the most difficult of birds to see. Its cousin, the Malayan Night-Heron *Gorsachius melanolophus* may be seen elsewhere in rice paddies at night and sometimes along streams by day, and its loud calls can be heard at dawn and dusk. While we searched some rice paddies at night and spent time in the forest at dawn and dusk, no *Gorsachius* were seen or heard. We feel that the White-eared Night-Heron is at least severely endangered, if not already extinct. The Chinese government has declared this species to be in Category II of their protected species list (threatened). We feel strongly that this bird is best classed in Category I (endangered).

We found the Hainan Partridge common at Bawangling and heard one at Wuzhishan. Its situation at Wuzhishan may be precarious because of continued hunting and trapping. Due to the continued destruction of its forest haunts, and intense hunting and trapping pressure, we believe this species to be endangered and in severe need of protection. We are engaged in trying to get the Hainan government to adopt this partridge,

its only endemic species of bird, as its provincial bird symbol. This might help to secure its protection. In November 1988 the Hainan Partridge was declared a Category I species (i.e. endangered) by the Chinese government.

The general shortage of birds everywhere would be startling anywhere but in China or Java. In thirteen days we saw only 16 Eurasian Tree-Sparrows *Passer montanus*. We saw no crows whatever, although there are ten species in the family Corvidae recorded from Hainan. It is likely that the heavy load of pesticides and rodenticides used on crops has killed most birds. There are no common birds along the roads — mostly no birds at all. The Long-tailed Shrike *Lanius schach* is the only bird to be encountered more or less regularly along the roadsides. There are so few birds in most of the countryside that it looks like a very minimal effort could completely eliminate birds from the bulk of Hainan Island.

#### ANNOTATED LIST OF BIRDS RECORDED ON HAINAN

[Bird names have been maintained in accordance with the author's wishes; those which differ from names commonly used in Hong Kong are marked with an asterisk — Ed.]

**Chinese Pond-Heron** *Ardeola bacchus*  
One at Dongzhaigang on 16 April and one at Wuzhishan on 19 April.

**Cattle Egret** *Bubulcus ibis*  
Three on 18 April and six on 19 April in rice paddies at Wuzhishan.

**Little Egret** *Egretta garzetta*  
One along highway in rice paddy on 17 April.

**Black Eagle** *Ictinaetus malayensis*  
One above secondary forest at Bawangling at 600m on 24 April.

**Peregrine Falcon** *Falco peregrinus*  
One near Dongzhaigang on 16 April. Apparently the first Hainan record in over 80 years.

**Chinese Francolin** *Francolinus pintadeanus*  
Fairly common in secondary scrub, 550-750m, at Wuzhishan.

**Hainan Partridge** *Arborophila ardens*  
One heard at 750m in old secondary forest at Wuzhishan on 20 April; common 1,000-1,100m at Bawangling, 22-24 April, in primary forest.

**Silver Pheasant** *Lophura nycthemera*  
One on 22 April and one on 23 April at Bawangling at 1,100m in primary forest.

**Red Junglefowl** *Gallus gallus*  
Several for sale in market near Wuzhishan.



**White-breasted Waterhen** *Amaurornis phoenicurus*  
One at Dongzhaigang on 16 April; one at Wuzhishan on 17 and 18 April at 550m.

**Common Redshank** *Tringa totanus*  
Two at Dongzhaigang on 16 April.

**Common Greenshank** *Tringa nebularia*  
One at Dongzhaigang on 16 April.

**Common Sandpiper** *Actitis hypoleucos*  
Two at Dongzhaigang on 16 April.

**Oriental Pratincole** *Glareola maldivarum*  
About eight feeding on a termite swarm on the evening of 18 April at 550m at Wuzhishan.

**Whiskered Tern** *Chlidonias hybrida*  
Six over rice paddies near Haikou on 25 April. This is apparently the first record from Hainan. There are records from Guangdong.

**Mountain Imperial Pigeon** *Ducula badia*  
One to four heard daily at Wuzhishan, 750-900m, and Bawangling, 1,000-1,100m.

**Rock Dove** *Columba livia*  
A few amidst human habitation and cultivation.

**Barred Cuckoo-Dove\*** *Macropygia unchall*  
Three at Bawangling on 21 April, 900-1,000m.

**Red Turtle-Dove** *Streptopelia tranquebarica*  
Two at Dongzhaigang on 16 April.

**Spotted Dove** *Streptopelia chinensis*  
Five at Dongzhaigang on 16 April; three along road south of Haikou on 17 April; two along road southwest of Haikou on 25 April.

**Emerald Dove** *Chalcophaps indica*  
One or two daily at Wuzhishan, 750-900m; two at Bawangling at 500m in secondary forest.

**Large Hawk-Cuckoo** *Cuculus sparverioides*  
Two to five heard daily Wuzhishan, 550-1,000m; one to two heard daily at Bawangling, 150-1,100m.

**Hodgson's Hawk-Cuckoo** *Cuculus fugax*  
One at 1,100m at Bawangling. Apparently the first record for Hainan in over 80 years.

**Indian Cuckoo** *Cuculus micropterus*  
Two to three heard daily at Wuzhishan, 800-1,000m; 10-15 heard daily, 1,000-1,100m, at Bawangling.

**Drongo Cuckoo** *Surniculus lugubris*  
Three to eight daily at Wuzhishan, 750-900m; three at 1,000m on 21 April and two at 600m on 25 April at Bawangling.

**Asian Koel\*** *Eudynamis scolopacea*  
One heard at 600m at Wuzhishan on 19 April.

**Greater Coucal** *Centropus sinensis*  
One to four heard daily at Wuzhishan in secondary scrub, 600-800m.

**Mountain Scops-Owl** *Otus spilocephalus*  
One heard at 550m on 17 April and three heard, 750-850m, on 20 April at Wuzhishan; one heard at 1,100m at Bawangling on 24 April. These are apparently the first records in over 80 years.

**Collared Scops-Owl** *Otus lempiji*  
One heard at 850m on 20 April at Wuzhishan. For use of the name *lempiji*, see Roberts and King (1986).

**Collared Owlet\*** *Glaucidium brodiei*  
One to two heard daily at Wuzhishan, 750-1,000m; two to four heard daily, 1,000-1,100m, at Bawangling.

**Asian Barred Owlet\*** *Glaucidium cuculoides*  
One heard on 22 and 23 April at 1,100m and one seen eating a frog at 600m on 25 April at Bawangling.

**Brown Wood-Owl** *Strix leptogrammica*  
One heard at 1,000m on 22 April at Bawangling.

**Grey Nightjar\*** *Caprimulgus indicus*  
One heard at 750m on 20 April at Wuzhishan; two to four heard daily at Bawangling, 1,000-1,100m.

**Large-tailed Nightjar** *Caprimulgus macrurus*  
One heard at Bawangling HQ on 24 April at 150m.

**White-throated Needletail** *Hirundapus caudacutus*  
Two at 550m at Wuzhishan among a large group of swifts, swallows, pratincoles and rollers feeding on a termite swarm. There were five or six more needletails present but none gave an identifiable view. The white throats on the two identified were clearly seen. Apparently the first record on Hainan. There are records for Guangdong.

**Fork-tailed Swift\*** *Apus pacificus*  
Five to 20 seen daily at Wuzhishan, 550-900m; three to 30 seen daily at Bawangling, 150-1,100m.

**House Swift** *Apus affinis*  
Six to 80 seen daily in all areas except Dongzhaigang.

**Red-headed Trogon** *Harpactes erythrocephalus*  
Two to six daily at 1,100m at Bawangling.

**Pied Kingfisher** *Ceryle rudis*  
Two at Dongzhaigang on 16 April.

**Common Kingfisher** *Alcedo atthis*  
One at Wuzhishan at 550m on 19 and 20 April.

**Black-backed Kingfisher** *Ceyx erithacus*  
One at 800m at Wuzhishan on 19 April.

**White-throated Kingfisher\*** *Halcyon smyrnensis*  
Two along road near Wuzhishan on 17 April; four along road between Wuzhishan and Bawangling on 20 April; two at Bawangling at 150m on 24 April; two along road between Bawangling and Haikou on 25 April.

