

THE HONG KONG BIRD REPORT 1976



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THE HONG KONG BIRD WATCHING SOCIETY

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Contents

	Page
Chairman's Report	1
Report on the Birds, 1976	5
Systematic List for 1976	7
Notes on Seabird Observations in the South China Sea by D. S. Melville and M. A. Webster	45
Seabirds in the South China Sea from M. V. Taipoosek by M. L. Chalmers	54
The Vanishing Birds of Southern China by C. A. Viney	58
Field Notes on Birds Seen in China in July 1977 by Karen Phillipps	62
Notes for Applicants Wishing to Visit the Mai Po Marshes ..	67
Application Form for Membership	72

Published in 1978 by the

HONG KONG BIRD WATCHING SOCIETY

c/o Zoology Department, University of Hong Kong

(A registered society under the Societies Ordinance)

Records compiled by C. A. Viney

OFFICERS OF THE SOCIETY

Chairman	M. A. Webster
Hon. Secretary	C. R. Payne
Hon. Treasurer	M. A. Webster
Hon. Recorder	C. A. Viney

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Membership again rose to a record level, 141, of whom 42 were overseas members.

One member of the Committee, David Bradford, left during the year, and is now watching birds in the sands of Dubai. You will already have read his report on his search for the Steller's Sea Eagle in Japan last winter.

The following outings were held in 1976:—

January 1st	Mai Po Marshes
January 18th	Mai Po Marshes
January 31st	Tai Po Kau Forestry Reserve
February 15th	Tsim Bei Tsui/Mong Tseng
March 7th	Bride's Pool
March 28th	Mai Po Marshes
April 17th	Mai Po Marshes
May 9th	Mai Po Marshes
June 12th	Tai Mo Shan/Fanling
August 30th	Mai Po Marshes
September 26th	Mai Po Marshes
October 2nd	Tai Long Wan, Sai Kung Peninsula
October 24th	Mai Po Marshes/Mong Tseng
November 21st	Mai Po Marshes
December 12th	Tai Po Kau/Sek Kong Woods/ Lam Tsuen Valley
December 27th	Mong Tseng

The numbers on outings were again at a high level, and we experimented with a system of booking places on some of them, especially those to woodland areas. This system seems to have worked well, and has at least made it possible to go to places which would otherwise have been impossible for the Society in view of the size of the group we usually get. Subject to the agreement of the incoming Committee, this system will be extended, so that we can vary our outings even more. Some members may object to having to make up their minds several days ahead, but this seems to be a case where we have to sacrifice our informality in the cause of seeing more birds. Our thanks go to Mrs. Garland for her efforts in securing lifts for those members who have no cars.

The Society has been sparing in its conferment of the honour of Honorary Life Membership. This was discussed at several committee meetings, and it was decided to use this honour as a means of keeping in touch with members who had left Hong Kong, but whose contribution to the Society had been considerable. The Committee has therefore proposed the following as Honorary Life Members:—

Lt. Col. Maxwell Macfarlane. On his first tour here, Lt. Col. Macfarlane was instrumental in compiling the first edition of our Annotated Checklist; he also prepared the second, revised, edition in 1966.

David Robertson. David was very active in wildlife conservation here, before conservation became fashionable. His main achievement for the Society was the design of the Common Bird Charts, which he initiated, sought a sponsor for, and carried through as far as the publication of the first chart.

Clive Briffett. Clive was a very active secretary of the Society. He organised and manned a stand for the Society at the Sek Kong Agricultural Show, and worked very hard both to improve the Society itself, and to interest local people in Hong Kong's bird life.

The year saw the publication of two books on Hong Kong's bird life. The first to appear was 'Common Hong Kong Birds', by Natalie Graham, and the second was my own 'A New Guide to the Birds of Hong Kong'. Modesty forbids further comment, except that I think I can take this opportunity to congratulate Karen Phillipp on her excellent illustrations for the New Guide. At least Hong Kong now has a Field Guide of its own, and it is hoped that it will soon be available in Chinese as well as English.

The Committee hopes you are enjoying the expanded bulletins we have been sending you recently. Contributions for these would be welcomed. Such articles used to be published in the Annual Report, but the new method of distributing them is cheaper for the Society, and enables a wider range of news to be circulated to members.

As usual, the Society has been much concerned with wildlife conservation, chiefly on two topics. The first is the trade in endangered species of wild birds and other animals. Members may be surprised to hear that over 900 owls and 7000 diurnal birds of prey were imported from China in 1975, the vast majority destined for the cooking pot. Other species were traded in smaller numbers, a particular favourite seeming to have been the White-naped Crane, which was being exported from China at a price of about HK\$3000 per bird. This trade has now been made illegal, and efforts are being made by the Hong Kong Government to enforce the new legislation, after a number of false starts. Certainly the trade is much reduced since the legislation finally came into force in November. The Society, with the Hong Kong Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, together with a number of smaller donations, financed your Chairman's attendance at a meeting of a new IUCN subcommittee on the wildlife trade. It is hoped that this new committee will make it possible to identify much more clearly trades in which wild species are at risk, and as a consequence to urge the relevant governments to take the necessary controlling action.

The second topic was the perennial one, the Mai Po Marshes. The housing scheme at Tai Shang Wai is slowly going ahead, though at the time of writing nothing has been built beyond a few specimen houses. Rumours have it that over a thousand units have been sold, but there is no way in which we can assess the reliability of these rumours.

Certainly development has not reached the border nearest to the Restricted Area of the Mai Po Marshes. Wardening of the marsh area improves slowly, though still hampered by totally inadequate staffing. Recently used cartridges have been found on the marsh, netting still takes place, and it is no secret that less scrupulous hunters send their beaters into the Restricted Area to drive the duck out towards them. However, the good numbers of duck on the marsh throughout November and December testify that the restrictions are being at least partially effective.

However, developments have taken place at the southern end of the marsh which we view with great concern. The huts which we were assured were only used by watchmen for the fishponds have now become family homes, with vegetable gardens, and most recently, telephones. The latter, served by a long line of green telephone poles along the outer bund, are a good example of the administrative inadequacies of the present system. Permission to erect the poles was given by the District Office, Yuen Long, without consulting the Director of Agriculture and Fisheries, whose business it is to administer the Restricted Area. Now the poles are up, it is proving very difficult to get them dismantled, in spite of the personal assurance given by His Excellency the Governor last year to Mr. Hechtel and your Chairman that no further development would be allowed. The excuse, which seems to be merely a way of evading action rather than a genuine belief, is that the telephone poles do not constitute development, but are a normal amenity to which the marsh-dwellers are entitled.

The Government of Hong Kong, in spite of the enormous budget surpluses of the past two years, claims that it cannot spare the \$4 or \$5 million required to turn the marsh into a full-scale wildfowl park cum nature reserve. However, there are certain things which it could do at minimal expense to defend the marsh against the kind of steady erosion of its unique qualities which is taking place at the moment. Firstly, it could be declared a Nature Reserve, and put wholly under the control of one authority, the Director of Agriculture and Fisheries, under the Country Parks Ordinance; this would avoid a repetition of muddles like the affair of the telephone poles. Secondly, it could be wardened twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, by men of better calibre than those at present employed there. I estimate that this could be done at an expense of approximately \$200,000 a year. Thirdly, the annual Crown leases under which the land is held could be transferred from the present absentee landlords to those actually working the keiwais and fishponds; this would make it possible to exercise much surer control over the operation of the keiwais and fishponds, as all negotiations would be carried out with the actual farmers rather than with businessmen in Yuen Long whose sole interest in the marsh is to extract the maximum amount of cash from it. The third of these suggestions raises involved problems of land tenure and compensation, but these problems have got to be faced sooner or later, unless the marsh, like so many of Hong Kong's potential assets, is to be allowed to degenerate through Government unwillingness to take positive action before it is too late. Fourthly, since the Hong Kong Government is unlikely to be able to provide its own expert for the setting up of a wildfowl park on the marsh, it could

invite the Severn Wildfowl Trust to send an expert to study the area and make recommendations. This might cost in the region of \$50,000.

There may be better ways to save the marsh than these; we hold no brief for any particular scheme. However, the marsh is one of Hong Kong's unique assets, and must not be allowed to vanish. A community which can afford \$150 million for the Ocean Park can afford \$5 million for Mai Po; what it cannot afford is to delay making up its mind until this exceptional biotope is irrevocably lost.

M. A. Webster

REPORT ON THE BIRDS 1976

Hon. Recorder: C. A. Viney

Even with the rigorous vetting the records now receive as many as 270 species occurred in Hong Kong during 1976—disregarding the infamous collection which now grace Category E. This is easily the highest tally for any one year. I do not think that this reflects an improvement in the environment but more an improvement of identification techniques. Typhoon Iris, although insignificant as typhoons go, also helped considerably.

Three species were added to Category A of the Hong Kong List. A somewhat nondescript starling, a magnificent adult Long-tailed Skua and seven wind-blown Sooty Terns.

Hong Kong is exceptionally poor for seabirds so it was pleasing that good records were obtained during 1976. These include the second record of a Christmas Island Frigate-bird, Brown-headed Gulls during both winters, high counts of Saunders' Gulls, the Long-tailed Skua and a magnificent collection of terns comprising all the annual species plus Sooty Terns, Greater Crested Terns, Common Terns, Little Terns and a likely Black-naped Tern, mostly thanks to the perseverance of Mike Chalmers.

On the marshes wildfowl included Bean Geese, Cotton Teal and Baers' Pochard but the best duck, a Mandarin, was seen on a temple pond at Castle Peak. As usual the better wader passage occurred in the spring and certainly 1976 was good by any standards. Perhaps the most exciting birds were the good numbers of Asiatic Dowitchers at Mai Po—one of the world's rarities and a good reason why this area must be carefully protected.

On land, raptor records were quite unexceptional apart from a Black Baza at Shing Mun. Exotics included a Red-winged Crested Cuckoo, Hoopoes, a male Grey-throated Minivet, Yellow-eyed Flycatcher Warbler, Red-headed Tits and a Chinese Great Grey Shrike. A Chestnut-cheeked Starling at Mai Po in the spring was a Hong Kong first, but could easily have been overlooked. Irruption species were Black Bulbuls, Collared Sivas, Yellow-bellied Tits and Dusky Thrushes (from 1975)—where were the Treepies? It was generally a good year for flycatchers, notably paradise flycatchers, but a mediocre year for thrushes although they seemed to extend their stay and included an Orange-headed Ground Thrush. Of the other categories, a remarkable range expansion of the White-cheeked Laughing-thrush was noted and the cockatoos were at last proved to breed.

I am hard put to find any regular species which were not recorded or that declined. Unhappily, owls appeared to be virtually non-existent. Although rare we usually manage one or two woodpeckers each year but this was not the case in 1976. Black-winged Cuckoo-shrikes were

surprisingly scarce after a recent upsurge. The recently re-discovered David's Hill Warbler was not found again and Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler appears to continue to bypass Hong Kong. Finally, the attractive Grey-headed Bunting has virtually ceased to over-winter and with even greater pressure on its remaining favoured habitat at Long Valley it does not seem long before this species will be lost to Hong Kong.

The Systematic List incorporates records from the following observers:—

H. Ackford, Dr. R. J. Barnes, E. A. Barnes, C. P. Barnes, Maj. G. D. Birch, D. Bradford, Sqdn. Ldr. J. H. Brown, J. A. Campbell, D. P. Carthy, M. L. Chalmers, Brig. J. L. Chapple, K. K. Chiu, G. C. H. Cooper, D. Deptford, R. Ferguson, T. H. Fisher, Supt. D. J. Galloway, T. P. Garland, I. W. Harris, F. O. P. Hechtel, Dr. D. S. Hill, A. J. Holcolme, J. A. Irving, D. S. Melville, K. Oldfield, C. R. Payne, H. C. Ryker, H. D. Stead, R. P. Tipper, C. A. Viney, M. A. Webster and B. D. Wilson.

SYSTEMATIC LIST FOR 1976

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

2. **Great Crested Grebe** (*Podiceps cristatus*)
One in Deep Bay on 11 January and four there on 15 February. One flying near Green Island on 25 November. One at Mai Po on 19 December and two in Deep Bay on 27 December.

4. **Little Grebe** (*Podiceps ruficollis*)
Up to three at Mai Po until 10 May and from 28 November. Also recorded in small numbers at Kowloon Reservoirs, Shing Mun Reservoir, Tai Lam Chung Reservoir and Luk Keng during the winter months. A pair with six young at Shing Mun Reservoir on 17 March.

7. **Dalmatian Pelican** (*Pelecanus crispus*)
All records are from the Deep Bay area. A flock of up to 22 remained until 18 January. Up to 30 were seen between 4 and 28 March. Eight pelicans seen on 26 February were not specifically identified.

8. **Cormorant** (*Phalacrocorax carbo*)
Over 200 recorded from the Deep Bay area during both winters. Also commonly seen off Lantau, Castle Peak, Ma Wan, Hei Ling Chau, Stonecutters' Island and Cheung Chau in smaller numbers. Up to 14 at Plover Cove Reservoir. Between 20 and 28 March, flocks of up to 90 were recorded flying over Fanling. Extreme dates were until 5 April and from 22 October.

10. **Christmas Island Frigate-bird** (*Fregata andrewsi*)
An adult male was seen flying west along the coast off Ting Kau on 16 April. This is the second record for Hong Kong. Full field notes (MLC) were accepted by the Records Committee. An immature frigate-bird, which could not be specifically identified, was seen soaring over Stonecutters' Island on 10 August.

12. **Yellow Bittern** (*Ixobrychus sinensis*)
Mostly recorded from the Deep Bay Marshes but occasionally elsewhere in the New Territories between April and October. Up to three were seen during both winters at Mai Po.

13. **Chestnut Bittern** (*Ixobrychus cinnamomeus*)
One at the Chinese University, Sha Tin between 10 and 16 April. One at Mai Po on 2 May. One near Sai Kung on 1 and 2 August. An immature at High Island on 20 August.

16. Bittern (*Botaurus stellaris*)
One or two regularly seen at Mai Po until 17 April and from 23 October.

17. Night Heron (*Nycticorax nycticorax*)
Up to six recorded at Yim Tso Ha Egretty between 19 April and 17 July, with several immatures seen on the last date. On the Deep Bay Marshes, recorded in varying numbers between 5 and 26 April but notable flocks of over 300 were disturbed from the mangroves on 5 and 6 April. Several at Lok Ma Chau on 20 July. Recorded again on the Deep Bay Marshes in varying numbers from 30 August until 7 November but over 300 were seen on 24 October. One at Mai Po on 12 December. Odd birds at Plover Cove on 4 April, Hebe Haven on 12 September and Shing Mun Reservoir on 30 October.

18. Chinese Pond-heron (*Ardeola bacchus*)
Present throughout the year in the northern New Territories and in the Sai Kung area. Elsewhere, one or two seen at Chi Ma Wan, Sha Tin, Kai Tak and Aberdeen during migration. An estimated 30 to 40 pairs at Yim Tso Ha Egretty on 3 June and a large number of juveniles noted there in July. An estimated ten pairs bred at Mai Po Village.

19. Cattle Egret (*Bubulcus ibis*)
Common in the northern New Territories, particularly during the summer months. Occasionally seen elsewhere in the New Territories and at Kai Tak during migration. Good numbers bred at Yim Tso Ha Egretty and a few pairs at Mai Po Village.

20. Little Green Heron (*Butorides striatus*)
Up to three seen at Ho Chung Ponds throughout the year. Up to 15 recorded in ones and twos on the Deep Bay Marshes between 19 April and 10 October, but odd birds also seen there on 29 January and 15 February.

21. Little Egret (*Egretta garzetta*)
Common in the northern New Territories throughout the year and occasionally seen elsewhere in small numbers during migration. Bred in good numbers at Yim Tso Ha Egretty and Mai Po Village. A 'grey phase' bird was seen at Mai Po on 5 September, this is the fourth successive year that such a bird has been recorded.

22. Lesser Egret (*Egretta intermedia*)
Two at Mai Po on 18 January, nine there on 14 March and one on 4 December.

23. Swinhoe's Egret (*Egretta eulophotes*)
Up to three at Yim Tso Ha Egretty between 25 April and 16 July, but nesting activity was not noted. Two at Mai Po on 19

April, one there on 2 May and three on 30 August. One at Lok Ma Chau on 20 October.

24. Reef Egret (*Egretta sacra*)
Recorded in small numbers along the rocky parts of the coast-line throughout the year. Regularly seen at Kai Tak with up to six being noted. Two 'pied reef egrets' (intermediate between normal and 'white phase') seen in Starling Inlet, with a normal bird on 30 September. A nest was found on Kau Yi Chau, where it is considered that several pairs nested.

25. Great Egret (*Egretta alba*)
Up to 50 on the Deep Bay Marshes until 26 April and from 30 August—one there on 22 July. Odd birds seen at Starling Inlet and one pair successfully bred (two young) at Yim Tso Ha Egretty. One at Ho Chung on 19 September.

26. Grey Heron (*Ardea cinerea*)
Up to 100 in the Deep Bay area until 9 May and up to 165 there from 30 August. Odd birds were recorded at Lo Wu, Sha Tin, Castle Peak, Ting Kau and Lantau during November and December.

