

Hong Kong Trip Report – 8th-22nd April 2001.

By

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This trip was essentially to see the wader spectacular at Mai Po, and to sample a few other sites when time permitted. We decided on a two-centre holiday, spending the first day and a half in Kowloon, then travelling up to Mai Po (where we were staying at the Sir Peter Scott Field Study Centre for eight days) and then returning to Kowloon for the remaining four days of our trip. As it turned out the tides were perfect at Mai Po, being in the middle of the day and progressing to late afternoon, so we could get a taxi to a birding location for the morning and return to Mai Po for the afternoon high tide. This way we maximised our time covering as many localities as possible. We banded a total of 14 localities during the two weeks, and details of the sites are listed below.

Travel:

Travelling about Hong Kong is easy and relatively cheap. Most birding destinations can be visited by public transport, and as car hire is expensive, this was the option we chose. From the terminus at Hung Hom station in Kowloon, the half hour journey to Sheung Shui on the Kowloon – Canton Railway (KCR) cost only HK\$9 (about 90p). From the stations along this route we got taxis to our destinations. Most of the taxi drivers could understand some English, but we also took the Chinese translations from the back of David Diskin's book in case of problems. The Star Ferries, which run between Kowloon and Hong Kong Island, are very cheap. The upper deck on the shortest crossing (to Central) cost HK\$2.20 (about 20p), whilst the lower deck cost HK\$1.70 (about 17p). These ferries take about three minutes to cross the harbour and run all day long. On Hong Kong Island we caught the funicular railway to the top of Mt. Austin. This cost HK\$30 return. Taxis will also take you up the mountain and there is also a bus service that is quite a bit cheaper.

Accommodation:

Stanford Hillview Hotel, Kowloon

Finding cheap accommodation in Kowloon proved to be not as easy as we had hoped. Searches for available hotels on the Internet found few available at budget rates. Finally using the web site www.inm-asiaguides.com and then their section on Honk Kong we found a section with the heading '35 Hotels with discount rates'. In this the prices of the hotels continued to be expensive but the cheapest on offer was the Stanford Hillview Hotel with a rate of 570 HK\$ for the room per night. We decided to book rooms via the Internet for two nights for Sunday, April 08, 2001 - Monday, April 09, 2001 and for four nights for Wednesday, April 18, 2001 - Saturday, April 21, 2001. No credit card details were needed to reserve the room.

Charge for room 08/04/2001 to 09/04/2001 1675.40 HK\$ (£154.31) this include additional taxes & buffet breakfasts.

Charge for room 18/04/2001 to 21/04/2001 2576.40 HK\$ (£236.27) this included the additional taxes.

The Sir Peter Scott Field Studies Centre, Mai Po

This was booked via email - contact Silvia Yeung, (Mai Po Coordinator) at maipo@wwf.org.hk

We decided to use the meal service that was offered having breakfast, a packed lunch and an evening meal each day.

Charge for room 10/04/2001 to 17/04/2001 2586.04 HK\$ (330.51) this included all meals.

As can be seen from the above prices it was much cheaper to stay at Mai Po. Although the room was not up to the standard of the hotel it was still comfortable and by using the ‘all-in meals’ option, all we had to worry about from day to day was which site to visit and finding the birds! With hindsight it would have been possible to spend the whole holiday at Mai Po. The ease and cheapness of travelling to Kowloon from Mai Po via taxi and then the KCR would have made a considerable saving.

A refundable deposit of 100HK\$ was needed for the key to the room.

Itinerary:

- 7th April: Flew from NCL at 1035 local and arrived at AMS at 1255 local. Left AMS at 1700 local and arrived at HKG the next morning.
- 8th April: Arrived at HKG at 0930 local. Metro from airport to Kowloon Station (HK\$180) and then taxi to hotel. Birded Kowloon Park to and on way back from the Star Ferry terminal and the waterfront promenade.
- 9th April: Kowloon Park then over to Victoria Peak. Birded the Pok Fu Lam CP in thick fog. Came back down mountain and had a look around the Zoological and Botanical gardens.
- 10th April: Kowloon (Hung Hom) to Sheung Shui by the KCR, then taxi to Mai Po. Birded around the centre and fishponds along the entrance road.
- 11th April: Mai Po all day.
- 12th April: Mai Po – Boardwalk Hide and scrape till 1400 and then took taxi to Chau Tau and Lok Ma Chau.
- 13th April: Long Valley (0850-1400), then back to Mai Po till dusk.
- 14th April: Mai Po all day. Ringing with Paul Leader till 1100, then birded scrape etc till dusk.
- 15th April: Hok Tau Reservoir and the Sha lo Tung area till mid day. Back to Mai Po for the high tide then in the evening went to Chau Tau.
- 16th April: Mai Po all day.
- 17th April: Lam Tsuen Valley in morning then back to Mai Po for tide etc.
- 18th April: Mai Po entrance road early on. Travelled back to Kowloon late morning, checked back into hotel and then went across Victoria Sound and back up Victoria Peak as we could see the top of the mountain! Birded around the top till the cloud came back down. On way back to ferry, birded the Zoo. & Bot. gardens and Hong Kong Park.
- 19th April: Tai Po Kau all day. Kowloon Park late pm.
- 20th April: Aberdeen CP on HKI all morning, then took train back up to Tai Po Kau for last 3 hours.
- 21st April: Took ferry from Ma Liu Shui to Dong Ping Chau. Stayed on Island till 1715. Arrived back at Ma Liu Shui at 1845.
- 22nd April: Flew out of HKG at 1130 local. Arrived AMS 1720 local (11 ½ hr flight). Left AMS after a delay at 2210 local and arrived back at NCL at 2230 local.

The sites:

Victoria Harbour

Victoria Harbour is the area of water between Hong Kong Island and mainland Hong Kong. We watched on our first evening from the Kowloon promenade. We saw our only Eastern Reef Egret from here. In the evening most of the skyscrapers on Hong Kong Island are lit up – very spectacular and well worth seeing.