**Black-capped Kingfisher** *Halcyon pileata*  
One at Dongzhaigang on 16 April.

**Dollarbird\*** *Eurystomus orientalis*  
Four at 550m at Wuzhishan on 18 April feeding on a termite swarm.

**Black-browed Barbet** *Megalaima oorti*  
Five to ten daily at Wuzhishan, 750-1,000m; five to 40 daily at Bawangling, 150-1,100m.

**Greater Yellownapè** *Picus flavinucha*  
One on 22 April and two on 23 April at 1,100m at Bawangling.

**Lesser Yellownapè** *Picus chlorolophus*  
One at 1,100m at Bawangling on 21 April.

**Grey-capped Woodpecker** *Picoides canicapillus*  
Two at 600m at Wuzhishan in some scattered secondary trees amidst grass and scrub on 19 April; three in secondary forest at 500m at Bawangling on 24 April.

**Bay Woodpecker** *Blythipicus pyrrhotis*  
Four on 23 April at Bawangling.

**Silver-breasted Broadbill** *Serilophus lunatus*  
One on 22 April, one on 23 April and three on 24 April at 1,100m at Bawangling.

**Barn Swallow\*** *Hirundo rustica*  
Ten to 100 daily.

**Striated Swallow** *Hirundo striolata*  
One at Wuzhishan at 550m on 19 April.

**Yellow Wagtail** *Motacilla flava*  
Five on 18 April and one on 19 April in rice paddies at Wuzhishan at 550m.

**Grey Wagtail** *Motacilla cinerea*  
Three at 550m along a stream amidst paddies on 18 April at Wuzhishan.

**White Wagtail** *Motacilla alba*  
Three at 550m along a stream amidst paddies on 18 April at Wuzhishan.

**Richard's Pipit** *Anthus novaeseelandiae*  
Two at Dongzhaigang on 16 April.

**Red-throated Pipit** *Anthus cervinus*  
Five on 18 April and one on 20 April along a stream in rice paddies at 550m at Wuzhishan.

**Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike\*** *Coracina novaehollandiae*  
Two to four daily at Bawangling, 1,100m.

**Grey-chinned Minivet\*** *Pericrocotus solaris*  
Two to eight daily at Bawangling, 600-1,100m.

**Scarlet Minivet** *Pericrocotus flammeus*  
Four at 600m at Wuzhishan on 19 April; four at 150m on 24 April and three at 500m on 25 April at Bawangling.

**Light-vented Bulbul\*** *Pycnonotus sinensis*  
Two to 30 daily in second growth, scrub and cultivation.

**Puff-throated Bulbul** *Criniger pallidus*  
15-30 daily, 550-1,100m, at Wuzhishan and Bawangling in forest.

**Mountain Bulbul** *Hypsipetes mccllellandii*  
Four at Wuzhishan, 800-900m, on 18 April; four to 15 daily at Bawangling, 1000-1,100m.

**Chestnut Bulbul** *Hypsipetes castanonotus*  
Five to ten daily at Wuzhishan and Bawangling, 600-1,100m in forest.

**Black Bulbul** *Hypsipetes leucocephalus*  
Two at Wuzhishan at 1,000m on 18 April; one to three daily at Bawangling, 1,000-1,100m.

**Orange-bellied Leafbird** *Chloropsis hardwickii*  
Three at 1,100m at Bawangling on 24 April.

**Long-tailed Shrike\*** *Lanius schach*  
One to 30 daily in open country up to 800m.



**Black Drongo** *Dicrurus macrocercus*  
One to 15 daily in open country up to 700m.

**Ashy Drongo** *Dicrurus leucophaeus*  
One at 800m at Wuzhishan on 19 April and one at 1,100m at Bawangling on 22 April, both in forest.

**Crow-billed Drongo** *Dicrurus annectans*  
One at 800m at Wuzhishan on 19 April and one at 1,100m at Bawangling on 24 April, both in forest.

**Greater Racket-tailed Drongo** *Dicrurus paradiseus*  
One at 900m at Wuzhishan, starting to construct a nest on 19 April; one on 23 April at 1,100m and two on 25 April at 600m at Bawangling.

**White-shouldered Starling\*** *Sturnus sinensis*  
Six at Dongzhaigang on 16 April; one at Wuzhishan on 19 April at 600m; two at 500m at Bawangling on 25 April; eight along road between Bawangling and Haikou on 25 April.

**Crested Myna** *Acridotheres cristatellus*  
18 at Dongzhaigang on 16 April; eight along road between Wuzhishan and Bawangling on 20 April.

**[Grey Treepie\*]** *Dendrocitta formosae*  
One bird believed to be this species heard in the same area each day, 21-23 April, at 1,100m at Bawangling.]

**Siberian Blue Robin** *Erithacus cyane*  
One male at 800m on 18 April at Wuzhishan. Apparently the first record for Hainan. There are records from Guangdong.

**Magpie Robin** *Copsychus saularis*  
Two to ten daily in secondary growth, gardens, etc. up to about 800m.

**White-rumped Shama** *Copsychus malabaricus*  
One in dense secondary growth and bushes along a road at Bawangling at 150m on 24 April.

**White-tailed Robin** *Cinclidium leucurum*  
Six to ten daily, 1,000-1,100m, at Bawangling.

**White-crowned Forktail** *Enicurus leschenaulti*  
Two on 19 April, 800-900m, and three on 20 April, 750-800m, at Wuzhishan; one of the birds on 20 April was a fully fledged juvenal-plumaged bird; one at 1,000m at Bawangling on 21 April.

**Stonechat** *Saxicola torquata*  
One male at 600m at Wuzhishan on 19 April.

**Blue Rock-Thrush** *Monticola solitarius*  
One near Dongzhaigang on 16 April.

**Orange-headed Thrush\*** *Zoothera citrina*  
One at 800m on 19 April at Wuzhishan; one on 22 and 23 April at 1,100m at Bawangling.

**Eye-browed Thrush** *Turdus obscurus*  
Two at 1,100m at Bawangling on 21 April. Apparently the first record for Hainan. There are records from Guangdong.

**Streak-breasted Scimitar-Babbler\*** *Pomatorhinus ruficollis*  
Four to 14 daily, 500-1,100m, at Wuzhishan and Bawangling. Two adults, both carrying food and squawking vehemently at my presence on 23 April at 1,100m on Bawangling, suggested a nearby nest.

**Eye-browed Wren-Babbler** *Napothera epilepidota*  
Two to eight daily, 600-1,100m, at Wuzhishan and Bawangling. A pair with three fully fledged young on 22 April at 1,100m at Bawangling. Apparently not recorded on Hainan for over 80 years.

**Rufous-capped Babbler** *Stachyris ruficeps*  
Two to four daily, 600-1,100m, at Wuzhishan and Bawangling.

**Spot-necked Babbler** *Stachyris striolata*  
Two at 700m on 18 April and two at 700m on 19 April at Wuzhishan; two at 550m on 25 April at Bawangling, all in secondary scrub and bushes.

**Lesser Necklaced Laughingthrush** *Garrulax monileger*  
One at 800m at Wuzhishan on 19 April; one at 1,100m at Bawangling on 22 April; both in forest.

**Greater Necklaced Laughingthrush** *Garrulax pectoralis*  
Five at 1,100m at Bawangling on 21 April, three of which were fully fledged and flying juvenal-plumaged birds with tails two-thirds grown.

**Grey Laughingthrush** *Garrulax maesi*  
Six to 15 daily, 550-1,100m, in forest at Wuzhishan and Bawangling.

**Black-throated Laughingthrush** *Garrulax chinensis*  
Three at 600m on 19 April and two at 700m on 20 April at Wuzhishan; four at 150m at Bawangling on 24 April; all in secondary scrub and bushes.

**Hwamei** *Garrulax canorus*  
Three to four daily, 600-700m, at Wuzhishan; one at 150m at Bawangling on 24 April; all in secondary scrub and bushes.

