

Appendix 12-13 **Habitat Requirements of Key Species**

Great Cormorant

Great Cormorant is a common winter visitor to HK and is abundant in the Deep Bay area. It is an entirely piscivorous species and forages in fish ponds, rivers, intertidal areas and at sea. It forms very large night-time roosts and utilises smaller day-time roosts in less disturbed areas.

Little Egret

Little Egrets are found in HK throughout the year, primarily in the northeast and northwest New Territories. Habitat utilization has been studied by Young (1994), Young and Chan (1997) and Cornish (1996). These studies showed that Little Egrets in HK feed primarily in fishpond and intertidal areas. Little Egrets also feed opportunistically on stranded fish in ponds that are being drained, and are often the most abundant bird species in such circumstances. Breeding birds typically forage within 3 km of egretries (Young 1994).

Chinese Penduline Tit

Chinese Penduline Tit is a fairly common passage migrant and winter visitor to the Deep Bay area. It is insectivorous and forages almost exclusively in reed marsh (Carey *et al.* 2001).

Dusky Warbler

Dusky Warbler is common autumn migrant and winter visitor to the Deep Bay area but is uncommon elsewhere in HK. Although recorded from a variety of habitats, it shows a distinct preference for habitats associated with water, and is distinctly rare in shrubland habitats. It is insectivorous (Carey *et al.* 2001).

Oriental Reed Warbler

Oriental Reed Warbler is a common passage migrant and rare winter visitor to HK. It is widespread, but most common in wetland habitats, especially in reed marsh and grasses (particularly those around fishponds). It is insectivorous (Carey *et al.* 2001).

Black-browed Reed Warbler

Black-browed Reed Warbler is a common passage and rare winter visitor to HK that favours wetland areas, including reed marsh, fish pond bunds and inactive wet agricultural areas (Carey *et al.* 2001). Research at MPNR has shown that this species is significantly more abundant in permanently wet reed marsh than in seasonally wet reed marsh (WWFHK and HK Ringing Group unpubl. data).

Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler

Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler is primarily an autumn passage migrant to HK, with occasional winter and spring records. It occurs in most wetland habitats but most notably in areas of abandoned or inactive wet agriculture, along the bunds of fishponds and in reed marsh. It is insectivorous (Carey *et al.* 2001). Recent research has shown it to be abundant in reed marsh at MPNR although special effort is required to accurately survey this species (WWFHK and HK Ringing Group unpubl. data).

Bluethroat

Bluethroat is a winter visitor and spring migrant to HK; it is restricted to the northwest New Territories, where it frequents wet agricultural areas, well vegetated fishponds, freshwater ditches and reed marsh. It is insectivorous (Carey *et al.* 2001).

Eurasian Otter

Eurasian Otter is highly restricted and mainly confined to the northwest New Territories. According to Shek (2006) and Shek *et al.* (2007), it primarily occurs in the Mai Po and Inner Deep Bay Area, and work for this Study indicates that LMC Meander and adjacent areas of LMC Loop and Hoo Hok Wai are important for the species. Eurasian Otters feed largely on fish and amphibians. As is shown in BBV (2002), in HK otters are known to make use of fishponds, *gei wai* and river channels. The former are probably largely used for feeding, whilst the latter appear to provide important movement corridors.

Leopard Cat

Leopard Cat has a wide distribution in HK, occurring in a wide range of habitats (from forest to fishponds) and can live close to rural settlements (Shek 2006). Primarily nocturnal and solitary, it feeds on small vertebrates and occasionally carrion; this species is a good climber and excellent swimmer (Smith & Xie 2008).

Chinese Bullfrog

Chinese Bullfrog is of Potential Regional Concern (Fellowes *et al.* 2002), and is a Class II Protected Species in China (<http://www.sepa.gov.cn>). It is recorded from many localities in HK, and is fairly common and widespread in the New Territories, but the local population appears to be diminishing due to habitat destruction and hunting for food (Chan *et al.* 2005). This is generally a lowland species that can occur in a range of waterbodies, though it prefers deeper pools. Generally it feeds on large insects, but can also take small rodents and frogs (Karsen *et al.* 1998).

Common Rat Snake

Common Rat Snake occurs in a variety of lowland habitats and is common across HK (Karsen *et al.* 1998). A diurnal species, it feeds primarily on amphibians, birds and rodents.

Scarlet Basker

Scarlet Basker was considered by Fellowes *et al.* (2002) to be of Local Concern, but recent

evidence suggests this species has since colonised much of the lowland in HK, especially in the northwest New Territories where it shows a preference for abandoned fish ponds (Tam *et al.* 2011). The larvae utilise weedy ponds and marshes.

Ruby Darter

Ruby Darter is common and widespread in HK and utilises marshes and ponds with dense floating plants, in which the larvae are found.

Common Evening Hawker

Common Evening Hawker is a common, semi-crepuscular species with populations scattered across HK. Generally it feeds around marshes and wet lowland agriculture where it is gregarious. It may be a wind-borne migratory species, and local populations may be supplemented by occasional influxes. The larvae often occur in seasonal ponds.

Sapphire Flutterer

Sapphire Flutterer is common and widespread in HK, and shows a preference for well-vegetated waterbodies such as weedy ponds and sluggish streams and marshes. Larvae cling to aquatic plants in weedy ponds or seasonal marshes.

Coastal Glider

Coastal glider utilises well-vegetated ponds and marshes. It is a highly migratory species and widespread in HK. Larvae are salt-tolerant and are known to occur in lagoons and estuaries.