Kowloon Park

Kowloon Park is situated in the middle of the tourist district in Kowloon. It is an area of grassy lawns, ornamental ponds, trees, bushes and a couple of bird aviaries. It is very popular with people, especially at weekends and early in the mornings (!). Said to be good for migrants, we birded it on the way through to Hong Kong Island, as our hotel was very close by.

Pok Fu Lam CP (Mt. Austin) – Hong Kong Island

This park we found near to the Peak Railway station on Victoria Peak. It is an area of montane (?) forest and parkland at the bottom. We didn't bird it very hard, as it was thick fog at the time. In better weather conditions it could be very productive for migrants. We did see our only Violet Whistling Thrush and Arctic Warbler there.

Victoria Peak/Victoria Peak Gardens (Mt. Austin) – Hong Kong Island

Two areas of open parkland at the very top of Victoria Peak. Host's one or two localised birds. The views from the viewpoints were breathtaking. We only visited these sites once as there was usually low cloud.

Hong Kong Botanical & Zoological Gardens – Hong Kong Island

Another area of parkland combined with a small zoo, which can be worth a walk around on the way back from a visit up Victoria Peak.

Hong Kong Park – Hong Kong Island

Very similar to the Botanical gardens, with a massive aviary.

Aberdeen CP – Hong Kong Island

A well forested area on the south side of Hong Kong Island. It surrounds two reservoirs. We spent a morning here and eventually caught up with Hwamei, we also heard Rufous-necked Scimitar-babbler and saw a Pale-legged Leaf Warbler.

Mai Po

Mai Po is situated in the Northwest Territories and is *the* place to see large numbers of waders, often at close range. It can be reached from Kowloon by taking the KCR from Hung Hom station to Sheung Shui (cost HK\$9, c90p) and then by getting a green Taxi to the reserve (HK\$57). The reserve is a mass of fish and shrimp ponds, bordered by mangroves and reeds with the occasional stand of trees. There is an egret colony in the trees by the Peter Scott Field Study Centre, and this area can house several migrants. Three ponds have hides, the Tower hide gives good panoramic views of the area, but most people will spend most of the time in the Scrape hides. This pond is based on the scrape at Minsmere and has seven hides around it on three sides. An excellent place for seeing (and photographing) the waders at high tide, we saw about 34 species on the scrape during our week there. There are also the two hides that overlook Deep Bay, one of which is restricted to the use by members of the Hong Kong Bird Watching Society. We never really had a problem with overcrowding in the other hide, although it must be remembered that you have to obtain a Frontier Closed Area Permit before you arrive at Mai Po. The ponds and area along the entrance road are also worth checking out for buntings etc.

Lok Ma Chau/Chau Tau

This area is close to Mai Po. We arrived by Taxi at Chau Tau (HK\$36) and birded the valley, before walking to Lok Ma Chau. Birded the fishponds and rice paddies by walking along the bunds between paddies. Nobody appeared to mind us doing this. The Lok Ma Chau area is fairly built up and there were one or two new roads appeared since the Diskin book was written. Ended up at the Lok Ma Chau Viewpoint that overlooks China. Taxi back cost HK\$31.

We were also fortunate to get a lift to Chau Tau one evening with John and Jenni Holmes who were going to look at the Savanna Nightjars. Good views were obtained at around 1900 hrs. We also bumped into an Eagle Owl flying over and Jenni found an Asian Barred Owlet, rounding off a superb evening.

Long Valley

This is another area of paddy fields and fishponds fairly close to Sheung Shui. We visited by Taxi from Mai Po to Tsung Pak Long (HK\$57). Again birded by walking the bunds between paddies and a small area of Fung Shui woodland at Tsung Pak Long. The whole area is good for pipits, wagtails and snipe. The area is under pressure from development as major building work was going on the north and east sides.

Sha Lo Tung/Hok Tau Res.

We arrived at this location by taxi from Mai Po (HK\$106). We arrived at the reservoir and did a circular walk along the west side past the reservoir down to Cheung Uk and then on to Sha lo Tung. We then retraced our steps back to Cheung Uk and walking the trail back via Ping Shan Chai to the reservoir and then down the road birding some of the area around Hok Tau village. The area around the reservoir is wooded, becoming more open towards Sha lo Tung. Not many species seen, but most of what we did see was new for the trip. Taxi back to Mai Po was HK\$100.

Tong Min Tsuen/Lam Tsuen Valley

Again we took a taxi from Mai Po to this area (HK\$102). We birded the Fung Shui woodland at Tong Min Tsuen and then did a circular walk going over the Lam Tsuen river and birded a small valley before returning to the housed area and eventually reaching the road where we started. Crossing the road we birded the area around the fields and houses in the Lam Tsuen valley. We worked our way back through the cultivated area to the main road and caught a taxi back to Mai Po (HK\$100). It was fairly hard work keeping tabs as to which track we were walking on from the map in Diskin's book. Also most of the houses have plenty of not so friendly dogs in the garden compounds. Most are on chains and most gates are closed, however we did find one or two wandering about the place. It is worth keeping your distance from these dogs as birders have been bitten in the past.

Tai Po Kau

This is apparently the best forest reserve in Hong Kong. We arrived from Kowloon (KCR to Tai Po Market - HK\$8) and then caught a green taxi to the entrance to the reserve (HK\$21). There are four walks through the mature forest. We did a combined red and blue walk, which is what most birders do. Birding was quite hard work (which is what you would expect in a forest), we heard a lot more than we saw, and had we not met a ranger by the Ag. and Fisheries dept. buildings who pointed out several songs, we would have been very frustrated by the end of the walk! A short way along the red walk is a picnic area, which is well worth spending a bit of time at. There had been a Japanese Paradise Flycatcher in the area at the time of our visit, but we did not see it.