**White-browed Shrike-Babbler** *Pteruthius flaviscapitis*  
Four to eight daily, 1,000-1,100m, at Bawangling.

**Dusky Fulvetta\*** *Alcippe brunnea*  
Two at 650m at Wuzhishan on 18 April; two at 1,100m at Bawangling on 22 and 23 April.

**Grey-cheeked Fulvetta** *Alcippe morrisonia*  
The most common passerine forest bird: 20-50 seen daily at Wuzhishan and Bawangling, 550-1,100m. One juvenal-plumaged bird at Wuzhishan at 750m on 18 April.

**White-bellied Yuhina** *Yuhina zantholeuca*  
Two to six daily, 600-1,100m, at Wuzhishan and Bawangling.

**Grey-headed Parrotbill** *Paradoxornis gularis*  
One juvenal-plumaged bird, tail half grown, brought to us by a local person at 1,000m on 22 April at Bawangling.

**Sulfur-breasted Warbler** *Phylloscopus ricketti*  
One at 1,100m at Bawangling on 22 April.

**Rufous-faced Warbler\*** *Abroscopus albogularis*  
Four to eight daily at 1,100m at Bawangling. Two fully fledged juvenal-plumaged birds foraging with adults on 22 April.

**Plain Prinia\*** *Prinia inornata*  
Five at Dongzhaigang on 16 April; one along road between Wuzhishan and Bawangling on 20 April; one heard at Haikou near airport on 26 April.

**Yellow-bellied Prinia\*** *Prinia flaviventris*  
One to 15 daily up to 800m in grassy areas.

**Narcissus Flycatcher** *Ficedula narcissina*  
One male at 750m on 18 April and another male at 700m on 19 April at Wuzhishan.

**Blue-and-White Flycatcher** *Cyanoptila cyanomelana*  
One female at 750m on 18 April at Wuzhishan.

**Pale Blue Flycatcher** *Cyornis unicolor*  
A pair on 21 April and another pair on 24 April at 1,100m at Bawangling.

**Hainan Blue Flycatcher** *Cyornis hainana*  
One to six daily, 700-800m, at Wuzhishan in forest and second growth.

**Black-naped Monarch\*** *Hypothymis azurea*  
One at 800m at Wuzhishan on 19 April; three at 150m on 24 April and two at 500m on 25 April at Bawangling.

**Asian Paradise-Flycatcher** *Terpsiphone paradisi*  
One at 750m on 18 April and one at 800m on 19 April at Wuzhishan.

**Japanese Paradise-Flycatcher** *Terpsiphone atrocaudata*  
One male at 800m on 19 April at Wuzhishan. Apparently the first record in over 80 years.

**White-throated Fantail** *Rhipidura albicollis*  
One at 800m at Wuzhishan on 19 April; two at 500m at Bawangling on 25 April.

**Great Tit** *Parus major*  
Two at 650m at Wuzhishan on 19 April.

**Sultan Tit** *Melanochlora sultanea*  
Two to ten daily at Bawangling at 1,100m, high in the canopy — more often heard than seen.

**Yellow-billed Nuthatch** *Sitta solangiae*  
Seven on 22 April and four on 24 April at 1,100m at Bawangling; two of the birds on 22 April being fully fledged juvenal birds with dull yellow bills, active on trunks but still being fed by adults. The bright yellow bills of adults and high altitude of this bird, *S. s. chienfengensis*, place it with Vietnamese *S. solangiae* rather than *S. frontalis*. *Sitta solangiae* has not been previously listed as a Chinese bird.

**[Fire-breasted Flowerpecker** *Dicaeum ignipectus*  
Two to six flowerpeckers heard daily at 1,100m at Bawangling were believed to be this species but none was seen well.]

**Scarlet-backed Flowerpecker** *Dicaeum cruentatum*  
One male at 150m at Bawangling on 24 April.

**Olive-backed Sunbird** *Nectarinia jugularis*  
Eight on 24 April and three on 25 April at 150m at Bawangling.

**Fork-tailed Sunbird** *Aethopyga christinae*  
One at 750m on 20 April at Wuzhishan; one at 150m on 24 April and one at 500m on 25 April at Bawangling.

**Japanese White-eye\*** *Zosterops japonica*  
Six at Dongzhaigang on 16 April; six to ten daily, 550-800m, at Wuzhishan; three at 150m at Bawangling on 24 April.

**Eurasian Tree-Sparrow\*** *Passer montanus*  
Six at 150m at Bawangling on 25 April; ten between Bawangling and Haikou on 25 April.

**White-rumped Munia\*** *Lonchura striata*  
Eight on 19 April, 550-650m, at Wuzhishan; 25 along road on 20 April between Wuzhishan and Bawangling; three at 150m at Bawangling on 24 April.

**Scaly-breasted Munia\*** *Lonchura punctulata*  
Six on 20 April at Wuzhishan at 550m.



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We are indebted to the Forestry Department of Hainan Province for much assistance in our work. The Library of Natural Sounds at the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology supplied sound-recording equipment and all tapes will be deposited there.

## 摘要：

一九八八年四月十五日至廿七日，我們到海南島的東寨港〔音譯〕、五指山和霸王嶺考察。海南黑長臂猿 *Hylobates concolor* 僅存16頭，活動範圍限於霸王嶺。海南島唯一的特有雀鳥品種海南山鷓鴣 *Arborophila ardens* 祇剩零落幾羣，生活在島上碩果僅存的山地林區中，非常接近絕種的地步。我們無法尋得海南虎斑鴉 *Gorsachius magnificus* 的踪影，恐怕如非絕種亦相去不遠。我們認為牠應該列為一級保護品種。由於大規模砍伐林本和大量捕獵帶來的重大壓力，海南島上的鳥獸所餘無幾。除非立即停止捕獵，否則很多品種快將滅絕。我們尋得四個似乎是海南島初見的品種：鬚浮鷗 *Chlidonias hybrida*、白喉針尾雨燕 *Hirundapus caudacutus*、藍歌鸲 *Erithacus cyane* 和眉鸲 *Turdus obscurus*。我們認為海南島上的絨額鸲 *Sitta frontalis chienfengensis* 應列為黃咀鸲 *Sitta solangiae* 的一個亞種，因為牠的咀是鮮黃色的。中國以前並沒有 *Sitta solangiae* 的紀錄。

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## SOME BIRD OBSERVATIONS AT KANGWU LIANGSI, SOUTHWEST SICHUAN PROVINCE, CHINA

Ben King

A one-week survey of the Kangwu Liangsi area was carried out between 19 and 25 April 1989. Kangwu Liangsi (28°2'N, 101°E) is centred about 35 km by road northwest of Muli in southwest Sichuan Province, China. We ranged up to 31 km by road from our base at Number 35 Road Repair Crew Station. Elevations from 3,000 to 3,600m were covered.

When the Muli Forestry Bureau began operations in 1966, the entire area was primary forest. Since then nearly all the Kangwu Liangsi area has been logged, with only a few patches of primary forest remaining. The forest consists mostly of fir and spruce, some broadleaf trees and a few pines in the 3,000-3,600m range, while pines predominate below 3,000m. Bamboo is common on the cooler wetter north-facing slopes throughout the 3,000-3,600m range. Above 3,400m grassland often predominates on the dryer, warmer, south-facing slopes. There is some dense high-altitude scrub growth at the tree line on some slopes. Rhododendron is common throughout. Second growth forest and bushy growth predominates with scattered old tall trees and small patches of primary forest.

Muli is a very dry area compared to the areas close to the Sichuan Basin. Most rain falls in the June-August period.

Hunting pressure has been severe. When the logging operation began in 1966, six species of pheasants — Blood *Ithaginis cruentus*, White-eared *Crossoptilon crossoptilon*, Koklas *Pucrasia macrolopha*, Common *Phasianus colchicus* and Lady Amherst's Pheasants *Chrysolophus amherstiae* and Temminck's Tragopan *Tragopan temminckii* (in descending order of abundance) and one partridge, the Buff-throated *Tetraophasis szechenyii* — were abundant to common in the area according to local hunters. Many pheasants could be seen in a day's walk. Now only a pitiful remnant is left, the Lady Amherst's being the only one still found in any numbers being fairly common below 3,200m. The Common Pheasant is uncommon in the grassy areas, while the other four species are rare in most areas and completely absent in some. The Buff-throated Partridge, once very common, is nearly extirpated at Kangwu Liangsi.