27. Purple Heron (*Ardea purpurea*)
Up to ten at Mai Po until 17 May and from 30 August. One at Tai Long Wan on 2 October.

29. Black Stork (*Ciconia nigra*)
Two soaring over Mai Po on 30 December.

30. White Ibis (*Threskiornis melanocephalus*)
Only recorded from Mai Po. Most records are of up to three until 11 April and from October onwards. However, six were seen in July and a flock of 12 was noted on 12 December.

31. European Spoonbill (*Platalea leucorodia*)
Flocks of up to 30 regularly recorded at Mai Po until 9 May—peak numbers being seen between 10 January and 14 March. Two or three recorded again between 21 November and 27 December.

32. Lesser Spoonbill (*Platalea minor*)
Only recorded in the Deep Bay area. Up to nine were seen until 19 April, but odd birds were noted until 9 May. Up to six were seen from 13 November. Several records of spoonbills of either species were submitted, including a flock of 21 seen on 21 November.

33. Mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*)
Seven including a drake at Mai Po on 18 January.

34. Yellow-nib Duck (*Anas poecilorhyncha*)
All records are from the Mai Po Marshes. Two on 18 January, five on 1 February, two on 24 April and one on 1 May. Regularly recorded from 22 July until the end of the year in varying numbers. Flocks of over 50 were recorded in mid-September and the highest number seen was over 70 on 12 September.

35. Gadwall (*Anas strepera*)
One at Mai Po on 4 December.

36. Falcated Teal (*Anas falcata*)
20+ at Mai Po on 1 January.

37. Teal (*Anas crecca*)
Common in the Deep Bay area until 9 May and from 9 September. Very high numbers in Deep Bay during January and February, with an estimated 3500+ in early January (DSM). Large flocks returned in late October and November with over 700 recorded on 14 November. Elsewhere, three at Kai Tak on 22 October, three at Castle Peak on 13 November and nine there on 21 November and one at Sha Tin on 29 and 30 December.

39. Garganey (*Anas querquedula*)
A drake in Deep Bay on 1 January. Common in the Deep Bay area between 14 March and 2 May with up to 50 being seen. One at Mai Po on 30 May. Common again in the Deep Bay area from 30 August until 28 November, usually in small flocks but up to 150 between 23 October and 1 November. Seven, including a drake, at Castle Peak on 16 October and a drake there on 30 October.

40. Wigeon (*Anas penelope*)
Regularly recorded in the Deep Bay area. Ten on 1 January and six on 18 January. Up to 20 between 11 and 28 March. Noted again from 23 October onwards, usually in small numbers but up to 100 were seen in late November and early December. One at Tai Po on 28 February.

41. Pintail (*Anas acuta*)
All records were from the Deep Bay area, where it was seen until 1 February and from 23 October, usually in small numbers but 80 noted on 18 January and over 100 on 1 November.

42. Shoveler (*Anas clypeata*)
All records were from the Deep Bay area. Noted until 1 February, from 28 March until 11 April and from 21 November. Usually in small numbers, but over 100 seen on 11 January and 27 December.

43. Mandarin (*Aix galericulata*)
A female was clearly seen and photographed on a fish-pond near Ching Chung Koon Temple, Castle Peak on 23 October. This

is the fourth record for Hong Kong and the first since 1962. Full field notes (MLC) were accepted by the Records Committee.

45. Baer's Pochard (*Aythya baeri*)
At least one at Mai Po on 7 January (DSM & AJH) and an adult male there on 10 January (THF & DB). On both occasions a good sighting was had of a single bird, on a fish-pond, associating with Coot (*Fulica atra*). Full field notes were accepted by the Records Committee.

49. Red-breasted Merganser (*Mergus serrator*)
A female in Deep Bay on 15 February and seven there, including a drake, on 27 December.

50. Shelduck (*Tadorna tadorna*)
Recorded in the Deep Bay area, usually in good numbers, until 11 March and from 11 December. Counts of 178 on 1 January, 120 on 27 February and 450 on 27 December were made.

52. Cotton Teal (*Nettapus coromandelianus*)
A female was seen at Mai Po on 30 October. This is the third record for Hong Kong. Full field notes (FOPH) were accepted by the Records Committee.

54. Bean Goose (*Anser fabalis*)
A flock of nine, with a smaller unidentified goose, was seen at Mai Po on 1 November. This is the third record for Hong Kong. Full field notes (MAW) were accepted by the Records Committee.

55. Black-eared Kite (*Milvus migrans*)
Common and widespread, but with an increase in numbers in the winter months when the population was considered to be approximately 1000 (DSM). For full details of counts conducted in 1976 refer to 'Kite Counts 1975/76' by David Melville in the 1975 Report.

56. Black Baza (*Aviceda leucophotes*)
One above the headwaters to Shing Mun Reservoir on 20 June. This is the second record for Hong Kong. Full field notes (JHB) were accepted by the Records Committee.

57. Buzzard (*Buteo buteo*)
Quite common and widespread (including urban areas) during both winters. Most records are of one or two birds. Extreme dates were until 28 March and from 3 October.

58. Sparrowhawk (*Accipiter nisus*)
Sparrowhawks were seen at Sunset Peak, Lantau on 2 January, Sha Tin on 6 January, Sai Kung on 23 October, Mong Tseng on

24 October, Mai Po on 21 November and Kai Tak on 20 December. However, none of these records were submitted with field notes which conclusively ruled out *A. gularis*, *A. virgatus* or even *A. badius*.]

63. Imperial Eagle (*Aquila heliaca*)

All records were from Long Valley. One or two were seen quite regularly until 4 March and an immature was seen there on 19 December. One was seen to mob a Black Vulture (*Aegypius monachus*) and another seen at close quarters appeared to have the remains of a jess attached to its leg.

64. Steppe Eagle (*Aquila rapax*)

One or two immatures were seen at Long Valley on three occasions between 4 and 28 March. An immature returned there on 21 November.

66. Bonelli's Eagle (*Hieraëetus fasciatus*)

Regularly recorded throughout the year from widespread areas of the New Territories including offshore islands. Always single birds or pairs.

67. White-bellied Sea-eagle (*Haliaeetus leucogaster*)

Single birds and pairs were recorded throughout the year from widespread, mostly coastal, areas. At least one eyrie, on a remote offshore island, was used but successful breeding was not proved. Several records are of immatures.

69. Serpent Eagle (*Spilornis cheela*)

Single birds in the Lam Tsuen Valley on 16 March, 14 August and 19 December; field notes indicate that different birds were involved. One or two in the Sai Kung area on 1 August, 2 October and 19 December. Two over Beacon Hill on 14 November.

70. Marsh Harrier (*Circus aeruginosus*)

All records are from the Deep Bay Marshes. Up to six were seen until 19 April and again from 2 October. Two adult males of the race *spilonotus* were at Mai Po on 1 January.

71. Pied Harrier (*Circus melanoleucos*)

All records are from Mai Po. A male on 2 January and single female/immatures on 11 September, 21 October and 1 November.

72. Hen Harrier (*Circus cyaneus*)

A single female/immature at Mai Po on 24 October and 1 November.

73. Black Vulture (*Aegypius monachus*)

Two at Long Valley on 6 January and 29 February, one there on 26 February. Two at rest on a bund behind Mai Po Village

on 2 February. One, apparently an escape, was shot at Kai Tak on 4 April.

74. Osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*)

Up to five in the Deep Bay area until 17 May and up to three there from 30 August. One at Silvermine Bay on 2 January.

75. Hobby (*Falco subbuteo*)

One at Chung Hom Kok on 1 October. At least one adult and an immature over Sharp Peak and one at Long Valley on 2 October. One at Mai Po, corresponding with a heavy movement of Swallows (*Hirundo rustica*), on 24 October and one at Mong Tseng on the same day.

76. Peregrine Falcon (*Falco peregrinus*)

A male and a female were seen in the urban area throughout the year, but particularly in the winter months. A pair regularly roosted on Murray Building. Elsewhere, odd birds were seen throughout Hong Kong and at least one pair are thought to have bred on a remote offshore island.

78. Kestrel (*Falco tinnunculus*)

Widespread during both winters. Usually single birds but up to three seen together. Extreme dates were until 8 April and from 12 September.

79. Chinese Francolin (*Francolinus pintadeanus*)

Recorded in widespread areas of the New Territories, including Lantau, and Hong Kong Island. First heard calling on 4 February.

80. Japanese Quail (*Coturnix japonica*)

One at Kai Tak on 5 November.

85. Banded Rail (*Rallus striatus*)

Up to four recorded at Mai Po throughout the year, including an adult with two juveniles on 17 July. A male and female with four downy young were seen in a flooded area of abandoned paddy at Chek Keng (Sai Kung Peninsula) on 2 October.

87. Ruddy Crane (*Porzana fusca*)

One at Mai Po on 6 April.

89. White-breasted Waterhen (*Amaurornis phoenicurus*)

Common and widespread in the New Territories. Breeding was proved at Fanling in April, Castle Peak in May and Long Valley in October.

90. Moorhen (*Gallinula chloropus*)

Present in small numbers on the Deep Bay Marshes for most of the year, but not recorded there during mid-summer. Breeding was confirmed at Castle Peak in the autumn. An oiled bird was

collected at Kai Tak on 19 November and sent to the Botanical Gardens. One was struck by a Wessex helicopter, 400 ft above sea level, at Tai Long Wan (Sai Kung Peninsula), at 1930 hrs. on 13 December. Odd birds were also noted at Sha Tau Kok and Sai Kung.

91. Watercock (*Gallicrex cinerea*)

One at the Chinese University on 19 April. A male and a female at Sha Po (near Mai Po) on 2 and 3 May. A male and female with a probable young bird at Lau Fau Shan on 2 August.

92. Coot (*Fulica atra*)

Common on the Deep Bay Marshes until 10 May and from 1 November, with maximum counts of 116 on 18 January and 130 on 28 November. During the summer, six were seen at Mai Po on 27 July and two adults with a chick there on 30 August. Elsewhere, odd birds were seen at Ho Chung, Fanling, Luk Keng and Castle Peak in the winter months.

93. Pheasant-tailed Jacana (*Hydrophasianus chirurgus*)

One at Lok Ma Chau on 21 April. A male and two females at Sha Po (near Mai Po) in early May. One at Kai Tak on 7 May and one at Mai Po on 17 May. Three males at Mai Po on 30 August. One at Kai Tak on 15 October. A dead immature found in a bird-net at Ma Tso Lung (near Lok Ma Chau) on 25 October. Up to 12 at Lok Ma Chau between 27 October and 7 November.

94. Painted Snipe (*Rostratula benghalensis*)

Single dead birds were found at Kai Tak on 1 January, 27 October and 2 December. Two, including a male, at Castle Peak on 19 April.

96. Lapwing (*Vanellus vanellus*)

Flocks of up to 40 at Long Valley until 6 February and 15 there on 30 December.

97. Grey-headed Lapwing (*Vanellus cinereus*)

Up to 9 at Long Valley until 7 March. Single birds at Kai Tak on 6 and 7 May. Three at Kai Tak on 11 October and one there on 15 October. At 2030 hrs. on 20 October, one was attracted down to the sand track at Happy Valley Racecourse (presumably by the strong floodlights) during a meeting and groups of three and 20 were seen flying low over the area. These were apparently migrating birds; at the time it was raining and the cloud cover very low. One at Castle Peak on 23 October. Single birds at Mai Po on 14 November and Kai Tak on 17 December.

99. Little Ringed Plover (*Charadrius dubius*)

Regularly recorded from the Deep Bay area, Long Valley, Sha

Tau Kok, Sha Tin, Kai Tak, Ho Chung and Sai Kung until 5 May and from 27 July. Usually only a few together but up to 100 at Lok Ma Chau in late November and early December and 120 counted at Mai Po on 22 December. An almost completely albino bird was at Lok Ma Chau between 13 and 24 October.

100. Kentish Plover (*Charadrius alexandrinus*)

Regularly recorded from the Deep Bay area, Kai Tak, Sha Tau Kok, Sha Tin, Sai Kung and Ho Chung with a single record from Tai Long Wan. The largest numbers were flocks of up to 200 at Mai Po in January. The extreme dates were until 9 May and from 6 August, but there were no records between the latter date and 21 September.

101. Greater Sand-plover (*Charadrius leschenaultii*)

Flocks of up to 100 at Mai Po and Lok Ma Chau between 6 April and 9 May. 15 at Sai Kung on 19 April. Up to five at Kai Tak between 5 and 14 May and one there on 30 July. Two at Mai Po on 30 August and two there and at Lok Ma Chau in late October. Three at Sai Kung on 7 November.

102. Mongolian Sand-plover (*Charadrius mongolus*)

Two at Ma Wan on 21 March. Up to 15 at Mai Po between 5 April and 3 May. Five at Sai Kung on 24 April. One or two at Kai Tak between 27 and 30 July.

[101/102. Sand-plover Sp.]

Flocks of sand-plovers, not specifically identified, were seen regularly in the Deep Bay area. Elsewhere, small flocks overwintered at Sai Kung, 20 were seen at Tai Po between 5 April and 15 May and groups of up to 33 were regular at Kai Tak between 27 February and 30 April and between 2 July and 8 October.]

103. Oriental Plover (*Charadrius veredus*)

Three at Kai Tak on 5 May. Up to three there between 11 October and 8 November and one there on 24 December.

104. Grey Plover (*Pluvialis squatarola*)

Up to four at Mai Po on 1 and 2 January and up to 20 there between 22 February and 26 April. One in summer plumage at Kai Tak on 26 and 27 August. Up to 21 at Mai Po between 9 September and 19 December. One at Sai Kung between 23 October and 13 November.

105. Asiatic Golden Plover (*Pluvialis dominicus*)

One at Kai Tak on 2 January. Up to nine at Mai Po between 5 April and 2 May. Up to 25 at Kai Tak between 9 April and 12 May. One at Tai Po on 24 April and 8 May. Up to 15 at Kai Tak between 26 August and 22 October. Up to 15 at Mai Po on

9 and 12 September. One or two at Mai Po and Lok Ma Chau on 20 and 23 October. Seven at Castle Peak on 23 October.

106. Turnstone (*Arenaria interpres*)

Up to three at Mai Po between 11 April and 2 May and up to three at Kai Tak between 15 April and 7 May. One at Sai Kung on 24 April. Two at Mai Po on 12 September and two at Kai Tak on 20 and 21 September.

107. Fantail Snipe (*Gallinago gallinago*)

Regularly recorded from the Deep Bay area, Long Valley, Castle Peak (where up to 100 were present during the 1975/76 winter) and Kai Tak with odd records from Junk Bay, Stanley, Sek Kong and Sha Tau Kok. A flock of 60 was seen at Long Valley on 1 January. The extreme dates were until 5 May and from 20 September.

108. Pintail Snipe (*Gallinago stenura*)

Three at Long Valley on 11 January and one there on 15 February. Two at Mai Po on 1 February.

[108/109. Snipe Sp.]

Snipe, not specifically identified but apparently not *G. gallinago*, were recorded from the Deep Bay area, Castle Peak, Sek Kong, Sha Tin, Chi Ma Wan, Sha Tau Kok, Fanling, Sai Kung and Ho Chung. Usually in small numbers but occasionally in flocks of up to 30. The extreme dates for all snipe were until 5 May and from 30 August.]

112. Woodcock (*Scolopax rusticola*)

A few records of single birds in widespread wooded areas of the New Territories until 3 February and from 17 November. An unusual record of one on the Hung Hom Reclamation on 24 January.

113. Curlew (*Numenius arquata*)

Up to 30 at Mai Po on 10 and 18 January and up to 15 there between 14 March and 9 May. One at Tai Po between 16 and 19 April. Up to five at Mai Po between 5 and 11 September. One found dead at Kai Tak on 29 November.

114. Australian Curlew (*Numenius madagascariensis*)

Up to four at Mai Po between 25 April and 9 May.

115. Whimbrel (*Numenius phaeopus*)

Up to 12 at Mai Po between 6 April and 9 May. Up to six at Kai Tak between 26 August and 5 November. Up to 12 at Mai Po between 30 August and 26 September. Three at Sai Kung, after a typhoon, on 19 September. Odd birds at Pokfulam on 29 September, Nam Chung on 18 October and Mai Po on 24 October.

116. Little Whimbrel (*Numenius minutus*)

Three at Kai Tak on 30 April and 5 May.

117. Black-tailed Godwit (*Limosa limosa*)

Odd birds at Mai Po between 18 January and 3 March. Up to 28 there from 28 March until 11 May, but a flock of 65 on 8 April was exceptional. One at Sai Kung on 24 April is the first record for this species away from the Deep Bay Marshes. Up to 20 at Mai Po on 23 November.

118. Bar-tailed Godwit (*Limosa lapponica*)

Up to five in the Deep Bay area between 11 April and 9 May. One or two at Mai Po on 9 and 12 September and one at Lok Ma Chau on 5 December.

119. Asiatic Dowitcher (*Limnodromus semipalmatus*)

Up to 12 at Mai Po between 16 April and 4 May.