Dong Ping Chau

This is a small island (2km long) nearer to mainland China than it is to Hong Kong. To get to the ferry (which takes about 1 ½ hrs to get to the island & cost HK\$80 return, payable at the ferry pier), we caught the KCR from Hung Hom station (Kowloon) to University (HK\$6.50) and the ferry pier is at Ma Liu Shui which is a 10 minute walk (follow the signs) from the station. The ferry only runs on Saturday's and Sunday's, and does day trips both days or you could go on the Sat morning ferry and stay overnight and return on the Sunday night ferry. The ferry departs at about 0900hrs and arrived at the island at about 1045hrs. Assuming you are not staying overnight the return trip departs from the island at about 1700hrs and arrives back at the pier at about 1830hrs. There is a footpath around most of the island. The island is

covered by scrub and Fung Shui woodland, which is not very tall and fairly easy to bird, although viewing over some areas of the island can be restricted. The main attraction of the island is migrants.

Essential reading:

Birding Hong Kong – A site guide by David Diskin. The text covers all the major birding localities with descriptions of habitat, range of species which could be seen at different times of year, access and often includes maps of the various localities. Note that some of the maps may have changed since this book was written, many sites are under pressure from development and we found that some of the sites that we visited had extra roads through them and the marshy area opposite Tai Po Kau entrance is now a building site etc.

Birds of Hong Kong & South China by Clive Viney, Karen Phillipps & Lam Chiu Ying. This is the only field guide that covers Hong Kong. The illustrations are variable in quality and lack certain species in flight i.e. most of the Accipiters, but are usually adequate to identify most birds seen. We also took A field guide to the Birds of China by Clive MacKinnon & Karen Phillipps as the illustrations are more up to date, although some are straight out of Birds of Hong Kong & South China.

Systematic List.

The names and any racial identification used follow those in Viney et al; the birds of Hong Kong and south China.

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis poggei*

Only seen at Mai Po, with 15 on 14th, with 20 on 10th, 12th and 17th, the peak counts.

Cormorant (Great Cormorant) *Phalacrocorax carbo sinensis*

Four at Mai Po on 10th, with one on 12th and two on 13th.

Lesser Frigatebird *Fregata ariel*

Two was seen over Ping Chau on 21st. On the return journey they flew close past the ferry.

(Eurasian) Bittern *Botaurus stellaris*

One was seen from the tower hide on the evening of 14th, it having been seen by visitors to the reserve the previous evening.

Night Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax*

Birds were seen at most suitable localities. Most were seen at Mai Po with 35 being the peak count on 11th. At dusk on 21st, a bird was seen alighting on the water for up to two minutes at Ma Liu Shui, picking up a dead fish from the waters surface, before flying off.

Little Green (Striated) Heron *Butorides striatus*

Seen only at Mai Po, with singles on 14th and 15th, two on 16th with three the next day.

Chinese Pond Heron *Ardeola bacchus*

Commonly observed at Mai Po, where there is a colony outside the Peter Scott Study Centre. Elsewhere, four were at Tong Min Tsuen on 17th and two at Ma Liu Shui on 21st. Birds were present at Lok Ma Chau on 12th and at Long Valley on 13th.

Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis coromandus*

Up to 60 were noted around the fish ponds along the road to Mai Po between 10th to 16th. Two were at Lok Ma Chau on 12th, four in the Long Valley area on 13th and three along the road to Hok Tau on 15th.

Swinhoe's (Chinese) Egret *Egretta eulophotes*

One was on the scrape at Mai Po on 13th, having been seen from the Boardwalk hide earlier in the day. Two (inc. the bird of 13th) were seen from the Boardwalk hide on 16th.

(Eastern) Reef Egret *Egretta sacra*

One was seen from the promenade at Kowloon (by the Star Ferry terminal) on 8th.

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*

Common at Mai Po, with 60 on 13th and 60+ on 16th. Small numbers were also seen at Victoria Harbour, Lok Ma Chau, Long Valley, Tong Min Tsuen and in Tolo Harbour. A flock of 18 birds seen from the Star Ferry crossing Victoria Harbour on 9th were probably this species.

Intermediate Egret *Mesophoyx intermedia*

Only seen at Mai Po. Less than ten were observed on most days, but 30 from the Boardwalk hide on 14th was the peak count.

Great (White) Egret *Casmerodius albus (Ardea alba)*

Regularly seen at Mai Po, but not usually counted. Also noted in Victoria Harbour, Long Valley and in Tolo Harbour.

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*

Only seen at Mai Po. Favoured haunts were from the tower hide and near pond 20. Peak counts were 42 on 12th, 54 on 14th and 67 on 17th.

Purple Heron *Ardea purpurea*

Singles were seen at Mai Po on 12th, 13th, 16th and 17th. 12 were counted on 14th, but may have involved some duplication of birds flying around.

European Spoonbill *Platalea leucorodia*

Two were present on the scrape at Mai Po on 11th, with a single bird there (with the Black-faced Spoonbill flock) between 12th-14th.

Black-faced Spoonbill *Platalea minor*

Present at Mai Po in variable numbers. Peak counts were 34 – 10th, 48 – 11th, 100+ - 12th (from Boardwalk hide), 85 – 13th, 46 – 14th and 74 – 16th dropping to 17 the next day.

Wigeon *Anas penelope*

Up to 28 were present at Mai Po between 11th – 17th, usually on Pond 20.

Teal *Anas crecca*

50 were seen from the Boardwalk hide, Mai Po, on 11th. Four to 20 were on Pond 20 between 14th – 17th.

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*

One was seen flying over Mai Po on 10th, with a male there on 11th and a male and two females on 14th.

Yellow-nib (Spot-billed) Duck *Anas poecilorhyncha zonorhyncha*

Two were seen at Mai Po (Pond 20) on 14th and 18th, with four there on 17th.