Except for several squirrels and one vole, I saw no mammals.

The main purpose of my visit was to see and tape-record the White-speckled Laughingthrush *Garrulax bieti*. Although it is often considered a race of Barred Laughingthrush *Garrulax lunulatus*, I believe it to be a separate species. I did succeed in finding the bird and taping its voice. Later analysis will determine if voice casts any light on its specific status. This laughingthrush is confined to a very small area in northwest Yunnan and southwest Sichuan and is one of the least known of the genus.

Because the White-speckled Laughingthrush is so little known, so limited in distribution, and potentially rare, it would be useful to have a protected area for it. The place I found the laughingthrush, Ma Huang Valley (Ma Huang Gou), appears to be ideal for a small reserve. First of all, the laughingthrush appears to be fairly common there, and there hasn't been any recent cutting, so the vegetation is in good shape. Now all that is needed is a commitment to eliminate hunting and prevent any further logging. Since the area is small, revenue loss would also be small.

Ma Huang Valley ranges from 3,000m to perhaps 3,300m. I walked up to 3,200m and found the valley very pleasant indeed. Eliminating hunting would allow the pheasants to increase and eventually become less shy and easier to see. I heard Temminck's Tragopan and Koklas Pheasant, and saw Lady Amherst's Pheasant in the valley. Ma Huang Valley could be a fine place for wildlife tourists in a few years if properly managed.

Forest Bureau officials in Muli were approached with the idea and seemed receptive. Continued contact will be maintained to see how the notion progresses.

In all, 87 species were found in one week at Kangwu Liangsi, not a complete list, but an interesting one. The basic list for the area is Li (1984). One species seen, the Rufous-vented Yuhina *Yuhina occipitalis*, is apparently new for Sichuan Province (see Cheng 1987), the previous Chinese records being from nearby southeast Tibet and Yunnan. Three species, Koklas Pheasant, Grey Nightjar *Caprimulgus indicus* and Chinese Fulvetta *Alcippe striaticollis*, were not listed by Li (1984) and thus have apparently not been found before in the area covered by his paper.

The altitudes listed in parentheses after the altitudes at which I found the species are those listed by Li (1984). My short visit added a fair bit to the known altitudinal distribution in this area.

### ANNOTATED LIST OF BIRDS RECORDED AT KANGWU LIANGSI

[Bird names have been maintained in accordance with the author's wishes; those which differ from names commonly used in Hong Kong are marked with an asterisk — Ed.]

[Altitudes in parentheses are those listed by Li]

[Eurasian Sparrowhawk\* *Accipiter nisus*  
Two accipiters, probably this species at 3,300m (1,600-2,000m).]

Common Buzzard\* *Buteo buteo*  
Three from 3,300-3,500m (1,600-2,000m).



**Buff-throated Partridge** *Tetraophasis szechenyii*  
A pair at 3,600m (—). No others were heard and the bird is considered quite rare now, although known to all the local hunters and considered quite common only a few years ago.

**Blood Pheasant** *Ithaginis cruentus*  
Six at 3,400m (3,000-3,200m) in a valley not yet logged (56 km from Muli).

**Temminck's Tragopan** *Tragopan temminckii*  
One heard in Ma Huang Valley at 3,200m.

**Tibetan Eared Pheasant** *Crossoptilon crossoptilon*  
A pair heard at 3,400m (1,600-2,000m) in the same valley where the Blood Pheasants were seen.

**Koklas Pheasant** *Pucrasia macrolopha*  
Four scattered birds heard from 3,200-3,400m. Not listed by Li (1984) as having been found in this area.

**Common Pheasant\*** *Phasianus colchicus*  
Uncommon in grassy areas; one to three heard daily, 3,400-3,600m (1,700-2,600m) when in their habitat.

**Lady Amherst's Pheasant** *Chrysolophus amherstiae*  
One seen and one heard in Ma Huang Valley, 3,000-3,100m (1,500-2,400m).

**Derbian Parakeet** *Psittacula derbiana*  
Fairly common; one to 50 seen daily 3,000-3,600m (—). A flock of 35 and another flock of 45 were seen, and a few small flocks and singles were observed. The flock of 35 was watched at 50 metres feeding on rhododendron blossoms. They pulled the flower off the tree by its centre, ate the centre and then let the petals fall.

**Collared Owlet\*** *Glaucidium brodiei*  
Two heard at 3,000 and 3,100m (1,500-2,600m) in Ma Huang Valley.

**Grey Nightjar\*** *Caprimulgus indicus*  
One or two heard nightly, 3,300-3,500m. Not listed by Li (1984) as having been found in this region before.

**Himalayan Swiftlet** *Collocalia brevirostris*  
About 40 seen at 3,400m (1,400-1,600m) on 23 April.

**White-throated Needletail** *Hirundapus caudacutus*  
One seen at 3,400m (1,800-1,900m).

**Hoopoe** *Upupa epops*  
One at 3,000m (1,500-2,200m) on two separate days at cultivation edge in Ma Huang Valley.

**[Grey-headed Woodpecker\*]** *Picus canus*  
Three birds heard at 3,400 and 3,500m (700-3,300m) believed to be this species.]

**Great Spotted Woodpecker** *Picoides major*  
One at 3,000m and one at 3,400m (2,200 and 3,000m).

**Oriental Skylark** *Alauda gulgula*  
A few at 3,400-3,600m (1,800-2,800m) in grassy areas.

**White Wagtail** *Motacilla alba*  
Two seen at 3,400m (600-2,500m).

**Olive Tree-Pipit\*** *Anthus hodgsoni*  
Fairly common at forest edge of grassy areas, 3,400-3,600m (600-2,200m).

**Rosy Pipit** *Anthus roseatus*  
Two seen at 3,600m and one at 3,300m (600-2,000m).

**Long-tailed Minivet** *Pericrocotus ethologus*  
Fairly common; 3,000-3,600m (1,700-2,000m); two to ten seen or heard daily.

**Grey-backed Shrike** *Lanius tephronotus*  
One to five seen daily, 3,000-3,400m (1,100-3,000m).

**Blue Magpie** *Urocissa caerulea*  
Singles at 2,800m and 3,400m and a pair at 3,300m (700-2,200m).

**Eurasian Nutcracker** *Nucifraga caryocatactes*  
Two at 3,200m (1,500-2,200m) in Ma Huang Valley.

**Red-billed Chough** *Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax*  
A few, 3,400-3,600m (2,000m).

**Daurian Jackdaw** *Corvus dauuricus*  
A flock of 20 in a ploughed field at 3,400m (1,100-2,200m).

**Carrion Crow** *Corvus corone*  
Four at 3,400m (1,600-2,300m).

**Large-billed Crow\*** *Corvus macrorhynchus*  
Fairly common; one to eight daily, 3,000-3,600m (650-2,200m).

**Northern Wren\*** *Troglodytes troglodytes*  
A few, 3,400-3,600m (1,500-1,800m).

**Rufous-breasted Accentor** *Prunella strophiatea*  
Several at 3,400m (1,500-3,200m).

**Maroon-backed Accentor** *Prunella immaculata*  
A flock of 30 at 3,600m on 19 April and several individuals, 3,000-3,600m (1,500-3,700m).

