

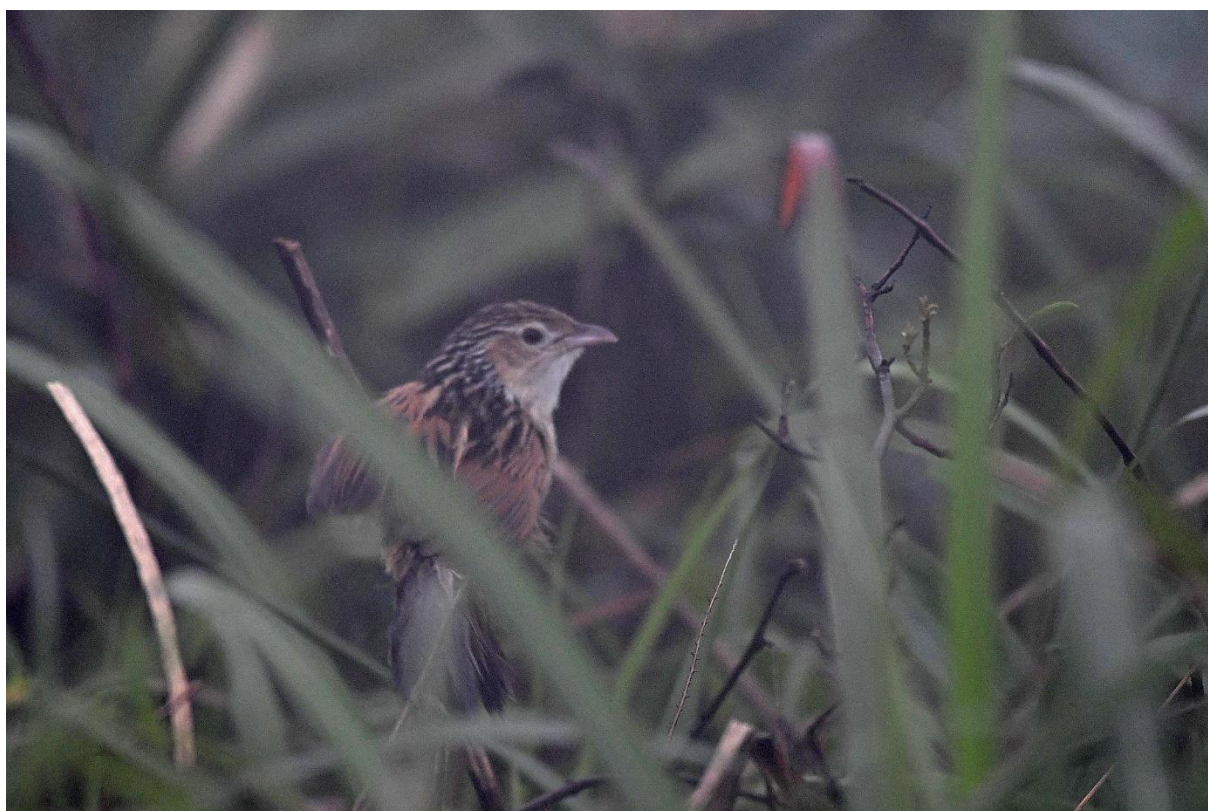
Report of a one-day Birding Trip to

# Hong Kong

27<sup>th</sup> April 2019

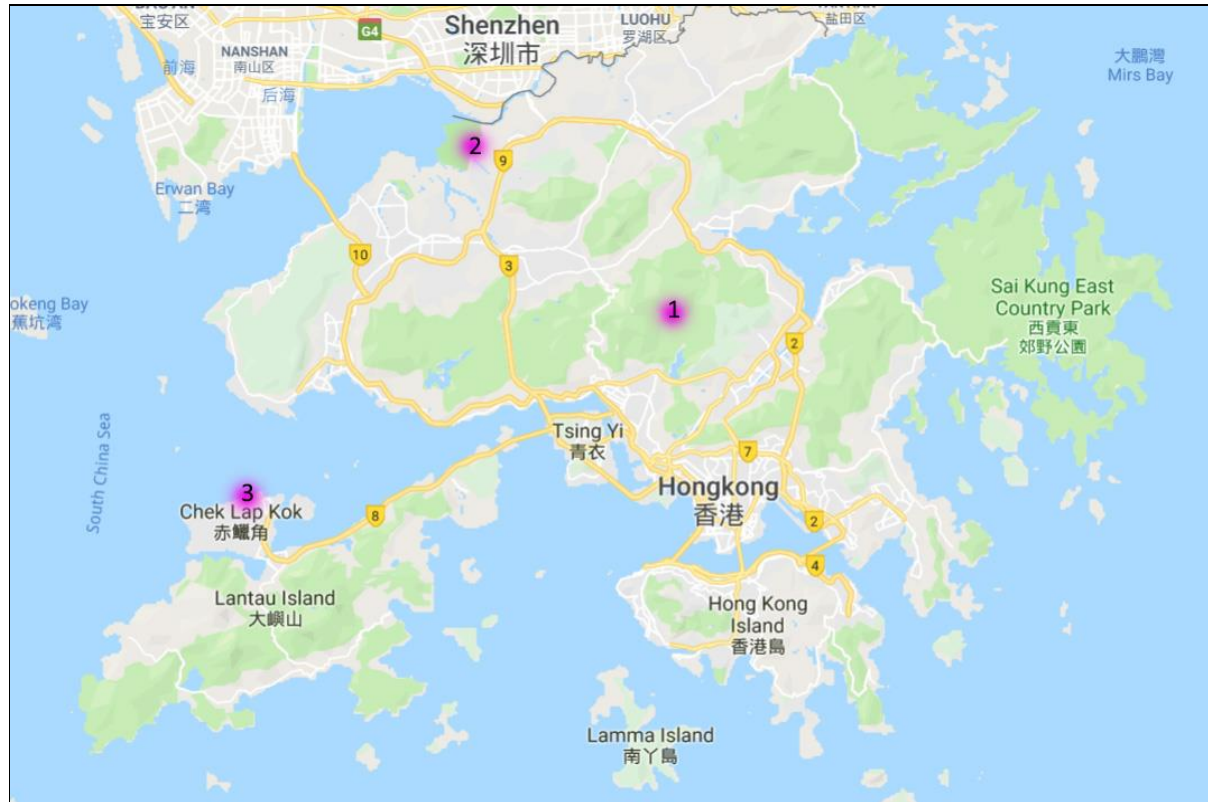
Participants:

Arjan Brenkman, Jan van der Laan, Matthew Kwan (guide)



Chinese Grassbird, 27 April, Tai Mo Shan, Hong Kong; © Jan van der Laan.

## Map



1. Tai Mo Shan
2. Mai Po
3. Hong Kong International Airport



## Introduction

Between 26 April and 6 May 2019, Arjan Brenkman and I, Jan van der Laan travelled to Papua New Guinea. We had an 11 hour stop in Hong Kong, so we looked around for a birding guide to guide us to the best birding spots in Hong Kong. The guide was quickly found: Matthew Kwan, a very good birder. We decided to concentrate on two spots: Tai Mo Shan for Chinese Grassbird and Mai Po for shore birds and several other migratory birds. Beforehand we had to negotiate for a permit and via the Oriental Bird Club, who stated we were life-long members, we obtained the permit.