Pintail *Anas acuta*

Single males (probably the same bird) were seen at Mai Po on 11th and 14th.

Garganey *Anas querquedula*

Up to 90 were present on Pond 20 at Mai Po between 11th – 17th.

Shoveler *Anas clypeata*

Ten were seen from the Boardwalk hide, Mai Po, on 11th.

Black Baza *Aviceda leuphotes*

A pair were seen in a small valley at Tong Min Tsuen on 17th.

Black-eared Kite *Milvus lineatus*

Common around Kowloon and Hong Kong Island. Much scarcer in the north, with one to six being seen on several dates.

White-bellied Sea-Eagle *Haliaeetus leucogaster*

One seen on the return journey from Ping Chau on 21st.

Crested Serpent Eagle *Spilornis cheela*

One was seen in the Sha lo Tung/Hok Tau Reservoir area on 15th with three at Tong Min Tsuen on 17th.

Harrier sp *Circus sp*

A female, with a white rump and possibly barred underwing was seen at Mai Po on 14th.

Eastern Marsh Harrier *Circus spilonotus*

One to two females were regularly seen at Mai Po from 10th – 17th.

Accipiter sp

Two large birds (possibly Northern Goshawk *A. gentiles*) were seen in the Sha lo Tung/Hok Tau reservoir area on 15th. Smaller birds were seen as follows – three at Sha lo Tung/Hok Tau reservoir on 15th, four single birds in the Tong Min Tsuen area on 17th, two at Tai Po Kau on 19th and a single at Aberdeen CP (Hong Kong Is.) on 20th. Most were thought to be Crested Goshawk.

Northern Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*

A bird seen at Tai Po Kau (being mobbed by a Dollarbird) on 19th was thought to be this species.

Besra *Accipiter virgatus*

Singles were seen in the Sha lo Tung/Hok Tau area on 15th and at Mai Po on 18th.

Crested Goshawk *Accipiter trivirgatus*

One seen sitting in a tree in the Zoological and Botanical Gardens on Hong Kong Island on 18th was the only one definitely identified.

Chinese Goshawk *Accipiter soloensis*

17 were observed migrating from China over Mai Po on 14th.

Buzzard sp

Two were seen from a Taxi along the entrance road to the Peter Scott Study Centre, Mai Po, on 17th.

Grey-faced Buzzard *Butastur indicus*

One was seen from Victoria Peak Gardens, Hong Kong Island, on 18th.

(Common) Buzzard *Buteo buteo*

Singles were at Chau Tau on 12th and at Long Valley the next day.

Osprey *Pandion haliaetus*

One-five were seen on several days at Mai Po between 10th – 18th.

Hobby *Falco subbuteo*

Singles were seen at Mai Po on 11th and 17th. In addition, two small falcons (probably this species) were seen there also on 11th.

Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus*

Two were over the scrape, Mai Po, on 11th with another seen there on 14th.

Banded (Slaty-breasted) Rail *Gallirallus striatus*

Singles were seen on 11th, 14th and 16th at Mai Po.

White-breasted Waterhen *Amaurornis phoenicurus*

One to three were seen most days at Mai Po with six there on 18th. One to three were also seen at Lok Ma Chau, Long Valley, Tong Min Tsuen and Kowloon Park.

Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*

Only seen at Mai Po, where the peak count was seven on 14th. A juvenile was noted on 18th.

Coot *Fulica atra*

A single was present from the Tower hide at Mai Po from 11th – 17th.

Accurate wader counts were generally not made at Mai Po, so the numbers below are probably under-estimates.

Painted Snipe *Rostratula benghalensis*

A pair were eventually seen in a paddy in Long Valley on 13th.

Black-winged Stilt *Himantopus himantopus*

At Mai Po peak counts were 100+ on 10th and 179 on 14th.

Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta*

A large flock was present in Deep Bay (seen from the Boardwalk hide, Mai Po) from 11th – 16th. ‘Hundreds’ were noted on 12th with a count of 88 on 16th.

Oriental Pratincole *Glareola maldivarum*

On the scrape at Mai Po, eight were noted on 10th, decreasing to 2 by 17th. A flock of 17 flew over the Peter Scott Study Centre on 14th.

Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius curonicus*

Two were in Long Valley on 13th with a single on the scrape at Mai Po on 15th.

Kentish Plover *Charadrius alexandrinus dealbatus*

Up to ten were noted at Mai Po.

Lesser Sandplover *Charadrius mongolus*

Up to 30 were noted at Mai Po.

Greater Sandplover *Charadrius leschenaultii*

40+ were noted at Mai Po on several dates.

Pacific Golden Plover *Pluvialis fulva*

300 was the Peak count at Mai Po on 14th.

Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*

Up to 30 were noted at Mai Po.

Grey-headed Lapwing *Vanellus cinereus*

One flew over the ringing site at Mai Po on 14th. It was later found on the Tower Hide pool in the evening.

Great Knot *Calidris tenuirostris*

Up to 255 (12th) were noted at Mai Po. Numbers generally decreased during the week we were there. One bird had a red flag on the right leg on 17th.

Red Knot *Calidris canutus rogersi*

Two to six were seen on the scrape at Mai Po.

Sanderling *Calidris alba*

One to two were seen on the scrape at Mai Po from 11th – 17th.

Stint sp *Calidris sp*

One was photographed at Mai Po, on the scrape, on 17th. Opinion is divided; from the people I have shown the photographs to, between Red-necked Stint (2), Little Stint (1) and Semi-palmated Sandpiper (8)!

Red-necked Stint *Calidris ruficollis*

Daily counts at Mai Po were as follows: ten – 11th, 16 – 12th, 25 – 13th, 30-40 – 14th, 60 – 15th & 16th and 600+ - 17th. Two also flew over Long Valley on 13th.

