

## Hong Kong Natural History Society Report on October 2014 boat outing to Ap Chau and Kat O

Our last boat trip of the season was marked by a promising response with participation by 36 members. It was a fine day – warm with sunny intervals. Our boat set off from Ma Liu Shui Public Pier and we arrived at Ap Chau by 11:30. Mr. Li took us there through a very scenic narrow water passage at Hung Shek Mun between Plover Cove Country Park and Double Island. We sailed around the very small island to see the special features at an angle; they are said to resemble an ‘Ap’ (a duck). With the years of erosion, we think the name of the island should now be called ‘Platypus Chau’ instead!



Most of us disembarked onto the island, and walked through the village with only about 5-6 inhabitants these days. We had a chance to talk to one of the villagers who told us about her livelihood. After the chat we headed on to the famous arch which forms the eye of the duck. Most of the time, we were busy turning our heads from one side to the other - either to the right admiring the beautiful nature of the marine park or to the left looking over at huge cranes and high rises of the city in China. After staying at the “duck’s eye” for a short while, part of the group decided to take the route along the shore, looping back to the pier; whereas the other members returned by the same way which they had arrived.



After a big effort of re-grouping everyone on board, we set off to Kat O (Crooked Island). Unfortunately, the Organizer was a little distracted; without her reminding everyone the direction to visit the Geo-heritage Centre, Tin Hau Temple and Love Tree, some members headed off to Tung O Wan Beach. However, with the wind and currents of the day, it was not a good beach for swimming with a lot of rubbish lying around. Members dispersed into different groups; some took a walk, some had some noodles, some bought souvenirs.



We all returned to the boat at 2:00 and Mr. Li took us to a good, quiet peaceful bay at Pak Sha Tau Wan (Camp Cove). Here, the water is as clean as you can get in Hong Kong and, being surrounded 360 degrees by little green islands, was a supremely beautiful spot. More than half of our members swam around the boat, and a few swam to the far off shore to investigate any 'pre-historic' vegetation. We enjoyed watching all the sizeable jumping fish, the small herd of cows who were watching us, and – *coup de grace* – the white-bellied sea eagle that circled overhead.



Although some members expressed the wish of staying longer in this idyllic spot, our boat had to leave the bay at about 4:00 to return to Ma Liu Shui at 5:30. It was really a great day enjoyed by everyone!



*Reported by Mak Wei Ming  
Photos taken by Chan Ping Chung*