

**Hong Kong Natural History Society**  
**Report on January 2018 outing to Ng Yuen Gardens – Lung Tsai, Lantau**

The two groups from the different meeting points of Tung Chung and Mui Wo joined without problem in good time at the entrance of Keung Shan water catchment at Lung Tsai. After a briefing, the group began the flat and easy walk along the catchment for 30 minutes. We then followed the sign towards Man Cheung Po and took an ascending path on the left. After about 20 minutes, just where the path flattened out, we were able to see Ng Yuen (Garden of Enlightenment) in the distance, sitting on the hillside in tranquillity. Then in no more than 15 minutes, we arrived and were welcomed by the host at the gate.



David first led us to the main house to settle down. After he showed us the guest rooms on the ground level, he led us to the rooftop pavilion and started telling us the history of this garden. His grandfather, inspired by the serenity of the area, decided to build this garden and meant it to be enjoyed by all those who wished to escape from the bustling life of the city for a while. It was a time when people still travelled by sedan chairs. Most of the granite used to build the main house was quarried from nearby mountains but almost everything else for the construction had to be carried up the hill. At lunch, which we took under the sun in the garden, we enjoyed some hot soup prepared by the host. After lunch, we were led to a resource room (formerly a Buddhist prayer room) with photographs from David's grandfather's time, and lists of plants and bird sightings in the garden.



We then had half an hour's free time to stroll in the garden. Many of us went over to the pavilion in the middle of the pond by the nine-bend bridge. Some went to the Happy Fish Kingdom to admire the carvings and statues. After regrouping, we

left at about 3:00. All felt contented, except that we were 2 to 3 weeks too early to see all the Camellias blooming, but we were well in time to see the Chinese New Year Flower (*Enkianthus quinqueflorus*, below right). Protected by law and native to Hong Kong, this flower can be used to make a medicine for suppressing coughs.



We then left by the nine-bend bridge, saying goodbye to the carp in the pond before making our way back, and thinking how wonderful it would be if we could see all the lotus floating on this pond in summer!



*(... 4 Camellias blooming just in time ....)*



*Text: Mak Wei Ming  
Photos: Mak Wei Ming  
Chan Ping Chung  
Rose England  
Jan Campbell*