

WILD CORNER

Any sightings of civets, mongooses, ferret badgers, leopard cats, barking deer, pangolins and porcupines – live or dead – should be reported. Rare birds, reptiles, amphibians and fishes, or unusual behaviour by common species, are also of interest, as are rare or interesting invertebrates and plants. If you think it is interesting, our readers probably will! Please give dates, times and localities as accurately as possible

Mammals

David Cox saw a **Mongoose** (*Herpestes* sp.) at the junction of Stubbs Road and Magazine Gap Road on 18 May 2004 about 9 pm.

Two **Wild Boars** (*Sus scrofa*) (one adult and one juvenile) were seen by Eric Chan in Shing Mun Country Park (near Lead Mine Pass) at around 6.30 pm on 24 February 2005. They rushed into the vegetation after being sighted.

Fion Cheung and Alan To found a family of **Wild Boars** (*Sus scrofa*) (two adults and three juveniles) in Luk Keng marsh in the morning on 8 March 2005.



Three **Masked Palm Civet** (*Paguma larvata*) were seen at Tai Lo Shan on 23 October 2004 around 3.30 am by Samson So.

On 25 January 2005 at around 8.45 pm, Fiona Somerville saw a pair of **Porcupines** (*Hystrix brachyura*) on the Peak less than 500 m along Lugard Road from the Peak tram. One porcupine was spotted about 2 metre away and she observed it for about a minute as it didn't seem eager to get away, while the other one was about 5 metre away.

Tom and Ed Glenwright saw a **Javan Mongoose** (*Herpestes javanicus*) run across the road leading to Mai Po nature reserve at 2 pm on 1 October 2004.

A dead **Ferret Badger** (*Melogale moschata*) was found lying in a shallow pool of blood on Mt. Nicholson Road on 7

November 2004 by Barry Bousfield. It had probably been hit by a car during the night before and was about 40 cm long and weighed about 1 kg. The dead animal was removed from the road and placed in the undergrowth nearby.

On 1 November 2004 morning at 8 am, Sally Bunker found the body of a **Masked Palm Civet** (*Paguma larvata*) at Nam Shan on Lantau. The animal appeared to have a neck injury. It was a young female with nose to tip of tail around 46 cm, and shoulder to end of body 24 cm.

While walking up the Cheung Sheung trail, above Yung Shue O, Sai Kung at 5.30 pm on 26 October 2004, Ian Cowieson disturbed a beautiful adult **Barking Deer** (*Muntiacus* sp.) that had been feeding in an open grassy area, just on the edge of the forest. The deer ran off along the tree line for 100-odd metres before taking shelter among some trees.

Two sightings of wild mammals were made by Andrew Malone near HKU campus. He spotted a **Porcupine** (*Hystrix brachyura*) in early October 2004 on Hatton Road just above the fire station, and a **Masked Palm Civet** (*Paguma larvata*) was spotted climbing trees adjacent to the single storey building, at the south side of the Main Library on 18 October at 9.45 pm.

Ian Cowieson found an injured **Porcupine** (*Hystrix brachyura*) in a car park of Shan Liu Village, Sai Kung on the evening of 7 October 2004. It was quite badly injured on its right hand side, and had probably been hit by a car. It was still quite mobile but obviously fairly seriously injured, as it stayed in the vicinity of the car park for about one hour.



Michael Lau saw a group of three **Rhesus Macaque** in the feng shui wood of Sheung Yeung Village, Clear Water Bay from 26 January to 12 February 2005.

Birds

Kwok Hon Kai saw 21 **Striated Yuhinas** (*Yuhina castaniceps*) in Tai Po Kau on 19 February 2005.

On 9 October 2004, Kwok Hon Kai saw a cat holding a juvenile **Lanceolated Warbler** *Locustella lanceolata* (very

scarce) near New Town Plaza of Shatin. He seized the bird from the cat and released it. It could still fly!

