

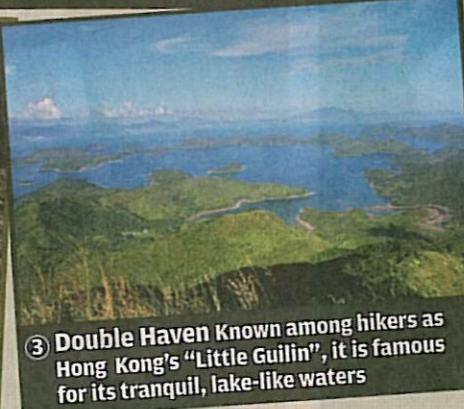
Natural marvels



1 Po Pin Chau The island's hexagonal rock columns stand out among the world's biggest. The island, formed entirely of compacted volcanic ash, dates back 140 million years



2 Ping Chau Formed from the city's youngest sedimentary rock, the pretty island boasts rock stacks, rock platforms and steep cliffs



3 Double Haven Known among hikers as Hong Kong's "Little Guilin", it is famous for its tranquil, lake-like waters



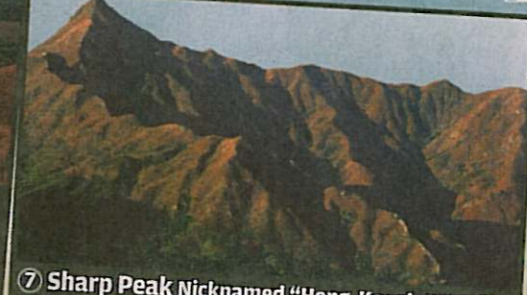
4 Ninepin Group Standout features of the island cluster include hexagonal columns with girths of up to three metres



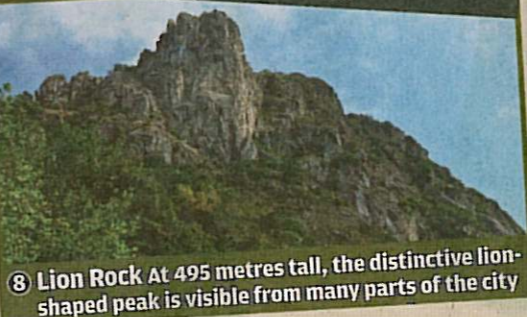
5 Tai Long Wan The four bays, home to lagoons and the longest headland in Hong Kong, provide unrestricted views of the South China Sea



6 Wang Chau Kok Arch The biggest sea arch in Hong Kong waters, it is more than 20 metres tall and close to 10 metres wide



7 Sharp Peak Nicknamed "Hong Kong's Mt Fuji" because of its shape, the crest is a popular spot from which to watch the sun rise



8 Lion Rock At 495 metres tall, the distinctive lion-shaped peak is visible from many parts of the city

SCMP GRAPHIC

SOURCE: ASSOCIATION FOR GEOCONSERVATION, HONG KONG

Dramatic rockscape tops public's scenic spots

Tiffany Lam

Not many people may have heard of Po Pin Chau or Double Haven, but they should, said local conservation groups, because these scenic spots rank among the most breathtaking in Hong Kong.

City folk were encouraged to take a walk on the wild side as the results of a public vote on the Eight Geo Wonders of Hong Kong were announced.

Po Pin Chau in Sai Kung took top honour, with Tai Po's Ping Chau and Double Haven – "Hong Kong's Little Guilin" – coming in second and third.

Thirteen thousand ballots were cast in the two-week contest aimed at raising awareness about geological conservation, organised by the Association for Geoconservation and Friends of the Country Parks.

Winner Po Pin Chau is a striking accordion-shaped island consisting of compressed volcanic ash that dates back 140 million years. It was severed from the Sai Kung Peninsula by consistently choppy waves, and boasts dramatic precipices of up to 200 metres, the association said.

