

Report on the HKNHS February, 2011 hike from So Kwun Wat to Tsing Lung Tau

The weather prior to this hike was dismal with very high humidity so after seeing the wet floors of the corridors in my school and with discussion with Jan, our difficult Castle Peak hike, which is a favourite of mine, was postponed until later this year and changed to a hike in the same area of North West New Territories to start near the Gold Coast at So Kwun Wat village.

With some people pulling out of the Castle Peak list for various reasons, including the poor weather, and others joining us for the easier hike, we ended up with the same number of thirteen people who set off for this hike. After the miserable day on Saturday, we were indeed fortunate to experience a lovely day, not too cold and not too hot without any rain, and with relatively good visibility, certainly compared with previous days.



We left So Kwun Wat around a quarter past ten, taking the higher trail up the southwestern side of the Tai Lam Chung Reservoir. From time to time, we had very scenic views of the



reservoir. We continued along this road track, until we met the Maclehose Trail, which then took us on higher ground north of the reservoir. This was mainly a woodland track with various different types of foliage from short trees to some very tall trees and one section that was lined with bamboo. For many of us who

enjoy the woodland walks, this was a very pretty sight with the trees sometimes forming a canopy overhead.

Eventually around twelve thirty, we arrived at the Kat Hing Bridge where we stopped along with other groups to have our lunch in a picnic spot there. Three of us were sitting together at one table when Rob came over to talk to us. Suddenly, he exclaimed, "Look Out!" At that same moment, out of the side of my eye, I saw an arm which reached up onto the table, snatching Angie's bun that was wrapped in glad wrap. The monkey then took it to a safe distance and started eating the bun. Angie was concerned that the monkey would choke on the glad wrap but it knew better. We were fascinated as we watched it as it carefully unwrapped the glad wrap, ate the bun, and then finally left it on the ground.



We quickly cleared the table. It approached again, looking for more food but only finding a



piece of rubbish. It stayed around for a while until we moved off for the second part of our journey.

Just before we left, a tanker came along, stopping at the two portable toilets nearby. Some of us found it quite interesting to watch. We had always wondered how they kept these portable toilets reasonably clean. So, now we know!

We continued on our way, crossing the bridge and walking south on the Tai Lam Country Trail for a short distance and then turned off onto the Yuen Tsuen Ancient Trail, again for a short distance, until we finally found the Yuen Tun Country Trail, the last section of our journey. Towards the end of our walk, we came across a small garden area featuring different plants that encourages different species of butterflies. Some of us took the opportunity to walk around the garden before continuing on our journey.



The last part of the journey, for us, was not so easy. The signposts for the Yuen Tun Country Trail were a little confusing. We were soon a little lost. However, the saying goes that ‘All roads lead to Rome’, well in this case, ‘All roads lead to Castle Peak Road’, but we just had to make sure that we took a track that would lead us to Sham Tseng which was where we were aiming. We ended up taking a track that led us to Tsing Lung Tau, arriving a quarter of an hour earlier than the meeting time for the bus. While some of the group had a quick beer at the corner restaurant, Chung arranged for the bus to pick us up there rather than at the arranged meeting place in Sham Tseng. I think most of us would agree that it was a most an enjoyable outing.

Christine Mills
20th February, 2011