

communities of benthic invertebrates in pools with shrimps to pools without *Macrobrachium* shrimps. Shrimp removal did not result in any significant change in the community, probably since these pools also contain benthic predatory fishes that might have cropped the excess prey made available by removal of the shrimps. Interestingly, however, this shrimp feeds on large quantities of *Brotia hainanensis*, a snail that is abundant in the streams, with the gut of one shrimp containing 74 small snails! It is therefore believed that the shrimp is probably responsible for the high mortality of small-sized *Brotia*.

Nerita by Ariel Yeung

When you walk along the coastal region of Hong Kong, you can find one group of animals easily, species of *Nerita*. They belong to the family of prosobranch gastropods Neritidae that is widely distributed in tropical regions. The shell of *Nerita* are globular or depressed. They have a flattened base. The colour of *Nerita* differs from species to species. Typical *Nerita albicilla* shells are black in colour (but some are eroded so white colour can be seen) while *Nerita yoldii* shells are creamy yellow with black bands.

These animals are grazers, feeding on algae attached to the shore with their radulae. Because of their high abundance, they are important to the structure of the algal community in the coastal region. For example, halos from absent biofilm are common on western rocky shores, due to the grazing effect of *Nerita*.

Nerita has separate sexes. Unlike some other gastropods, they possess internal fertilization. You can identify the sex of a *Nerita* by seeing the presence or not of a triangle-shaped penis beside its right tentacle. During autumn, white egg capsules ('white disks' with diameter about 5 mm) can be seen easily on Hong Kong shores. Within each egg capsule, more than 100 babies can be found!

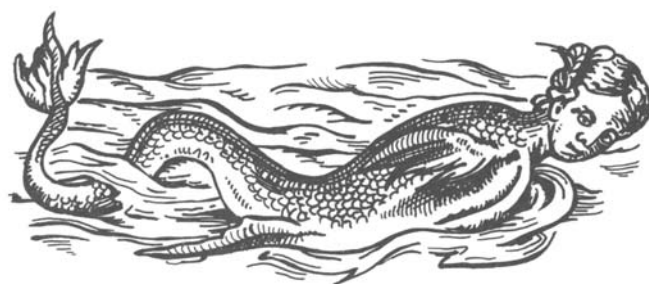


Fig.2. *Nerita costata*

There are more than 100 *Nerita* species in the world, while 8 of them can be found in Hong Kong. Most live on rocky shores. The commonest is *Nerita albicilla* in eastern oceanic waters, while in the western estuary region, a high density of

Nerita yoldii can be seen. Some big guys such as *Nerita costata* (black in colour, Fig. 2) and *Nerita plicata* (white in colour) can also be found on the rocky shores of Cape d'Aguilar. Apart from rocky shores, *Nerita spp.* can inhabit mangrove regions, such as *Nerita lineate*, and sandy shore regions, such as *Nerita chameleon*. Both are abundant in Three Fathoms Cove.

In order to live in the intertidal region, a highly variable environment, they have a particular strategy. They hide in crevices most of the time to escape from predators and physical stress. They also have an endogenous rhythm to ensure they forage at the right time. Next time when you walk along the shores, try to search out these animals. Try to observe their behaviour and see how they have adapted to the environment.



MISCELLANY

BBR 2004

by Fion Cheung
ENS Year 3 student

After a long (18 hours), hard and tiring bird-watching trip, the Big Bird Race (BBR) 2004 was completed successfully yesterday (28/2) at dusk. This year, our group consisted of 11 Environmental Life Science final year students and many other groups were amazed by our combinationall of us are girls!

