

The other noteworthy increase is in cuckoos. Unlike the winter-visiting bulbuls, they are spring migrants and summer visitors. Chestnut-winged Cuckoo was formerly considered to be rather uncommon, but records have greatly increased since the 1980s. The Avifauna of Hong Kong suggests that their increase is closely tied to the spread of Greater Necklaced Laughingthrush (which it is known to parasitise). The increase of Hodgson's Hawk Cuckoo in the last five years may well be linked to the spread of Hainan Blue Flycatcher, which also breeds in mature secondary forest.

In response to the suggestion of introducing Greater Necklaced Laughingthrush, Streak-breasted Scimitar Babbler and Rufous-capped Babbler to Lantau one has to ask how you can safely establish whether the habitat is really suitable? It seems likely that their natural arrival on Lantau is simply a matter of time. Hwamei and Masked Laughingthrush already occur on Lantau. What's more the latter has been recorded flying across Victoria Harbour, suggesting natural colonisation is at least possible, even if laughing thrushes are hesitant to cross open spaces.

While some species of extralimital babblers (Blue-winged Minla, Silver-eared Mesia) have done well in Hong Kong, several others have not. These include Red-tailed Laughingthrush, (formerly on Tai Mo Shan), and Moustached Laughingthrush, Grey-headed Parrotbill and most significantly, Grey-cheeked Fulvetta. While the former three species all occur in northern Guangdong they have failed to establish viable populations and disappeared. The third has been dealt with above. Holding the middle ground are Chinese Babax and Vinous-throated Parrotbill, neither of which have succeeded in expanding beyond the upper slopes of Tai Mo Shan.

I find the list of proposed phase 3 bird reintroductions somewhat arbitrary. Chinese Bamboo Partridge failed to recolonise in 1961. Do we know why? Bay, Grey-headed, and Rufous Woodpeckers all breed in Guangdong, have visited Hong Kong but never stayed. The absence of dead trees for making nesting holes may be one reason – typhoons probably cause them to fall much sooner than they would at less wind-affected inland sites. Yet Great Barbet, another large hole-nester manages well in secondary and even *feng shui* woodlands. More questions. Paul Leader (*pers. comm.*) has suggested that the impact of typhoons and the heavily maritime climate of Hong Kong many have a wide range of as yet unknown influences on our forest habitats.

Does it make sense to introduce Brown Dipper when Slaty-backed Forktail is present in such low numbers and numbers of wintering Plumbeous Redstarts have declined? What is missing from our streams? If Silver Pheasant is to be introduced, why not Common Pheasant? As discussed above it looks like Mountain Bulbul is managing fine on its own.

In summary, the presence of a given species in the nearest similar habitat is clearly not a sufficiently accurate method for determining whether that species has a reasonable chance of becoming self-sustaining in Hong Kong. Furthermore, in the light of an established pattern of natural recolonisation, managed reintroductions become harder to justify, especially when the data on past reintroductions (both deliberate and accidental) show such variable results.

I hope Richard Corlett enjoyed his opportunity to play God and fill Hong Kong with new and wonderful animals and birds. It is worth remembering that the last person to play God was God himself - and he had the benefit of omniscience when laying out creation. Since Richard's deity is yet to be confirmed it is hoped he will make the most of the next best thing - responsible science – and patience, before making any reintroductions based on “imaginative extrapolation”.

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A new cicada record for Hong Kong —*Meimuna silhetana* (Cicadidae)

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A cicada picture was taken by an AFCD Country Park Warden on Tung Ping Chau in fall 2001. The species was later found to not be one of the familiar cicada species in Hong Kong and a specimen was collected and sent to the Natural History Museum, London, for identification. The specimen was examined by the University of Amsterdam, the Netherlands

and the Natural History Museum, London, and proven to be *Meimuna silhetana*, a new record for Hong Kong.

In September 2002, Country Park staff went to the island again for an ecological survey. A few calling male *Meimuna silhetana* were first found on *Celtis sinensis* close to Cham Keng Chau and the call is distinct. According to the intensity and presence of the call, *Meimuna silhetana* shows a scattered distribution on the island, mainly on *Celtis sinensis*. Three male specimens were collected during that field trip.

Information on *Meimuna silhetana* is scarce. It was not even included in the book, *The Cicadidae of China* (Chou & Lei, 1997). According to the *List of Chinese Insects* (Hua, 2000), *Meimuna silhetana* occurs in India and China (Fujian, Guangdong, Sichuan and Yunnan). Chen (1992) reported a record in Yunnan, China (Lijiang, 2400m, 1974. VII. 23).

Including *Meimuna silhetana*, 20 species of cicada have been recorded in Hong Kong.

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Feral/stray dogs and civet mortality on Kau Sai Chau, 2001-2

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Introduction

Mortality of Small Indian (*Viverricula indica*) and Masked Palm (*Paguma larvata*) Civets between May 1998 and May 2001 on Kau Sai Chau was documented by Dahmer (2001).

Five dead Small Indian Civets and one dead Masked Palm Civet were reported on a ± 6 km² island in Port Shelter of eastern Hong Kong. The cause of death in each case was determined to be attack by feral/stray dogs (*Canis lupus familiaris*). Between June 2001 and November 2002 six additional Small Indian Civet fatalities were recovered from Kau Sai Chau, raising the total to 12 civets over a period of four years and eight months. The cause of death in each of the latter cases was also determined to be attack by feral/stray dogs. Based upon recovered carcasses the rate of civet mortality due to dog attack on Kau Sai Chau has averaged one civet every 4-5 months since May 1998. Most of the attacked civets were sub-adult males that appeared to be dispersing from litters.

Many feral/stray dogs were removed from Kau Sai Chau between 1998 and 2002, but the population was seldom, if ever, reduced to zero for more than a few weeks at a time. At almost all times the island was occupied by >2 feral/stray dogs.

The purpose of this manuscript is to document the frequency of dog attacks on Small Indian Civets in a situation that is uniquely suited to monitoring this relationship. It is hoped that this report will encourage a more aggressive feral/stray dog removal and control programme in Hong Kong in the interests of reducing civet mortality. One additional Small Indian Civet fatality is included in this report to document a death caused by vehicle collision.

Methods

Methods reported in Dahmer (2000) were used in the 18-month follow-on period from June 2001 through November 2002. All dead civets were reported by the golf course greenskeeping staff. One vehicle-killed Small Indian Civet was recovered by the author from Clearwater Bay Road on 4 July 2001. Nomenclature used in this report follows Wilson and Reeder (1992).

Results

Over a period of 18 months from June 2001 through November 2002, six dead Small Indian Civets were recovered from northern Kau Sai Chau. These are listed in Table 1 together with the fatalities reported in Dahmer (2001). All fatalities were discovered shortly after sunrise when the greenskeeping staff spread out over the golf courses to mow grass and tend to facilities. Only the two March 2002 fatalities were inspected in detail prior to disposal of the carcasses. No flesh or internal organs of the two inspected civets had been eaten, and none of the body cavities had been opened (except by tooth punctures through skin and underlying flesh).