Henry Lui, Leung Va and Kwok Hon Kai saw an albino **Black-necked Starling** (*Sturnus nigricollis*) at a reservoir (Barragem de Ka-Ho) on Coloane Island of Macau on 9 January 2005.



Sightings of **Slaty-backed Forktail** (*Enicurus schistaceus*) were reported from Tai Po Kau:

Kwok Hon Kai saw the bird in late September 2004.

Polly Chik, King Law and Vicky Yeung saw the bird catching and eating small fishes, probably *Parazacco spilurus* at around 8.45am on 27 December 2004.

Reports from Samson So:

A **Collared Scops Owl** (*Otus lempii*) was seen at the junction of King's Road and Parker Shan on 10 November 2004.

A **Woodcock** (*Scolopax rusticola*) was seen at Ma On Shan on 23 October 2004 (around 2.00 am), and another individual was seen at Gilwell Campsite at 3.30 am, during the Trailwalker event when hundreds of people were walking around.

A juvenile **White-Bellied Sea Eagle** (*Haliaeetus leucogaster*) perched beside a stream at Ma Wan Chung (Lantau) on 24 October 2004.

A pair of **White-Bellied Sea Eagle** were displaying at Shui Hou (Lantau) on 31 October 2004.

A **White-Bellied Sea Eagle** was chasing a passerine (probably a Black Bird *Turdus merula*) at Kowloon Reservoir on 6 November 2004.

Fish

A 10 cm desiccated remains of a poisonous **Eclipse Puffer** (*Takifugu ocellatus*) was found by R.D. Hill on the roof of the Kadoorie Biological Sciences Building, HKU on 2 December 2004. The fish had probably been taken dead from the sea by a common kite and discarded in flight. Presumably the kite took a mouthful, found it distasteful and dropped it.

Amphibians and Reptiles

A **Blue-tailed Skink** (*Eumeces quadrilineatus*) was seen near a stream by Lora Lam in Sai Kung West Country Park near Tsak Yue Wu.

Robert Davidson saw a 1.3 m road killed **Copperhead Racer** (*Elaphe radiata*) at Luk Keng in the afternoon on 23 October 2004.

Eric Chan and Fiona Chung reported the sighting of two **Great Green Snakes** (*Ophedrys major*) at 6.00 pm at streamside near Chuen Lung on the 8 August 2004. One of them slid on the boulders to cross the stream and then disappeared in the vegetation.

David Poon saw a **Yellow Pond Terrapin** (*Mauremys mutica*) wandering at the high shore of Starfish Bay in the morning on 11 November 2004. It is an endangered species and presumably this individual was released by people.



A **Bamboo Snake** (*Trimeresurus albolabris*) (length approximately 60 – 80 cm) was reported by David Cox. The snake was found on steps from Mount Nicholson Government Quarters down to Stubbs Road, HK Island, on 3 July 2004 at around 6.30 am.

Samson So reported the following sightings of reptiles:

A dead **Chinese Mountain Snake** (*Sibynophis chinensis*) was found at the catchment area of Kowloon Reservoir on 18 September 2004.

A **Burmese Python** (*Python molurus bivittatus*) was seen by Mai Po staff at the Scrape of Mai Po Nature Reserve on 10 September 2004. The snake was about 2 m in length.

A **Tokay Gecko** (*Gekko gekko*) was seen at the catchment area along Tan Sha River (near Hok Tau Reservoir) on 1 August 2004. The species was regularly heard at the same locality throughout 2003-2004.

A **Tokay Gecko** was seen near Nong Ping (Lantau) on 31 Oct 2004.

Invertebrates

Robert Davidson found a **Lantern Bug** (*Pyrops candelaria*) in Sheung Tsat Muk Kiu village (near Luk Keng) in mid-January. It was firmly stuck to a tree, about 1.3 m off the ground.

Samson So and Fion Cheung saw a *Labrogomphus torvus* at a small tributary of Hok Tau Reservoir on 4 September 2004. This dragonfly is regarded as rare by Wilson (2003).

