

Hong Kong Natural History Society

Report on March 2011 Outing to Tai Lam Country Park

The day was a bit wet and humid but 13 courageous members set off on time to Kap Lung Natural Trail. It was raining on the day before and 4 members withdrew their participation for the day.

The group arrived at the starting point of the trail at 10:30 am. There was a gradual 30 minutes ascent. Then the path was like winding into a deep forest. We were especially impressed by the huge ferns in this undisturbed forest. After an hour, we



arrived at the first junction and took a short break. We then followed the cycle track, aiming to arrive at Ho Pui Reservoir for lunch before two o'clock. We saw mushrooms and fungus along the trail, definitely sure not to pick



them for our salad later until we've examined their species. Along the track, we occasionally had to give way to some brave and adventurous cyclists. Finally, we took a separate Hikers' Path down to Hoi Pui. Here, we made our way down without having to worry about the cyclists



skiing down in the same path. At the reservoir, we spotted a very distinctive Coral Tree (*Erythrina variegata*) with bright red ivory-shaped blossoms.

We took a long lunch break at a picnic area by the side of the irrigation reservoir. Just after two o'clock, we set off to Kat Hing Bridge. We could see Shek Kong in a distance on our right and soon came to a noisy section where we heard all the traffic noises coming from the linking highway of the Tai Lam Tunnel. We were actually walking over the tunnel and soon turned to a concrete path leading to Kat Hing Bridge where we took another short break.

We then headed on to a part of the Yuen Tsuen Ancient Trail which went through a bamboo forest. The trail also winds by the side of a nice clear stream. I suppose the traders from Tsuen Wan to Yuen Long in ancient times would not need to carry their water bottles on top of their goods! All the way along we saw "Plum Wheels" (the Chinese name for a very small five-petal white wildflower) stretching out, bowing to greet us. We then took the Tai Tong Nature Trail and arrived at the pickup point at around 5:00 pm. By surprise, starting out on such a gloomy day, every member enjoyed this very long hike without getting a single drop of rain on their heads!

The group dismissed in Central at about 6:00 pm.

Written with photos edited by Mak Wei Ming