**Orange-flanked Bush-Robin\*** *Tarsiger cyanurus*  
A few, 3,400-3,600m (800-3,700m).

**White-browed Bush-Robin** *Tarsiger indicus*  
One at 3,100m (3,200m) in Ma Huang Valley.

**Blue-fronted Redstart** *Phoenicurus frontalis*  
Fairly common, 3,100-3,600m (1,600-3,500m).

**White-throated Redstart** *Phoenicurus schisticeps*  
A territorial male at 3,600m (3,700m) on 20 April.

**Daurian Redstart** *Phoenicurus aureus*  
One at 3,400m (700-3,000m).

**Plumbeous Redstart\*** *Rhyacornis fuliginosus*  
Common along streams up to 3,000m (600-3,200m).

**White-crowned Forktail** *Enicurus leschenaulti*  
Four at 3,000m (1,400-2,000m) in Ma Huang Valley.

**River Chat\*** *Chaimarrornis leucocephalus*  
Common along streams up to 3,400m (700-3,200m).

**Blue Whistling Thrush\*** *Myophonus caeruleus*  
One at 3,400m and one at 3,500m (650-3,000m).

**Long-tailed Thrush** *Zoothera dixonii*  
One at 3,500m and one at 3,600m (1,600-1,700m).

**Chestnut Thrush** *Turdus rubrocanus*  
Common, 3,000-3,600m (1,400-3,000m).

**Spot-breasted Scimitar-Babbler** *Pomatorhinus erythrocnemis*  
Common, 3,000-3,500m (700-3,000m).

**Streak-breasted Scimitar-Babbler\*** *Pomatorhinus ruficollis*  
One or two daily 3,000-3,400m (700-1,700m).

**Chinese Babax** *Babax lanceolatus*  
Two at 3,000m (1,100-3,000m) in Ma Huang Valley.

**White-speckled Laughingthrush** *Garrulax bieti*  
Fairly common in Ma Huang Valley in bamboo, 3,100-3,200m (3,000m). Difficult to observe.

**Giant Laughingthrush** *Garrulax maximus*  
Common, 3,000-3,600m (3,000m).

**Elliot's Laughingthrush** *Garrulax elliotii*  
One at 3,500m and one at 3,400m (1,400-3,000m).

**Green Shrike Babbler** *Pteruthius xanthochlorus*  
Two at 3,050m (1,500-2,500m) in Ma Huang Valley.

**White-browed Fulvetta** *Alcippe vinipectus*  
Very common, 3,000-3,600m (2,200-3,700m).

**Chinese Fulvetta** *Alcippe striaticollis*  
Three at 3,500m on 23 April and one at 3,400m on 24 April. Not listed by Li (1984) for this region.

**White-collared Yuhina** *Yuhina diademata*  
Common, 3,000-3,600m (1,400-3,000m).

**Rufous-vented Yuhina** *Yuhina occipitalis*  
One at 3,200m on 22 April and four at 3,400m on 24 April. Not listed by Li (1984) for this region and apparently the first record for Sichuan (Cheng 1987).

**Brown Parrotbill** *Paradoxornis unicolor*  
Common (five to 25 daily) in bamboo in Ma Huang Valley, 3,000-3,200m (1,900-3,000m).

**Fulvous Parrotbill** *Paradoxornis fulvifrons*  
Fairly common (two to 12 daily) in bamboo in Ma Huang Valley at 3,100m (—).

**Yellowish-bellied Bush-Warbler** *Cettia acanthizoides*  
Fairly common in bamboo (one to ten daily), 3,000-3,600m (1,600-2,500m).

**Buff-throated Warbler** *Phylloscopus subaffinis*  
One to four daily, 3,200-3,400m (1,100-3,500m).

**Yellow-streaked Warbler** *Phylloscopus armandii*  
One at 3,300m (1,600-3,000m) on 19 April.

**Buff-barred Warbler** *Phylloscopus pulcher*  
Common, 3,000-3,600m (1,700-3,700m).

**Lemon-rumped Warbler\*** *Phylloscopus proregulus*  
Common, 3,000-3,600m (800-3,000m).

**Ashy-throated Warbler** *Phylloscopus maculipennis*  
Two on 22 April and two on 25 April at 3,100m in Ma Huang Valley.

**Blyth's Leaf-Warbler** *Phylloscopus reguloides*  
Common, 3,000-3,100m (1,600-3,200m) in Ma Huang Valley.



<b>Goldcrest</b> Common, 3,000-3,600m (2,200m).	<i>Regulus regulus</i>
<b>Golden-spectacled Warbler*</b> One at 3,000m (1,100-3,700m) in Ma Huang Valley.	<i>Seicercus burkii</i>
<b>Rufous-gorgetted Flycatcher</b> Single birds seen at 3,000m, 3,400m and 3,600m (1,600-3,700m).	<i>Ficedula strophciata</i>
<b>Slaty-blue Flycatcher</b> Uncommon; single birds seen, 3,100-3,400m (1,800-3,000m).	<i>Ficedula tricolor</i>
<b>Grey-headed Flycatcher</b> Uncommon; single birds, 3,000-3,600m (700-2,200m).	<i>Culicicapa ceylonensis</i>
<b>Yellow-bellied Fantail</b> One at 3,100m (3,700m).	<i>Rhipidura hypoxantha</i>
<b>Black-browed Tit</b> Very common, ten to 35 daily, 3,000-3,600m (700-3,100m).	<i>Aegithalos iouschistos</i>
<b>Willow Tit</b> Two at 3,500m (—).	<i>Parus montanus</i>
<b>Rufous-bellied Tit</b> Common, 3000-3,600m (2,100-3,700m).	<i>Parus rubidiventris</i>
<b>Coal Tit</b> Two at 3,400m (—).	<i>Parus ater</i>
<b>Grey-crested Tit</b> Uncommon, one or two daily, 3,000-3,600m (2,500-3,700m).	<i>Parus dichrous</i>
<b>Green-backed Tit</b> Common; six to 15 daily, 3,000-3,600m (600-2,500m).	<i>Parus monticolus</i>
<b>Chestnut-vented Nuthatch</b> Uncommon; one or two daily, 3,000-3,600m (1,600-2,500m).	<i>Sitta nagaensis</i>
<b>Common Treecreeper</b> Uncommon, one or two daily, 3,000-3,600m (—).	<i>Certhia familiaris</i>
<b>Bar-tailed Treecreeper</b> One at 3,400m (1,800-2,200m).	<i>Certhia himalayana</i>
<b>Gould's Sunbird</b> Uncommon; one to three daily, 3,100-3,400m (700-3,000m).	<i>Aethopyga gouldiae</i>
<b>Japanese White-eye*</b> Three at 3,400m (700-3,200m) on two days.	<i>Zosterops japonica</i>

<b>Dark-breasted Rosefinch</b> One at 3,100m (—) in Ma Huang Valley.	<i>Carpodacus nipalensis</i>
<b>Beautiful Rosefinch</b> Uncommon; several at 3,400 and 3,600m.	<i>Carpodacus pulcherrimus</i>
<b>Dark-rumped Rosefinch</b> One at 3,100m (1,500-2,500m) in Ma Huang Valley.	<i>Carpodacus edwardsii</i>
<b>Three-banded Rosefinch</b> One at 3,500m (—).	<i>Carpodacus trifasciatus</i>
<b>White-browed Rosefinch</b> Several at 3,500m and 3,600m (3,700m).	<i>Carpodacus thura</i>
<b>Grey-headed Bullfinch</b> One at 3,100m (1,400-3,700m) in Ma Huang Valley.	<i>Pyrrhula erythaca</i>
<b>Eurasian Rock-Bunting</b> One at 3,300m (600-3,000m).	<i>Emberiza cia</i>

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## 摘要：

在一九八九年四月十九日至廿五日期間，在四川省的康塢 *Liangsi* 地區進行了一次為期一星期的調查，主要目的在找尋白點斑噪鵲 *Garrulax bieti*\*，希望見到牠和把牠的叫鳴聲錄音。文章介紹該處的環境，並討論以雉類為主的幾種鳥類的數目。作者認為：假如停止狩獵和伐木活動，該處可建立一個重要的保護區，幾年內便能夠吸引來愛好野生生物的遊客。這個建議已經提交木里林業局，作者並與該局保持聯繫。附表列出調查期間錄得的87個品種及加以註解。

\* 譯註：鄭作新著「中國鳥類分布名錄」第二版(1967)列為斑背噪鵲 *Garrulax lunulatus* 的西南亞種，不作獨立的一種。

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## NOTES

### UNUSUAL FEEDING BEHAVIOUR BY ARDEIDS IN HONG KONG

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Ardeids (i.e. herons and egrets) use a wide variety of behaviour patterns and body postures whilst foraging. The principal one is that of standing or walking in shallow water in search of prey (Hancock and Kushlan 1984, Kushlan 1978). However, the exact posture and feeding behaviour adopted by any individual or group of individuals is determined by a variety of factors such as the feeding habitat type and the availability of prey in that habitat (Kushlan 1978, Recher and Recher 1972).