As for last year's race, the bird-watching schedule was tight. Since this year's BBR began at midnight, we started walking around Kadoorie Agricultural Research Centre where we stayed for the night and then drove to Shek Wu Wai trying to record bird calls in the dark. It was windy and thus very difficult to detect the weak bird calls. Luckily, we were able to record the calls of a Collared Scops Owl and several Savanna Nightjars. After a short break, we set out again at about 6.30 to Pak Ngau Shek off Kadoorie Farm and then to Tai Po Kau. The number of birds recorded at Tai Po Kau was a little bit less than expected as a result of the windy morning and quite a lot of human disturbance (for example, cars of park-visitors). But then, our luck came back and the number of birds recorded surged in Sha Po, which is situated in North

Kam Tin, and Mai Po. Just in Sha Po, we recorded nearly 40 bird species (Fig. 1). However, it was sad to learn that this wonderful bird paradise was under imminent threat of development and illegal landuse. Despite the fact that we have the Environmental Impact Assessment Ordinance (EIAO) to govern the impacts of development on our environment, the unacceptable impacts at Sha Po warrant thorough evaluation of the way the EIAO is used. While we were observing a Yellow-billed Grosbeak on a tree branch on the way out of Sha Po, our “angel”, which was a handsome Hoopoe, suddenly came to visit us!! Every one of us was so excited by its sudden appearance that the poor little Grosbeak was put aside. When we arrived at Mai Po, it was sunny and so it was quite exhausting to watch birds there. Like many other groups, we could not spot any night herons in Mai Po so we went to A Chau to find them. Lastly, we reached the Little Egret Restaurant to finish the race (Fig. 2).



Fig. 1. Bird watching at Sha Po.

We recorded 115 different bird species and ranked the 10 out of 13 groups this year. However, we won the Pentax Cup as we had the largest number of individual sponsors. The prize is six pairs of Pentax binoculars. We have to thank all those who supported the Birdbrains Team this year. One thing I can be sure is that we were all lucky girls as nearly half of us got a prize in the lucky draw!



Fig. 2. End point at the Little Egret Restaurant.

Finally, I would like to express my gratitude to Dr Hau for his great effort in initiating our interest in bird-watching and organizing the Birdbrains Team for us this year. I must also thank Mr. Yu Yat Tung for his patience in teaching us the bird-watching skills. Mr. Yu is really an experienced bird-watcher and we are grateful to have him in our team. It was the second BBR for most of us to take part in and I am glad that Dr Hau said our bird-watching skills, especially on identifying bird calls, were better than last year. Although after graduation, there may be fewer chances for me to go bird-watching with my classmates, my interest in bird-watching will not fade and I do hope that my classmates and I can join the BBR again next year.

Sham Chung: a revisit

by Ken Ching and Eric Chan

The 30-hectare Sham Chung was in the news again recently. There are speculations that Sham Chung, where half of the land is privately owned, will be developed into a golf course with resorts (Ming Pao 3.5.04, SCMP 3.5.04). Sham Chung once included a 9-hectare freshwater marsh, which was rated as a site with high conservation value (Dudgeon & Chan 1996). The ecological value of Sham Chung marsh started to deteriorate in 1999, when the developers began to drain water out from the marsh and then grew grasses after tillage. This is still legal as Sham Chung is not protected under any conservation ordinance, while draining water from the wetland and growing grasses (some people call this ‘dry farming’) do not violate the permitted land-use of ‘agriculture’ as stated in the Outline Zoning Plans. However, this damages the marsh and it will be easier for the developers to pass the EIA when development plans are proposed. Now, the major part of the Sham Chung marsh has turned into grassland which has a lower level of biodiversity than the original abandoned paddy field.

Recently, Civil Engineering Department has submitted a proposal for the reconstruction of Sham Chung Public Pier (www.ced.gov.hk/eng/generalinfo/tsd/pp_04_sc.pdf). The reconstruction will extend the size of the original pier. This may be a further step towards the development of Sham Chung.