Samson So reported the following sightings of dragonflies:

Pseudagrion microcephalum laying eggs at a rehabilitated freshwater pond of Mai Po Nature Reserve.

One *Macrodiplox cora* was seen at Luk Keng marsh (near mangrove) on 29 September, and both sexes of this species were seen at Mai Po throughout October.

Gynacantha subinterrupta was seen at Mai Po on 10 November and 5 December (both were male individuals).

Samson So saw a **Japanese White-eye** caught and eaten by a **Large Woodland Spider** (*Nephila maculata*) at Mong Tseng Tsuen (near Tsim Bei Tsui) on 22 August 2004.



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Recent Publications

Books, monographs etc.

AFCD (2004) *Field Guide to the Freshwater Fishes of Hong Kong*. Friends of the Country Parks, Hong Kong.

AFCD (2004) *Venturing Wetlands*. Friends of the Country Parks, Hong Kong.

AFCD (2005) *Exploring Double Haven*. Friends of the Country Parks, Hong Kong.

Elvin, M. (2004) *The Retreat of the Elephants: an Environmental History of China*. Yale University Press, New

Haven.

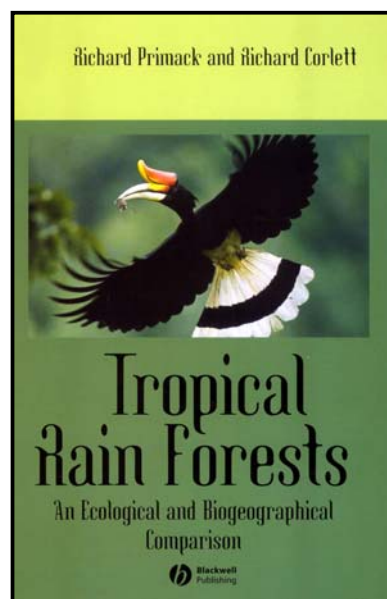
HKBWS (2004) *A Photographic Guide to the Birds of Hong Kong*. Wan Li Book Co Ltd., Hong Kong.

Lo, P.Y.F. & Hui, W.C. (2004) *Hong Kong Butterfly*. Friends of the Country Parks, Hong Kong.

Lock, N.Y. (2004) *Beauties of Pat Sin*. Friends of the Country Parks, Hong Kong.

Ngar, Y.N., Wong, S.K., Lee, C.F., Li, F.L., & Chung, W.S. (2004) *Tree Lover's Companion*. Friends of the Country Parks, Hong Kong.

Primack, R.B. & Corlett, R.T. (2005) *Tropical Rainforests: An Ecological and Biogeographical Comparison*. Blackwell Science, Oxford.



Stokes, E. (2004) *Venturing Sai Kung East*. Friends of the Country Parks, Hong Kong.

Yip, J.K.L., Ngar, Y.N., Yip, J.Y., Liu, E.K.Y., & Lai, P.C.C. (2004) *Venturing Fung Shui Woods*. Friends of the Country Parks, Hong Kong.

Journal articles, book chapters and other published work

Ades, G. & Crow, P. (2002). The Asian turtle rescue operation: temporary holding and placement at Kadoorie Farm and Botanic Gardens. *Turtle and Tortoise Newsletter* 6: 2-7.

Ah, W.L., Guan, W.B., Chen, J.C., & Su, J.L. (2004). A model study of influence of circulation on the pollutant transport in the Zhujiang River Estuary and adjacent coastal waters. *Acta Oceanologica Sinica* 23: 225-237.

Bahr, A., Wong, H., Yim, W., Huang, G., Luedmann, T., Chan, L., & Ridley Thomas, W. (2004). Stratigraphy of Quaternary inner-shelf sediments in Tai O Bay, Hong Kong, based on ground-truthed seismic profiles. *Geo-Marine Letters* 25: 20-33.

Bell, D., Robertson, S., & Hunter, P.R. (2004). Animal origins of SARS coronavirus: possible links with the international trade in small carnivores. *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society of London Series B-Biological Sciences* 359: 1107-1114.