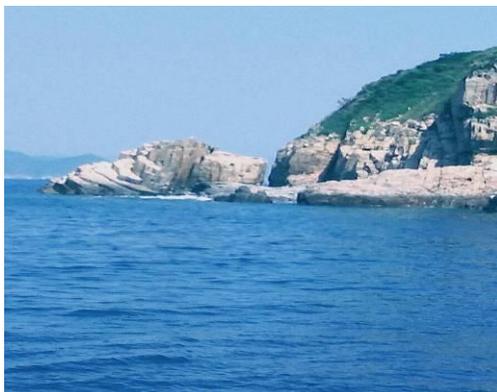


Hong Kong Natural History Society
September 2017 Boat Trip to Ninepins and Tung Lung Island

We set off from Central and were delighted to be told by the Captain that it was favourable weather conditions for heading to the Ninepins. After a 2-hour journey east, during which time the hazy skies cleared quite a bit, we reached the Ninepins. First we circumnavigated the north island, observing the main geographical features of the hexagonal columns all around the island.



Hexagonal columns of the north island, the “pins” that give the islands their name



We took a close look at the famous “spiral staircase” (*left*) and “canon” rock. One or two graceful black reef egrets were seen on the rocks and flying around.



Reef heron By Glen Fergus - Own work, Fingal Beach, NSW, Australia, CC BY-SA 2.5,

<https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=3277424>

We could see that it is possible to land on the island with a sampan near a small jetty where there are steps leading to a navigation light. We then turned to the south island with its

newly formed arches (*below*) and three bat caves. It would be possible to explore with a small boat into the caves to see the bats on a day as calm and good as this day – maybe next time?



Reluctant to leave the scenic Ninepins, and it being such a hot day, we decided we should stay there longer for some members to have a good swim. It was a rare chance to swim at the Ninepins in front of the famous arch above the coral communities!



We then had lunch on board before making our way to Tung Lung Island. There we headed to the Fort although it was unbearably hot. As always, it was a spectacular view overlooking Clearwater Bay and we saw some interesting vegetation in the area with a couple of uncommon moths and butterflies. Before heading back to the pier, a few members decided to go to see the rock carving and some others decided to visit the lighthouse. We returned to the boat at about 4:00.



Possibly Viburnum odoratissimum?

On the return journey on the boat we enjoyed our leisurely chats, catching the mild and very welcome breeze, and sunshine. We arrived back in Central at about 5:30, thinking how lucky we were to get this unusual experience at the Ninepins !

Text and Photos (excepting Reef egret)

Mak Wei Ming