Despite the degraded marsh, streams in Sham Chung are still home to various species of fishes – at least six native freshwater fishes and five brackishwater species were found in a brief visit by us to Sham Chung. Three species of decapods were also spotted there. A brief survey focusing on birds, dragonflies and butterflies found that Sham Chung is now supporting a number of rare species (Table 1). It was a surprise to find a very rare raptor, the Brown Fish Owl *Ketupa zeylonensis*, which was photographed in the woodland there (Fig. 1). Also, this woodland may support mammals and rare species of plants. Active conservation activities and increased public awareness are necessary for Hong Kong society to make the best choices for the future of Sham Chung.

Bibliography

Dudgeon, D. & Chan, E.W.C. (1996) *Ecological Study of Freshwater Wetland Habitats in Hong Kong*. Agriculture & Fisheries Department, Hong Kong Government.

Hau, B. (1999) Sham Chung conspiracy? *Porcupine!* 19: 28.

Table 1. Uncommon species of birds, dragonflies and butterflies in Sham Chung. Data from surveys by Ken Ching (until 13 June 2004)

	Species
Bird	White-bellied Sea Eagle <i>Haliaeetus leucogaster</i>
	Brown Fish Owl <i>Ketupa zeylonensis</i>
Dragonfly	<i>Agriocnemis pygmaea</i>
	<i>Pseudagrion microcephalum</i>
	<i>Rhyothemis triangularis</i>
Butterfly	<i>Spindasis lohita</i>



Fig. 1. A Brown Fish Owl *Ketupa zeylonensis* photographed at Sham Chung (Photo by Ken Ching).

Big Fish Count 2004

by Allen To, Anna Situ & Kevin Kwok

On Sunday, 20 June, the first “underwater” version of the Big Bird Race, the Big Fish Count, was hosted by WWF Hong Kong. The event was to echo the World Oceans Day on 8 June, aiming to raise public awareness about marine life and funds for WWF Hong Kong. In addition, the event contributes to scientific knowledge of the local environment by gathering data on local fish species diversity to build up a database. Participating teams can go to up to three sites of their choice in search of fish species in a 45-minute dive at each site. The

team finding most fish species is the winner. We three teamed up with Kenny Leung and four other fish-loving divers to form the “HKU Diving Team” to compete with three other local diving teams (Fig. 1).

The three sites we chose were Bluff Island, Port Shelter and Sharp Island. Climate was ideal for diving: sunny, good visibility and warm water. However, the tide was very low on that afternoon and the water level was too shallow to do SCUBA diving. Therefore most of us snorkeled instead. Nevertheless, we still had a great opportunity to see many beautiful fishes. We swam amongst schools of Chinese Demoiselle and Regal Demoiselle and saw the common clownfish (Fig. 2). Some of us encountered a number of less common fish species in Hong Kong, including Bird wrasse (*Gomphosus varius*), Western gregory (*Stegastes obreptus*), Spotted knifejaw (*Oplegnathus punctatus*), Chevron butterflyfish (*Chaetodon trifascialis*) and Raccoon butterflyfish (*Chaetodon lunula*). Kenny even saw a 12-inch long abalone during the survey!



Fig. 1. Team photo of HKU diving team (Photo: WWF).

The 8-hour intensive survey was challenging and physically demanding. We were relieved when it ended. A celebration barbecue party was held at WWF HK Island House Conservation Studies Centre that night. Kenny of course did not miss the chance to refuel himself with chilled beer. Our team effort was highly acknowledged when our team was announced to be the winner. A record of 90 valid fish species by our group was far more than that of other teams. We were presented with the trophy and certificates by the competition judge, our beloved fish expert Dr. Andy Cornish.

This event enhanced our knowledge of fish species diversity in local waters. It surprised us that such a high diversity of fish was readily observable in the Hong Kong waters. Fish-watching can be an equally enjoyable and accessible activity as bird-watching. Hopefully Hong Kong people will begin to treasure and protect this beautiful underwater world, starting with an appreciation of its beauty.

Lastly we are thankful to our teammates including Dr. Kenneth Leung, Ken Ching, Raymond Chu, Rosemary

Torrance and Marija Minic for their efforts and Cheung Ming and Cheung Ming Hong for logistics and technical support.



