

Nature Trail Badge Challenge

"Nature Trail Badge Challenge" recommends six hiking trail routes for participants to visit and complete designated tasks. These routes are all at locations where The Green Earth's "Repair Your Own Trails" volunteer team has carried out trail maintenance. We hope that through this activity, more nature lovers in Hong Kong can learn more about the stories behind hiking trails. Hence, spread the achievements of our efforts, and encourage everyone to take action to give back to nature and cherish these trails.



Mau Ping Ancient Trail



According to Mr Kwok Chi-biu, a veteran researcher of ancient trails, the trail connecting Mau Ping and Pak Kung is part of the Sai Sha Ancient Trail. This trail was used by villagers to travel to and from Sai Kung and Shu Lek Yues in the past. Nowadays, two well-known trails – Mau Ping Ancient Trail and Pak Kung Ancient Trail – still have their original stone steps and ridges, where the big rocks are covered in moss. As you walk along these trails, you will find yourself in a completely natural environment.

In Mau Ping, you can choose to hike along the Pak Kung Ancient Trail. On your way, you'll pass through Uk Cheung Village and the famous bamboo grove. After arriving at Pak Kung Au, you'll find multiple ancient trails of different types. This shows how well the ancient network of trails was developed. Please remember that you need to do some research to find the right route and read a map before you go hiking, as people sometimes lose their way in the network of trails.

[Download the offline version of the Mau Ping Ancient Trail guide.](#)



Route Map (GPX file is available for download)

Routes:

Mui Tsz Lam road ➡ Mui Tsz Lam ➡ Mau Ping Sai Uk ➡ Lau's Ancestral Hall ➡ Mau Ping Au ➡ King of Gogovine

You can pick either route when arriving at Mau Ping Au:

1 ➡ Pak Kung Ancient Trail ➡ Pak Kung Au ➡ Hiram's Highway (2.3km)

You may also

2 ➡ MacLehose Trail Section 4 (reverse direction) ➡ Ngong Ping ➡ Ma On Shan Country Trail ➡ (3.1km to leave at Ma On Shan Village)

You can also choose a longer route:

3 ➡ MacLehose Trail Section 4 ➡ Gilwell Campsite and She Tin Au (2.3km)

Distance: 4.1 km (Arriving at Mau Ping Au only)

Time: About 2 hours

Difficulty: ★★☆☆☆

Supply Point:

No supply point on the way

Let's Leave No Trace

- To get to Mui Tsz Lam, walk down Mui Tsz Lam Road. Try not to go through Chevalier Garden so as not to disturb the people living there.
- Some parts of the road might not have phone signal. Please plan ahead and make sure you have everything you need before you set off to stay safe.
- Please take your rubbish home. Any rubbish that you make while hiking or on other trips should be taken back to where you live so that it can be thrown away properly.

Introduction Point I: Mui Tsz Lam Fung Shui Woodland

The route starts at Chevalier Garden. To warm up, walk along Mui Tsz Lam Road. After about 2 km (30 minutes) of walking uphill, the road becomes flat. Before you reach the Water Supplies Department gate, look for the sign for "Mui Tsz Lam Village" and enter the trail.

This route does not lead to Mui Tsz Lam Village. Just walk a little further to the farm gate. On the left, you'll see a concrete path. Follow the path along the farm's iron fence to reach the entrance to the Mau Ping Ancient Trail.

When you arrive at Mui Tsz Lam Village, you will see that the village is surrounded by hills on three sides, with an open space in front. This is how the Hakka people would decide if a place was good for building their village. They believe that this is a "Fung Shui paradise". They also believe that planting fruit trees on the hills at the back of the village can help protect it from typhoons, keep the temperature regulated and prevent soil erosion.

Fung Shui Woodland is a unique cultural landscape that originated in the Lingnan area. In the past, people's daily lives depended almost entirely on the laws of nature, so they held nature in awe and believed in Fung Shui numerology. There are more than 300 Fung Shui Woodlands in Hong Kong, although only 116 are officially registered. As well as mitigating seasonal temperature extremes, Fung Shui Woodlands also have an economic value. Villagers grow their own fruit trees and medicinal plants to provide food as well as timber for construction and firewood. Fung Shui Woodlands also support the survival of wildlife.



Introduction Point II: Mau Ping Ancient Trail

The Mau Ping Ancient Trail, which connects Mui Tsz Lam and Pak Kung, was the main route for villagers to travel between Ma On Shan and Sai Kung. This ancient trail is at least one hundred years old.

