

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

An unusual behaviour of a **Squirrel** (*Callosciurus erythraeus*) was reported by Richard Corlett on 9 May 2005. A squirrel was seen catching flying termites (probably *Macrotermes*) with its front paws on the wooded slope above the Kadoorie Biological Sciences Building in HKU campus. Most of the termites were on the ground or low vegetation, but the squirrel also caught a couple from the air.

A juvenile **Leopard Cat** (*Prionailurus bengalensis*) was seen at close range by Yu Yat Tung on the Mai Po boardwalk on 18 April 2005.

An unusual locality for **Chinese White Dolphin** (*Sousa chinensis*) was reported by Yu Yat Tung; in Long Harbour, Sai Kung on 14 May 2005.

Robert Davison found a freshly road-killed **Javan Mongoose** (*Herpestes javanicus*) on the Brides Pool Road in the afternoon of 26 March 2005.



(Photo: Robert Davison)

A small **Javan Mongoose** (*Herpestes javanicus*) was seen in a garden at Sha Lan Village near Tai Po, at 3.00 pm on 5 June 2005 by Ed, Phil, Bill and Tanya Glenwright.

Two **Barking Deer** (*Muntiacus muntjac*) were seen close to the trail by Danny Lau and James Hui in Tai Po Kau Nature Reserve on the morning of 10 November 2005. They rushed

off noisily into the vegetation upon hearing the stepping sound of the observers.

Mike Bains found a number of Porcupine quills that were still attached to a small piece of skin (size: 5cm x 2cm) on the Hong Kong trail at approximately 500 m east of Peel Rise at around 6.00 pm on 11 October 2005.

Andrew Malone reported the sighting of a **Porcupine** on the path between Hatton Road and Pinewood Battery on 11 October 2005.

On 22 and 23 May 2005, Simon Dover saw **Porcupines** (at a distance of around 2-4 feet for up to 15 minutes) on the hillside above the stream at Tung Tze, Tai Po at around midnight. A porcupine was seen feeding on a plant on 22 May.

BIRDS

A **Mountain Tailor Bird** (*Orthotomus cuculatus*) was seen by Kwok Hon Kai at Tai Po Kau on 14 May 2005.

An unusual hunting behaviour for a **Long-tailed Shrike** (*Lanius schach*) was reported by Billy Hau. The whole process of the killing of an **Eurasian Skylark** (*Alauda arvensis*) was seen near a nullah in Long Valley in the afternoon of 11 October 2005: the Long-tailed Shrike killed the Skylark rapidly in a skillful way, then it tried to pick up the trophy and fly but the Skylark was apparently too heavy. Finally, the shrike gave up when it sensed that someone was watching on the other side of the bank.



(Photo: Billy Hau)

FISH

A locally rare wrasse, *Hologymnosus annulatus* (TL: 245 mm), was collected by Allen To on 16 Aug 2005 from Sai Kung Wet Market. The wrasse was caught by fishermen from Sharp Island. The wrasse had previously been sighted by Andy Cornish in Cape D'Aguiar and Lamma Island (Andy Cornish pers. comm.).



(Photo: Allen To)

Amphibians and Reptiles

6-8 **Hong Kong Newts** (*Paramesotriton hongkongensis*) were observed by David Sanderson in a stream pool at the head of Lam Tsuen Valley on 16 October 2005.

Ken Ching and Allen To found a dead **Yellow Pond Terrapin** (*Mauremys mutica*) (carapace length: 15 cm) trapped in a cage along a stream in Tsing Yi in the morning of 21 May 2005.



(Photo: Allen To)

Chinese Cobras (*Naja atra*) were seen by Ed, Phil, Bill and Tanya Glenwright on two occasions at Sha Lan Village, near Tai Po, in May 2005.

Fiona Chung and Eric Chan found a dead **Burmese Python** (*Python molurus*) at Tai Nam Chung Country Park.

Robert Davison reported the following sightings of snakes:

A dead **Checkered Keelback** (*Xenochrophis piscator*) was found at Tai Mei Tuk in mid-May. It was killed by a vehicle. A road-killed **Greater Green Snake** (*Ophedrys major*) was seen at Shing Mun Reservoir on 16 May 2005.

A number of **Common Rat Snakes** (*Ptyas mucosus*), including a large individual which was above 2.4 m, were seen in the campus of City University of Hong Kong in early wet season of 2005.

Ken Ching saw a **Malayan Box Turtle** (*Cuora amboinensis*) (carapace length: 12cm) in a freshwater wetland at Sha Kok Mei, Sai Kung, in the morning of 1 Sept 2005.

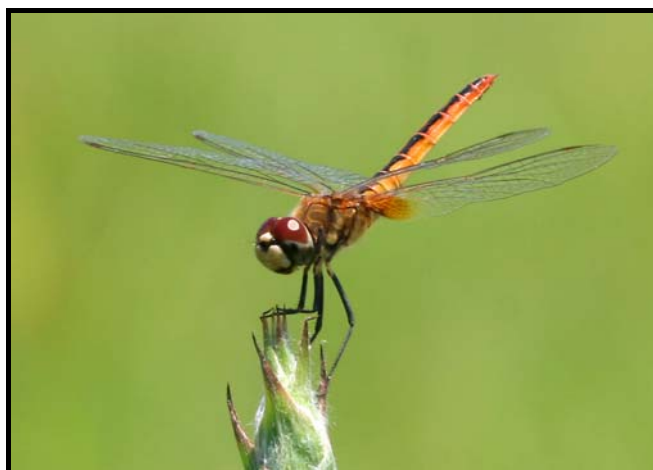


(Photo: Ken Ching)

INVERTEBRATES

On 22 May 2005, Christie Flowers and friends found more than five **Blue Bottle**, or **Portuguese Man O'War** (*Physalia physalis*), jellyfish washed up on Power Station beach, Yung Shue Wan, Lamma Island. The jellyfish are rare visitors to Hong Kong, and can deliver a painful sting even when dead. They are easily identified by being a blue-colour and having an air-filled float which keeps the main body of the jellyfish on the water surface (Submitted by Andy Cornish).

An uncommon dragonfly species *Macrodiplax cora* and two unusual damselfly species *Cercion calamorum dyeri* and *Pseudagrion microcephalum* were seen on 24 July, 8 May and 11 September 2005 respectively by Fion Cheng at Luk Keng marsh.



(Photo: Fion Cheung)

PLANTS

Tom Glenwright noticed that a *Sonneratia* was growing in the Tolo pond below Tai Po Kau. This suggests that this exotic mangrove species may be spreading in Hong Kong.