Fig. 2. A photo of a Clark's anemone fish, *Amphiprion clarkii*, a common fish species encountered at Big Fish Count (Photo: Ken Ching).

Kadoorie Farm & Botanic Garden - Wildlife updates & sightings

by Gary Ades, Roger Kendrick, Paul Crow, Amanda Haig, Louis Cheung, Preston Chow and Rupert Griffiths
email: fauna@kfbg.org

Wildlife recordings, surveys and rehabilitation at Kadoorie Farm & Botanic Garden (KFBG) have produced a number of interesting and unusual records since December. In this report, KFBG Fauna staff provide some of the highlights of their findings.

General wildlife sightings are posted on the KFBG Wildlife Sightings Board on a fortnightly basis, with records provided by staff and visitors. Many records are generated by the Security team on night shifts.

(1) The following sightings records were posted between August and November, 2003:

August

5 August, 5.10pm; Scarlet-backed Flowerpecker (*Dicaeum cruentatum*), near tropical plants house - adult female with 3 juveniles begging for food.

23 August, (Night Safari) 7.30pm; Japanese Pipistrelle Bats observed hunting insects, and picked up at 46KHz on bat detectors, over the Butterfly Garden; 8.30pm - still a few fireflies along the stream at the Fern Walk

27 August, p.m.; Many-banded Krait hatchling found outside the Admin. Office

29 August; a male Macaque seen outside the Conservation Office.

September

1 September; at least 5 Birdwing butterflies (*Troides helenus* and *T. aeacus*) flying around the Butterfly Garden, 4 pm

3 September - Small Indian Civet at Signpost Corner

6 September - Bamboo Snake at Native Tree Nursery

8 September - Cobra near Helicopter Pad

10 September - Atlas Moth (mating pair) at Parrot Sanctuary

12 September - Muntjac (Barking deer) heard, below Kwun Yum Shan and near Post Office Pillars

12 September - Porcupine seen on road above Post Office Pillars

12 September - Wild boar seen on road above Post Office Pillars

13 September - Barking deer above Post Office Pillars

15 September - Porcupine at Apiary

24 September - Burmese Python near T S Woo Pavilion

29 September - Woodcock below Twin Pavilion

October

5 October - Black-naped Oriole, (two individuals) at Kwun Yum Shan summit.

24 October - Big-headed Terrapin, Magnolia Reservoir

25 October - 2 Ferret-badgers playing near Orchid Haven; 2 Porcupine at Raptor Sanctuary, unidentified species of Nightjar hawking for insects at dusk, summit of Kwun Yum Shan; Japanese Pipistrelle Bats above Upper Canteen; Himalayan Leaf-nosed Bats (*Hipposideros armiger*) hunting airborne invertebrates below TS Woo Pavilion; fireflies evident after dusk at the top of Kwun Yum Shan and at Great Falls.

November

21 November (evening / night) - Wild boar, Leopard Cat and Small Indian Civet - upper Farm tangerine terraces; HK cascade frog - stream pool near Orchid Haven; 3 Big-headed Terrapins, Lesser Spiny frog, 3 Anderson Stream Snakes -

stream above Magnolia Reservoir; HK Newt - stream near Fern Walk.

22 November (Night Safari) - Porcupine (2 adult, 2 sub-adult) on road beneath summit of Kwun Yum Shan; Porcupine (one adult) above Boulder Lodge; Fire-fly larvae (=glow-worms!) at Magnolia Reservoir, by stream at Orchid Haven, Fern Walk and below Butterfly Garden.

