

Man sentenced for entering illegally into Restricted Area in Mai Po

A 26-year-old man was convicted of entering the Mai Po Marshes and Inner Deep Bay Restricted Area (the Restricted Area) without a permit at the Shatin Magistrates' Courts today (August 25) for violating Section 13 of the Wild Animals Protection Ordinance (Cap 170) (the Ordinance).

A spokesperson for Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) said that officers from AFCD and Lok Ma Chau Division and Marine West Division of Police mounted a joint operation at the Restricted Area yesterday (August 24) morning to combat illegal activities there. A 26-year-old Mainland man, holding an Exit-entry permit for Travelling to and from Hong Kong and Macao, was arrested at the shallow waters and found entering the Restricted Area without a permit.

Following investigations by AFCD, the man was charged for entering a Restricted Area without a permit. He was convicted and sentenced to a fine of \$1,000 today.

The Restricted Area, comprising a total area of about 800 hectares, includes the Mai Po Marshes, all the mangrove swamps adjoining the marshes, and the intertidal mudflats and shallow waters of Inner Deep Bay. The Ordinance stipulates that any person who enters into or be within the Restricted Area without a permit issued by the Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation is liable to a maximum fine of \$50,000 on conviction.

The spokesperson stressed that illegal entry into the Restricted Area may affect both the habitats and the wild animals, especially water birds of the area. AFCD conducts patrols at the Restricted Area, and mounts joint enforcement operation with the Police from time to time with a view to controlling illegal activities there.