120. Green Sandpiper (*Tringa ochropus*)

Regular and widespread in the New Territories but also recorded at Kai Tak and Pokfulam. Usually in small numbers, but a flock of 26 at Mai Po on 5 September. Extreme dates were until 7 May and from 29 August.

121. Wood Sandpiper (*Tringa glareola*)

Up to 55 in the Deep Bay area until 30 May (but very few records for March). Four at Long Valley on 1 January. Up to ten at Castle Peak until 24 January and up to 25 there between 14 March and 1 May. Up to ten at Sai Kung on 19 and 24 April. Five at Kai Tak on 5 May. Up to four at Kai Tak between 26 July and 6 August. Recorded in good numbers at Castle Peak between 29 August and 18 December, with a maximum count of 140 on 9 October. Up to 60 in the Deep Bay area from 5 September. Up to nine at Sha Tin between 23 September and 19 October. Nine at Kai Tak on 22 October.

122. Redshank (*Tringa totanus*)

One at Sai Kung on 28 February. Up to 30 in the Deep Bay area between 4 March and 23 May. One at Kai Tak on 30 April. Odd birds at Kai Tak between 30 July and 27 August. One or two in the Deep Bay area on 27 October and 21 November.

123. Spotted Redshank (*Tringa erythropus*)

Flocks of up to 350 in the Deep Bay area until 1 February and up to 40 there between 14 March and 5 May. One at Kai Tak on 15 April. Flocks of up to 400 (31 December) in the Deep Bay area from 23 October. One at Luk Keng on 30 December.

124. Greenshank (*Tringa nebularia*)

Up to 75 in the Deep Bay area until 8 May. One at Sai Kung on 24 April. Eight at Sha Tau Kok on 15 May. Up to 25 in the Deep Bay area from 30 August. One flying east at Ting Kau, during Typhoon Iris, on 19 September.

126. Marsh Sandpiper (*Tringa stagnatilis*)

Four at Mai Po on 10 January and one at Lok Ma Chau on 11 and 18 January. Eight at Mai Po on 22 February. Up to ten in the Mai Po/Lok Ma Chau area between 20 March and 5 May. Up to 19 at Mai Po/Lok Ma Chau between 2 October and 1 November. Single birds at Sha Tin on 8 October and Kai Tak on 22 October.

127. Common Sandpiper (*Actitis hypoleucos*)

Common and widespread. The extreme dates were until 21 May and from 23 July. A flock of 25 at Ho Chung on 19 April.

128. Grey-rumped Sandpiper (*Heteroscelus brevipes*)

Up to four at Mai Po between 19 April and 2 May. Counts of up to 52 at Tai Po between 24 April and 15 May. Six at Sai Kung on 24 April. Two at Kai Tak on 30 April. Three at Sha Tau Kok on 2 May. Eight at Ho Chung on 26 May. Up to six at Kai Tak between 23 July and 29 October. Single birds at Pokfulam on 30 September, Sha Tin on 8 October, Tai Mong Tsai on 16 October and Sai Kung on 23 October.

129. Terek Sandpiper (*Xenus cinereus*)

Counts of up to 50 at Mai Po between 11 April and 8 May. One at Sai Kung on 19 April. Four at Tai Po on 3 and 8 May. One at Ho Chung on 26 May. In the autumn, three at Mai Po on 29 August and 9 September and one there on 24 October.

130. Knot (*Calidris canutus*)

Single birds at Mai Po on 19 April and 3 May.

131. Great Knot (*Calidris tenuirostris*)

One at Mai Po on 14 March. Up to 14 at Mai Po between 8 and 20 April. One at Kai Tak on 20 April.

132. Eastern Little Stint (*Calidris ruficollis*)

Recorded in varying numbers at Mai Po/Lok Ma Chau between 16 March and 25 May, but with high counts of 1000+ on 25 April (THF), up to 700 on 3 May and up to 400 on 2 May. Two at Sai Kung on 19 April. Up to five at Kai Tak between 30 April and 14 May—one found dead there on 4 June. The only autumn records are from Lok Ma Chau of four on 17 October and 20 on 7 November.

133. Long-toed Stint (*Calidris subminuta*)

Up to eight at Lok Ma Chau between 11 January and 20 March. One at Castle Peak on 11 January. Up to 12 at Mai Po between 5 April and 2 May. One at Castle Peak on 19 April. Three at Sai Kung on 24 April. Three at Sai Kung on 24 April. Up to 30 at Lok Ma Chau from 2 October to 22 November. 45 at Mai Po on 21 December and up to ten at Lok Ma Chau from 27 December.

134. Temminck's Stint (*Calidris temminckii*)

Counts of up to 26 at Mai Po/Lok Ma Chau until 25 April. Two at Castle Peak on 11 January. 24 at Kai Tak on 5 May. Up to 70 at Mai Po/Lok Ma Chau from 13 October (maximum count on 30 October). Four at Castle Peak on 13 November.

135. Sharp-tailed Sandpiper (*Calidris acuminata*)

Counts of up to 43 at Mai Po between 5 April and 25 May. Three at Sai Kung on 24 April. Up to six at Kai Tak between 5 and 17 May. Single birds at Mai Po on 9 and 12 September.

136. Dunlin (*Calidris alpina*)

Ten at Mai Po on 1 January and at least one there on 18 January. Two at Mai Po 24 October. Up to 25 at Mai Po and Lok Ma Chau on 20 and 21 November. One at Mai Po on 19 December.

137. Curlew Sandpiper (*Calidris ferruginea*)

Recorded in the Deep Bay area from 20 March until 25 May, with a maximum count of 140 at Mai Po on 5 May. Five at Sai Kung on 24 April. Up to seven at Kai Tak on 5 and 6 May. In the autumn, only single birds at Kai Tak on 6 August and Sha Tau Kok on 10 October.

138. Sanderling (*Crocethia alba*)

Single birds at Mai Po between 16 and 21 April. One at Tai Long Wan on 2 October. Two at Mai Po on 24 October and eight there on 21 November.

139. Spoon-billed Sandpiper (*Eurynorhynchus pygmeus*)

One at Mai Po between 11 and 25 May. DSM submitted the following note:—

‘The bird spent most of the time actively feeding in the damp mud/algae area where it fed in a manner very reminiscent of a dabbling duck. The bill was placed on/just below the surface and it then ran about rather like a vacuum cleaner! This was certainly very different to the ‘stitching’ feeding method used by the Eastern Little Stint and if typical would be a useful field character for the species. Feeding habits of this species have been little studied. Observers seeing this species in the future would do well to make detailed notes of the feeding method’.

140. Broad-billed Sandpiper (*Limicola falcinellus*)

Counts of up to 48 at Mai Po between 16 April and 11 May. Two at Kai Tak on 6 August. Two at Mai Po on 9 and 12 September. One at Lok Ma Chau on 5 December.

141. Ruff (*Philomachus pugnax*)

One remained at Lok Ma Chau until 6 January. Single birds at Mai Po on 14 September and Lok Ma Chau on 21 November.

142. Red-necked Phalarope (*Phalaropus lobatus*)

One at Mai Po on 11 May is the only spring record. Recorded daily from many widespread areas between 19 September and 2 October, usually in small flocks but over 100 at Lok Ma Chau. Ten at Sha Tau Kok on 10 October. Typhoon Iris passed close to Hong Kong on 19 September, which probably accounts for most of these records.

143. Black-winged Stilt (*Himantopus himantopus*)

All records are from Mai Po. Flocks of up to 15 were regularly recorded from 2 January until 21 April and up to nine from 9 September until 23 December.

144. Avocet (*Recurvirostra avosetta*)

All records are from the Deep Bay area where a wintering flock of up to 60 remained until 4 March. 16 there on 21 and 28 November and 20 on 30 December.

145. Oriental Pratincole (*Glareola maldivarum*)

Two at Sai Kung on 13 March. Two at Mai Po on 14 March. Regularly recorded in varying numbers at Kai Tak between 19 March and 26 July, with a maximum of 50 on 3 June. 12 at Sai Kung on 19 April. Three at Mai Po on 9 May. One or two at Kai Tak on 20 and 21 September. Up to 30 at Mai Po on 2 October. One found dead at Kai Tak on 14 October.

146. Herring Gull (*Larus argentatus*)

Recorded from widespread areas in flocks of varying numbers until 17 April and from 3 November. An extraordinary record of one at Kai Tak on 17 June.

151. Brown-headed Gull (*Larus brunnicephalus*)

Single sub-adults at Aberdeen on 10 February and Deep Bay on 15 February. An adult off Ting Kau on 22 February and a sub-adult there on 29 February. Two at Mai Po on 4 March. An adult off Ting Kau on 26 March. An adult at Mai Po on 4 December. Single adults at Kwai Chung on 27 and 31 December.

152. Black-tailed Gull (*Larus crassirostris*)

One at Mai Po on 18 January. Up to 70 (mostly sub-adults) in Tolo Harbour between 19 January and 6 March. Up to five at

Kai Tak between 23 January and 27 February. Ten sub-adults at Nim Wan on 15 February. An immature at Tolo Harbour on 4 December.

153. Black-headed Gull (*Larus ridibundus*)

Regularly recorded in flocks of varying numbers from widespread areas until 20 April and from 1 November, apart from an odd bird at Mai Po on 26 September. Regular daily movements of up to 2000 were noted off Ting Kau (MLC). 1500 in Tolo Harbour on 1 February.

154. Saunders' Gull (*Larus saundersi*)

All records are from the Deep Bay area. Up to ten until 11 March. Over 53 (including 20 adults) on 14 March. Up to 12 between 7 November and 5 December.

155.1 Long-tailed Skua (*Stercorarius longicaudus*)

A light phase adult bird was seen flying over the outer bund at Mai Po from Deep Bay and heading east on 9 May (MLC, MAW, THF, RJB et al.). This is the first record for this species from Hong Kong. The bird was seen on a Society Outing and was in unmistakable adult plumage and readily identified by those familiar with the species. Several sets of good field notes were accepted by the Records Committee.

Distribution: Northern Holarctic. Breeding distribution circumpolar on northern coasts, alpine tundras and islands, north to about 72° N (but beyond 80° N in Greenland), south to Jan Mayen, Scandinavia, Gulf of Ob, Kamchatka, west Alaska and north Quebec; extreme limits 83° N and 52° N. Winters at sea in the Atlantic and Pacific south to about 50° S. Also known as the Long-tailed Jaeger (North America).

156. White-winged Black Tern (*Chlidonias leucoptera*)

Regularly recorded in the Deep Bay area between 26 April and 17 May when flocks of up to 100 were seen. One at Kai Tak on 5 May. Up to 20 in the West Lamma Channel on 14 May. Several off Ting Kau and Tai Lam Bay during Typhoon Iris on 19 September. Four at Lok Ma Chau on 26 September. Flocks of up to 80 in Victoria Harbour on 29 September and 1 October.

157. Whiskered Tern (*Chlidonias hybrida*)

Several off Ting Kau and Tai Lam Bay during Typhoon Iris on 19 September. Up to 50 in the Deep Bay area between 20 September and 24 October. Two at Kwai Chung on 25 September. Four in Victoria Harbour on 1 October.

158. Gull-billed Tern (*Gelochelidon nilotica*)

One at Mai Po on 16 March. Up to 15 regularly seen in the Deep Bay area between 11 April and 9 May. Five off Lamma on 16 April. Two in the West Lamma Channel between 23 and 27 August. Two in Tolo Harbour on 2 October.

159. Caspian Tern (*Hydroprogne caspia*)

Up to 30 in the Deep Bay area until 7 July and two there on 22 July. One found dead at Kai Tak on 26 July. One at Mai Po on 5 September. At least five in the East Lamma Channel on 29 and 30 September. Three in Tolo Harbour on 4 December. 22 in Deep Bay on 21 December.

160. Common Tern (*Sterna hirundo*)

A flock of 27 in Tai Lam Bay during Typhoon Iris on 19 September. The field notes (MLC) of this record were accepted by the Records Committee. Also during this typhoon over 300 and possibly as many 1000 terns, which were probably of this species, were seen off Ting Kau. A flock of 15 terns, which were probably of this species, were seen in Victoria Harbour the following day. On 25 September, 15 probables were seen off Kwai Chung and a single probable at Mai Po. Two probables in Tolo Harbour on 2 October.

[161. Black-naped Tern (*Sterna sumatrana*)

A pale tern seen flying off Tai Lam Bay during Typhoon Iris on 19 September was probably this species.]

161.1 Sooty Tern (*Sterna fuscata*)

At least seven, including two immatures, were seen flying east off Ting Kau during Typhoon Iris on 19 September. This is the first record for this species from Hong Kong. Comprehensive field notes (MLC) were accepted by the Records Committee.

Distribution:— Oceanic. Breeds, often in immense colonies, mainly on tropical islands in all oceans, from the Caribbean and mid-Atlantic islands and across the Indian and Pacific Oceans, also Red Sea; between 30° N and 34° S. Pelagic outside breeding season.

162. Little Tern (*Sterna albifrons*)

Small groups of up to 20 in the Deep Bay area between 11 April and 17 May. Over 50 flying east off Ting Kau during Typhoon Iris on 19 September. One at Mai Po on 19 September.

163. Greater Crested Tern (*Sterna bergii*)

15 were seen flying east off Ting Kau and two off Tai Lam Bay during Typhoon Iris on 19 September. The Records Committee accepted this record after examining comprehensive field notes (MLC). This is the fourth record for Hong Kong and the first since 1965. Two terns seen in Victoria Harbour on 29 September were probably this species.

166. Rufous Turtle-dove (*Streptopelia orientalis*)

Scarce but widespread in small numbers until 8 May. Up to ten at Beas River on 30 December, which seems the best area to find this species.

167. Spotted Dove (*Streptopelia chinensis*)

Common and widespread. One nest, containing two eggs, located at Beas Hill in April.

168. Red Turtle-dove (*Streptopelia tranquebarica*)

Four female/immatures at Sai Kung on 19 April. Three at Mai Po on 2 October.

171. Indian Cuckoo (*Cuculus micropterus*)

Recorded from widespread areas of the New Territories between 19 April and 3 July. Mostly only heard calling.

172. Large Hawk-cuckoo (*Cuculus sparveroides*)

One heard at Tai Po Kau on 18 May.

174. Plaintive Cuckoo (*Cacomantis merulinus*)

Quite common and widespread. Mostly recorded between mid-February and July. However, odd birds were seen outside of this period. A hepatic bird at Sek Kong on 5 April. A young bird seen being fed by a Long-tailed Tailor-bird (*Orthotomus sutorius*) on 1 October, also at Sek Kong.

175. Red-winged Crested Cuckoo (*Clamator coromandus*)

One seen at Ho Sheung Heung Woods (near Long Valley) on 2 and 3 October. Two sets of field notes (GCHC and THF) were accepted by the Records Committee. This is the fifth record for Hong Kong.

177. Koel (*Eudynamis scolopacea*)

Quite common and widespread. Mostly recorded between April and July but a few sight records outside of this period. Regularly recorded from Victoria Barracks and the Botanical Gardens in the early summer.

178. Greater Coucal (*Centropus sinensis*)

Quite common and widespread.

179. Lesser Coucal (*Centropus bengalensis*)

Scarce but widespread.

180. Barred Owllet (*Glaucidium cuculoides*)

Single birds at Sek Kong Woods on 20 March and 23 December (MAW).

182. Collared Scops Owl (*Otus bakkamoena*)

One heard at Wanchai Gap on 20 March.

[185. Brown Fish-owl (*Ketupa zeylonensis*)

An owl which was possibly this species was seen at Mai Po on 20 March.]

189. Savannah Nightjar (*Caprimulgus affinis*)

A dead bird collected at Kai Tak on 8 November.

[188/189. Nightjar Sp.

Nightjars, not specifically identified, were seen at Mong Tseng on 18 February (two) and 27 December, Pak Tam Au on 31 October, Ho Man Tin on 1 November and Kai Tak on 3 December.]

190. Large White-rumped Swift (*Apus pacificus*)

Recorded from widespread areas, in flocks of up to 50, between February and September. One over Fanling on 24 December.

191. House Swift (*Apus affinis*)

Recorded from widespread areas, in flocks of up to 50, throughout the year. Small breeding colonies noted at Tsun Wan, Lai Chi Kok and Kowloon City.

192. Pied Kingfisher (*Ceryle rudis*)

One or two sporadically recorded in the Deep Bay area and Sha Tau Kok throughout the year. Odd birds at Tai Long Wan on 2 October and Plover Cove on 10 October.

194. Common Kingfisher (*Alcedo atthis*)

Quite common and widespread. Notably scarcer in summer but still recorded from favoured localities.

195. White-breasted Kingfisher (*Halcyon smyrnensis*)

Common and widespread for most of the year but during the summer was comparatively scarce. Two or three pairs breeding at Chi Ma Wan in late May.

196. Black-capped Kingfisher (*Halcyon pileata*)

Single birds and pairs regularly recorded from widespread areas until the end of April and from mid-September. Also recorded in the summer but much more local, particularly favouring Tai Po Kau, Ho Chung and Deep Water Bay.

