

Report on the HKNHS December 2010 hike from Parkview to the Dragon's Back, Shek O.

A group of thirteen members and one guest gathered at Parkview on Hong Kong Island ready to start our hike. Disappointingly, the day was overcast so did not enable us the great view we had on our two recces. An almost unanimous vote on whether to take the long route over Violet Hill or to take the shorter route to the Tai Tam reservoirs, took us on the shorter family trail route. The magnificent views from Violet Hill would be lost on such a gloomy day. We decided to leave it for another hike.

The family trail took us along an easy path through a woodland area where the trees were identified with signs. Some of us trailed the group, stopping to look at the different signs and read the information. Although some trees were out in flower, we came to the conclusion that it would be a good idea to return to the area in April / May when many of the trees would be in full bloom.



Soon we had a wonderful view of the many Tai Tam reservoirs, something that one does not see on the Violet Hill route because this time, we were still above the reservoirs. While looking at the view, surprisingly clear through the gloomy sky, we stopped to have morning tea of Christmas mince tarts. From there, we made our way down to the Tai Tam Upper Reservoir where we met the Hong Kong trail and made our way to the Tai Tam Tuk Reservoir. After another short break, we then crossed the Tai Tam Road to meet the track which led us down the east side of the Tai Tam Harbour. This track is concreted and winds in and out. However, at times we could view across the harbour.

We attempted to walk down to a village where there was a temple to have our lunch break but as we were greeted by fierce looking dogs, we returned to the hiking track and sat along the side of the path to eat our lunch. At H 080, we turned off and walked up a steep slope to Shek O Road where one of our members left us while the rest of us walked up another rough path to meet the path below the Dragon's Back trail.

We soon met Dragon's Back trail that leads us along a ridge, allowing us to view both sides of the D'Agular Peninsular. As we were walking towards Shek O, we had a wonderful view of Big Wave Bay and the two beaches at Shek O to the left, and to the right we had a wonderful view of Tai Tam Bay, more magnificent if it is a clear sunny day. Some of dragged the trail by sitting and taking in the view, but then soon joined the others at a different meeting point on Shek O Road.

Many times along the way, we were greeted by many friendly people wishing us a "Merry Christmas". One member of our group remarked how friendly hikers were. Yes, people often greet us but I had wondered why there were so many Christmas greetings. Then the penny dropped. Some of us were wearing Santa hats as part of the Christmas theme!

After catching the bus and one more member making her way to do other things, we finally arrived at Shek O with time to spare. A walk along the beach was enjoyed by many of us. We then made our way to the Happy Garden Thai Restaurant across from the beach where we were able to sit on the roof-top and enjoy a quiet, relaxed meal of delicious Thai food. It was a great outing, thanks to everyone who participated and to Mike, Rob and especially Frank who assisted me with the recces. (Christine Mills)