## Itinerary

- 26 April** we took the Cathay Pacific CX 270 flight of 13:00 from Amsterdam to Hong Kong. Flight departed in time and nothing worth to mention happened during the flight.
- 27 April** we arrived in **Hong Kong** in time at 6:10 hours. With only hand luggage we could quickly pass through immigration and a lone figure in the arrival hall was our Hong Kong guide Matthew Kwan. We drove quickly to **Tai Mo Shan**, a hill where Arjan's three main targets would reside, the Chinese Hwamei, Russet Bush Warbler and Chinese Grassbird. We drove to the top and at the parking lot already a Chinese Hwamei gave good views. We continued along a track to the top of the mountain. Fog appeared and made visibility difficult. Yet we managed to find the remaining two targets and we had very good views of both skulkers. Next we went to the lower elevations of **Tai Mo Shan** and at a small botanic garden we observed a pair of Fork-tailed Sunbirds, a pair of Hainan Blue Flycatchers, heard a Yellow-crested Tit and photographed several dragonflies and butterflies. After a very short coffee and sandwich break we drove to **Mai Po**, where we should bird the remains of the day. First we birded the **fish ponds** where we saw Intermediate Egret, Collared Crows, Chinese Penduline Tit, Masked Laughingthrush, Dusky Warbler, Sharp-tailed Sandpipers, Whiskered Tern, Pied Kingfisher, Chinese Pond Heron, Black-browed Reed Warbler, Oriental Reed Warbler, White-shouldered and Black-collared Starlings. We continued to the famous **Mud Flats of Deep Bay**, where we could see birds from the **Deep Bay Hide** during rising tide. From the hide we saw Greater and Lesser Sandplover, Terek Sandpiper, Grey-tailed Tattler, Red-necked and Long-toed Stints, Broad-billed and Curlew Sandpipers, Pacific Golden Plover, Kentish Plover, Mongolian (Vega) Gull, Black-tailed Godwit, Eurasian, Far Eastern Curlew and Whimbrels. Finally we found at least four Asian Dowitchers, a new bird for Jan. When walking back to the fish ponds we managed to get a Styan's Grasshopper Warbler into view while it skulked in the mangroves. And just before we arrived at the **Visitor centre** we found between a flock of House Swifts a Himalayan Swiftlet. Then it was time to get back to the **International Airport Chek Lap Kok**, where we arrived at c 15:30 hours. We said goodbye to Matthew and we checked in for our CX935 flight to Manila. Departure as planned for 17:40 hours, but we had to wait an hour because three passengers didn't show up and their luggage had to be taken out of the plane. We arrived on time in **Manila** at c 20:30 hours and we continued to **Gate 2** in Manila for our flight PR0215 to Port Moresby to be departed at 23:25 hours. Our trip to Papua New Guinea will be in another report.



## Species Accounts

Order and nomenclature follows [www.worldbirdnames.org](http://www.worldbirdnames.org), version 11.2. Species important to us are in capitals.

## Recommended Literature

For Hong Kong there is the rather outdated Birds of Hong Kong by Clive Viney and Karen Phillipps available. The best book of course is the Birds of East Asia by Mark Brazil.

Trip reports can be found at [www.cloudbirders.com](http://www.cloudbirders.com), [www.surfbirds.com](http://www.surfbirds.com) and [www.birdtours.co.uk](http://www.birdtours.co.uk)

## Acknowledgements

We would like to thank Lisa Whiffin from OBC for providing proof we are OBC Members, Barry Lau for granting us a permit for Mai Po and Matthew Kwan for guiding and driving us and around Hong Kong. We can recommend his services to anyone. Matthew's blog can be found here: <https://matthewkwanbirding.blogspot.com/>.

[Jan van der Laan](#) and Arjan Brenkman, Alkmaar & Culemborg May 2019.

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Left: Chinese Hwamei; right: Chinese Grassbird; both on 27 April 2019, Tai Mo Shan, Hong Kong; © Jan van der Laan.



Left: Hainan Blue Flycatcher, 27 April 2019, Tai Mo Shan; right: Light-vented Bulbul, 27 April 2019, Mai Po, Hong Kong; © Jan van der Laan.