198. Broad-billed Roller (*Eurystomus orientalis*)

On 2 October, up to three immatures were seen between Chek Keng and Tai Long Wan on the Sai Kung Peninsula and another immature was recorded near Fanling. An adult at Sek Kong Woods on 18 November.

199. Hoopoe (*Upupa epops*)

One at Mong Tseng on 15 February. Single birds seen on Cheung Chau on 26 July and 25 August.

200. Great Barbet (*Megalaima virens*)

Regularly recorded from widespread areas of the New Territories, notably Tai Po Kau, Shing Mun, Lam Tsuen Valley, Fanling, Ho Chung and the Sai Kung Peninsula.

203. Wryneck (*Jynx torquilla*)

One at Fanling on 9 and 17 January. One at Kowloon Park on 17 January. One at Kai Tak on 23 January. One near Plover

Cove on 31 January. One near Sha Tau Kok on 3 February. At the end of the year, single birds at Mai Po on 4, 12 and 30 December.

205. Small Skylark (*Alauda gulgula*)

Recorded throughout the year at Kai Tak with a peak number of 39 on 16 January and 34 on 3 December. A single bird at the Chinese University on 6 and 18 January. One at Sek Kong and two at Lok Ma Chau on 11 January. Single birds at Mong Tseng on 15 February and at Castle Peak on 21 March. One at Sai Kung on 7 November. Four at Mai Po on 13 November. Two at Lok Ma Chau on 21 November, two at Route Twisk on 12 December, two at Happy Valley on 24 and 25 December and two at Mong Tseng on 27 December.

206. Swallow (*Hirundo rustica*)

Common and widespread from mid-February until September but also recorded in small numbers outside of this period.

207. Red-rumped Swallow (*Hirundo daurica*)

One at Mai Po on 20 March. Three flocks containing a total of up to 80 birds at Mai Po and Lok Ma Chau on 14 November. Four at Mong Tseng on 22 November. Single birds at Mai Po and Lok Ma Chau on 31 December.

208. House-martin (*Delichon urbica*)

Up to 30 at Mai Po and four at Sha Tin on 20 March. One at Mai Po on 3 October.

209. Sand-martin (*Riparia riparia*)

One at Castle Peak on 19 April. Two at Mai Po on 24 October and one there on 28 November.

210. Chinese Great Grey Shrike (*Lanius sphenocercus*)

One at Tai Mo Shan on 12 September. Field notes (GCHC) of this sighting were accepted by the Records Committee. This is the third record for Hong Kong.

211. Rufous-backed Shrike (*Lanius schach*)

Common and widespread but generally avoiding urban areas. As usual, a number of melanistic Dusky Shrikes were noted. Breeding recorded at Beas River (April), Junk Bay (May) and Fanling (July).

213. Brown Shrike (*Lanius cristatus*)

Widespread in small numbers. Recorded until 11 May and from 15 September, except for odd birds at the Chinese University on 12 July and 2 August. Much scarcer in the winter months with the main passages occurring in early May and early October.

214. Black-naped Oriole (*Oriolus chinensis*)

Odd birds at Sek Kong on 4 January and 28 March. One at

Fanling Golf Course on 3 February. One in East Kowloon on 27 March. Regularly recorded from Fanling Golf Course between 18 April and 13 October, where at least four pairs are considered to have bred. Breeding pairs were also found at two separate localities in the Tai Po area. A female at Stonecutters' Island on 25 May. Between 30 September and 18 November immatures were seen in widespread areas, mostly the northern part of the New Territories.

215. Black Drongo (*Dicrurus macrocercus*)

Common and widespread between mid-April and late October. Odd birds also recorded from widespread areas in January, February and November. Occasionally seen in concentrations of up to 50 over a small area, particularly in May and early autumn.

216. Ashy Drongo (*Dicrurus leucophaeus*)

One at Ho Sheung Heung (Long Valley) between 30 September and 3 October. One of the race *salangensis* at She Shan on 12 and 30 December. Another of this race at Fung Yuen (near Tai Po) on 22 December.

217. Hair-crested Drongo (*Dicrurus hottentottus*)

One or two in the Lam Tsuen Valley in late April. Three at Ting Kau on 16 April. One at Fung Yuen (near Tai Po) on 2 May. Odd birds recorded from widespread areas between 30 August and 11 October. One or two occasionally seen in the Deep Bay area and in the Lam Tsuen Valley during late November and December. Probably under-recorded.

218. Chinese Starling (*Sturnus sinensis*)

Recorded in small numbers (flocks up to 20) from widespread areas until the end of May. Several pairs noted breeding at Castle Peak Monastery during May. Recorded again in small numbers from widespread areas from 30 August, with exceptional flocks of 50 and 70 at Lok Ma Chau on 27 October and 14 November respectively.

219. Silky Starling (*Sturnus sericeus*)

Quite scarce but widespread. Recorded in flocks of up to 30 until 20 March and from 7 November.

220. Grey Starling (*Sturnus cineraceus*)

Six at Mai Po on 1 January and nine there on 10 January. Three or four at Mong Tseng between 2 and 18 February. One at Sai Kung on 28 February. Two at Fanling on 27 March. A flock of 20 at Mong Tseng on 4 April. Two at Tai Po on 8 April. Two at Mai Po on 24 October and 28 November. One at Kai Tak on 4 November. 18 at Mong Tseng on 27 December.

220.1 Chestnut-cheeked Starling (*Sturnus philippensis*)

A female or young male was seen at Mai Po with a small party of Chinese Bulbuls (*Pycnonotus sinensis*) on 28 March and again on 8 April (MAW, CPB, CAV et al). This is the first record for this species from Hong Kong. The most important field mark, a small deep red patch on the side of the neck, was noted and field notes submitted by MAW were accepted by the Records Committee. Distribution:— Breeds in Japan from the Kurile Islands southwards. Winters in the Philippine Islands and Malay Archipelago. First recorded in China in 1908 (La Touche).

221. Common Starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*)

Up to six at Lok Ma Chau until 1 February and up to five there from 25 November.

222. Black-necked Starling (*Sturnus nigricollis*)

Locally common in the New Territories throughout the year. At least 200 present on Fanling Golf Course at dawn on 3 July. Breeding proved at Fanling, Castle Peak and Junk Bay. Five at Stanley on 29 October is the first documented record from Hong Kong Island.

223. Crested Mynah (*Acridotheres cristatellus*)

Common and widespread.

224. Jay (*Garrulus glandarius*)

One at Kowloon Reservoirs on 12 March. Five at Shing Mun on 28 March. One at Fanling on 15 November and two at Tai Po Kau on 28 November.

225. Blue Magpie (*Urocissa erythrorhyncha*)

Common on Hong Kong Island but only locally common in the New Territories.

226. Magpie (*Pica pica*)

Common and widespread. A flock of over 40 at Fanling on 30 June.

228. Jungle Crow (*Corvus macrorhynchos*)

Locally common in the New Territories and on Hong Kong Island. Large numbers seen on the mud at Tai Po with a maximum count of 78 on 11 January. Flocks of over 30 at Fanling on 11 January and at Mai Po on 20 April.

229. Collared Crow (*Corvus torquatus*)

Regularly recorded throughout the year from the Deep Bay area (up to nine) and the remoter parts of the New Territories, usually in ones and twos.

230. Black-winged Cuckoo-shrike (*Coracina melaschistos*)

Scarce but widespread. Fifteen records, all of single birds. Extreme dates were until 2 April and from 6 September.

- 233. Ashy Minivet** (*Pericrocotus divaricatus*)
One at Sek Kong Woods on 16 April.
- 234. Grey-throated Minivet** (*Pericrocotus solaris*)
A male at Tai Po Kau on 3 January. This is the first record of a male and the sixth record for this species from Hong Kong. Field notes were accepted by the Records Committee. The observer (MAW) particularly commented on the striking colour of the bird (which was in company with a male *P. flammeus*) described as vermillion (flame-red), not the deep scarlet of an adult male *P. flammeus* and much redder than the orange of a juvenile male *P. flammeus*. The grey sides of head and throat were also noted.
- 235. Scarlet Minivet** (*Pericrocotus flammeus*)
Quite common in the New Territories until 18 May and from 16 November. Flocks of up to 30 were seen, most containing one or two adult males. A good proportion of records came from within a five mile radius of Tai Po.
- 236. Chestnut Bulbul** (*Hypsipetes castanotus*)
Up to six remained in the Tai Po Kau Forestry Reserve until 8 April. A flock of 12 at Barker Road, Hong Kong Island on 6 March. A flock of at least six in the Lam Tsuen Valley on 19 April.
- 237. Black Bulbul** (*Hypsipetes madagascariensis*)
Recorded from widespread areas in flocks of up to 30 until 8 April.
- 238. Crested Bulbul** (*Pycnonotus jocosus*)
Common and widespread.
- 239. Chinese Bulbul** (*Pycnonotus sinensis*)
Common and widespread. Up to 1000 noisily flocking on gum trees in the Tai Po Kau Forestry Reserve on 8 April.
- 240. Red-vented Bulbul** (*Pycnonotus aurigaster*)
Common and widespread but avoiding urban areas. One pair constructed a nest three feet from the ground in a hibiscus bush and laid four eggs (mauve speckled darker) later deserted—June, Tseng Lan Shue.
- 241. Black-faced Laughing-thrush** (*Garrulax perspicillatus*)
Common and widespread. First young out of the nest from 5 April.
- 242. Black-throated Laughing-thrush** (*Garrulax chinensis*)
Recorded from Bowen Road, Lady Clementi's Ride and the Upper Tai Tam Reservoir on Hong Kong Island.
- 243. Hwamei** (*Garrulax canorus*)
Quite common on Hong Kong Island and parts of the New

Territories. Also regularly recorded in urban Kowloon, but it is likely that these are escaped birds or their descendants.

- 244. Greater Necklaced Laughing-thrush** (*Garrulax pectoralis*)
At Tai Po Kau a flock of 20 was seen during January, at least three were there on 8 August, ten on 3 October and eight on 12 December. Up to three seen on Victoria Peak on 12 and 31 January and one at Shing Mun on 17 March are the first records away from Tai Po Kau.

- 246. Collared Siva** (*Yuhina castaniceps*)
Flocks of up to 30 remained at Tai Po Kau until 22 February. A flock was seen there again on 19 December.

- 248. Asian/Ince's Paradise Flycatcher** (*Terpsiphone paradisi*)
Single birds at Tai Po Kau on 5 and 16 April are the only spring records. Quite widespread during the autumn with records of at least 12 separate birds between 24 August and 23 October, including three at Ho Man Tin during late September. Odd birds at Tai Po Kau on 18 and 21 December.

- 249. Japanese Paradise Flycatcher** (*Terpsiphone atrocaudata*)
Single males at Tai Po Kau on 5 and 11 April. A single male at Ho Sheung Heung (Long Valley) between 3 September and 3 October. A male and a female at Tai Po Kau on 1 October. Single birds at Sek Kong on 1 and 2 October and Tai Long Wan on 2 October.

- 250. Grey-headed Flycatcher** (*Culicicapa ceylonensis*)
One at Wu Kau Tang (near Plover Cove) on 26 January. One at Fung Yuen (near Tai Po) on 17 November and 18 December. Up to three at Tai Po Kau between 17 November and 21 December. One at Hong Kong University on 18 November. Up to four at She Shan between 19 November and 12 December.

- 251. Black-naped Monarch Flycatcher** (*Hypothymis azurea*)
A female/immature at Hebe Haven on 10 January. A female/immature at Fung Yuen (near Tai Po) between 31 January and 13 February. A female/immature at Bethanie on 12 February. A female/immature, which first appeared during Typhoon Iris, remained at Ho Man Tin between 19 and 28 September. A female/immature at Ho Sheung Heung (Long Valley) on 30 September. Both these sightings are much earlier than any previous autumn records. Up to two female/immatures at Sek Kong between 18 November and 19 December. A male at She Shan on 19 November and a female/immature there on 12 December. A female/immature at Aberdeen on 24 November. A male at Fung Yuen on 22 December. A female/immature at Ho Sheung Heung on 30 December.

- 252. Brown Flycatcher** (*Muscicapa latirostris*)
One at Castle Peak on 22 February. Widespread but scarce

between 16 April and 1 May. Common and widespread between 5 September and 27 December with peak numbers between late September and mid-October.

253. Grey-spotted Flycatcher (*Muscicapa griseisticta*)

One at Sek Kong Woods on 2 May. One at Hong Kong University between 3 and 12 May. One at Castle Peak on 6 May. One on Victoria Peak on 10 May. Four at Middle Gap, Hong Kong Island on 13 May. One on Tai Mo Shan on 12 September. One at Hong Kong University on 22 and 24 September. One at Sek Kong between 25 September and 2 October. One or two at Ho Sheung Heung (Long Valley) between 30 September and 15 October. Single birds at Tai Po Kau and She Shan on 1 October. One at Beas Hill on 3 and 8 October.

255. Ferruginous Flycatcher (*Muscicapa ferruginea*)

One at Pokfulam on 4 April and one at Wongneichong Gap on 4 and 5 April.

256. Verditer Flycatcher (*Muscicapa thalassina*)

A female at Tai Po Kau on 25 January. One or two at Luen Yick (near Plover Cove) between 31 January and 12 February. A male at She Shan between 17 October and 30 December.

257. Red-breasted Flycatcher (*Ficedula parva*)

A male remained in a garden at Fanling until 20 April and by mid-April had developed full breeding plumage. One remained at Hong Kong University until 5 April. One at Sek Kong on 4 January. Single birds at Tai Po Kau on 31 January, Beas River on 3 February and the Colonial Cemetery, Happy Valley on 5 February. The male bird returned to the garden in Fanling on 18 September and remained until the end of the year. Fairly common and widespread in ones and twos from 2 October.

258. Robin Flycatcher (*Ficedula mugimaki*)

A male at Kai Tak on 23 April. A female at Mong Tseng on 26 April. A male on Victoria Peak on 4 December. One at Sek Kong on 5 December and a male at Fanling on 30 December.

259. Narcissus Flycatcher (*Ficedula narcissina*)

An adult male at Ting Kau on 14 and 15 April. A male at Hong Kong University on 20 and 21 April.

260. Tricolour Flycatcher (*Ficedula zanthopygia*)

A male at Tai Po on 19 April. One or two female/immatures at Sha Tin between 15 and 21 September. A female/immature at Shing Mun on 22 September. Single female/immatures at She Shan on 26 September and Beas Hill on 3 October.

262. Blue and White Flycatcher (*Cyanoptila cyanomelana*)

One at Tai Po Kau on 15 April. An adult male at Ting Kau

on 16 April. Two at Hong Kong University on 9 October. A female at Shing Mun on 30 October.

263. Chinese Bush Warbler (*Cettia diphone*)

Uncommon but widespread until 19 April and from 24 October (probably under-recorded).

264. Short-tailed Bush Warbler (*Cettia squameiceps*)

One or two at Tai Po Kau until 11 January. Single birds at Happy Valley on 4 January, Chinese University on 2 February and Shing Mun on 3 March. Up to four at Tai Po Kau from 28 November. Single birds at Sek Kong on 29 December, Sai Kung and Wu Kau Tang (Plover Cove) on 30 December.

266. Styan's Grasshopper Warbler (*Locustella pleskei*)

Four at Mai Po on 25 April and one there on 2 May. One at Mai Po on 1 November.

267. Von Schrenck's Reed-warbler (*Acrocephalus bistrigiceps*)

Quite common in the Deep Bay area during both passages. One at Sha Tau Kok on 10 October. Extreme dates were from 6 April to 17 May and from 2 October to 1 November.

268. Great Reed-warbler (*Acrocephalus arundinaceus*)

Common in the Deep Bay area during both passages but more numerous in the autumn. Also reported from Long Valley, Pokfulam, Castle Peak, Chi Ma Wan and Kwai Chung in small numbers in the autumn. Extreme dates were from 21 April until 17 May and from 30 August until 21 November.

269. Dusky Warbler (*Phylloscopus fuscatus*)

Common and widespread during both winters. Extreme dates were until 9 May and from 21 September.

270. Yellow-browed Warbler (*Phylloscopus inornatus*)

Common and widespread during both winters. Extreme dates were until 9 May and from 11 September.

271. Pallas's Warbler (*Phylloscopus proregulus*)

Quite common and widespread during both winters. Particularly numerous during mid-December. Extreme dates were until 17 April and from 31 October.

272. Arctic Warbler (*Phylloscopus borealis*)

Three or four at Hong Kong University between 7 and 11 May. Two at Castle Peak on 16 May. Common and widespread during late September and early October. One of the race *xanthodryas* (Swinhoe's Warbler) was identified at Sek Kong on 9 October. Extreme autumn dates were from 14 September until 24 October.

273. Pale-legged Willow-warbler (*Phylloscopus tenellipes*)

Two at Sek Kong on 20 March.