According to an online article written in 2018 by Dr Yip Tak-ping, president of the Hong Kong History and Culture Society, Mr Yu Yongping of Lok Yuen Shek Kau Lung village wrote a poem in the late Qing dynasty called "Wei Ming Ge", which contains five lines praising the five villages near Ma On Shan:

Walking through the Mui Tsz Lam, you will not notice that you have already reached Mau Ping, where you are surrounded by curiosities. Don't be intimidated by the height of Wong Chuk Shan.

Take your path at Shek Lung Tsai; walk up Ngong Ping to catch earthworms. When you turn back to look at the Ma On Shan hilltop, you will be surprised to see the moon hanging in the sky.

Five villages are mentioned in the poem, including Mui Tsz Lam, Mau Ping, Wong Chuk Shan, Shek Lung Tsai and Ngong Ping – a sign that there used to be many villages in the area.

Built by the villagers with local materials and stones in irregular shapes, this path can be considered an ancient "handmade path".

Along the way, you will see Mau Ping cottages that have been abandoned for years. You can imagine how villagers used to travel along this ancient path and cook in their homes.



Along the way there are traces of architectures where villagers used to live in the past.

Introduction Point III: Ancient Stone Paths and Walls

As you walk along these ancient stone paths, you will be amazed at the craftsmanship of the ancient people who used stone materials. Take the example of the Lau cun in Mau Ping, who are believed to have settled in Mau Ping over 200 years ago. Although the stone steps (paths for walking uphill) between the villages there have a long history, they are still in use today.

Ancient paths were often built with a slight incline, accompanied by stone steps with little difference in height. This would save the villagers having to walk with heavy loads on their shoulders. Although the shapes and sizes of the stones vary, the paths made from them are still very smooth and flat. Even though no cement was used to fix the 2 metre high stone wall next to the path, it is still very strong.

The surface would be slippery after rain, so hikers need to be extremely careful. The stones are covered with moss and raindrops make them look even shinier and greener!



Introduction Point IV: Mau Ping Au Luen Tat Five Heung Public School & Mau Ping "King of Gogovine".

Mau Ping Au is the junction of several walking trails, including the MacLehose Trail, Mau Ping Ancient Trail, Pak Kung Ancient Trail and Shek Lung Tsai Ancient Trail. There is a large foundation with only a pavilion and a few benches. Have you ever wondered why so much time and effort went into building such a large cement foundation just for these facilities?

In fact, it was the foundation of the Luen Tat Five Heung Public School, which was built in the 1950s and 1960s. Children from the villages of Ngong Ping, Shek Lung Tsai, Mau Ping, Wong Chuk Shan and Mui Tsz Lam attended this school.

There is an abandoned public toilet in the woods next to the school where a huge vine is growing. With its impressive shape and rare size, the plant is known as the "King of Gogovine". It has been a popular photo spot for many hikers. Unfortunately, in June 2023, all of its main trunks were cut off. Now we can only hope that the King of Gogovine will recover naturally.

A rare and famous botanical landmark in Hong Kong was lost due to the selfishness of hated people.

From here, it is recommended to head towards Pak Kung, follow the Pak Kung Ancient Trail, pass through the bamboo forest and Pak Kung Village, and exit onto Hiram's Highway.



The site used to be Luen Tat Five Heung Public School

The main trunks were all cut off.



MTR Tsui Ma Line

Exit of the Tai Shai Hang Station, walk about 8 minutes to Mui Tsz Lam Road

Bus: 43x

Tsuen Wan West MTR Station ↔ Yu On Estate
(Get off at Tai Shai Hang and Tai Shai Hang village)

Bus: 299x

Sai Kung ↔ Sha Tin Central
(Get off at Tai Shai Hang and Tai Shai Hang village)

Bus: 40x

Wu Kai Sha MTR Station ↔ Kwai Chung Estate
(Get off at Tai Shai Hang and Tai Shai Hang village)

Bus: 85M

Kam Ying Court ↔ Wong Tai Sin
(Get off at Tai Shai Hang and Tai Shai Hang village)

Bus: You can also take other buses passing through Tai Shai Hang or Chevalier Garden
(Get off at Tai Shai Hang and Tai Shai Hang village)

Midi Bus: 3A Pak Kung Au Rd ↔ Sai Kung Minibus Terminal

Ma On Shan Country Trail



Yuen Tsuen Ancient Trail



MacLehose Trail Section 4



Mau Ping Ancient Trail



Tai Tong Thousand-Island Lake



Sunset Peak