When foraging, it is in an animal's interest to hunt in the most energetically efficient way in order to maximise its food (= energy) intake. However since environmental conditions are constantly changing due to climate and the harvesting of fish ponds and gei-wais, thus affecting the food supply, animals must be adaptable in their feeding behaviour to cope with these changes. Such is the case with the herons and egrets in Hong Kong when often they can be seen to exhibit unusual feeding patterns.

Around the fish ponds in and near Mai Po Nature Reserve, the water levels are normally sufficiently low for there to be suitable sites at the edges for herons to stand in search of prey. However during the winter of 1988/89, the water level in Pond 24 in the southern part of the reserve rose after a period of rain and was kept high by the pond owner. Therefore all the sites which were previously used by Chinese Pond Herons *Ardeola bacchus* became inundated. Between 30 November 1988 and 11 March 1989, the Chinese Pond Herons seen feeding around this pond switched to diving for their prey from perches instead of waiting or walking slowly along the pond edges as they had previously. The perches used were often branches of trees overhanging the pond at a height of between two and four metres or else were wooden posts, two to four metres high, close to the pond edge. From these, the pond heron would dive out to distances of up to ten metres to catch fish from the surface of the water before returning to the same, or different, perch to swallow it. Such a feeding technique must be energetically more expensive to the bird than 'waiting' or 'stalking' but has been recorded for other ardeids such as the Great Blue Heron *Ardea herodias* (Morey and Smits 1987) and the Green-backed (= Little Green) Heron *Butorides striatus* (Davis 1983, in Hancock and Kushlan 1984).

Another unusual type of feeding behaviour exhibited by ardeids in Hong Kong is that of flying low over water and taking fish from near the surface. All three examples of this behaviour described below were noted



in association with human activity i.e. fishing, and suggest that these birds have adapted to exploit this novel and short-term increase in food abundance.

The first example was on 2 March 1985 when two people were seen in a small sampan setting a fine fish net near A Chau, Starling Inlet. Once the net was in place, the sampan turned and began to travel parallel to the net while one of the occupants banged the bottom of the boat — a common technique used to drive fish into nets in Hong Kong. Almost immediately, several Little Egrets *Egretta garzetta* appeared and flew low over the water along the line of the net floats. As fish broke the surface and tried to jump over the net, the egrets attempted to catch them but it was not determined how successful they were.

The second example was seen on 10 March 1987 when fishermen were catching fish fry off Island House using a fine seine net. As the seine was drawn tight, three Little Egrets and about sixty Black-headed Gulls *Larus ridibundus* flew low over the netting area where fish were jumping. The egrets hovered and at least one was seen to pick up a fish from the surface with its bill. However, it was difficult to determine whether the bird swallowed its prey then and there, or whether it flew off with it to the shore.

The third example was observed on 12 March 1989 in Tolo Harbour. Again, a small fishing boat was setting nets in deep water in relatively calm conditions. As the boat made sharp turns, wakes were created which appeared to bring schools of small fish to the surface. The fish were seen leaping clear of the water and would glide for about one metre before re-entering the water again. Almost immediately four Little Egrets and about a dozen Black-headed Gulls were attracted to the scene. The gulls dipped towards the water surface or alighted on it and attempted to catch the fish. Similarly, the egrets also dipped towards the water and attempted to catch the fish using a darting movement of their heads and necks. During the five-minute observation, no egrets were seen to alight on the water and unfortunately, it was not possible to estimate the egrets' feeding success rate. Great White Egrets *Egretta alba* have also been reported to feed in the wake of a boat in a similar manner, and even attempt to steal food from gulls in the same feeding flock (Smith 1989).

Chinese Pond Herons and Night Herons *Nycticorax nycticorax* have also been observed in various parts of Hong Kong to plunge-dive for surface-swimming fish from the air. This particular feeding behaviour appears to be quite widespread amongst ardeids since it has already been described for several other species e.g. Reef Egret *Egretta sacra* and Intermediate Egret *Egretta intermedia* (Demey 1986, Loyn 1985, Sivasubramanian 1988).

In conclusion, ardeids appear capable of a wide range of feeding behaviour patterns, each one of which is an adaptation to a particular feeding situation. Since these different kinds of behaviour can often be seen exhibited by the ardeids in Hong Kong, it would be an interesting

research project to determine how frequently each feeding technique is used at a particular site e.g. fish pond edge versus the edge of the open sea, and the efficiency associated with each technique.

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## GREAT EGRET SWIMMING

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A Great Egret *Egretta alba* was seen swimming offshore at Starling Inlet on 13 February 1988. It looked almost swan-like and took fish (presumably dead) from the surface until harassed by Black-headed Gulls *Larus ridibundus*. I can trace no reference to this behaviour in the literature.

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## REACTION OF DUCK TO THE SURPRISE APPEARANCE OF A SAKER FALCON

Peter R. Kennerley

While birding along the Tsim Bei Tsui Fence road on 9 January 1988 Steve Smith, Simon Wilkes and I were watching a drake Baikal Teal *Anas formosa* in Deep Bay when we were distracted by a flock of gulls *Larus* sp. taking flight from a distant mudbank. Suspecting a raptor might be the cause of the disturbance, we watched the gulls and, as a closer flock of Cormorants *Phalacrocorax carbo* took flight, a large falcon *Falco* sp. was noticed heading at great speed over the mud directly towards us and the intervening duck flock.

The falcon came in low and fast, about one metre or less above the ground, towards the roosting duck flock which consisted of Teal *Anas crecca*, Shoveler *A. clypeata*, Pintail *A. acuta* and Falcated Teal *A. falcata*. The duck were oblivious to its presence until the last seconds of its approach when those which were resting on the mudbank frantically scrambled into the adjacent water channel. As the falcon passed over them, they all raised their rear ends into the air so that their tails were held higher than their heads. The falcon was unsuccessful in its first pass and set off in pursuit of a flock of Dunlin *Calidris alpina* which had taken flight on its approach but it soon gave up as a Magpie *Pica pica* flew over the Fence. Sensing danger, the Magpie dropped like a stone into the mangroves as the falcon headed straight towards it, the Fence and us. At the last second it swerved upwards and banked directly in front of us, only some 15 metres away, and went out into the Bay where it landed on a post about two metres directly above the duck in the channel — approximately 100 metres away from us.

It appeared that a stalemate had ensued. The duck, still with their tails held high in the air, could not take flight while the falcon, now identified as a Saker *Falco cherrug*, could not launch an attack without

getting a soaking. This stalemate continued for some 20 minutes during which time the duck became noticeably more relaxed and lowered their tails to assume a more typical posture. Eventually most of the duck were able to drift away on the rising tide and the Saker Falcon lost interest and flew off.

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## TEAL AND GARGANEY DIVING

Clive Viney

About 20 each of both Teal *Anas crecca* and Garganey *A. querquedula* were seen continuously diving, apparently for food, on a small pond at Lok Ma Chau on 13 January 1988. The birds were surfacing several metres from their dive point. They certainly did not seem to be wounded or frightened which, according to Cramp and Simmons (eds.) (*The Birds of the Western Palearctic*, Vol. 1, 1977) is the only time when these dabbling ducks dive.

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## CRESTED GOSHAWK PREYING ON BELLY-BANDED SQUIRREL

Karen Phillipps

On 13 May 1989 at approximately 0930h a Crested Goshawk *Accipiter trivirgatus* swooped into a large Black Olive Tree *Canarium pimela* right outside this flat. I saw it at a distance of about 15m perched on a horizontal branch holding a freshly killed adult Belly-banded Squirrel *Callosciurus flavimanus*. The bird continued eating the squirrel for 15-20 minutes, then flew off along Bowen Path carrying the remains. I saw it half an hour later in flight, still carrying the remains of the kill.

On 14 June at 0700h, in the same tree, a Crested Goshawk was observed holding another dead squirrel which, seen through the binoculars, was obviously just killed, not having been eaten at all. On this occasion the bird only remained a few minutes before flying off in the direction of Bowen Path.