- 274. Crowned Willow-warbler** (*Phylloscopus coronatus*)
One at Tai Po Kau on 24 January.
- 276. Yellow-eyed Flycatcher-warbler** (*Seicercus burkii*)
One near Wu Kau Tang (near Plover Cove) on 30 December. This is the second record of this species for Hong Kong. A full field description (TPG) was accepted by the Records Committee.
- 279. Long-tailed Tailor-bird** (*Orthotomus sutorius*)
Common and widespread.
- 281. Brown Wren-warbler** (*Prinia subflava*)
Common on the Deep Bay Marshes.
- 282. Yellow-bellied Wren-warbler** (*Prinia flaviventris*)
Common and widespread.
- 283. Fantail Warbler** (*Cisticola juncidis*)
Quite common and widespread but not recorded between 18 May and 28 August.
- 285. Red-tailed Robin** (*Erithacus sibilans*)
Single birds at Bride's Pool on 21 January and Conduit Road, Hong Kong Island on 30 January and 2 February. Two at Tai Po Kau and one at Sek Kong Woods on 28 November. One at She Shan on 18 December.
- 286. Bluethroat** (*Erithacus svecica*)
Up to three separate birds at Mai Po until 1 February, single birds there on 17 and 25 April. One at Mong Tseng on 15 February. Single birds at Mai Po on 23 and 30 December.
- 288. Rubythroat** (*Erithacus calliope*)
Quite common and widespread during both winters. Extreme dates were until 1 May and from 4 November.
- 289. Red-flanked Bluetail** (*Tarsiger cyanurus*)
Fairly common and widespread during both winters. Extreme dates were until 28 March and from 20 November. As usual records of females/immatures easily predominated (approx 8:1).
- 290. Magpie-robin** (*Copsychus saularis*)
Common and widespread.
- 291. Daurian Redstart** (*Phoenicurus aureus*)
Fairly common and widespread during both winters. Apart from a male at Kai Tak on 28 September, the extreme dates were until 3 April and from 30 October.
- 292. Plumbeous Water-redstart** (*Rhyacornis fuliginosus*)
A female/immature at Ho Chung on 3 January. Single female/immatures at Shing Mun on 11 January and 3 March. A male and

a female/immature at Bride's Pool between 21 January and 7 March. A male at Sek Kong Catchment on 3 December. A female/immature at Ting Kau on 11 December. A female and a first year male at Shing Mun on 12 December.

- 294. Stonechat** (*Saxicola torquata*)
Common and widespread during both winters. Extreme dates were until 26 April and from 11 September.
- 295. Grey Bushchat** (*Saxicola ferrea*)
Up to three, including a male, on Volunteer Slopes (Fanling) between 9 and 17 January. A pair at Lin Au (Tai Po) on 25 January. Two females on Victoria Peak between 29 January and 5 February. A male and two females at Fanling Golf Course on 3 February. Single birds at Mai Po on 6 February and at Robin's Nest on 7 March. Pairs at Lok Ma Chau on 28 November and Mong Tseng on 27 December. A male with two females near Sai Kung on 29 December.
- 296. Blue Rock-thrush** (*Monticola solitaria*)
Recorded from widespread areas, including urban localities, until 23 April and from 6 September.
- 297. Chestnut-breasted Rock-thrush** (*Monticola rufiventris*)
Adult males at Victoria Peak between 14 January and 23 February, Luen Yick (Plover Cove) between 21 and 31 January and the Chinese University on 10 March.
- 298. Violet Whistling Thrush** (*Myiophonus caeruleus*)
Locally common.
- 299. Pale Thrush** (*Turdus pallidus*)
Quite common and widespread until 25 April. At least one at Hong Kong University on 8 December and one at Bride's Pool on 31 December.
- 300. Eye-browed Thrush** (*Turdus obscurus*)
Single birds at Mong Tseng on 15 February and Tai Po on 6 March. Up to 13 at Hong Kong University between 15 and 25 April. One returned to the Hong Kong University from 21 November. One on Ma Wan Island on 28 November, and one at Bride's Pool on 30 December.
- 301. Brown Thrush** (*Turdus chrysolaus*)
At least one remained in the area of Hong Kong University and Conduit Road until 9 February. One at Chi Ma Wan on 20 March.
- 302. Grey-backed Thrush** (*Turdus hortulorum*)
Quite common and widespread until 14 April and from 5 November.

303. Dusky Thrush (*Turdus naumanni*)

Continued to be quite common and widespread in small numbers until 23 April. Absent at the end of the year. Three records of the Red-tailed race (*naumanni*) from Kowloon Park (5 January), Aberdeen (10 March) and Hong Kong University (19 April), otherwise all birds were of the dark race *eunomus*.

304. Blackbird (*Turdus merula*)

Uncommon, but widespread during both winters. Up to 50 at Tsung Pak Long on 28 November. Extreme dates were until 26 March and from 7 November.

305. Grey Thrush (*Turdus cardis*)

Scarce, but widespread in small numbers until 23 April. One or two in the area of Hong Kong University from 15 November. A male at Tai Po Kau on 17 December.

307. Orange-headed Ground-thrush (*Zoothera citrinus*)

A male at Chi Ma Wan on 21 March. This is the seventh record for Hong Kong.

308. White's Thrush (*Zoothera dauma*)

Recorded in small numbers, mostly single birds, from widespread areas during both winters. Not particularly uncommon. Extreme dates were until 27 April and from 20 November.

310. Great Tit (*Parus major*)

Common and widespread. First young out of the nest noted on 19 April.

311. Yellow-bellied Tit (*Parus venustulus*)

The third recorded irruption of this species in Hong Kong occurred during the 1976/77 winter. The first birds were seen at O Tau, near Sai Kung, on 7 November and by the end of that month small flocks of up to 30 were reported from many widespread areas, where they remained until the end of the year.

312. Red-headed Tit (*Aegithalos concinnus*)

Two at Sok Kwu Wan, Lamma Island on 19 December. This is the second record for Hong Kong. Comprehensive field notes (TPG) were accepted by the Records Committee.

313. Richard's Pipit (*Anthus novaeseelandiae*)

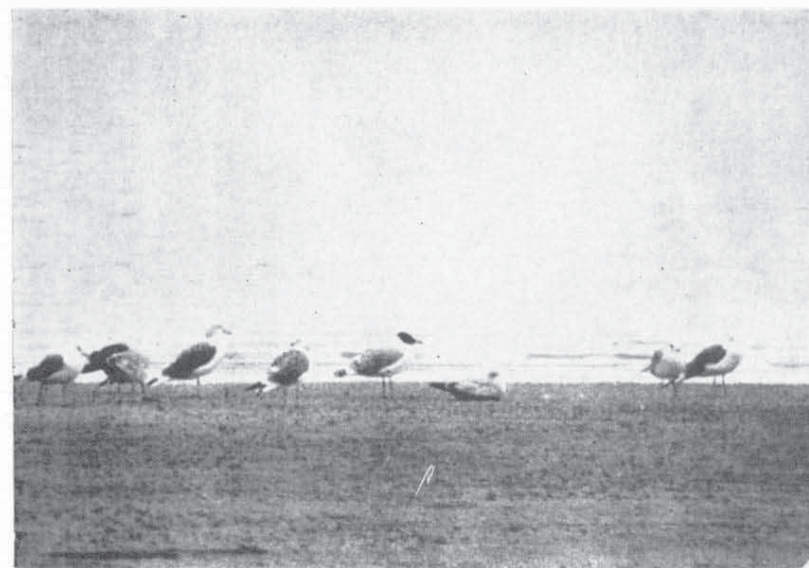
Quite common and widespread until late April and from late September, but odd birds were seen outside of this period. Extreme dates were until 28 May and from 10 September.

314. Indian Tree-pipit (*Anthus hodgsoni*)

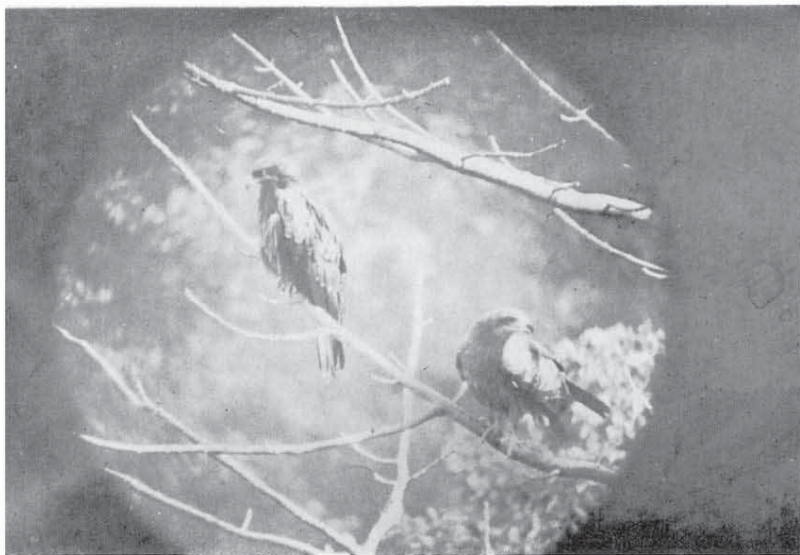
Common and widespread during both winters. Extreme dates were until 26 April and from 13 October.



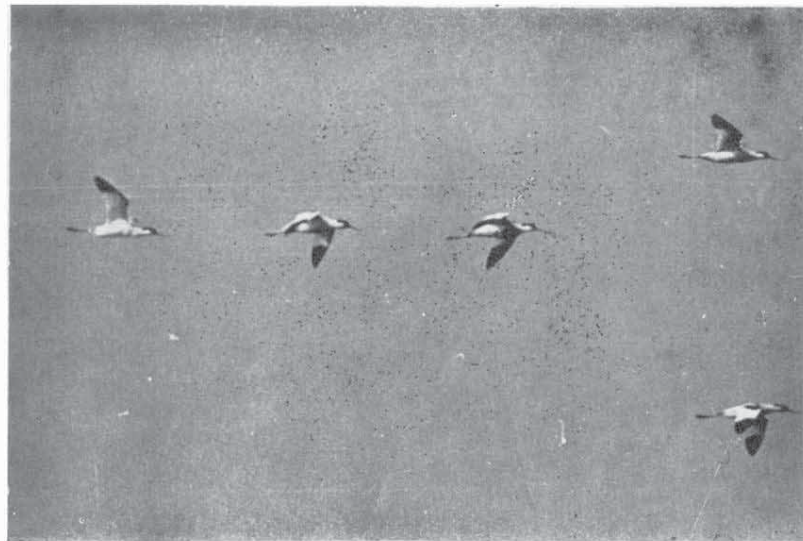
Common Kingfisher
Photo: M. L. Chalmers



Great Black-headed Gull
Photo: M. L. Chalmers



Black Eared Kites
Photo: C. R. Payne



Avocets
Photo: D. J. Galloway



Waders at Mai Po
Photo: M. L. Chalmers



Black-tailed Godwit
Photo: D. J. Galloway



Brown Flycatcher
Photo: D. J. Galloway

315. Red-throated Pipit (*Anthus cervinus*)

Uncommon but recorded from widespread areas until 30 April. Even scarcer at the start of the 1976/77 winter, but the few records were again from widespread localities. The highest numbers were from Kai Tak where up to 64 were noted. Extreme dates were until 30 April and from 8 October.

318. Upland Pipit (*Anthus sylvanus*)

Recorded from Tai Mo Shan, Kowloon Peak and Sunset Peak throughout the year.

319. Forest Wagtail (*Dendronanthus indicus*)

Single birds at Mai Po on 15 April and the Chinese University on 19 April. Six records of single birds from widespread areas between 11 September and 1 November.

320. White Wagtail (*Motacilla alba*)

Common and widespread during both winters. Extreme dates were until 9 May and from 25 September.

321. Grey Wagtail (*Motacilla cinerea*)

Quite common and widespread during both winters. Extreme dates were until 9 May and from 22 August.

322. Yellow Wagtail (*Motacilla flava*)

Locally common during both winters and on migration. Records are predominately from the Deep Bay area and Kai Tak (on migration) but occasionally seen elsewhere. 228 counted at Kai Tak on 30 April and a flock of 120 at Castle Peak on 6 May. Extreme dates were until 28 May and from 28 August.

324. Fork-tailed Sunbird (*Aethopyga christinae*)

Recorded throughout the year from widespread areas including Hong Kong Island, Tai Po Kau, Shing Mun, Ma Liu Shui, Lam Tsuen Valley and the Sai Kung/Clearwater Bay area.

325. White-eye (*Zosterops japonica*)

Common and widespread.

326. Scarlet-backed Flowerpecker (*Dicaeum cruentatum*)

Recorded from widespread areas of the New Territories, urban Kowloon and Mid-Levels on Hong Kong Island. Apparently scarcer during mid-summer.

327. Fire-breasted Flowerpecker (*Dicaeum ignipectus*)

Recorded from Tai Po Kau, Ma Liu Shui, Fung Yuen (near Tai Po), Plover Cove, Hong Kong University, Victoria Barracks and Victoria Peak in ones and twos (mostly males) during both winters. Extreme dates were until 7 March and from 19 October.

328. Black-tailed Hawfinch (*Coccothraustes migratoria*)

Recorded in small flocks (up to 25) from widespread areas

of the New Territories, Kowloon Park and Hong Kong University during both winters. Extreme dates were until 19 April and from 13 November.

329. Chinese Greenfinch (*Carduelis sinica*)

Uncommon but widespread. Apparently scarcer during the summer months. Maximum counts were an estimated 50 at Yung Shue Wan, Lamma Island on 29 February and a flock of 63 at Castle Peak on 9 October. Two juveniles with four adults at Happy Valley on 15 September, but these may have been escapes. The status of this species is still unclear.

331. Common Rosefinch (*Carpodacus erythrinus*)

Up to three at Fanling between 9 and 17 January. Up to six, including an adult male, at Sek Kong between 16 January and 8 February. At least two, including a male in the Lam Tsuen Valley on 16 January and 7 March. A pair at Beas River on 3 February. Three, including a male, at Mong Tseng on 15 February. A flock of 16 including several males, above Junk Bay on 21 February. Up to 20 at Bride's Pool on 7 March. A male at Fung Yuen (near Tai Po) on 22 December and a male with two females/immatures at Bride's Pool on 30 December.

332. Masked Bunting (*Emberiza spodocephala*)

Common and widespread during both winters. Extreme dates were until 2 May and from 24 October.

333. Tristram's Bunting (*Emberiza tristrami*)

Up to ten remained at Tai Po Kau until 6 March. A flock of 12 at Fanling on 9 January. Odd birds at Sek Kong on 16 January and Ma Nam Wat (near Sai Kung) on 28 February. Up to 30 returned to the Tai Po Kau Forestry Reserve from 4 December.

334. Chestnut Bunting (*Emberiza rutila*)

Three separate records of single adult males, at Sha Tin on 12 February, Ho Chung on 13 March and Mai Po on 28 March.

335. Yellow-breasted Bunting (*Emberiza aureola*)

One near Sai Kung on 1 January. A flock of over 50 feeding on the reed-heads at Mai Po on 18 January. Quite widespread in small numbers between 8 April and 10 May. Between 23 October and 13 November recorded at Sai Kung (up to 15), Three Fathoms Cove and Mong Tseng (over 70).

336. Grey-headed Bunting (*Emberiza fucata*)

One or two at Long Valley on 1 and 18 January. Three at Mong Tseng on 15 February. One at Mai Po on 4 December.

337. Little Bunting (*Emberiza pusilla*)

Uncommon but widespread, usually in small numbers, during

both winters. Up to 50 at Mai Po between 11 March and 6 April. Extreme dates were until 9 May and from 7 November.

338. Reed Bunting (*Emberiza schoeniclus*)

An immature male at Mai Po on 19 April (MAW). This is the second record of this species accepted for Hong Kong.

339. Crested Bunting (*Melophus lathamii*)

Uncommon but widespread in the New Territories, usually in small numbers, during both winters. In the summer months recorded on the upper slopes of Tai Mo Shan, Razor Hill and Bluff Island where it probably bred.

340. Tree Sparrow (*Passer montanus*)

Common and widespread but usually associated with habitation.

341. Chesnut Munia (*Lonchura malacca*)

Two remained at Happy Valley during January and were probably escapes. Up to four at Mai Po between 6 April and 17 May. One at Lok Ma Chau on 19 April. One at the Chinese University on 12 July. One at Mai Po on 3 October.

342. Spotted Munia (*Lonchura punctulata*)

Quite common and widespread, usually in flocks. Over 200 at Three Fathoms Cove on 29 December. Recorded throughout the year. Nest-building activity noted at Tai Tam in June and Hong Kong University in early October.

343. White-backed Munia (*Lonchura striata*)

Recorded throughout the year from widespread areas, although most frequently reported from the north side of Hong Kong Island. Always in small numbers, with a maximum count of 14 at Hong Kong University on 5 November. Nest-building activity noted at Tai Po on 1 February and young birds just out of the nest seen there on 15 February.

C. SPECIES WHICH, ALTHOUGH ORIGINALLY INTRODUCED BY MAN, HAVE NOW ESTABLISHED A REGULAR FERAL BREEDING STOCK WHICH APPARENTLY MAINTAINS ITSELF WITHOUT NECESSARY RECOURSE TO FURTHER INTRODUCTION.

501. Emerald Dove (*Chalcophaps indica*)

One or two seen in the Tai Po Kau Forestry Reserve throughout the year. Single birds also seen at Shap Long, Lantau on 8 January, Chinese University on 11 January, Chung Hom Kok on 17 January, Shing Mun on 22 October and Fanling on 12 December.