The following notable sighting records from Kwun Yum Shan (KYS) were posted between December 2003 and May 2004:

December

15 December - Daurian redstart
19 December - Red-tailed robin
19 December - Chestnut bellied rock thrush

January

13 January - White's thrush
16 January - Woodcock, rufous turtle dove, big-headed terrapin, and a Rhesus macaque
17 January - Hong Kong cascade frog, Malayan porcupine, a barking deer calling
21 January - Imperial Eagle over KYS

February

3 February - Small Indian civet
7 February - Two Malayan porcupines
10 February - Wild boar
12 February - Three stray dogs were seen eating a barking deer they had just killed
20 February - Two barking deer

March

4 March - A young barking deer
6 March - Small Indian civet
16 March - Two wild boar
24 March - Two barking deer
27 March - Malayan porcupine killed by stray dogs
31 March - Three Malayan porcupines

April

7 April - Red mountain racer
10 April - Wild boar
14 April - Small Asian mongoose
19 April - Three Malayan porcupines
20 April - A Hong Kong cascade frog calling
21 April - Leopard cat
23 April - Big-headed terrapin
25 April - Greater green snake
27 April - Bamboo Pit Viper
27 April - Two Styan's squirrels

(2) Kadoorie Farm & Botanic Garden – Fauna Department Project News:

The monthly moth survey has again increased the number of moths recorded at KFBG, to at least 1,171 species as of April 2004. Fourteen species have been recorded as new to KFBG in two nights light-trapping (28 February and 27 March) out of the 292 species recorded. The Yponomeutidae species reported as new to Hong Kong in *Porcupine!* **30** has been tentatively identified as *Teinoptila* sp. near *brunnescens*. One further species of note from 25 October 2003 has been identified as *Tirathaba ruptilinea* (Pyralidae, Galleriinae), also new to Hong Kong.

The second edition of KFBG's *Hong Kong Fauna – A Checklist of Selected Taxa* was completed in April. Copies are to be privately distributed, primarily to environmental non-governmental organisations and relevant government departments. The Checklist combines lists available from several sources into one reference and contains recent unpublished records. The list includes all the vertebrates recorded in Hong Kong, odonates, Lepidoptera (including moths), several beetle families and phasmids; just over 3,500 species in total. Further groups are to be added in future editions. Comments on this latest edition are welcome.

The endemic **Romer's Tree Frog** population on the KFBG hillside is still being monitored monthly. This year, courtship calls were first heard in March. In April and May a total of 20 adults were recorded in the field, but no tadpoles and eggs have been found yet. This is quite late compared to May 2003, when more than 100 eggs and tadpoles were found during the same night.

KFBG currently has a total of 21 **artificial bat roosts** of 4 different designs installed on site. The boxes are all between 1-2 yrs old and as yet have not attracted a significant level of occupancy however that is not to say they are not utilized. Our most successful design to date was our "first draft" which was our simplest design based upon simple principles laid out by Bat Conservation International and reference design laid out in "The Bat House Builder's Handbook" 1993 Merlin Tuttle and Donna Hensley.

The first design was recorded as housing up to 5 head of Japanese pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus abramus*) in a box at any one time and up to 11 bats at one time between all four roosts of that design. Unfortunately this box design was not resilient enough to last in the Hong Kong, climate being constructed only of plywood, and later upgrades have as yet failed to attract the same response from our local bats.

Other designs in use include a "Bat Condo" designed to offer housing to larger numbers of bats and prefabricated "Woodcrete" boxes designed to be built into permanent brick or concrete structures.

In many temperate countries artificial roost structures for bats are well researched and are recognized as a valid conservation measure for some species. By putting different designs through trial, we hope to find those designs most appropriate for use in Hong Kong that may have value in mitigating loss of existing bat roost sites. Plans exist in the future to test larger scale roost designs.

With the arrival of the new financial and working year in April of 2004 KFBG has formalized one of the ongoing monitoring projects into a more structured programme. The population of **Big-headed Terrapins** resident inside the boundaries of KFBG is the subject of the study. Initially basic occurrence data is being collected during routine stream searches, this has so far recorded 39 individual turtles, which have been marked, measured and released (Figs. 1 and 2). Turtles have ranged from 8.5 g hatchlings to adults just under 1 kg in weight. As an extension to this project, collaboration with the Savannah River Ecology Laboratory (USA) has been initiated and a radio telemetry project that hopes to uncover a little more of the ecology of this threatened species is underway. Currently only four animals are being regularly tracked but we hope to expand the project when manpower allows. Each turtle being tracked is also carrying an “ibutton” temperature logger that will provide a snap shot of the thermal environment the animals are selecting.