Little Stint *Calidris minuta*

Singles were at Mai Po on 13th and 17th.

Long-toed Stint *Calidris subminuta*

Ten were seen at Mai Po on 15th & 17th, with 20 on 16th.

Sharp-tailed Sandpiper *Calidris acuminata*

Singles were at Mai Po on 10th & 14th – 16th with five on 13th and five to seven on 17th.

Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea*

Many hundreds or thousands were at Mai Po. One to two had red flags, noted on several days.

Spoon-billed Sandpiper *Eurynorhynchus pygmaeus*

Two (one in summer, one in winter) were seen on the scrape at Mai Po on 11th, with another in winter plumage seen there on 16th.

Broad-billed Sandpiper *Limicola falcinellus sibirica*

12 were at Mai Po on 11th with up peaks of 50 on 16th and 17th and 50+ on 14th.

Snipe sp *Gallinago sp*

Eight were seen at Mai Po on 14th with a single there on 16th. Another single was in the Lam Tsuen Valley on 17th.

Fantail (Common) Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*

Five were at Lok Ma Chau on 12th, with 13 at Long Valley the next day. At Mai Po, five on 14th and a single on 16th with another single at Tong Min Tsuen on 17th.

Pintail Snipe *Gallinago stenura*

ca. Five were at Lok Ma Chau on 12th with a single in Long Valley the next day.

Swinhoe's Snipe *Gallinago megalala*

Three were at Lok Ma Chau on 12th with a single at Long Valley the next day.

Long-billed Dowitcher *Limnodromus scolopaceus*

A single summer plumaged bird was at Mai Po from 11th-17th.

Asiatic Dowitcher *Limnodromus semipalmatus*

Daily counts at Mai Po were as follows: eight-ten – 11th, four – 12th, four-five – 13th, 35 – 14th, 17 – 15th, seven+ - 16th and 22 – 17th.

Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa melanurooides*

Up to 500 were seen at Mai Po.

Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica baueri*

Ten were seen from the Boardwalk hide, Mai Po, on 11th. Thereafter five to seven were noted on the scrape.

Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*

Up to 25 were seen at Mai Po.

Curlew *Numenius arquata orientalis*

Up to 40 were at Mai Po.

Australian (Far Eastern) Curlew *Numenius madagascariensis*

Only seen at Mai Po, with two on 12th, four on 14th and a single on 16th.

Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus*

Several hundred were seen at Mai Po.

Redshank *Tringa tetanus*

Up to 500+ were seen at Mai Po.

Marsh Sandpiper *Tringa stagnatilis*

Several hundred were seen at Mai Po.

Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*

Many were seen at Mai Po with 600+ on 17th.

Nordmann's Greenshank *Tringa guttifer*

Daily totals at Mai Po are as follows: four to five – 11th, eight to nine – 12th, ten – 14th, one – 15th, three to four – 16th and two on 17th.

Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*

Four were at Mai Po on 10th, 12th and 13th.

Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola*

Small numbers were seen at Mai Po daily with 50 on 15th, 89 on 17th, and over 186 on 14th. On the latter date 186 flew over whilst we were ringing, with about 70+ seen on the ponds around the reserve.

Terek Sandpiper *Xenus cinereus*

Up to 400 were seen daily at Mai Po.

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*

Up to 15 were seen at Mai Po, with one at Lok Ma Chau on 12th, six at Long Valley on 13th, one at Tong Min Tsuen on 17th and two on Ping Chau on 21st.

Grey-tailed Tattler *Tringa brevipes*

Three were seen on the scrape at Mai Po on 17th.

Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*

Only seen at Mai Po where small numbers between 11th-15th with 20 on 16th and 50 on 17th.

Red-necked Phalarope *Phalaropus lobatus*

Two were seen on the outward journey to Ping Chau on 21st with another five on the return.

Saunders's Gull *Larus saundersi*

A 1st W bird was at Mai Po on 11th and 12th.

Black-headed Gull *Larus ridibundus*

An adult W was at Mai Po on 11th and 16th.

Black-tailed Gull *Larus crassirostris*

First winters were seen from the Boardwalk hide at Mai Po as follows: three on 12th, one on 14th and two on 16th. An adult bird, possibly this species was seen from the Boardwalk hide on 16th.

Gull-billed Tern *Sterna nilotica*

415 were seen from the Boardwalk hide on 12th with 343+ there on 16th. Smaller numbers (i.e. 200-250!) were seen on other dates, all at Mai Po.

Caspian Tern *Sterna caspia*

Ten on 11th and 20 the next day were the peak counts at Mai Po.

Black-naped Tern *Sterna sumatrana*

Four were seen in Tolo Harbour on the return journey from Ping Chau on 21st.

Little Tern *Sterna albifrons*

Singles were at Mai Po on 12th and 13th with 11 on 16th and four on 17th.

Whiskered Tern *Chlidonias hybrida*

Four were seen from the Boardwalk hide and 11 came into the scrape, Mai Po, on 12th and two were seen on 13th and 14th.

Feral Pigeon *Columba livia*

Present at Kowloon Park and 12 were seen at Mai Po on 18th. Generally ignored and not counted!

Rufous Turtle Dove *Streptopelia orientalis orientalis*

Only seen at Mai Po. One to six were seen most days with 21+ on 14th.

Spotted (Turtle) Dove *Streptopelia chinensis chinensis*

Seen at most localities and not generally counted. 20+ were at Mai Po on 16th.

Emerald Dove *Chalcophaps indica*

One was seen along the entrance road at Tai Po Kau on 20th.

Rose-ringed (Ring-necked) Parakeet *Psittacula krameri*

Two were in the Botanical gardens, HKI, on 9th with three there on 18th.

Alexandrine Parakeet *Psittacula eupatria*

Up to eight were seen in Kowloon Park during the trip.