502. Rose-ringed Parakeet (*Psittacula krameri*)

Recorded throughout the year from widespread areas, including urban Hong Kong and Kowloon. Usually in small numbers but a

flock of 30 over Waterloo Road on 16 March. The status of this species is still unclear but a decline is evident.

503. Common Mynah (*Acridotheres tristis*)

One at Long Valley on 11 January. Up to three quite regularly seen at Sek Kong between April and August. Two at Kai Tak on 15 April and 5 May. One at Kadoorie Farm on 4 May. One at Ha Tsuen on 17 June and three at Mong Tseng on 24 October.

504. White-checked Laughing-thrush (*Garrulax sannio*)

The expansion of range of this species during 1976 was quite remarkable. To enable this sudden increase to be monitored full details of submitted records are given below:—

Hong Kong University, 22 March—21 April, max. 12 — possibly escapes as several had abraded feathers.

Tseng Lan Shue (Junk Bay), May — early October, max. ten — recorded daily and probably bred.

Bird Hill (near Tai Po), 8 May, three.

Shing Mun, 13 May, one.

Pokfulam, 23 May, three.

Victoria Peak (head of Hatton Road), 11 September, max. five.

Cheung Chau, 28 November, one — near temple and possibly released.

Route Twisk, 12 December, eight — possibly released as very tame.

Bowen Path (Hong Kong Island), 31 December, two — tame, therefore possibly escaped.

505. Red Avadavat (*Amandava amandava*)

Three records from Mai Po. One on 14 May, a pair on 25 October and eight on 1 November.

D. SPECIES INTRODUCED BY MAN, OF WHICH THE FERAL POPULATIONS MAY OR MAY NOT BE SELF — SUPPORTING.

601. Sulphur-crested Cockatoo (*Cacatua sulphurea*)

Regularly recorded from Victoria Barracks/Central (daily, up to 20), Hong Kong University (daily, up to 18) and Happy Valley. Breeding was proved in Victoria Barracks on 27 March when one was found nesting in a hole in a bombax tree, 25 feet off the ground.

602. Indian Grackle (*Gracula religiosa*)

Up to three in the Fanling area between 24 January and 20 March. Single birds at She Shan on 17 April, Chinese University on 21 September, Hong Kong University on 25 November and Three Fathoms Cove on 29 December.

E. SPECIES OF WHICH ALL PUBLISHED RECORDS ARE SUSPECTED OF BEING OF BIRDS ESCAPED OR RELEASED FROM CAPTIVITY.

708. Pekin Robin (*Leiothrix lutea*)

A flock of four in the Tai Po Kau Forestry Reserve on 3 January — these birds were in perfect plumage and displayed the characteristics of wild birds. Single birds at La Salle Road, Kowloon on 5 April and Tai Tam on 8 April. Two on Victoria Peak on 16 May. One at Ho Man Tin on 29 November.

710. Java Sparrow (*Padda oryzivora*)

Two feeding on uncut rice at Sai Kung on 23 October.

715. Budgerigar (*Melopsittacus undulatus*)

As usual, odd birds seen free-flying in urban areas.

721. Rustic Bunting (*Emberiza rustica*)

One at Kai Tak on 16 January.

(723). Rainbow Lorikeet (*Trichoglossus haematodus*)

Two at Shouson Hill in early summer.

(724). Vinous-breasted Starling (*Sturnus burmannicus*)

One or two in the King's Park area of Kowloon in April and October.

(725). Azure-winged Magpie (*Cyanopica cyanus*)

Four which escaped from the Botanical Gardens in 1975 have established themselves as free-flying and during 1976 were regularly seen in the area.

(726). Pied Bushchat (*Saxicola caprata*)

A male seen in the vicinity of Kai Tak from mid-April onwards.

(727). Yellow-fronted Canary (*Serinus mozambicus*)

Odd birds seen at Hong Kong University on 30 January and 16 September. A very popular cage-bird.

(728). Hawfinch (*Coccothraustes coccothraustes*)

One at Hong Kong University from 8 to 12 May. In view of the locality and tameness of the bird this record has been relegated to Category E, although Hong Kong is within its known range.

(729). Paradise Whydah (*Vidua paradisaea*)

A male at Happy Valley on 13 and 14 October.

APPENDIX TO THE SYSTEMATIC LIST FOR 1971
(OLD NUMBERING)

107. Oriental Plover (*Charadrius veredus*)

One at Mai Po on 16 May (RJB). A review of this record, which includes slides, confirmed that the bird seen was of this species (in partial breeding plumage).

APPENDIX TO THE SYSTEMATIC LIST FOR 1975

291. Daurian Redstart (*Phoenicurus aureus*)

One at Mount Butler on 17 October (HA). A new early date for 1975.

SECOND APPENDIX TO 'AN ANNOTATED CHECK-LIST OF THE BIRDS OF HONG KONG' BY M. A. WEBSTER, PUBLISHED BY THE HONG KONG BIRD WATCHING SOCIETY, 1975. (NUMBERS CORRESPOND TO THOSE USED IN THE CHECK-LIST).

10. One male off Ting Kau on 16 April 1976.
11. '(Schrenk's Bittern)' and 'Von Schrenk's Little Bittern' should read '(Schrenck's Bittern)' and 'Von Schrenck's Little Bittern.'
21. 'grey phase' bird reported in 1976.
22. Three additional records and can now more accurately be regarded as a 'Non-breeding visitor.'
25. A single pair bred at Yim Tso Ha in 1976.
31. Several records from Mai Po until 9 May and from 21 November 1976. Flocks up to 30.
37. '3500' new high estimate for the Deep Bay area. New last spring date 9 May 1976.
40. Flocks up to '100.'
43. A female at Castle Peak on 23 October 1976. Delete 'Three records.'
45. At least one at Mai Po on 7 and 10 January 1976.
50. Maximum count of '450.'
52. A female at Mai Po on 30 October 1976. Delete 'Two records.'
54. A flock of nine at Mai Po on 1 November 1976. Delete 'Two records.'
56. One at Shing Mun on 20 June 1976.
73. New late date 4 April 1976.
78. New early autumn date 12 September 1976.
87. New early spring date 6 April 1976. Delete 'Five.'
94. New late spring date 19 April 1976.
96. Parties up to '40.'
97. New late spring date 7 May 1976.
102. New early autumn date 27 July 1976.
103. Up to three at Kai Tak between 11 October and 8 November and one there on 24 December 1976. New late spring date 16 May 1971.
114. New late spring date 9 May 1976.

116. Three at Kai Tak on 30 April and 5 May 1976.
117. First record away from the Deep Bay Marshes (Sai Kung). New high count '65.' New early records from 18 January 1976.
119. New late spring date 4 May 1976.
123. New high flock count of '400' (December).
126. Two further January records.
128. New high count of '52.'
131. Also recorded from Kai Tak. New early spring date 14 March 1976.
132. New high count of '1000+.'
134. New high count of '70' (October).
135. New maximum of 43.
138. New late autumn date 21 November 1976.
140. New high count of 48. New late autumn date 5 December 1976.
141. The wintering bird at Lok Ma Chau remained until 6 January 1976. New late autumn date of 21 November 1976.
143. Regularly recorded from 2 January 1976 — the first record of over-wintering.
144. New high count of '60.' New late date 4 March 1976. New early date 21 November.
145. Recorded through the summer at Kai Tak. (Status to be reviewed).
146. New late date 17 April 1976. One summer record 17 June 1976.
151. Several records for February, March and December 1976.
153. New late date 20 April 1976. New early date 26 September 1976.
154. New high flock count of '53.' New early date 7 November 1976.
- 155.1 *Stercorarius longicaudus* Vieillot. Long-tailed Skua
Northern Holarctic.
Vagrant. One record. An adult at Mai Po on 9 May 1976. (new entry).
160. A flock of 27 at Tai Lam Bay on 19 September.
- 161.1 *Sterna fuscata*. Linnaeus. Sooty Tern.
Oceanic.
Vagrant. One record. At least seven, including two immatures, were seen flying east off Ting Kau during a typhoon on 19 September 1976. (new entry).
163. 15 off Ting Kau and two off Tai Lam on 19 September 1976. Delete 'Three records.'
175. One at Ho Sheung Heung (Long Valley) on 2 and 3 October 1976. Delete 'Four records.'
199. Single birds at Mong Tseng on 15 February and Cheung Chau on 26 July and 25 August 1976.
210. One at Tai Mo Shan on 12 September 1976. Delete 'Two records.'
- 220.1 *Sturnus philippensis* (Forster) Chestnut-cheeked Starling.
Japan.
Vagrant. One at Mai Po on 28 March and 8 April 1976. (new entry).
222. New high count of '200.'
228. New maximum count of 78.
230. New early date 6 September 1976.
234. A male at Tai Po Kau on 3 January 1976. Delete 'Five records.'
235. Several late spring records (status to be reviewed).
236. New late date 19 April 1976.
244. New early date 8 August 1976.
246. Recorded during January, February and December (status to be reviewed).
249. New early spring date 5 April 1976.
Delete '(7 records).' New early autumn date 3 September 1976. Delete '(7 records).' Additional localities.
251. New early date 19 September 1976.
253. New early autumn date 12 September 1976.
257. New early date 18 September 1976.
271. New late date 17 April 1976.
276. One near Plover Cove on 30 December 1976.
299. New late date 25 April 1976.
300. New early date 21 November 1976.
301. New late date 20 March 1976.
303. Three records of race *naumanni* in 1976.
304. New maximum flock count '50.'
307. A male at Chi Ma Wan on 21 March 1976. Delete 'six records.'
308. New late date 27 April 1976.
311. Third recorded irruption from 7 November 1976.

- 312. Two at Sok Kwu Wan, Lamma Island on 19 December 1976.
- 319. New late autumn date 1 November 1976.
- 334. New early spring date 12 February 1976.
- 335. New late spring date 5 May 1976.
- 337. New late date 9 May 1977.
- 338. An immature male at Mai Po on 19 April 1976.
Delete 'one record.'
- 504. Range expansion into the New Territories and Kowloon.
- 601. Breeding now proved. Add asterisk after status.
- 721. One at Kai Tak on 16 January 1976.
- 723. *Trichoglossus haematodus* Rainbow Lorikeet
Two at Shouson Hill in early summer 1976.
- 724. *Sturnus burmannicus* Vinous-breasted Starling
One or two at King's Park, Kowloon in April and October 1976.
- 725. *Cyanopica cyanus* (Pallas) Azure-winged Magpie
Four in the vicinity of the Botanical Gardens throughout 1976.
- 726. *Saxicola caprata* Linnaeus Pied Bushchat
A male at Kai Tak from mid-April 1976.
- 727. *Serinus mozambicus* Yellow-fronted Canary
A popular cage-bird occasionally seen free-flying.
- 728. *Coccothraustes coccothraustes* (Linnaeus) Hawfinch
One at the Hong Kong University from 8 to 12 May 1976.
- 729. *Vidua paradisaea* Paradise Whydah
A male at Happy Valley on 13 and 14 October 1976.

NOTES ON SEABIRD OBSERVATIONS IN THE SOUTH CHINA SEA

David Melville and M. A. Webster

There has been an increasing amount of work on Pacific seabird studies since Serventy's (1953) reported on the 'state of the art'. The Smithsonian Institution's "Pacific Ocean Biological Survey Program", initiated in 1963, concentrated on the central and eastern Pacific (King 1974). Shuntov (1974) reports on observations in the north Pacific, Sea of Japan, East China Sea and off Australasia. The Pacific Seabird Group currently promotes research on Pacific seabirds, but activity tends to be centred around the northeast/east Pacific while current Japanese research is concentrated in the north Pacific (Ogi 1976). McClure (1974) has summarised ringing recoveries in the western Pacific.

The South China Sea appears to be a little studied area and thus we were very pleased when Lt. Bywater and the crew of H.M.S. Wolverton agreed to make some observations whilst on duty patrols in the area. Two voyages were made—one in September 1976, the other from mid-January to mid-February 1977. Fig. 1 shows the area covered—for further details, reference should be made to Admiralty Chart 1263, "South China Sea".

None of the crew were experienced seabird watchers and identification was aided by Alexander (1954), Harrison (1962), King (1967), and on the second voyage by Slater (1970). No systematic watches were made and observers simply noted birds as and when they saw them. Many of the records only identified birds to families or groups; however these have been included in Tables 1 and 2 which summarise all of the observations. Additional notes on some observations are given below.

Shearwaters

With the exception of one bird off the Mekong Delta on 27 September, all records refer to the area between Hong Kong and the northern Philippines.

The only birds specifically identified were Streaked Shearwaters (*Puffinus leucomelas*). Cheng (1976) states that this species is found "all over Chinese waters". Shuntov (1974) shows it wintering throughout the South China Sea (fig. 42), however the text suggests that the main movements occur through the East China Sea, the northern, spring migration being "mainly in the eastern half of the sea". Jones (1965) found the species "numerous" off Japan in early Oct. and recorded "many thousand" in the same area at the

end of the month but did not record it from the South China Sea during October, while Morzer Bruyns (1965) recorded four in the South China Sea 20-21 October and found the species absent from the Philippines 23-26 October. It is thought that the main wintering area for this species is off New Guinea.

Several other species of shearwater could occur in the area, notably the Pale-footed Shearwater (*Puffinus carneipes*). Shuntov (1974) notes that this species appears in the East China Sea and the Sea of Japan in March/April. The Slender-billed (*Puffinus tenuirostris*) and Sooty Shearwaters (*Puffinus griseus*) do not pass through the Korean Strait into the Sea of Japan in spring but pass further east. The only shearwater records for Malaya relate to medium sized, dark birds seen in August 1950 in the Malacca Straits (6°N, 98°E)—tentatively identified as Pale-footed or Wedge-tailed Shearwaters (*Puffinus pacificus*) (Medway & Wells 1976).

Petrels

A considerable northwest movement of birds was noted in the East Java Sea half an hour before sunrise on 30 January. No attempt was made to identify the species at the time, but the notes suggest that the birds were Bulwer's Petrels (*Bulweria bulwerii*): "Birds small (7"-9"?) with rapid w'beats. Colour probably all dark brown or black. Stocky neck with pos. short bill. Tail fan-shaped. Wings beat at wrists". None were seen after sunrise.

The migration patterns of this species are unknown (King 1967, Vaurie 1965), however Harrisson (1952) noted "Tantalising are the records, scattered over several years, for evidently extensive passage migration of a small, all dark shearwater-petrel. Both Mr. F. G. Allen and I surely identify these as Bulwer's Petrel which has not been recorded in South-east Asia". The species has not been recorded from Sabah (Gore 1968) or the Malay peninsula (Medway & Wells 1976). Shuntov (1974) records the species in the southern half of the East China Sea in spring and summer but apparently did not find it in the area between north Australia and the Sunda Isles.

Storm petrels

The two records on 29 and 30 September near the Paracels were very tentatively identified as Fork-tailed Petrels (*Oceanodroma furcata*), however good views were not obtained (on 29 September the birds were fluttering around the ship's steaming light at 0430 hrs. local, in heavy rain). It seems more likely that the birds were Swinhoe's Storm Petrel (*Oceanodroma monorhis*). Lockley (1974), who considers the bird to be a subspecies of Leach's Storm Petrel (*O. leucorrhoa*), shows both *O.l.leucorrhoa* and *O.l.monorhis* dispersing throughout the South China to Java and east to western New Guinea and the western Pacific. It has been collected off northern

New Guinea (King 1967); there are single specimen records from Sabah and Hong Kong (Gore 1968, Webster 1975). Off the Malay peninsula *monorhis* is a "non-breeding visitor, seen or collected in the Malacca Straits and off Singapore in September-November, and between 22 April and 10 May" (Medway & Wells 1976).

Boobies

Three species were recorded, Blue-faced (*Sula dactylatra*), Red-footed (*S. sula*) and Brown (*S. leucogaster*).

The Blue-faced Booby has been recorded breeding on Paulau Perak but there are no records from the east coast of Peninsular Malaya (Medway & Wells 1976). Although Cheng (1976) does not record the species from China, Jones (1965) notes it as "infrequent" in the China Sea. The Red-footed and Brown Boobies nest on the Paracels (Si Sha Islands), the Brown Booby wintering from Shanghai to Taiwan and Hainan (Cheng 1976). Mörzer Bruyns (1965) records the Red-footed Booby as "very abundant" in the Sulu Sea, Philippines.

Cormorants

The only species identified was the Little Pied Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax melanoleucos*) off the coast of Borneo. All cormorants seen were associated with logs or other suitable perches.

Frigatebirds

None were specifically identified but both Great and Lesser Frigatebirds (*Fregata minor*, *F. ariel*) occur in the area where birds were observed.

Terns

Four species of terns were tentatively identified, the Brown Noddy (*Anous stolidus*), the Black Noddy (*Anous tenuirostris*), the Blue-grey Noddy (*Procelsterna cerulea*), and the Sooty or Bridled Tern (*Sterna fuscata* or *anaethetus*). Brown and Black Noddies were recorded off the east coast of Borneo in January, and Sooty/Bridled Terns off Palawan Is. in September. The species twice identified as Blue-grey Noddy off the east coast of Borneo may have been the Bridled Tern as the Blue-grey Noddy's range does not normally extend so far west (King 1967).

