

**Hong Kong Natural History Society**  
**June 2009 Boat Outing to Crescent Island Report**

Members called to see if the launch was cancelled due to the torrential rainstorm at early dawn but we decided to go ahead – and we had a lovely sunny day!

25 members set off at Ma Liu Shui public pier when the weather was turning better, though it was still very hot and humid. With reference to a newspaper article, I asked Mr. Li to stop by Port Island and Wong Chuk Kok Tsui along Tolo Channel to see some of the oldest sedimentary rock in Hong Kong. The reddish rocks we saw at Port Island (or Chek Chau – Red Island) are known as the “Port Island Series” and were deposited 100 – 80 million years ago when a desert climate prevailed in an area dominated by mountains and wide valleys, subject to flash floods. The rocks are layered sedimentary rocks, dominantly river sands and pebbly conglomerates reddened by the dry environment, the red colour of the rocks being due to high iron mineral content of the rock, which oxidized into red iron oxide during the dry, arid climate that existed all that time ago. There are several islands and coastlines in NE NT that display this rock series. The rocks have been folded and weathered over the years to form distinct shapes. We saw “A Group of Rats on a Rock” and “The Ghost Hand” which was much smaller than I expected. We also inspected a conservation project from a distance of some manmade nests built for the Roseate Tern, which has been declining in numbers over recent years. After 20 minutes, we made our way towards Crescent Bay.



The Crescent Island is uninhabited and there are many corals stretching along the side of the beach for over 200 metres. Most of us liked to go to the beach, so Mr. Li took everyone with his small boat in three rounds. A few of us decided to swim ashore from the boat. The water was clear enough for coral viewing and I was actually attacked



by two clown fishes swimming around the corals. Jacqui, with her very professional waterproof camera, managed to take a picture of a crab on some rocks. At about 3 o'clock, when our members were enjoying themselves on the “NHS Private Beach”, a big ferry boat with about 100 people onboard arrived with well equipped snorkelling gear and serious divers. Within a few minutes, the area had developed into Central. Dave, reading his book peacefully on board, picked up a rescue call from the people who wanted to come back to the boat. After Mr.Li took everyone back, there was about half an hour for those who enjoy swimming around the boat and relax in peace and quiet.



We set off at about 4 o'clock. On our way back, we all toasted to Jacqui and said our goodbyes. We drank about 10 bottles of wine and had some wonderful homemade dips, cheese and chips. It was especially cheerful to see Dave and Rose back with us on this trip. We all had a wonderful day.