Yellow (Sulphur)-crested Cockatoo *Cacatua sulphurea sulphurea*

Five were seen in the Botanical gardens, HKI on 9th with ten there on 18th. Two were also in the Hong Kong Park, HKI, also on 18th.

Red-winged Crested Cuckoo *Clamator coromandus*

One was seen at Tong Min Tsuen on 17th and another was heard at Tai Po Kau on 19th.

Large Hawk-Cuckoo *Cuculus sparverioides*

Once we learnt the call, this species was heard at Chau Tau, Tong Min Tsuen, Mai Po and Aberdeen CP, HKI.

Plaintive Cuckoo *Cacomantis merulinus*

One to three were regularly seen or heard at Mai Po from 11th-17th. Elsewhere birds were seen or heard at Chau Tau on 12th, Long Valley on 13th and Tong Min Tsuen on 17th.

Indian Cuckoo *Cuculus micropterus*

One to two were heard at Mai Po between 11th-17th with others at Chau Tau on 15th and two on Ping Chau on 21st.

Oriental Cuckoo *Cuculus saturatus*

Singles at Mai Po on 13th and 17th probably involved the same bird.

(Asian) Koel *Eudynamis scolopacea*

Up to five were at Mai Po from 11th-17th with others at Kowloon Park, Botanical gardens (HKI), Chau Tau, Lok Ma Chau, Long Valley and Tong Min Tsuen.

Greater Coucal *Centropus sinensis*

Up to three noted at Mai Po from 11th-17th and on Ping Chau on 21st. Singles were also at Long Valley on 13th and near Hok Tau on 15th.

Lesser Coucal *Centropus bengalensis*

Singles were at Chau Tau on 12th and at Tong Min Tsuen on 17th.

Eurasian Eagle Owl *Bubo bubo*

One flew over Chau Tau on 15th.

Asian Barred Owlet *Glaucidium cuculoides whiteleyi*

One was seen and heard at Chau Tau on 15th.

Savanna Nightjar *Caprimulgus affinis*

On 15th, a pair were seen at Chau Tau and a single was heard by a pig farm on way back to Mai Po.

Pacific Swift *Apus pacificus*

At Mai Po a single was seen on 10th with five on 16th. Elsewhere two were at Sha lo Tung on 15th, three at Tong Min Tsuen on 17th with six at Victoria Peak Park and two at nearby Victoria Peak gardens (both HKI) on 18th.

House Swift *Apus nipalensis*

Several hundred were present at Mai Po on 11th and 12th. Elsewhere, small numbers were seen at Kowloon Park, Lok Ma Chau, Tong Min Tsuen, Victoria Peak (HKI), Tai Po Kau and at Ma Liu Shui.

White-breasted Kingfisher *Halcyon smyrnensis*

Two (singles) were seen in the Tong Min Tsuen area on 17th.

Black-capped Kingfisher *Halcyon pileata*

Only seen at Mai Po, where up to four were present on 14th.

Common Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*

Up to 12 were present at Mai Po from 10th to 17th. Singles were also seen at Tong Min Tsuen on 17th and in Kowloon Park on 19th.

Pied Kingfisher *Ceryle rudis*

Singles were seen at Mai Po on five dates from 10th to 17th, with two sightings on 16th.

Blue-tailed Bee-eater *Merops philippinus*

Five were seen during heavy rain on Ping Chau on 21st.

Broad-billed Roller (Dollarbird) *Eurystomus orientalis*

One was shown to us by a ranger, at a small village near Tai Po Kau, on 19th.

Great Barbet *Megalaima virens*

Three were heard (one seen) at Tai Po Kau on 19th and a male and female were heard there on 20th.

Sand Martin *Riparia riparia*

Two singles were seen at Mai Po on 16th.

Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica gutturalis*

Present in small numbers at most localities visited, but not generally counted. 40 were along the entrance road to Mai Po on 10th and 28 were counted migrating towards China from the return ferry from Ping Chau on 21st.

Asian House Martin *Delichon dasypus*

One was on Ping Chau on 21st.

Richard's Pipit *Anthus richardi*

16+ were in Long Valley on 13th with a single at Mai Po on 16th.

Olive-backed Pipit *Anthus hodgsoni*

Singles were seen at Mai Po on four dates. Elsewhere, three were at Lok Ma Chau on 12th, 11 in Long Valley the next day, one at Chau Tau on 15th, two at Tong Min Tsuen on 17th and a single at Tai Po Kau on 19th with three there the next day.

Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava taivana*

Four were at Mai Po on 12th with three there on 16th and 16 on 18th. Six were at Lok Ma Chau on 12th, ten at Long Valley on 13th and three on Ping Chau on 21st.

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*

Singles were at Mai Po on 11th and 16th with two at Lok Ma Chau on 12th and Aberdeen CP (HKI), on 20th.

White Wagtail *Motacilla alba leucopsis*

Singles were seen at Mai Po on six dates with five on 11th and two on 17th. Seven were at Lok Ma Chau on 12th with six in Long Valley the next day and two at Tong Min Tsuen on 17th.

Black-winged Cuckoo-shrike *Coracina melaschistos*

One was at Tai Po Kau on 19th.

Grey-throated Minivet *Pericrocotus solaris griseigularis*

A male and three females were seen at Tai Po Kau on 19th.

Scarlet Minivet *Pericrocotus flammeus*

Five males and one female were seen at Tai Po Kau on 19th with two males seen there the next day.

Crested (Red-whiskered) Bulbul *Pycnonotus jocosus*

Present at most localities visited and not generally counted.

Chinese Bulbul *Pycnonotus sinensis sinensis*

Present at most localities visited and not generally counted.

Red-vented Bulbul *Pycnonotus aurigaster*

Four were at Chau Tau on 12th with three there on 15th. Three were in the Sha lo Tung area on 15th with another along the road to Hok Tau. One was at Tong Min Tsuen on 17th.

