



The objective of HKBWS is to promote the study, appreciation and conservation of birds in Hong Kong. In addition, the Society also facilitates the exchange of experience and information related to birdwatching among members. Since birds are sensitive to human disturbance, special care is required when watching or taking photographs of birds, to avoid bringing disturbance to the birds or endangering their lives. The Society has drawn up the following *Code of Conduct for Birdwatching and Bird Photography* and requires that it be followed by members. It would provide a model of good practices in birdwatching and bird photography for the general public to follow.

### ***Code of Conduct for Birdwatching and Bird Photography***

#### **1. The Welfare of Birds Comes First**

Birdwatching and bird photography should be carried out with minimum interference to the birds. Disturbance must be avoided as far as possible.

- a. Stop if the birds appear disturbed, begin to move away or exhibit other abnormal reaction
- b. Exercise additional precautions when the activity is undertaken with a large group of people
- c. Do not attempt to influence the behaviour of birds, e.g. by flushing, chasing or baiting
- d. Use flash only sparingly
- e. Do not damage the natural environment

#### **2. Protect Sensitive Sites**

Sites such as nests, seabird colonies and the roost of rarities are particularly vulnerable. Take extra care to minimize disturbance.

- a. Keep a suitable distance to avoid stressing the birds
- b. Do not land on islands with breeding colonies
- c. Do not disturb nests and their surrounding vegetation, or the nest could be abandoned or become exposed to predators
- d. Share information about the sites with discretion and do not reveal it casually in public. Explain clearly to those who may not understand the Code, to avoid bringing disturbance to the site
- e. Beware that your actions may attract unwanted attention and hence disturbance to the site

#### **3. Report Disturbances**

If you find people disturbing or causing harm to birds, advise against the act when it is safe to do so. If they cannot be stopped, take photos and report to the AFCD as soon as possible. Post a report at the Society's online Forum.

#### **4. Respect Others**

- a. Share the fun – avoid disturbing other birdwatchers or photographers on site.
- b. Take care not to damage facilities or crops at the site.

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**I support the objectives of the Society. I have read the above *Code of Conduct for Birdwatching and Bird Photography* and promise to abide by it fully.**

Name of Applicant : \_\_\_\_\_ Signature : \_\_\_\_\_ Date : \_\_\_\_\_

# Quiz for New Members

In order to ensure that members understand proper attitudes and behaviors of birding, applicant who intends to become our member shall study the following three documents on their own:

1. “Code of Conduct for Birdwatching and Bird Photography” by HKBWS
2. “Important Note for Birding in Rural Area” by HKBWS
3. “Codes of Entry to Mai Po” by WWF, HK

**Answering all questions below correctly is the prerequisite for acceptance as a member.**

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Circle only **ONE** out of the three choices to answer each question; otherwise your answer will be considered incorrect.

1. When breeding colonies of birds are present on an island, we **should**:  
A. have war-game there    B. avoid landing on this island    C. land on the island for records
2. When you find people disturbing or causing harm to birds, which **government department** should you report to?  
A. Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department    B. Customs & Excise Department    C. Consumer Council
3. Do you **support** “Code of Conduct for Birdwatching and Bird Photography” and promise to **abide by** it fully:  
A. support but not to abide by    B. not support and not to abide by    C. support and abide by
4. Which of the following is considered **proper** when birding in farmlands?  
A. step on crops    B. walk into farmlands    C. walk with care and avoid causing damage to crops
5. When birding in rural area, we **should**:  
A. respect private properties, local culture and custom    B. damage crops    C. make noise
6. When entering the Mai Po Nature Reserve (ie Gei-wai area), in addition to your personal identity document, which valid document issued by **AFCD** is required?  
A. Mai Po Marshes Entry Permit    B. Frontier Closed Area Permit    C. None of both
7. When entering the Deep Bay mudflats for floating boardwalk and hides, in addition to the ‘Mai Po Marshes Entry Permit’, which valid document issued by **HK Police Force** is required?  
A. Mai Po Marshes Entry Permit    B. Frontier Closed Area Permit    C. None of both
8. When birding in a hide in Mai Po, we should **NOT** :  
A. make noise    B. keep quiet    C. close all windows before leaving

Name of Applicant : \_\_\_\_\_ Signature : \_\_\_\_\_ Date : \_\_\_\_\_

## **Important Note for Birding in Rural Area**

In birding season, birders and bird photographers may visit rural area to watch and photograph birds. However, as most rural areas are private properties, please take extra cautions when birding there. A note is developed in addition to our “Code of Conduct for Birdwatching and Bird Photography” for your action:

1. Respect private properties, local custom and culture:
  - Most of the lands in rural area are privately owned. Please respect local residents, their private properties and belongings. Do not damage any property and crops in the field.
  - If requested by villagers or farmers, birders should leave the area as soon as possible to avoid causing any discontentment.
  - Ancestral shrine, temple and cemetery are important elements of local culture and custom. Do not enter these architectures without permission. Do not step on cemetery. Behave decently.
  - Do not enter alleyway between houses so as to minimize disturbance to daily life of residents.
  - Keep the area clean. Do not smoke or litter.
  - Keep quiet and avoid making noise.
  