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## BIRDS DRINKING FROM FLOWERS OF AFRICAN TULIP TREE

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At about 0830h on the morning of 4 January 1989 we saw a number of birds in a large African Tulip Tree *Spathodea campanulata* (Bignoniaceae) in the garden of Island House, Tai Po, New Territories, Hong Kong. The birds were visiting the large red flowers from which they were seen to drink. Altogether one Black-naped Oriole *Oriolus chinensis*, two Crested Bulbuls *Pycnonotus jocosus* and three Chinese Bulbuls *P. sinensis* were seen visiting the flowers, as was one squirrel (probably *Callosciurus flavimanus*). Thrower (1988) notes that the flowers of the African Tulip Tree are reported to open at night and that when in bud they are full of water. It is likely that the birds were drinking such liquid since it had been dry for some days prior to the observations and the flowers could not have contained rain. There was no evidence of nectar secretions in fallen flowers; however, Ali and Ripley (1983) record the Northern Jungle Mynah *Acridotheres fuscus fuscus* taking 'nectar' from the African Tulip Tree in India, and Watling (1982) notes the habit in the Common Mynah *A. tristis* in Fiji. It would be of interest to make further observations to determine what the birds do take from the flowers.

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## ORANGE-BELLIED LEAFBIRDS MIMICKING SEVERAL SPECIES

Clive Viney

On 30 January 1988 at the grove of *Rhodoleia championii* in the Tai Po Kau Forest (Red Walk), John Edge, Don Weidemann and I noted an extraordinary melody of song and calls emanating from the flowering tree canopy. We quickly located several male and female Orange-bellied Leafbirds *Chloropsis hardwickii* but no other birds. We positioned ourselves on the path overlooking the canopy and observed the leafbirds.

The volume and quality of the mimicking was amazing. The songs and calls of the following species were clearly identifiable: Yellow-browed Warbler *Phylloscopus inornatus*, Long-tailed Tailorbird *Orthotomus sutorius*, White-eye *Zosterops japonica* (these were nearby but the leafbirds were seen imitating the calls), Great Tit *Parus major*, Magpie *Pica pica*, Hair-crested Drongo *Dicrurus hottentottus*, Blue Magpie *Urocissa erythrorhyncha*, Great Barbet *Megalaima virens*, Magpie Robin *Copsychus saularis*, Blackbird *Turdus merula* and at a pitch suited to distance Crested Goshawk *Accipiter trivirgatus* and Serpent Eagle *Spilornis cheela*. None of the calls overlapped (they were given more or less in the above order) and we were convinced that had they been tape-recorded most knowledgeable ornithologists would have listed the species mimicked as individuals and not the sole effort of these leafbirds.

It is difficult to understand what inspired this repertoire. The number of birds involved was not easy to ascertain but there were certainly two males and two females present. Perhaps they were defending a good feeding territory from other species or even each other. *Rhodoleia* trees are native and attract a number of species when flowering.

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## BLUE AND WHITE FLYCATCHER CATCHING AND SWALLOWING DRAGONFLY

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While looking for migrants at Pak Nai on 15 April 1989, I discovered a female Blue and White Flycatcher *Cyanoptila cyanomelana* flycatching beneath the tree canopy. It made several sorties after various flying insects but was largely unsuccessful in capturing any of these. After one prolonged chase it eventually caught a large dragonfly (Odonata), approximately 80mm in length, and took it to a nearby branch on which it proceeded to bash the dragonfly's head. After a few minutes of this the dragonfly escaped but was easily recaptured by the flycatcher.

Presumably fearing it would escape again, the flycatcher started to swallow the dragonfly head first. When the dragonfly's wings reached the flycatcher's gape, things came to a halt for a few minutes while the puzzled flycatcher paused for breath. It tried to swallow the dragonfly again and after a few minutes of vigorous gulping, the dragonfly's wings bent backwards and the body of the dragonfly disappeared inside the flycatcher.

It then paused for at least five minutes with the dragonfly's long abdomen and four wings sticking out of its gape. By this stage, the flycatcher's legs had collapsed underneath it and it appeared totally



exhausted. It now presented a rather amusing appearance with no legs visible and a large pot belly resting on the branch with the remains of the dragonfly protruding from its gape. Eventually, it started to swallow the remainder of the dragonfly which took a further ten minutes and even then, the tip of the abdomen and some wing were visible in the flycatcher's gape.

After the dragonfly had been swallowed, the flycatcher remained motionless on the branch for at least a further 30 minutes and was still sitting there when I left the area. It is not known whether the flycatcher survived its meal!

The whole process of swallowing the dragonfly took some 20 minutes and it seemed quite amazing that the flycatcher could swallow prey with a length of up to 60 per cent of its own body length.

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#### BLACK DRONGO TAKING WREN-WARBLER SP. AT MAI PO

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Black Drongos *Dicrurus macrocercus* are one of the more common summer visitors to Hong Kong. During this season, they can often be seen perching on vantage points such as wooden posts and tree branches, from where they fly out in pursuit of aerial insects which form an important part of their diet.

The drongo's insectivorous feeding behaviour has been well documented in this region of China (Étchécopar and Hüe 1983, Herklots 1953, La Touche 1925-1930, Viney and Phillipps 1988) but on the Indian sub-continent however, their diet has been reported to be much more varied, including small birds (e.g. Wren-warblers *Prinia*, White-eyes *Zosterops*, and Sunbirds *Aegithina*), bats and lizards (Ali and Ripley 1983).

Early on the morning of 1 June 1989 whilst walking around the fish ponds immediately behind the Education Centre at Mai Po Nature Reserve, Hong Kong, I heard several Black Drongos calling from a telephone line about twenty metres away. Looking up, I saw three drongos, one of which was an adult and of the other two, one was a juvenile and the other of uncertain age. The adult had a small bird in its claws and from the victim's olive-brown colour and long tail, it was obviously a *Prinia* sp. but it was not possible to determine whether it was *P. flaviventris*, the Yellow-bellied Wren-warbler or *P. subflava*, the Brown Wren-warbler since it was still alive at the time and struggling desperately to escape.

With the other two drongos looking on and occasionally calling, the adult proceeded to eat its prey. First, pieces were apparently torn from around the neck region since before too long the head fell away. The drongo then proceeded to tear away small pieces of the *Prinia* from the neck downwards, appearing to take in the feathers as well as the flesh. Within thirteen minutes, all that remained were the legs of the *Prinia* which the drongo dropped before flying off.

During the period of observation, neither of the other two drongos attempted to seize the *Prinia*. The one of uncertain age flew off after a few minutes whilst the juvenile remained for almost the whole duration.

It is difficult to say exactly why an animal should include such an apparently unusual item in its normal diet, but similar events have been documented e.g. Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis* eating Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus* (Niikura 1986), and ungulates such as Red Deer *Cervus elaphus* and sheep *Ovis* eating the chicks of ground-nesting seabirds (Furness 1988). Differing hypotheses have been put forward as to why animals should behave like this and how they choose the food they do, but generally it is thought that animals select food items according to their energy value and essential nutrient content in order to make up a balanced diet (Begon *et al.* 1986).

In the case of ungulates eating the chicks of ground-nesting seabirds e.g. Arctic Tern *Sterna paradisaea* and Manx Shearwater *Puffinus puffinus*, it is thought that this unusual behaviour is due to mineral deficiencies, e.g. calcium, in the vegetation that the animal normally eats and which the animal has to make up for by eating bones of live chicks (Furness 1988). Nutrient deficiency could explain why a normally insectivorous species such as the Black Drongo should take to eating a small bird. However, this would have to be investigated by examining the nutrient content of the drongo's normal insect diet, and that of the 'unusual' prey, and determining how often in fact drongos do eat such prey.

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### TREE SPARROW CAUGHT IN A SPIDER'S WEB

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At 0705h on 10 September 1988, at the WWF Hong Kong Mai Po Nature Reserve, we found a Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus* firmly held in the web of a spider. The web, about 1.25m in diameter, had been spun across the branches of a shrub at a height of about 2.5m above the ground and was just inside the Frontier Closed Area, near to the fence.