Fig. 1. An adult male big headed terrapin from the KFBG hillside fitted with radio transmitter and data logger package.



Fig. 2. A hatchling big headed terrapin is processed and numbered before re-release.

The results of a *Pilot biodiversity study of the eastern Frontier Closed Area and North East New Territories*

undertaken during 2003 have been published. The executive summary is reproduced here:

“A 7-day preliminary biodiversity survey was conducted between June and December 2003 at Lin Ma Hang and San Kwai Tin in the Frontier Closed Area (FCA), and Kuk Po, So Lo Pun and Yung Shue Au in North East New Territories (NENT) The aim of this survey was to provide up-to-date ecological background information relevant to an evaluation of ecological importance of potential ecological hotspots in the study area. Included in the study were surveys of plants, mammals, birds, amphibians and reptiles, freshwater fish and macro-invertebrates.

In the FCA botanical hotspots included the *feng shui* woods and secondary forest where forest-dependent birds including the Orange-headed Thrush were recorded. *Gymnosphaera metteniana*, a new fern species to Hong Kong, was recorded in the secondary forest. The present survey also reinforces earlier findings of high ecological value of lowland streams for freshwater fish, and lowland habitats for bats. A dragonfly, *Idionyx victor*, of “Local Concern”, was also recorded. The endemic Anderson’s Stream Snake of “Potential Global Concern”, and Mountain Wolf Snake and Diamond-backed Water Snake both of “Local Concern” were recorded. Three Hong Kong endemic moths were also recorded during a light trap exercise. A dragonfly, *Gynacantha subinterrupta*, of “Local Concern” was recorded.

In the NENT a total of nine plant species of conservation concern were recorded. The Yellow-bellied Weasel and Crab-eating Mongoose of “Local Concern” were recorded by infra-red camera exercises. The highest occurrence of mammals occurred at Yung Shue Au. In addition, the presence of the goby *Stiphodon* sp., which is of “Global Concern”, is the first record of this fish species in the New Territories.

Designating Country Park and Site of Special Scientific Interest status to lowland habitats of high ecological value is the most effective way to conserve these habitats. Priority for conservation should be given to the secondary forest and lowland streams at Lin Ma Hang, secondary forest and hillstream at San Kwai Tin, San Uk Ha *feng shui* wood at Kuk Po, secondary forest, the lowland stream/marsh, and seagrass at So Lo Pun, and the lowland stream at Yung Shue Au. Green corridors between Wutongshan National Forest Park in Shenzhen and Robin’s Nest in Hong Kong are recommended with cross-border cooperation, to enhance movement and dispersal of wildlife between the Hong Kong and Shenzhen mountain ranges.”

(3) Wild Animal Rescue Centre (WARC) – update

The last few months saw a fair amount of activity at WARC, with animals admitted for rehabilitation and veterinary treatment for a variety of conditions, we also received a number of young animals. The release of a Brown Fish Owl fitted with a radio transmitter provided a useful diary of habitat use and survival prior to the transmitter being recovered from a shed feather in April. Notable animals received during this period include a Saker Falcon and a Pied Avocet.

Below is a list of some of the animals received over the last few months that have been successfully rehabilitated and subsequently released.