Left: Collared Crow; right: Chinese Penduline Tit; both on 27 April 2019, Mai Po, Hong Kong; © Jan van der Laan.



Left: Terek Sandpiper; right: Grey-tailed Tattler; both on 27 April 2019, Deep Bay Mudflats, Mai Po, Hong Kong; © Jan van der Laan.





Left: Three Asian Dowitchers; 27 April 2019, Mai Po, Hong Kong; © Jan van der Laan; right: Whimbrel (leftmost bird), four Eurasians Curlew and far right, a Far Eastern Curlew, also 27 April 2019, Mai Po, Hong Kong; © Arjan Brenkman.



Left: Red-necked Stints; right: Long-toed Stint; all on 27 April 2019, Deep Bay Mudflats, Mai Po, Hong Kong; © Jan van der Laan.



Left: Curlew Sandpipers; right: Lesser & Greater Sandplovers; 27 April 2019, Deep Bay Mudflats, Mai Po, Hong Kong; © Jan van der Laan.



Left: Black-faced Spoonbills; right: Masked Laughingthrush; both on 27 April 2019, Mai Po; Jan van der Laan.





Left: Indigo Dropwing; right: Common Blue Skimmer; both on 27 April 2019, lower elevations Tai Mo Shan, Hong Kong; © Jan van der Laan.



Left: Asian Amberwing; right: Pied Percher; both on 27 April 2019, Mai Po, Hong Kong; © Jan van der Laan.



Left: Common Bluetail, Mai Po, Hong Kong; right: Honk Kong Newt, Tai Mo Shan, both on 27 April 2019; © Jan van der Laan.



001. **Northern Shoveler** - *Spatula clypeata*  
27-04                      c 5      Mai Po.
  
002. **Himalayan Swiftlet** - *Aerodramus brevirostris*  
27-04                      1      Mai Po. Apparently a scarce bird.
  
003. **House Swift** - *Apus nipalensis*  
27-04                      3-4      Mai Po.
  
004. **Asian Koel** - *Eudynamys scolopaceus*  
Common by voice and several seen nicely at Mai Po.
  
005. **Large Hawk-Cuckoo** - *Hierococcyx sparveroides*  
27-04                      c 5      (1 seen, others heard-only) Mai Po.
  
006. **Indian Cuckoo** - *Cuculus micropterus*  
27-04                      2      (1 seen, other heard-only) Mai Po.
  
007. **Spotted Dove** - *Spilopelia chinensis*  
Fairly common in Mai Po.
  
008. **Common Moorhen** - *Gallinula chloropus*  
Several in the mangroves at Mai Po.
  
009. **White-breasted Waterhen** - *Amaurornis phoenicurus*  
27-04                      3      Mai Po.
  
010. **Little Grebe** - *Tachybaptus ruficollis*  
Fairly common at the Mai Po fish ponds. Several on the nest or with chicks.
  
011. **Pied Avocet** - *Recurvirostra avosetta*  
27-04                      c 20-30      Deep Bay Mudflats, Mai Po.
  
012. **Pacific Golden Plover** - *Pluvialis fulva*  
27-04                      c 15-20      Deep Bay Mudflats, Mai Po.
  
013. **Grey Plover** - *Pluvialis squaterola*  
27-04                      1      (still in winter plumage) Deep Bay Mudflats, Mai Po.
  
014. **Little Ringed Plover** - *Charadrius dubius*  
27-04                      c 5      Fish ponds, Mai Po.
  
015. **Kentish Plover** - *Charadrius alexandrinus*  
27-04                      c 2-3      Deep Bay Mudflats, Mai Po.