Chestnut Bulbul *Hemixos castanonotus canipennis*

14 were counted at Tai Po Kau on 19th with five there the next day.

Siberian Rubythroat *Luscinia calliope*

A male was ringed at Mai Po on 14th.

Magpie Robin *Copsychus saularis*

Present in small numbers at most localities visited and not generally counted.

Siberian Stonechat *Saxicola maura stejnegeri*

At Mai Po, single males were seen along the entrance road on 10th-12th and from the tower hide on 14th, 16th-17th. A female was seen near the tower hide on 11th with two around the fish ponds and entrance track on 16th. Elsewhere two males were at Lok Ma Chau on 12th with six males and one female in the Long Valley area the next day. A female was along the road to Hok Tau Res. on 15th. Finally, a male was at Tong Min Tsuen on 17th.

Violet Whistling Thrush *Myiophonus caeruleus caeruleus*

One was seen in thick fog by the Pok Fu Lam CP, HKI, on 9th.

Thrush sp *Turdus sp*

Four were seen in the Sha lo Tung/Hok Tau area on 15th.

Grey Thrush *Turdus cardis*

One was seen on Ping Chau on 21st.

Eye-browed Thrush *Turdus obscurus*

One was at Tai Po Kau on 19th.

Plain Prinia *Prinia inornata extensicauda*

Common at Mai Po and seen at Lok Ma Chau, Chau Tau and in the Sha lo Tung area.

Yellow-bellied Prinia *Prinia flaviventris*

Common at Mai Po and seen at Lok Ma Chau, Chau Tau, Long Valley, Sha lo Tung/Hok Tau area, Tong Min Tsuen and a single singing in the Aberdeen CP, (HKI) on 20th.

Chinese Bush Warbler *Cettia canturians*

One was seen at Long Valley on 13th.

Black-browed Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus bistrigiceps*

A single was heard singing at Mai Po (by the scrape) on 16th. Two were present the next day (in the same general area) with three along the entrance road on 18th.

Blunt-winged Warbler *Acrocephalus concinens*

One was re-trapped at Mai Po on 14th.

Oriental Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus orientalis*

Two were at Mai Po on 11th with singles ringed there on 14th, and seen/heard on 16th and 18th.

Common Tailorbird *Orthotomus sutorius*

Present at most localities visited, and not generally counted.

Pale-legged Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus tenellipes*

One was seen in the Aberdeen CP (HKI) on 20th.

Arctic Warbler *Phylloscopus borealis*

One was seen in the Pok Fu Lam CP (HKI) on 9th.

Yellow-browed Warbler *Phylloscopus inornatus inornatus*

Up to six were present at Mai Po from 10th to 18th. Small numbers were also seen/heard at Pok Fu Lam CP (HKI), Chau Tau, Long Valley, Sha lo Tung/Hok Tau area, Tong Min Tsuen, Botanical gardens (HKI), Tai Po Kau, Aberdeen CP (HKI) and Ping Chau.

Dusky Warbler *Phylloscopus fuscatus*

Up to four were present at Mai Po from 10th to 18th. Elsewhere singles were at Lok Ma Chau on 12th, Long Valley on 13th and along the road to Hok Tau on 15th.

Hainan Blue Flycatcher *Cyornis hainana*

A female was seen at Mai Po on 11th and two males, both singles, were heard and seen with a ranger at Tai Po Kau on 19th.

Asian Brown Flycatcher *Muscicapa dauurica*

Two were at the Pok Fu Lam CP, HKI, on 9th. Singles were seen at Mai Po (various localities) on five dates with others at Long Valley on 13th and Kowloon Park on 18th.

Narcissus Flycatcher *Ficedula narcissina narcissina*

A female was at Mai Po on 14th and a male was in the Sha lo Tung/Hok Tau area on 15th.

Rufous-necked Scimitar Babbler *Pomatorhinus ruficollis stridulus*

Two were heard in the Aberdeen CP (HKI) on 20th.

Greater Necklaced Laughing-thrush *Garrulax pectoralis*

Nine were seen near Sha lo Tung on 15th and two were at Tai Po Kau on 19th.

Black-throated Laughing-thrush *Garrulax chinensis*

One was at Victoria Peak gardens (HKI) on 18th.

Hwamei *Garrulax canorus*

Two were seen in the Aberdeen CP (HKI) on 20th.

White-browed Laughing-thrush *Garrulax sannio*

Singles were at Chau Tau on 12th and 15th with others at Tong Min Tsuen (carrying food) on 17th and in the Botanical gardens (HKI) on 18th.

Black-faced Laughing-thrush *Garrulax perspicillatus*

Up to five were seen at several localities and were generally not counted. A family party was in Hong Kong Park (HKI) on 18th.

Pekin Robin *Leiothrix lutea*

One was heard at Tai Po Kau on 19th.

Silver-eared Mesia *Leiothrix argentauris*

Two were seen at Tai Po Kau on 19th.

Blue-winged Minla *Minla cyanouroptera*

13 were seen at Tai Po Kau on 19th.

Great Tit *Parus major commixtus*

Up to three were seen at Mai Po from 12th-16th. Singles were at Chau Tau on 12th, Sha lo Tung on 15th, Victoria Peak Park (HKI) on 18th, Kowloon Park on 19th and on Ping Chau on 21st. Five were at Tong Min Tsuen on 17th, seven at Tai Po Kau on 19th and six in the Aberdeen CP (HKI) on 20th.

Yellow-cheeked Tit *Parus spilonotus rex*

Four+ were at Tai Po Kau on 19th.

Chinese Penduline Tit *Remiz consobrinus*

One was trapped at Mai Po on 14th with another bird heard there on 16th.

Velvet-fronted Nuthatch *Sitta frontalis*

Four were seen at Tai Po Kau on 19th.