Phalaropes

The birds were not specifically identified but were presumably the Red-necked Phalarope (*Lobipes lobatus*) which winters in abundance off northern New Guinea (King 1967, Mayr 1941, Mörzer Bruyns 1965).

Skuas

The Pomarine Skua (*Stercorarius pomarinus*) is "common off the coast of Japan in spring, probably as a migrant from the Southwest Pacific" (King 1967). Of 36 skuas seen off northern Irian Jaya, New Guinea in early April, three were definitely identified as this species and the remainder were probably also this species (Melville 1977a). Although Medway & Wells (1976) give no records from the east coast of the Malay Peninsula, Boonsong & Cronin (1974) record the species as a "common migrant" in Thailand. Mörzer Bruyns (1965) saw one at the Anambas Is. northeast of Singapore on 19 October and noted that the species "regularly migrates through the Philippines to winter . . . on the north coast of New Guinea". There is one record from Hong Kong (de la Moussaye 1958).

Although specimens of the Great Skua (*Catharacta skua*) have been taken off the coast of Japan (Ornithological Society of Japan 1974), there are no records from China (Cheng 1976) and it does not appear to have been recorded previously from the South China Sea. Although the birds seen on 9 February were described as "big heavy birds" it is possible that they were immature *Stercorarius* skuas. The Arctic Skua (*Stercorarius parasiticus*) has not been recorded from China (Cheng 1976), while there is one record of the Long-tailed Skua (*Stercorarius longicaudus*) from Hong Kong (Melville 1977b).

Gulls

"Black-headed" Gulls were recorded off Sabah and the Mekong Delta, Vietnam on 14 and 27 September respectively. The Black-headed Gull (*Larus ridibundus*) was first recorded in Borneo in 1950 (Smythies 1960), and is recorded as a "regular but scarce winter visitor" off Sabah (Gore 1968). The date of the record is surprising, however Smythies (1960) notes a group of eight (including two in full breeding plumage) seen on 19 May 1955.

Both Black-headed and Brown-headed Gulls (*Larus brunnicephalus*) occur as winter visitors in South Vietnam (Wildash 1968), the Black-headed being less common, as is the case in the Malay Peninsula (Medway & Wells 1976).

Date	Latitude & Longitude	Distance to nearest land	Species	Number	Direction of flight
6.9.76	19°00'N 116°55'E	89 m. Pratas Reef	shearwater	1	E
7.9.76	18°17'N 117°36'E	170 m. Pratas Reef	shearwater	1	—
7.9.76	17°57'N 117°53'E	143 m. North Luzon	shearwater	2	WSW
12.9.76	14°25'N 119°50'E	27 m. Subic Bay	shearwater	2	SSW
13.9.76	11°00'N 118°45'E	30 m. Palawan Is.	Streaked Shearwater	50	N
13.9.76	10°52'N 118°39'E	33 m. Palawan Is.	Streaked Shearwater	4	SE
13.9.76	10°23'N 116°40'E	37 m. Palawan Is.	Streaked Shearwater	35	NNE
14.9.76	8°35'N 116°40'E	37 m. Palawan Is.	Sooty/Bridled Tern	1	WSW
14.9.76	7°05'N 115°39'E	60 m. Kudat, Sabah	Black-headed Gull	1	—
14.9.76	8°08'N 105°31'E	40 m. Mekong Delta	Black-headed Gull	15-20	N
27.9.76	8°00'N 106°00'E	40 m. Mekong Delta	shearwater	10-15	—
28.9.76	10°07'N 109°49'E	55 m. Pulau Cecir de Mer			followed ship for 5 miles
		43 m. Sapate & Catwick Is.			
		87 m. Vietnam mainland	Red-footed Booby	2	SSE
28.9.76	11°33'N 110°48'E	93 m. Vietnam mainland	skua	4	SSW
29.9.76	14°12'N 112°25'E	180 m. Vietnam mainland	Red-footed Booby	1	—
29.9.76	14°38'N 112°40'E	110 m. Triton Is.	skua	4	ESE
29.9.76	16°40'N 113°20'E	30 m. Lincoln Is. Paracels	storm petrel	c 20	NW
30.9.76	17°20'N 113°23'E	190 m. Hainan Is.	Storm petrel	1	—
30.9.76	17°42'N 113°25'E	80 m. Rocky Is. Paracels	Blue-faced Booby	1	E



Date	Latitude & Longitude	Distance to nearest land	Species	Number	Direction of flight
18.1.77	17°38'N 118°03'E	130 m. C. Balinao	Streaked Shearwater	c 100	
18.1.77	17°30'N 118°12'E	115 m. C. Balinao	Streaked Shearwater	c 100	
18.1.77	17°14'N 118°20'E	100 m. C. Balinao	Streaked Shearwater	c 10	
18.1.77	regular sightings of these birds all afternoons	19 m. Kaviti Is.	frigatebird	1	
22.1.77	8°55'N 120°52'E	Sibutu Passages	booby	2	
22.1.77	4°49'N 119°41'E		frigatebird	1	
23.1.77	4°30'N 119°35'E	15 m. S. of Sibutu Is.	frigatebird	8	
23.1.77	4°05'N 119°31'E	35 m. S. of Sibutu Is.	Brown Noddy	46	
23.1.77	3°48'N 119°27'E	40 m. Ligitan Is.	booby	4	
23.1.77			Brown Booby	3	
23.1.77			noddy	4-5	
23.1.77	2°58'N 119°20'E	65 m. Maratua	?Blue-grey-Noddy	1	
23.1.77	2°25'N 119°15'E	44 m. Muaras Reef	cormorant	10	
23.1.77	2°10'N 119°15'E	27 m. Muaras Reef	Little Pied Cormorant	12	
24.1.77	0°57'S 119°00'E	25 m. Celebes Is.	Black Noddy	1	ENE
			Brown Noddy	1	
			cormorant	1	
			frigatebird	6	
			phalaropes	1	
			phalaropes	c 20	
			?Butler's Petrel	many flocks	NW
			booby	c 1000	SE
26.1.77	8°12'S 116°58'E	12 m. Lombok	noddy	—	
30.1.77	5°03'S 117°34'E	9 m. Kalu Kalukuang	Pomarine Skua	1	
30.1.77	4°48'S 117°38'E	24 m. Kalu Kalukuang	Brown Booby	1	
30.1.77	4°40'S 117°45'E	27 m. Kalu Kalukuang	Brown Booby	1	
31.1.77	4°25'S 117°52'E	48 m. Kalu Kalukuang	?Blue-grey-Noddy	8 adults	S
31.1.77	4°00'S 118°00'E	57 m. Cape Mandar	frigatebird	1	
1.2.77	2°50'N 119°07'E	42 m. Borneo	frigatebird	30+	
2.2.77	4°00'N 118°15'E	18 m. Tawau	frigatebird	2	
5.2.77	4°50'N 119°50'E	7 m. Pearl Bank	frigatebird	1	
5.2.77	6°35'N 120°00'E	40 m. Pearl Bank	booby	1	
6.2.77	9°55'N 121°05'E	17 m. Kalusha Is.	Red-footed Booby	regular sightings of groups, usually 3-5, but up to 10	
9.2.77	15°00'N 119°40'E	17 m. Capones Is.	Great Skua	3	
10.2.77	18°50'N 116°30'E	110 m. Pratas Is.	shearwater	1	NE

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SEABIRDS IN THE SOUTH CHINA SEA FROM M.V. "TAIPOOSEK"

M. L. Chalmers

This paper describes the seabirds recorded on a passage from Hong Kong to Singapore, commencing 4th August 1977, on board the cargo/passenger vessel M.V. "Taipoosek."

The complete list of birds seen on the five day voyage is tabulated in fig. 1. Times refer to GMT + 8 hours for 4th and 5th August, and thereafter to GMT + 7½ hours. Latitude and longitude are given to the nearest five minutes based on interpolation between noon day positions and known changes in course. In general, the vessel's track followed the usual route between Hong Kong and Singapore, passing to the east of the Paracels, and within 90 miles of the Vietnamese coast (Admiralty Chart 1263 refers).

Previous seabird records for Hong Kong are very sparse. The lack of sightings can probably be attributed to the shielding effect of the offshore Lema Islands and the general absence of observations during typhoons or other adverse weather conditions. For example, up to 1975 there had been only one sight record of a shearwater, thought to be either Sooty or Slender-billed (*Puffinus griseus/tenuirostris*) (Webster 1975). In addition, a Streaked Shearwater (*P. leucomelas*), with its bill wired, was found alive at Aberdeen in January 1977, presumably after being caught at sea by a fishing vessel (Society bulletin).

It was therefore interesting to note the numbers of shearwaters present in the northern part of the South China Sea, especially the first group of about 60 Streaked Shearwaters recorded just outside the limit of Hong Kong territorial waters, about 4 miles east of the Lema Islands. Although Streaked Shearwaters proved to be the most frequent species observed, several, all dark-brown shearwaters were also recorded. Unfortunately specific identification was seldom possible due to the lack of distinctive field characters and the unfamiliarity of the observer with this difficult group of Pacific shearwaters.

The larger, heavier individuals exhibited both dark and pale wing-linings. Although bill and foot colours were not clearly seen, it is probable that both Sooty and Pale-footed (*P. carneipes*) Shearwaters were present.

The smaller, medium-sized birds were seen at closer ranges and appeared to be of one species. They had fine dark bills, long tails, pale feet, dark underwings, and an easy flight style with frequent

glides on bowed wings, sometimes paddling on the surface of the sea or landing for several seconds to feed. They were tentatively identified as dark-phase Wedge-tailed Shearwater (*P. pacificus*). The possibility of them being Slender-billed Shearwaters was rejected because at the time none of the birds appeared small enough, and none showed the characteristic short rounded tail or rigid flight style attributed to this species (King et al. 1975).

Groups of Red-footed Boobies (*Sula sula*) were seen near the Paracel Islands, where they are known to breed. Both Masked or Blue-faced Boobies (*S. dactylatra*) and Brown Boobies (*S. leucogaster*) were noted in smaller numbers further south. In this region several flocks of Sooty or Bridled Terns (*Sterna fuscata/anaethetus*) were also recorded. Individuals which came close enough to the ship were all identified as Sooty Terns. One of the tern flocks was in association with a feeding group of unidentified shearwaters.

No birds at all were recorded on the fifth day, and on the last day the only seabirds seen were several terns in the approaches to Singapore.

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Date	Time	Approx. Position		Distance to nearest land	Species	Number	Movement	Notes
		Latitude °N	Longitude °E					
4.8.77	1715	22° 10'	114° 20'	4m. Po Toi Is., Hong Kong	Whiskered/White-winged Black Tern	1	SE	Many birds circling over water
	1730	22° 05'	114° 25'	4m. Lema Is., China	Streaked Shearwater	c. 60	SE	
	1740	22° 05'	114° 25'	"	Streaked Shearwater	c. 10	SE	
	1750	22° 05'	114° 25'	"	Whiskered Tern	2	N	
	1800	22° 00'	114° 20'	"	Streaked Shearwater	6	SE	
5.8.77	0730	19° 20'	113° 50'	150m. St. John Is., China	Wader Sp.	4	SE	Medium sized (possibly plover) Large, dark brown underparts and underwing (probably Pale-footed) Large, dark brown underparts and underwing (probably Sooty)
	0730	19° 20'	113° 50'	"	Shearwater Sp.	1	S	
	0915	19° 00'	113° 45'	150m. Tree Is., Paracels	Shearwater Sp.	1	S	
	1415	18° 00'	113° 40'	100m. Lincoln Is., Paracels	Red-footed Booby	2	SW	
	1415	18° 00'	113° 40'	"	Shearwater Sp.	1	W	
6.8.77	1415	18° 00'	113° 40'	"	Wedge-tailed Shearwater	1	SW	Large, dark brown underparts and underwing (probably Pale-footed) Dark phase
	1545	17° 45'	113° 35'	85m. "	Red-footed Booby	7 Ad + 1 imm.	W	
	1550	17° 45'	113° 35'	"	Red-footed Booby	1 Ad + 5 imm.	W	
	1620	17° 35'	113° 35'	75m. "	Red-footed Booby	7 Ad	W	
	1740	17° 20'	113° 35'	65m. Lincoln Is., Paracels	Red-footed Booby	4 Ad	W	
	1750	17° 20'	113° 35'	"	Red-footed Booby	1 Ad	W	
	1800	17° 15'	113° 35'	60m. "	Red-footed Booby	c. 60 Ad + 4 imm.	Feeding group	
	0630	15° 00'	112° 35'	90m. Triton Is., Paracels	Red-footed Booby	1 Ad	W	
	0700	14° 55'	112° 30'	135m. C. Varella, Vietnam	Wedge-tailed Shearwater	2 Ad	SW	
	1515	13° 25'	111° 45'	"	Red-footed Booby	1	SW	
7.8.77	1545	13° 20'	111° 45'	"	Wedge-tailed Shearwater	14	SW	Dark phase: pale feet observed Dark phase: pale feet observed
	1100	10° 05'	109° 95'	50m. Po. Sapatu, Vietnam	Red-footed Booby	1	W	
	1130	10° 00'	109° 50'	45m. "	Swallow Sp.	4	S	
	1430	9° 25'	109° 35'	40m. "	Sooty Tern	22	SW	
	1600	9° 10'	109° 20'	50m. "	Brown Booby	1 Ad)	W	
	1605	9° 10'	109° 20'	"	Masked Booby	1 Ad	SW	
	1610	9° 10'	109° 20'	"	Masked/Red-footed Booby	1 Ad + 1 imm.)	SW	
	1615	9° 10'	109° 20'	"	Sooty/Bridled Tern	c. 90	W	
	1630	9° 05'	109° 15'	55m. "	Masked Booby	1 Ad	SW	
	1640	9° 05'	109° 15'	55m. "	Masked/Red-footed Booby	1 Ad	SW	
9.8.77	1610	1° 20'	104° 05'	55m. Singapore	Sooty/Bridled Tern	c. 40)	SW	Mixed group. Shearwaters with both dark and light underparts.
	1300	1° 40'	104° 35'	20m. Johor, Malaysia	Shearwater Sp.	c. 20)	SW	
	1600	1° 20'	104° 05'	"	Caspian/Greater Crested Tern	1	S	
	1610	1° 20'	104° 05'	"	Whiskered/White-winged Black Tern	6	Feeding group	
	1610	1° 20'	104° 05'	"	Caspian Tern	2	W	

THE VANISHING BIRDS OF SOUTHERN CHINA

By C. A. Viney

During August 1976 I had the good fortune to visit southern China. Apart from being able to admire the considerable achievements of that developing country and the scenic splendours of Kweilin I was able to focus my binoculars on the birdlife of the region. Prior to the Second World War the rich birdlife of southern China had been well documented, however, since the cessation of hostilities little, if anything, has been published regarding the current status of birds in that area. Here indeed was a unique opportunity for a Hong Kong based bird watcher.

Our party, comprising for the most part architects from Hong Kong, travelled some 1500 miles visiting the provinces of Kwangtung, Hunan and the autonomous region of Kwangsi-Chuang. Long journeys through the countryside were undertaken by coach and rail and the highlight was undoubtedly an eight hour boat trip down the Li River from Kweilin to Yangsho.

Before my departure other China travellers, not quite so fanatically interested in birds, had advised me that there are no birds in China. This I found hard to believe as this remark is frequently made by newcomers about Hong Kong, which is in fact an excellent place to watch birds if you know where to look. Unfortunately, it is almost true of southern China—there are now virtually no birds, at least in the areas that I visited. Once Shum Chun was left behind the countryside became beautifully organized, commune followed commune each with its orderly fields of differing crops and in the damper areas almost endless paddyfields stretched to the horizon. Alongside the track neat lines of trees have been planted to please the eye of the traveller. All in such sharp contrast to the apparent disorder of the New Territories, no tin shacks, no dirty rivers, no litter, no disfiguring graves, no wastelands and unfortunately no birds. Where were the graceful egrets, flocks of bulbuls and mynahs that I saw from the train as it crawled through Shatin, Tai Po and Sheung Shui? From Shum Chun to Canton, apart from the ubiquitous sparrows, I did not see one wild bird from my carriage window.

Canton, a pleasant city with many parks and lakes, gave the unfortunate impression of being birdless, but a few House Swifts graced the air and one or two Chinese Bulbuls and small flocks of White-eyes could usually be found where there was a stand of trees.

I held much higher hopes for extraordinarily beautiful Kweilin and in fact the journey from the airport suggested that there were more birds about, as often small brown 'jobs' darted away as our

coach passed by. Unfortunately, the town presented the same birdless impression as Canton, but a wooded hillside produced a familiar Magpie-robin and the pine trees held a few Great Tits. In another area a patch of scrub, which had been left uncultivated as it formed part of the entrance area to the famous Reed Flute Cave, held good numbers of Chinese and Red-vented Bulbuls. The long excursion down the Li River through rural Kweilin was a magnificent experience but birds were few in areas where they should have abounded. In the mountains both Collared and Jungle Crows made their presence known and along the banks occasionally Rufous-backed Shrikes, a dove or two, Crested Mynahs and White Wagtails were seen. A shingle spit in the river held a few migrating Kentish Plovers and the slower reaches, which collected flotsam, attracted a few Black Kites (the well known scavenger of Hong Kong Harbour). Where were the truly waterside birds—the egrets, herons, rails and ducks? Of course, the communes had their flocks of domestic ducks and geese and a few fishermen still fished with Cormorants, but nowhere were wild birds common.