We at first assumed the bird to be dead since it was motionless, but, upon probing the web through the chain-link fence with the legs of a telescope tripod, it began to struggle. Eventually we were able to free the bird from the web and it flew off, unharmed.

We were unable to identify the spider, which remained at the top of the web throughout, nor were we able to note sufficient detail to assist in its identification due to the fact that it was silhouetted against the sky. What was apparent, however, was that its body was roughly round in shape and about 20-25 mm in diameter; the legs were relatively short — perhaps 20-30 mm in length.

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## GUIDELINES FOR THE SUBMISSION OF RECORDS

### Recording

One of the most important functions of the Hong Kong Bird Watching Society is the publication of the Hong Kong Bird Report. The value of this publication depends on members submitting records and all are encouraged to submit records at the end of each year.

The Society provides 152 × 106mm record cards to facilitate analysis and storage and these are available from the Recorder. Completed cards are stored in a species-indexed filing system and members wishing to look at past records are asked to contact the Recorder. It is hoped that the ease with which records can be retrieved will result in interested people analysing migration patterns and population trends and undertaking other studies.

Nest Record Cards are also available from the Recorder for reporting breeding data.

The Society also maintains a collection of reports of birds recorded during members' visits to other parts of Southeast Asia and China to assist others in planning overseas trips.

### Rarities

While the birds of Hong Kong are better known than those of many other areas of the Far East, new species are continually being added to the Hong Kong List and the status of many other species is uncertain.

Field identification techniques for species in the area still need refining and the Society has a Records Committee to assist the Recorder in the unenviable task of assessing records and ensuring that a high standard of observation is maintained. A list of species considered by the Committee is given below. The list may seem dauntingly long and to include some unmistakeable species such as Oystercatcher. However, all members are requested to submit field descriptions of the birds listed.

Ideally field notes of a rarity should cover the following points:

- a) Date, time and location of sighting.
- b) Power of binoculars/telescope used, distance of bird from observer, weather and light conditions.
- c) Description of habitat and what other birds, if any, it was associating with.
- d) Whether you saw it from different angles; at rest, in light, swimming etc.; from above or below. The more varied the conditions the better.

- e) Its actions and the character of its flight compared with other birds.
- f) Its general shape and structure as compared with other birds e.g. size and shape of bill, length of legs, shape of wing, length of tail.
- g) Colour of bill, legs, feet and iris.
- h) As far as possible, an exact description of the whole plumage of the bird, not only those parts which you think may help in identifying it. A rough sketch or diagram is a great help.
- i) Any calls, indicating especially the quality of the sound (harsh, rattling, shrill, hoarse, liquid etc.) and comparison with calls of other species.
- j) Notes on previous experience with the species or species with which it may be confused.

If possible try and get someone else to see the bird as two descriptions are better than one. *Make sure that you take full field notes on the spot* — it is all too easy to imagine field marks after consulting a book!

Even if you do not know what the bird is please send in the description as it may be possible for the Committee to identify it for you. It should be remembered that many species of cage birds have been recorded as escapes in Hong Kong and they may not be included in any of the local books.

The increasing number of field guides on the market often make positive identification appear all too easy, but it must be remembered that there are still many difficult species and groups of birds and it is only by careful, painstaking observation that such species can be identified.

**Species for which written descriptions of all sightings must be submitted to the Recorder for consideration by the Records Committee.**

The following list is based on the *Annotated Checklist of the Birds of Hong Kong* (Chalmers 1986) plus additions detailed in the annual *Hong Kong Bird Reports* from 1984/85 onwards. In many cases brief notes added to the record cards describing the salient features, ranges and viewing conditions will suffice. However, full descriptions are required for the rarer or more difficult species, or any new species not yet on the Hong Kong List. In addition the Recorder may request descriptions of other species under unusual circumstances. Records submitted without descriptions may not be considered.

**CATEGORY A**

Red-necked Grebe	Pectoral Sandpiper
Black-necked Grebe	Spoon-billed Sandpiper
Streaked Shearwater	Ruff
Swinhoe's Storm Petrel	Jack Snipe
Dalmatian Pelican	Swinhoe's Snipe
all frigatebirds	Solitary Snipe
Von Schrenck's Little Bittern	Long-billed Dowitcher
Black Bittern	Asiatic Dowitcher
Japanese Night Heron	Little Whimbrel
Swinhoe's Egret	Australian Curlew
Black Stork	Nordmann's Greenshank
White Stork	Lesser Yellowlegs
Glossy Ibis	all skuas
European Spoonbill	Great Black-headed Gull
Black-faced Spoonbill	Saunders' Gull
Lesser Treeduck	Brown-headed Gull
all geese	Common Gull
Ruddy Shelduck	Slaty-backed Gull
Cotton Teal	Glaucous-winged Gull
Mandarin	Glaucous Gull
Falcated Teal	Kittiwake
Baikal Teal	Greater Crested Tern
Common Pochard	Black-naped Tern
Baer's Pochard	Roseate Tern
Scaup	Common Tern
Velvet Scoter	Bridled Tern
Goldeneye	Sooty Tern
Crested Honey Buzzard	Ancient Auk
Black-shouldered Kite	Bar-tailed Cuckoo Dove
Brahminy Kite	White-bellied Green Pigeon
Hen Harrier	Thick-billed Pigeon
Pied Harrier	Hodgson's Hawk Cuckoo
Northern Goshawk	Emerald Cuckoo
Japanese Sparrowhawk	Common Cuckoo
Besra	Oriental Cuckoo
Horsfield's Goshawk	all owls except Collared Scops Owl
Grey-faced Buzzard Eagle	Japanese Nightjar
Spotted Eagle	White-throated Needletail
Imperial Eagle	White-vented Needletail
Mountain Hawk Eagle	Crested Kingfisher
White-legged Falconet	Blue-tailed Bee-eater
Amur Falcon	all woodpeckers
Merlin	Chinese Pitta
all button quails	all larks
all crakes	Pechora Pipit
Purple Gallinule	Water Pipit
Common Crane	Citrine Wagtail
Pheasant-tailed Jacana	White Wagtail (all races other than <i>leucopsis</i> and <i>ocularis</i> )
Painted Snipe	Greater Cuckoo Shrike
Oystercatcher	Rosy Minivet
Ringed Plover	Orange-bellied Leafbird
Oriental Plover	Brown Dipper
Great Knot	Wren
Little Stint	



Japanese Robin  
 Siberian Blue Robin  
 White-capped Redstart  
 Chestnut-breasted Rock Thrush  
 Orange-headed Ground Thrush  
 Siberian Thrush  
 Brown Thrush  
 Slaty-backed Forktail  
 Mountain Bush Warbler  
 Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler  
 Styan's Grasshopper Warbler  
 Lanceolated Warbler  
 Blyth's Reed Warbler  
 Thick-billed Warbler  
 Yellow-eyed Flycatcher Warbler  
 Chestnut-crowned Warbler  
 Fulvous-faced Flycatcher Warbler  
 Large Grass Warbler  
 Sulphur-breasted Warbler  
 Blyth's Leaf Warbler  
 Eastern Crowned Warbler  
 Pale-legged Leaf Warbler  
 Radde's Warbler

Chiffchaff  
 Fukien Niltava  
 Sooty Flycatcher  
 Chinese Babax  
 Chestnut-flanked White-eye  
 Red-headed Tit  
 Penduline Tit  
 Gould's Sunbird  
 Tiger Shrike  
 Bull-headed Shrike  
 Chinese Great Grey Shrike  
 Daurian Jackdaw  
 Purple-backed Starling  
 Chestnut-cheeked Starling  
 European Starling  
 Rosy Starling  
 Brambling  
 Siskin  
 Japanese Grosbeak  
 Japanese Yellow Bunting  
 Yellow-throated Bunting  
 Rustic Bunting  
 Reed Bunting

#### **CATEGORY B**

all (one!)

#### **CATEGORY C**

none

#### **CATEGORY D**

all

#### **CATEGORY E**

all, other than most obvious escapes

#### **CATEGORY F**

all