2. Protect crops in the field
  - Farmers rely on farmlands for their livings. Do not walk into farmlands. Do not step on or damage crops.
  - Farmers plant crops around their farmlands (e.g. on bunds); so please be careful when you are walking around. Do not step on the crops.
  - Do not walk into the farmlands when the path is blocked. When the path is blocked, please use another one. To avoid causing unnecessary lost, do not try to pass through the barrier.
  - Do not walk on those harvested farmlands to avoid disturbance.
  - Do not walk on narrow bunds between rice paddies (in Long Valley) since these bunds are made for special purposes and for farmers' use only.
  - Do not move or relocate farmer's tool or belongings. Do not put any stuff, e.g. branch or stone, onto farmlands or bunds because it may hinder cultivation activity and put farmers in danger.
  
3. Driving & Parking
  - Roads in rural area are usually narrow and single two way, please be patient and be considerate to oncoming cars on a narrow road.
  - Try to use public car parks or on-street parking with meters if possible; otherwise, try to park your car in open area or at broad roadside.
  - After parking the car, pay attention to whether the vehicle has obstructed the traffic or occupied residents' parking spaces because parking spaces are not always apparent in rural area.
  - Place your contact number in front of the windscreen for emergency contact.



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Welcome to Mai Po Nature Reserve. The Reserve is a restricted area under the Wild Animals Protection Ordinance (Chapter 170) in order to minimize disturbance to wildlife so all visitors are expected to behave responsibly and observe the following **codes of entry**:

1. To enter the Mai Po Nature Reserve you need, together with your identification, a valid 'Mai Po Marshes Entry Permit' issued by the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD), and to enter the Frontier Closed Area (FCA) to access the Floating Boardwalk and Hides to see birds on the Deep Bay mudflats you need a valid 'FCA Permit' issued by the Hong Kong Police Force. Therefore you must either –
  - a) Hold valid personal entry permit(s),
  - b) Use valid group entry permits issued to WWF-HK or other organizations, or
  - c) Hold a valid temporary entry permit mainly issued to foreign visitors.
2. Persons under 18 years must be accompanied by an adult who should be responsible for their proper behaviour and safety inside the nature Reserve and those aged under 4 are not allowed to enter the nature Reserve for safety reasons;
3. All visitors are asked to respect the habitats and wildlife of the Reserve by keeping to the designated paths at all times and not causing undue noise. Some locations in the Reserve are fenced off in the interest of conservation and wildlife preservation. Details of the designated paths are highlighted as enclosed, please do not go past any 'No Entry' signs. You are obliged to observe and comply with the instruction accordingly;
4. You need to be a WWF member or a participant on one of the WWF tours, in order to use WWF facilities such as bird hides, rainshelters and boardwalks; for non-member wishing to use WWF facilities, you should contact WWF staff at **2471 3480** before entering the Reserve;
5. Site facilities (or part of a specific facility) are sometimes closed off or Reserved for activities organized by WWF-HK including public guided visit, school visit at designated time slot, special events or repair. Under such circumstance, a notice will be posted by WWF-HK at the facility entrance and visitors should not use that specific facility during the closure / Reserved period.

6. While in a bird hide, please -
  - Remain quiet;
  - Do not poke you arms, cameras or telescopes out of the windows of the hide;
  - Close all windows before leaving.
7. Cycling in the Reserve is not meant for leisure. Individual permit holders please register their bikes with WWF for cycling in the Reserve (parking space for you bike is provided in the car park but at your own risk); and you are advised to observe safety precautions at all time when cycling in the Reserve.
8. Never use flash when taking photographs;
9. Visitors should wear clothes in plain colour;
10. Mobile phone should be switched to quiet mode;
11. Do not feed any animal;
12. Smoking, including e-cigarette, is prohibited in the Reserve;
13. No pet should be brought into the Reserve. For dogs, only trained assistance dogs are allowed (i.e. Guide Dogs);
14. No baby strollers should be brought into the Reserve;
15. Do not disturb or take away ANYTHING from the Reserve;
16. We request vehicles only enter the Reserve for official work purposes (e.g. research). Inside the Reserve, please do not leave your vehicle engine idling;
17. Aerial cameras / drones should not be flown over the Reserve.

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Free parking is available at the Mai Po Visitor Centre for private cars and coaches belonging to people visiting the Reserve, although you are encouraged to visit us by public transport or bicycle whenever possible. If you do arrive by vehicle please help

After your visit, please help other visitors by writing your wildlife sightings on the chalk record board in the Car Park. Also if you happen to see any sick or injured wildlife, please report their location to WWF staff at the Visitor Center reception (or the Education Centre inside the Reserve).

WWF provides guided tours to the Reserve on every Saturday, Sunday and Public Holiday (Except Chinese New Year). To join our tours, please book through our website ([wwf.org.hk](http://wwf.org.hk)). Alternatively you can contact us directly; email [publicvisit@wwf.org.hk](mailto:publicvisit@wwf.org.hk), fax 2471 0325, call 2471 3480 (during office hours), call our service hotline 2526 1011 (press 2, 1 after selecting the language).

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(Updated at 2015)