At Changsha I was delighted to see Red-rumped Swallows, but alas could not find the eagles that 'cleave the air' that Mao Tse-tung found here in 1925 when he penned his first poem. An excursion to Shaoshan revealed that this area held good numbers of Magpies and a few Black Drongos were seen in the fields. It was a pleasure to note that in Chairman Mao Tse-tung's first home a place had been found in the rafters for nesting swallows.

During the entire journey, only nineteen species were positively identified, although there were certainly one or two additional ones that got away. All of the birds that I identified could quite easily be seen in Hong Kong, although the Red-rumped Swallow is a migrant and might be difficult to track down. Most could be seen during a short walk almost anywhere and at any time in the New Territories.

Why are there so few birds? A major reason is undoubtedly the complete land utilization and consequent absence of suitable breeding habitat—there are virtually no hedgerows, wastelands, marshlands or trees that are not grown to bear fruit. Every available square foot in the rural areas is cultivated and nowhere was this made more apparent than along the banks of the Li River where narrow strips of land, perhaps only ten feet wide, between mountain and river were used for cultivation. The other major and perhaps even more significant factor is the extensive use of insecticides, particularly DDT, which were detected in many places. At one airport a considerable fleet of ancient biplanes was noted and on enquiry as to their use I was informed that they were used for crop spraying. I discussed the absence of birds with one guide

and he agreed that in his village there had been an enormous decline since his childhood but he continued that now there was more than enough food and that although Chinese people love birds they would rather have full bellies and do without some of the birds than to revert to the old unproductive system. He also explained that the government had banned the shooting of birds, except around airports where all large birds were shot to obviate birdstrike. I was also informed that trapping of wild birds for food is still extensively practised and judging by the numbers found in Hong Kong bird shops I should imagine for export as well.

Significantly, as the train arrived back at Shum Chun a flock of Cattle Egrets flew across the river and all the way back to Kowloon birds were my constant railside companions.

A lesson to be learnt is that the egrettries, 'fung shui' woods, plantations and especially the marshes that we have in Hong Kong are precious gems to be jealously guarded and protected, for their like certainly does not now exist across the Shum Chun River.

C. A. VINEY
August 1976

APPENDIX

A SPECIES LIST OF BIRDS RECORDED IN SOUTHERN CHINA — 14 to 22 August 1976

Black Kite (*Milvus migrans*)
Kentish Plover (*Charadrius alexandrinus*)
Rufous Turtle-dove (*Streptopelia orientalis*)
House Swift (*Apus affinis*)
Swallow (*Hirundo rustica*)
Red-rumped Swallow (*Hirundo daurica*)
Rufous-backed Shrike (*Lanius schach*)
Black Drongo (*Dicrurus macrocercus*)
Crested Mynah (*Acridotheres cristatellus*)
Magpie (*Pica pica*)
Jungle Crow (*Corvus macrorhynchos*)
Collared Crow (*Corvus torquatus*)
Chinese Bulbul (*Pycnonotus sinensis*)
Red-vented Bulbul (*Pycnonotus aurigaster*)
Magpie-robin (*Copsychus saularis*)
Great Tit (*Parus major*)
White Wagtail (*Motacilla alba*)
White-eye (*Zosterops japonica*)
Tree Sparrow (*Passer montanus*)

FIELD NOTES ON BIRDS SEEN IN CHINA IN JULY 1977

Canton — Changsha — Kweilin — Canton

By Karen Phillipps

During the early morning journey by train to the Chinese border at Lowu, I saw no birds of special interest except large flocks of Cattle Egrets in breeding plumage around the paddy fields in the northern part of the New Territories. Once on the train from Shumchun to Canton however, they seemed to disappear, and I saw only one flying overhead throughout the whole journey. There were the usual Swallows, Tree Sparrows and small groups of Crested Mynahs. The rice fields were flooded and in the process of being ploughed, while there was some harvesting going on at the same time. It was drizzling. A Chestnut Bittern flew out of the long reeds beside the track, and later on a Yellow Bittern was startled out from cover by the passing train. Tree cover consisted of avenues of eucalyptus growing alongside the railway and nearby road, Chinese pines on the hills and clumps of bamboo. Later that day in Canton, the weather alternated between showers and sunshine. One White-eye was seen in a park along with some sparrows and various small brown birds which remained unidentified.

We took the 10 p.m. train that evening up to Changsha in Hunan Province, a distance of approximately 650 miles. It began to get light around 5.15 a.m., by which time the railway was running fairly close to a tributary of the Xiang River. The earth was very red and the country much hillier, with many Chinese pines and fields of tea—for which the area is famous. A lot of rice was being planted and there were many lotus and fish ponds. The countryside looked very fertile. The first birds up were the Magpies. Spotted Doves were perched on wires, Black Drongos, Crested Mynahs, Swallows and swifts flying around; I saw a female Marsh Harrier wheeling over the river.

Later on in the hotel garden in Changsha I saw several White Wagtails. In the afternoon we drove over Xiang River to Yuelu Hill which is quite heavily forested. Crows were heard cawing regularly and some bird with a very high whistling call of two, three or four descending notes was heard close by—possibly some kind of cuckoo.

On the third day we drove out to Shaoshan (birthplace of the late Chairman Mao), a two and one-half hour drive through the

countryside. Apart from the already identified birds, a White-breasted Kingfisher was seen and another harrier quartering the paddy, but I could not be certain of its species. I saw a party of Crested Mynahs mobbing a Black Kite in a tea plantation near Shaoshan. Both Rufous-backed Shrikes and Brown Shrikes were seen, usually singly, the Rufous-backed being the more common. There were many Black Drongos but I saw only one Magpie-robin! In a domestic duck pond by the side of the road I was surprised to see a Great Crested Grebe swimming (looking rather incongruous). Presumably it had been injured or captured in some way and its wings had been clipped. At Shaoshan, which is a fertile valley surrounded by forested hills (mainly pine) an Eurasian Jay flew out of the woods calling raucously. Later on I saw two of them quarreling in the trees by the Shaoshan Rest House. A small flock of Chinese Greenfinches were seen there too, though later on in Kweilin they were more common. In the low growth and hanging bamboo by the side of the path I heard the call of the White-rumped Shama (*Copsychus malabaricus*), unluckily I never saw it. On the road back two small groups of Russet Sparrows were seen near the pine woods on the edge of the rice paddies. There were very few scarecrows in the fields; I counted only two during the long drive. Many of the farm houses had been thatched with rice straw and I saw large numbers of Tree Sparrows nesting in and around them.

The next day we were driven out to a People's Commune in the opposite direction from Shaoshan, about a ninety-minute drive into the country. A Black-capped Kingfisher was seen on the overhead wires, and I saw a Black Drongo diving and fluttering repeatedly at the surface of a fish pond. Red-vented Bulbuls were fairly common and a couple of Rufous Turtle-doves were identified; I thought there might have been some Red Turtle-doves also, as some birds appeared pinker and more compact than the Rufous, but they were never positively identifiable. Outside the Commune Hospital I saw a Chinese Bulbul perched on a wire beside a Brown Shrike, the shrike with a very large cricket in its mouth that was causing it a great deal of trouble. We were driven first through the Commune farmlands to a building where silk-worms were being reared. The surrounding earth was still brick-red, pine and tea had been planted on the small hills, and in the fields I saw sugarcane, sorghum, two crops of rice (maximum height eighteen inches), yellow and long beans, peanuts and groves of rather stunted mulberry trees that the silk-worms feed from. It was around the silk-worm huts and the small bushes close by that I noticed the Blue-throated Bee-eaters, their heads and shoulders dark chestnut and their brilliant blue backs and tails glinting in the sun. I saw five there and another later silhouetted on a wire. Later on in the day as we were being shown a dam, two egrets flew overhead. . . .

I saw only three in the ten days spent in China. Another Magpie-robin was seen later, and back at the hotel—White-rumped Swifts. There were various factories and schools to visit in the next couple of days so nothing more was added to my list except a sparrow which looked possibly melanistic but was more likely filthy.

We arrived in Kweilin around four p.m. on the 12th. The first bird I saw was a Chinese Greenfinch flying off into the bushes. Later on, up Fubo Hill where we were taken for the view, I saw large number of Swallows, House and White-rumped Swifts flying over the tiled roofs and in between the weird limestone crags. The earth had changed to brown-orange here, with a lot of houses being built and tiled with the grey limestone. Trees were a mixture of Cassia, Sycamore, Willows, Fan Palms and others in the town, Feathery Bamboo by the river, and the very common Chinese Pines.

Rice was being harvested and transplanted as elsewhere. Crops of millet and sugarcane were being grown. Some fairly large areas were left uncultivated and held old Chinese stone graves, with Indian Cattle and Water Buffaloes grazing nearby. The next day poured with rain though it cleared up slightly in the afternoon when we went to visit Reed Flute Cave. In the bushes and scrubby pines around the entrance I saw White-eyes, Greenfinches, Great Tits, Red-vented Bulbuls, sparrows and another White-breasted Kingfisher. Everywhere the fields were flooded and I saw many large butterflies of the *Papilio* family (possibly *bianor* or *protenor*).

The most interesting part of the trip—bird-wise, was definitely the journey down the Li River. The river was muddy after the rain, and we were towed behind another boat which made the journey slow and quiet. The morning was misty. Shrikes, Crested Mynahs, Greenfinches and a Black-capped Kingfisher were seen on the way to where we boarded our boat. There was a Buzzard perched in a tree on the bank of the river. In the low grassy areas and banks alongside I saw large gatherings of Collared Crows feeding, strutting and preening, and around a bend, just before we came to the high gorges there was a young Bonelli's Eagle which flew alongside the boat before veering off. Black Kites flew along the banks, and perched on the pebbly sand spits that stuck out into the water. On the craggy limestone cliffs 150-200 feet almost vertically above us, we could see small groups of mountain goats, with long, shaggy, cream—coloured coats and dark curling horns; later on I saw a number of younger ones that were browner or dark grey—probably domestic. The most exciting bird seen that day was a sub-adult Golden Eagle that swooped down from the cliffs only fifteen yards from the boat as it crept past an overhang. Later on the Collared Crows seemed to get scarcer and Jungle Crows took their place, but usually only in twos and

threes, perched in bamboo or in small trees along the banks. At one point a male Plumbeous Water-redstart flew past the boat and onto a low branch over the water. I could hear many birds calling in the trees edging the banks where the growth was thick. There were swifts of both kinds though the White-rumped were the ones seen using the liff caves along the river. A Little Green Heron was seen later. It started raining again in the afternoon. Small groups of Cormorants were perched on bamboo rafts that are used for fishing along the length of the river, though I did not see any of them fishing. We drove back after reaching Yangshuo, through some very medieval-looking countryside, I saw quite a few Black Drongos and an Oriental Hobby perched on an overhead wire, preening itself, its upper-parts dark brown/black, dark chestnut underneath. On the edge of a paddy field I saw a Richard's Pipit. Rufous Turtle-doves were perched on the wires and there were many Feral Pigeons seen around the small villages. A newly harvested ricefield we passed held a large gathering of both Collared Crows and Crested Mynahs.

We flew back to Canton the following day, where, because of the rain very little was seen except House Swifts. On our last full day we drove out to the town of Fu Shan through long avenues of eucalyptus. Harvesting was in full swing in the fields along the roadside. The school children apparently had the week off to help. I could see sparrows, House and White-rumped Swifts and Swallows in large flocks over the harvested rice, one White-breasted Kingfisher and several possible bulbuls.there were hundreds of domestic ducks, mainly white, in the irrigation ditches and feeding in the rice stubble.

LIST OF BIRDS IDENTIFIED

Great Crested Grebe	(<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>)
Little Green Heron	(<i>Butorides striatus</i>)
Cattle Egret	(<i>Bubulcus ibis</i>)
Yellow Bittern	(<i>Ixobrychus sinensis</i>)
Chestnut Bittern	(<i>Ixobrychus cinnamomeus</i>)
Black Kite	(<i>Milvus migrans</i>)
Marsh Harrier	(<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>)
Buzzard	(<i>Buteo buteo</i>)
Golden Eagle	(<i>Aquila chrysaetos</i>)
Bonelli's Eagle	(<i>Hieraetus fasciatus</i>)
Oriental Hobby	(<i>Falco severus</i>)
Rufous Turtle-dove	(<i>Streptopelia orientalis</i>)
Spotted Dove	(<i>Streptopelia chinensis</i>)
White-rumped Swift	(<i>Apus pacificus</i>)
House Swift	(<i>Apus affinis</i>)
White-breasted Kingfisher	(<i>Halcyon smyrnensis</i>)
Black-capped Kingfisher	(<i>Halcyon pileata</i>)
Blue-throated Bee-eater	(<i>Merops viridis</i>)
Swallow	(<i>Hirundo rustica</i>)
Red-vented Bulbul	(<i>Pycnonotus aurigaster</i>)
Chinese Bulbul	(<i>Pycnonotus sinensis</i>)
Black Drongo	(<i>Dicrurus macrocrens</i>)
Eurasian Jay	(<i>Garrulus glandarius</i>)
Magpie	(<i>Pica pica</i>)
Jungle Crow	(<i>Corvus macrorhynchos</i>)
Collared Crow	(<i>Corvus torquatus</i>)
Great Tit	(<i>Parus major</i>)
Magpie-robin	(<i>Copsychus saularis</i>)
Plumbeous Water-redstart	(<i>Rhyacornis fuliginosus</i>)
White Wagtail	(<i>Motacilla alba</i>)
Richard's Pipit	(<i>Anthus novaeseelandiae</i>)
Brown Shrike	(<i>Lanius cristatus</i>)
Rufous-backed Shrike	(<i>Lanius schach</i>)
Crested Mynah	(<i>Acridotheres cristatellus</i>)
White-eye	(<i>Zosterops japonica</i>)
Tree Sparrow	(<i>Passer montanus</i>)
Russet Sparrow	(<i>Passer rutilans</i>)
Chinese Greenfinch	(<i>Carduelis sinica</i>)

HONG KONG BIRD WATCHING SOCIETY

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

(To be sent to the Hong Kong Bird Watching Society,
c/o Zoology Dept., University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong.)

Introduced by
(if applicable)

I/We support the objects of the Hong Kong Bird Watching Society as listed below and wish to become (a) member(s).

I/We enclose \$30.00 single member or
\$40.00 husband & wife or
\$15.00 single member age between 16 & 20
\$ 5.00 child member when parents are not members.

or half these fees if joining after 30th June as my/our subscription for the current year. Children aged 7-16 one of whose parents is already a member need pay no subscription. All children are permitted to be members provided they are accompanied on Society Outings by a responsible adult and parents should sign below absolving the Society from any responsibility in case of accident or mishap on Outings.

Date..... Signature.....

Name & Address (block letters).....

Tel. No. (home) (Office)

The objects of the Hong Kong Bird Watching Society are:

- To facilitate and encourage the study of birds in Hong Kong;
- To provide information and assistance to all persons, either visitors to Hong Kong or residents, who are interested in birds;
- To correlate and publish from time to time the field records of all bird watchers in the Hong Kong;
- To publish and keep up-to-date a check-list of the birds of Hong Kong;
- To assist in the enforcement of the law relating to the protection of birds (The Wild Animals Protection Ordinance, No. 5 of 1976);
- To maintain a library of books on birds;
- To exchange information among members and with ornithological societies in other countries.

NOTES FOR APPLICANTS WISHING TO VISIT THE MAI PO MARSHES

The following information has been received from the Agriculture and Fisheries Department:

Individuals

Individual members of the public will normally be granted a 'day permit', however in certain cases permits for a longer period may be issued. Applications should be made *at least two weeks* in advance of the proposed date and must include the following details:

Name in full

Hong Kong Identity Card No. or Passport No.

Date of proposed visit.

Point of entry into area: Tam Kon Chau/Tai Shang Wai

Purpose of visit

Other pertinent details e.g. membership of relevant societies etc.

Groups

Group permits will be limited to a maximum of 35 persons per group and will be valid for one day only. Groups will normally be escorted by a Game Warden. To enable the spacing of group visits to prevent excessive disturbance, applications should be made *not less than one month* in advance of the proposed date and should include the following details:—

Name in full and Hong Kong Identity Card No. of group leader(s)

Date of proposed visit

Point of entry into area: Tam Kon Chau/Tai Shang Wai

Purpose of visit

Number in group

Other pertinent details

Please ensure that full details are given with your application, otherwise the issue of a permit may be delayed.

You are advised to apply for permits well in advance of the proposed visiting date.

All applications and enquiries should be addressed to:—

**The Director of Agriculture & Fisheries,
Canton Road Government Offices,
393 Canton Road,
Kowloon.**

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