SPECIES	LOCATION FOUND	RELEASE DATE	RELEASE LOCATION
RAPTORS			
Collard Scops Owl (<i>Otus lempiji</i>)	Unknown	20.09.03	KFBG
Collard Scops Owl (<i>Otus lempiji</i>)	Aberdeen	20.09.03	KFBG
Collard Scops Owl (<i>Otus lempiji</i>)	Peel Rise	25.10.03	KFBG
Collard Scops Owl (<i>Otus lempiji</i>)	Mui Wo	25.10.03	KFBG
Collard Scops Owl (<i>Otus lempiji</i>)	Quarry Bay	13.10.03	KFBG
Collard Scops Owl (<i>Otus lempiji</i>)	The Peak	27.04.04	The Peak
Black Eared Kite (<i>Milvus migrans</i>)	Unknown	05.10.03	KFBG
Black Eared Kite (<i>Milvus migrans</i>)	Taipo	17.12.03	KFBG
Brown Hawk Owl (<i>Ninox scutulata</i>)	Ho Man Tin	15.10.03	KFBG
Oriental Scops Owl (<i>Otus sunia</i>)	Kwun Tong	21.10.03	KFBG
Common Buzzard (<i>Buteo buteo</i>)	Kowloon Tong	06.11.03	Mai Po
Common Buzzard (<i>Buteo buteo</i>)	Unknown	05.12.03	KFBG
Kestrel (<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>)	Causeway Bay	11.12.03	KFBG
Kestrel (<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>)	Kwai Fong	20.02.04	KFBG
Saker Falcon (<i>Falco cherrug</i>)	Kai Tak	21.02.04	KFBG
Peregrine Falcon (<i>Falco peregrinus</i>)	Tai Hang	23.02.04	KFBG
Peregrine Falcon (<i>Falco peregrinus</i>)	Causeway Bay	26.02.04	KFBG
Eastern Grass Owl (<i>Tyto longimembris</i>) x 2	Sai Kung	27.02.04	Sai Kung
NON RAPTORS			
Koel (<i>Eudynamis scolopacea</i>)	Kam Tin	01.09.03	Kam Tin
Yellow Bittern (<i>Ixobrychus sinensis</i>)	Sham Shui Po	17.10.03	Mai Po
Schrencks Bittern (<i>Ixobrychus eurhythmus</i>)	Kwun Tong	18.10.03	Mai Po
Chestnut Bittern (<i>Ixobrychus cinnamomeus</i>)	Wan Chai	22.10.03	Mai Po

White Breasted Waterhen (<i>Amourornis phoenicurus</i>)	North Point	30.09.03	Lam Tsuen
White Breasted Waterhen (<i>Amourornis phoenicurus</i>)	Morrison Hill	22.10.03	Lam Tsuen
Chinese Pond Heron (<i>Ardeola bacchus</i>)	Central	27.10.03	Lam Tsuen
Water Cock (<i>Gallicrex cinerea</i>)	Cotton Tree Drive	06.11.03	Mai Po
Common Teal (<i>Anas crecca</i>)	Lok Ma Chau	19.11.03	Mai Po
Common Teal (<i>Anas crecca</i>)	Mai Po	06.12.03	Mai Po
Band Bellied Crane (<i>Porzana paykulli</i>)	Mongkok	19.11.03	Mai Po
Moorhen (<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>)	Peak	21.11.03	Kam Tin
Woodcock (<i>Scolopax rusticola</i>)	Tsim Sha Tsui	22.11.03	KFBG
Shoveler Duck (<i>Anas clypeata</i>)	Mai Po	06.12.03	Mai Po
Spotted Dove (<i>Streptopelia chinensis</i>)	KFBG	11.12.03	KFBG
Spotted Dove (<i>Streptopelia chinensis</i>)	KFBG	11.12.03	KFBG
Spotted Dove (<i>Streptopelia chinensis</i>)	KFBG	11.12.03	KFBG
Shoveler Duck (<i>Anas clypeata</i>)	Mai Po	18.12.03	Mai Po
Shoveler Duck (<i>Anas clypeata</i>)	Mai Po	18.12.03	Mai Po
Northern Pintail (<i>Anas acuta</i>)	Mai Po	30.12.03	Mai Po
Woodcock (<i>Scolopax rusticola</i>)	Beacon Hill	30.12.03	KFBG
Pied Avocet (<i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>)	Mai Po	30.12.03	Mai Po
Chinese Pond Heron (<i>Ardeola bacchus</i>)	Fairview Park	17.01.04	Mai Po
Great Egret (<i>Egretta alba</i>)	Tai Po	27.01.04	Tai Po
Silky Starling (<i>Sturnus sericeus</i>)	Tai Po	25.03.04	Kam Tin
Common Kingfisher (<i>Alcedo atthis</i>)	Admiralty	03.04.04	Lam Tsuen
Chinese Pond Heron (<i>Ardeola bacchus</i>)	Sheung Shui	20.04.04	Sheung Shui
Chinese Pond Heron (<i>Ardeola bacchus</i>)	Lok Ma Chau	26.04.04	Lok Ma Chau
MAMMALS			
Greater Short Nosed Fruit Bat	Tai Po	11.11.03	Tai Po