016. **Lesser Sand Plover** - *Charadrius mongolus mongolus/stegmanni*  
27-04                      c 25      Deep Bay Mudflats, Mai Po.
017. **Greater Sand Plover** - *Charadrius leschenaultii*  
27-04                      c 25      Deep Bay Mudflats, Mai Po.
018. **Greater Painted-snipe** - *Rostratula benghalensis*  
27-04                      1      (male) Deep Bay Mudflats, Mai Po.
019. **Whimbrel** - *Numenius phaeopus*  
27-04                      c 10      Deep Bay Mudflats, Mai Po.
020. **FAR EASTERN CURLEW** - *Numenius madagascariensis*  
27-04                      2-3      (mixed in with the Eurasian Curlews) Deep Bay Mudflats, Mai Po.
021. **Eurasian Curlew** - *Numenius arquata orientalis*  
27-04                      c 5      (long-billed *orientalis* race) Deep Bay Mudflats, Mai Po.
022. **Black-tailed Godwit** - *Limosa limosa melanuroides*  
27-04                      c 50-60      Deep Bay Mudflats, Mai Po.
023. **Red Knot** - *Calidris canutus*  
27-04                      1      (summer plumage) Deep Bay Mudflats, Mai Po.
024. **Broad-billed Sandpiper** - *Calidris falcinellus siberica*  
27-04                      3      (minimum) Deep Bay Mudflats, Mai Po.
025. **Sharp-tailed Sandpiper** - *Calidris acuminata*  
27-04                      3      Deep Bay Mudflats, Mai Po.
026. **Curlew Sandpiper** - *Calidris ferruginea*  
27-04                      c 50      (the most common wader) Deep Bay Mudflats, Mai Po.
027. **Long-toed Stint** - *Calidris subminuta*  
27-04                      at least 3      Deep Bay Mudflats, Mai Po.
028. **Red-necked Stint** - *Calidris ruficollis*  
27-04                      50+      Deep Bay Mudflats, Mai Po.
029. **Sanderling** - *Calidris alba*  
27-04                      1      Fish ponds, Mai Po.
030. **Dunlin** - *Calidris alpina*  
27-04                      1      Deep Bay Mudflats, Mai Po.



031. **ASIAN DOWITCHER** - *Limnodromus semipalmatus*  
 27-04                      6    (some in winter, some in full summer plumage) Deep Bay Mudflats, Mai Po.
032. **Terek Sandpiper** - *Xenus cinereus*  
 27-04                      c 15    Deep Bay Mudflats, Mai Po.
033. **Common Sandpiper** - *Actitis hypoleucos*  
 27-04                      c 5    Fish ponds, Mai Po.  
                                  1    Deep Bay Mudflats, Mai Po.
034. **Grey-tailed Tattler** - *Tringa brevipes*  
 27-04                      3    Deep Bay Mudflats, Mai Po.
035. **Common Redshank** - *Tringa totanus*  
 27-04                      c 5    Deep Bay Mudflats, Mai Po.
036. **Marsh Sandpiper** - *Tringa stagnatilis*  
 27-04                      c 25    Deep Bay Mudflats, Mai Po.
037. **Wood Sandpiper** - *Tringa glareola*  
 27-04                      c 20    Fish ponds, Mai Po.
038. **Spotted Redshank** - *Tringa erythropus*  
 27-04                      c 20    (most in summer plumage) Fish ponds, Mai Po.
039. **Common Greenshank** - *Tringa nebularia*  
 27-04                      50+    Mai Po.
040. **Vega Gull** - *Larus vegae mongolus*  
 27-04                      4    Deep Bay Mudflats, Mai Po.  
 According to the IOC, *mongolus* is a subspecies of *L. vegae*, although they do not look like each other.
041. **Gull-billed Tern** - *Gelochelidon nilotica*  
 27-04                      5    Deep Bay Mudflats, Mai Po.
042. **Caspian Tern** - *Hydroprogne caspia*  
 27-04                      c 10    Deep Bay Mudflats, Mai Po.
043. **Whiskered Tern** - *Chlidonias hybrida*  
 27-04                      c 5    Fish ponds, Mai Po.
044. **BLACK-FACED SPOONBILL** - *Platalea minor*  
 27-04                      3    Fish Ponds, Mai Po.  
                                  65    Deep Bay Mudflats, Mai Po.