Fork-tailed Sunbird *Aethopyga christinae*

A male was seen on the road to Hok Tau Res. on 15th with another three males and two females at Tai Po Kau on 19th.

Scarlet-backed Flowerpecker *Dicaeum cruentatum*

A male was at Hok Tau Res. on 15th with seven being seen at Tai Po Kau on 19th.

Japanese White-eye *Zosterops japonica simplex*

Present in small numbers at most localities visited and not generally counted.

Black-naped Oriole *Oriolus chinensis*

A female was by the Tower hide at Mai Po on 10th with another bird around the entrance track on 16th.

Rufous-backed (Long-tailed) Shrike *Lanius schach schach*

Two were at Mai Po on 10th and 16th with singles there on 15th and 17th-18th. Elsewhere three were at Chau Tau on 12th, two at Lok Ma Chau on 12th and Long Valley on 13th with nine to 11 at Tong Min Tsuen on 17th. Singles were at Sha lo Tung and the road to Hok Tau on 15th. A dark phase bird (the so-called Dusky Shrike) were seen at Chau Tau on 12th and 15th.

Black Drongo *Dicrurus macrocercus*

Singles were seen at Mai Po on 10th and 12th with four on 18th. Four were also seen on Ping Chau on 21st.

Hair-crested Drongo *Dicrurus hottentottus*

Three were seen in a small valley in the Tong Min Tsuen area on 17th.

Blue Magpie *Urocissa erythrorhyncha*

Two were in Kowloon Park on 8th with another two at Lok Ma Chau on 12th. Singles were at Chau Tau on 12th, Tong Min Tsuen on 17th and Hong Kong Park (HKI) on 18th.

Magpie *Pica pica sinica*

Regularly seen at most localities and not generally counted.

Jungle (Large-billed) Crow *Corvus macrorhynchos*

Small numbers were seen at the Pok Fu Lam CP (HKI), Lok Ma Chau, Long Valley, Mai Po, Victoria Peak (HKI), Tai Po Kau and Ping Chau. Ten were at Aberdeen CP (HKI) on 20th.

Collared Crow *Corvus torquatus*

Only seen at Mai Po where Five was the peak count on 16th.

Chinese Starling *Sturnus sinensis*

ca. 20 were in Kowloon Park on 9th. 48 were at Mai Po on 10th with seven on 12th and 14 on 18th. Five were in Long Valley on 13th and a single in the Botanical gardens (HKI) on 18th.

Black-necked Starling *Sturnus nigricollis*

Seen at most localities with 24 in Long Valley on 13th, 16 at Mai Po on 16th and 20+ at Kowloon Park on 18th the peak counts.

Crested Myna *Acridotheres cristatellus*

Seen in small numbers at several localities, the peak count being 12 to 16 at Mai Po on 14th.

Hill Myna *Gracula religiosa*

One was seen outside the Peter Scott Field Study Centre, Mai Po on 12th and 14th.

Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus saturatus*

Present and common at every locality. Not counted.

Baya Weaver *Ploceus philippinus*

Up to six (with two nests) were noted in the small colony at Mai Po from 10th to 18th.

White-backed (White-rumped) Munia *Lonchura striata*

Ten + were in the Botanical gardens (HKI) on 9th. Smaller numbers were seen at Kowloon Park, Mai Po, Tong Min Tsuen, Victoria Peak Park (HKI) and Tai Po Kau.

Spotted (Scaly-breasted) Munia *Lonchura punctulata*

Small numbers were seen at Chau Tau and Lok Ma Chau with up to 73 at Mai Po (from the Tower Hide) on 17th and 26 in Long Valley on 13th.

Yellow-fronted Canary *Serinus mozambicus*

One was seen at Mai Po on 11th.

Black-tailed Hawfinch *Eophona migratoria*

A male was seen at Lok Ma Chau (around the fish ponds) on 12th.

Masked (Black-faced) Bunting *Emberiza spodocephala sordida*

At Mai Po up to five were recorded along the track before the tower hide from 10th to 17th. Three were on Ping Chau on 21st. All of those seen well enough appeared to be of the above race.

Little Bunting *Emberiza pusilla*

One was at Long Valley on 13th. At Mai Po one escaped from a bird bag on 14th, with another seen along the entrance track on 16th and two there on 18th.

Chestnut Bunting *Emberiza rutila*

A female was along the fence at Mai Po on 14th with a male seen along the entrance road on 16th. Two males were at Tong Min Tsuen on 17th.

Yellow-breasted Bunting *Emberiza aureola*

Only seen at Mai Po where singles on 12th (female) and 14th (fly-over) with 2 males, one female along the entrance road on 16th and one male and three females there on 18th.

Critters and things!

The following Butterflies were identified, mainly at Mai Po.

Great Orange Tip	<i>Hebomoia glaucippe</i>
Common White	<i>Pieris conidia</i>
Common Mormon	<i>Papilio memnon agenor</i>
Common Grass Yellow Butterfly	<i>Eurema hecabe</i>
Common Crow Butterfly	<i>Euploea core</i>
Banana Skipper	<i>Erionota torus</i>
Common Mime Butterfly	<i>Chilasa clytia</i>
Common Black Jezebel	<i>Delias aglaja</i>
Orange/Black-veined Tiger	<i>Danaus genutia</i>
False Tiger Moth	<i>Dysphania militaris</i>
‘small’ Hummingbird Hawkmoth sp	

Others:

Rat sp	several Kowloon Park
Bat sp	1 Kowloon Park
Java Mongoose	1 Mai Po
Praying Mantis sp	1 Mai Po
Snake sp	singles (greyish greeny brown!) Lam Tsuen Valley, Aberdeen CP
Gecko sp	1 Mai Po
Newt/Salamander sp	2 Lam Tsuen Valley
Squirrel sp	several Botanical gdns, Aberdeen CP
Lizard sp	2 fairly large Kowloon Park
Resus Macaque	2 Tai Po Kau