(<i>Cynopterus sphinx</i>)			
Short-nosed Fruit Bat (<i>Cynopterus sphinx</i>)	Lam Tsuen	05.02.04	Lam Tsuen
Short-nosed Fruit Bat (<i>Cynopterus sphinx</i>)	Tong Fuk	16.02.04	Tong Fuk
Short-nosed Fruit Bat (<i>Cynopterus sphinx</i>)	Tung Chung	23.04.04	Tung Chung

(4) Feature: Feral Dogs & Native Wildlife – a cause for concern

During a Night Safari activity at KFBG on 27 March, a dramatic incident occurred which highlights the impact feral dogs have on the native wildlife. The KFBG security patrol radioed the Safari team to say they had seen a porcupine family (two adults and one juvenile) at approximately 300 m ASL. Before the activity group reached the location, dogs were heard barking excitedly, with the sound coming from close to the reported sightings. The Night Safari team reached the location of the Porcupine sighting, to be met by the security guards on duty and were informed that a juvenile porcupine had been killed by feral dogs. The body had not been removed, so the Night Safari participants were able to see first hand the gruesome result of the feral dog attack as they walked to the lower part of the Farm (Fig. 3). Once at Misha's Bungalow lower down the hill, there followed a lively debate amongst KFBG staff and Night Safari participants as to the possible courses of action that could be taken to deal with feral dogs.



Fig. 3. Juvenile porcupine killed on 27 March 2004, showing extensive wounds from the attack by feral dogs.

This incident followed the killing of a pregnant muntjac deer on 12th February and a third incident occurred more recently, with an adult porcupine killed by feral dogs on May 21 (Fig. 4). Staff have also witnessed feral dogs attacking a pangolin on KYS.



Fig. 4. The muntjac killed by feral dogs on 12 February 2004.

Readers are encouraged to provide records of their own experiences concerning feral dog activities and the locations where they occurred.

“From the Bar”

Feature essay: Wildlife rehabilitation and release at KFBG

by Rupert Griffiths

Introduction

KFBG Wild Animal Rescue Centre (WARC) carries out rehabilitation work for any native Hong Kong wildlife that is found injured or displaced. From 1994 to 2004, admittances of native animals to the centre totalled more than 2000*, and more than 1000 were released. Snakes make up the largest proportion of these animals (~50%) but birds follow closely behind (~40%).

The WARC also serves a second important function, that is as a holding and relocation facility for large numbers of confiscated endangered exotic species, but this article will focus only on the native wildlife rehabilitation side of the work.

Why do we undertake wildlife rehabilitation?

Some people who visit the WARC question the value of wildlife rehabilitation. Others blindly accept the need for it without proper consideration. We believe that there are two main reasons to carry out wildlife rehabilitation, animal welfare and species conservation, the former involves the element of compassion and the latter is scientifically based. Both have the long-term beneficial result of wildlife conservation and education but in different ways.