045. **Yellow Bittern** - *Ixobrychus sinensis*  
27-04                      1    (male, well seen) Mai Po.
046. **Black-crowned Night Heron** - *Nycticorax nycticorax*  
27-04                      c 5    Mai Po.
047. **Chinese Pond Heron** - *Ardeola bacchus*  
27-04                      4    (in breeding plumage) Mai Po.
048. **Eastern Cattle Egret** - *Bubulcus coromandus*  
27-04                      c 50    Mai Po.
049. **Grey Heron** - *Ardea cinerea*  
27-04                      1    Deep Bay Mudflats, Mai Po.
050. **Great Egret** - *Ardea alba*  
27-04                      c 75-100    Deep Bay Mudflats, Mai Po.
051. **Intermediate Egret** - *Ardea intermedia*  
27-04                      1    Mai Po.
052. **Little Egret** - *Egretta garzetta*  
27-04                      c 40-50    Deep Bay Mudflats, Mai Po.
053. **Crested Serpent Eagle** - *Spilornis cheela*  
27-04                      1    lower elevations of Tai Mo Shan.
054. **Black Kite** - *Milvus migrans*  
27-04                      5    Mai Po.
055. **Common Kingfisher** - *Alcedo atthis*  
27-04                      c 5    (several heard, 2 seen) Mai Po.
056. **Pied Kingfisher** - *Ceryle rudis*  
27-04                      2    Mai Po.
057. **Grey-chinned Minivet** - *Pericrocotus solaris*  
27-04                      1    (female) lower elevations of Tai Mo Shan.
058. **Scarlet Minivet** - *Pericrocotus speciosus*  
27-04                      1    (female, together with *P. solaris*) lower elevations of Tai Mo Shan.
059. **Long-tailed Shrike** - *Lanius schach*  
27-04                      1    Mai Po.





060. **Hair-crested Drongo** - *Dicrurus hottentottus*

27-04                      1      Mai Po.

061. **Black Drongo** - *Dicrurus macrocercus*

27-04                      c 25      Mai Po.

062. **Azure-winged Magpie** - *Cyanopica cyanus*

27-04                      1      Visitor Centre, Mai Po. Introduced.

063. **Red-billed Blue Magpie** - *Urocissa erythrorhyncha*

27-04                      c 5      Mangroves of Mai Po.

064. **Oriental Magpie** - *Pica serica*

A few in the lowlands, recently split by IOC.

065. **Collared Crow** - *Corvus torquatus*

27-04                      c 15      Mai Po.

066. **Large-billed Crow** - *Corvus macrorhynchos*

27-04                      c 5      Tai Mo Shan.

067. **Cinereous Tit** - *Parus cinereus*

Several at Tai Mo Shan and in Mai Po.

068. **YELLOW-CHEEKED TIT** - *Machlolophus spilonotus*

A heard-only together with two Cinereous Tits at the lower elevations of Tai Mo Shan.

069. **Chinese Penduline Tit** - *Remiz consobrinus*

A female seen well at Mai Po, and several others heard.

070. **Light-vented Bulbul** - *Pycnonotus sinensis*

Several at Tai Mo Shan and Mai Po.

071. **Red-whiskered Bulbul** - *Pycnonotus jocosus*

Common at Tai Mo Shan. A new species for Jan after several visits to Asia!

072. **Barn Swallow** - *Hirundo rustica*

27-04                      c 25      Mai Po.

073. **Mountain Tailorbird** - *Phyllergates cucullatus*

27-04                      1      (heard only) Tai Mo Shan.



074. **Brown-flanked Bush Warbler** - *Horornis fortipes*  
Commonly singing at Tai Mo Shan.
075. **Dusky Warbler** - *Phylloscopus fuscatus*  
About three birds seen and heard (also singing) in bushes at Mai Po and one at the fishponds nearby.
076. **Oriental Reed Warbler** - *Acrocephalus orientalis*  
27-04                      1      Mai Po.
077. **Black-browed Reed Warbler** - *Acrocephalus bistrigiceps*  
Several singing at the fish ponds around Mai Po. One seen well.
078. **STYAN'S GRASSHOPPER WARBLER** - *Helopsaltes pleskei*  
An unexpected bonus of our trip. We heard one singing along the mangrove boardwalk, Mai Po. A little pishing eventually led to amazing views of this Savi's Warbler-like bird along the muddy waters edge.
079. **RUSSET BUSH WARBLER** - *Locustella mandelli*  
27-04                      c 5      (two seen well at close range) Tai Mo Shan.
080. **Yellow-bellied Prinia** - *Prinia flaviventris*  
Common throughout Hong Kong.
081. **Plain Prinia** - *Prinia inornata*  
27-04                      c 20      Mai Po.
082. **Common Tailorbird** - *Orthotomus sutorius*  
27-04                      c 5      (heard only) lower elevations of Tai Mo Shan.
083. **Warbling White-eye** - *Zosterops japonicus*  
27-04                      c 15      Tai Mo Shan.
084. **Streak-breasted Scimitar Babbler** - *Pomatorhinus ruficollis*  
One heard high up while looking for the Grassbird at Tai Mo Shan.
085. **CHINESE GRASSBIRD** - *Graminicola striatus*  
One started singing and was seen very well at Tai Mo Shan in its favoured grassy slope.
086. **Silver-eared Mesia** - *Leiothrix argentea*  
Three leading a small bird flock at the botanical garden at the lower slope of Tai Mo Shan. This is an introduced bird in Hongkong.
087. **CHINESE HWAMEI** - *Garrulax canorus*  
Several heard singing at the carpark, Tai Mo Shan, where one sat out brilliantly.



088. **Masked Laughingthrush** - *Pterorhinus perspicillatus*  
27-04                      c 20    (always in groups of 2-3 birds) Mai Po.
089. **Crested Myna** - *Acridotheres cristatellus*  
Several throughout Hong Kong, mainly at road sides.
090. **Common Myna** - *Acridotheres tristis*  
Singles in the lowland parts. Introduced?
091. **Black-collared Starling** - *Gracupica nigricollis*  
27-04                      c 5    Mai Po.
092. **White-shouldered Starling** - *Sturnia sinensis*  
Fairly common at Mai Po, breeding at the centre.
093. **Oriental Magpie-Robin** - *Copsychus saularis*  
A few seen at the lower elevations of Tai Mo Shan. Fairly common at Mai Po.
094. **Hainan Blue Flycatcher** - *Cyornis hainanus*  
A nice pair seen well at the lower elevations of Tai Mo Shan.
095. **Lesser Shortwing** - *Brachypteryx leucophrys*  
Several heard singing at Tai Mo Shan.
096. **Scarlet-backed Flowerpecker** - *Dicaeum cruentatum*  
27-04                      1    on our way from Tai Mo Shan to Mai Po.
097. **FORK-TAILED SUNBIRD** - *Aethopyga christinae*  
27-04                      2    (pair) feeding in red flower in a botanical garden of Tai Mo Shan.
098. **Eurasian Tree Sparrow** - *Passer montanus*  
Common throughout Hong Kong.
099. **Scaly-breasted Munia** - *Lonchura punctulata*  
27-04                      c 30    (several flocks) Mai Po.
100. **Eastern Yellow Wagtail** - *Motacilla tschutschensis*  
27-04                      3    Deep Bay Mudflats, Mai Po.
101. **Amur or White Wagtail** - *Motacilla alba leucopsis*  
27-04                      c 5    (adults and young) Mai Po.
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Common Kingfisher, 27 April, Mai Po; © Jan van der Laan.