At 65 million years old, Ping Chau at Mirs Bay, Tai Po, is the city's youngest rock mass formed by wave-deposited sediments.

Second runner-up Double Haven's tranquil waters have led hikers to hail it as the local version of Guilin

(桂林), a mainland city known for its stunning scenery.

The eight sites also include coastal stunners Ninepin Group, Tai Long Wan and Wang Chau Kok Arch, as well as the prominent Sharp Peak and Lion Rock.

Five of the eight winners are in Sai Kung, while four are proposed spots for the geopark project outlined in this year's policy address.

Secretary for the Environment Edward Yau Tang-wah said the city should "not only conserve, but also construct". He said geoparks could boost tourism and scientific studies, and become landmarks.

But association chairman Young Ng Chun-yeong said neither the geoparks nor the eight selected wonders should be marketed as tourist hotspots.

"Hong Kong does not need to depend on geoparks to boost tourism," he said. "The government should conserve geological features instead of developing infrastructure there, like hotels and piers."

Mr Ng, a participant in geopark development talks, said the government would be submitting national geopark applications to Beijing's land ministry by September, and to the UN heritage body Unesco by 2010.

Geopark facilities should be open to the public by May or June, he added.

六角柱 膺最受歡迎地貌

由香港地貌岩石保育協會主辦的「香港八大地貌勝景」選舉，昨日正式揭盅，結果由六角柱石群組成的破邊洲突圍，被選為最受歡迎的香港地貌，東平洲及印洲塘分列第二、三位，被視為香港代表的獅子山則位列第八位。



■邱騰華昨日為「香港八大地貌勝景」選舉揭盅。
盧江球攝

昨日擔任「香港八大地貌勝景選舉暨西貢地貌行」主禮嘉賓的環境局局長邱騰華表示，破邊洲是地質公園的熱門選址之一；地貌岩山保育協會主席吳振揚則表示，明年舉行的新創建西貢地貌行，會提供導賞講解服務。

破邊洲八大勝景居首

【記者程泰祖報道】香港擁有不少獨特的天然景致，其中西貢破邊洲，更榮登香港八大地貌勝景選舉的第一位，其次是分別是大鵬灣東平洲和印洲塘印洲塘海。而超過 3000 名市民昨日更從北潭涌起步，經過大浪灣畔的西灣和鹹田灣至北潭凹，飽覽沿途美景。

「新創建西貢地貌行暨香港八大地貌勝景選舉頒獎

■東平洲漂亮的沉積岩，列八大地貌勝景第二位。



禮」昨日在西貢北潭涌傷健樂園舉行。環境局局長邱騰華、署理漁農自然護理署署長劉善鵬、西貢區議會主席吳仕福 SBS 太平紳士及新創建集團有限公司執行董事林焯瀚出席了活動並任主禮嘉賓。

3000 市民遠足觀賞景色

同時，活動上公布由市民投票選出，最能代表香港的八個獨特天然地標，並有超過 3000 名市民參加「新創建西貢地貌行」，由北潭涌起步，經過大浪灣畔的西灣和鹹田灣至北潭凹，全程 17.5 公里，沿途遠觀萬宜水庫的美景，漫步水清沙幼的海灘，更能在峻峭壯麗的蚺蛇尖下，靜聽海浪滔滔和飽覽千變萬化的自然風光，大會更在沿線設立了四個導賞點，向參加者介紹不同的地貌特色，邱騰華及各主禮嘉賓亦行走其中一段路段。

由新創建集團慈善基金贊助、國際行星地球年、聯合國環境規劃署及本地多個綠色團體鼎力支持，香港地貌岩石保育協會與郊野公園之友會合辦名為「新創建香港地貌行」的一系列地貌岩石保育活動。

香港八大地貌勝景選舉結果

| 名次 | 名稱 | 位置 | 特點 |
|----|------|------|--------------------------|
| 1 | 破邊洲 | 西貢 | 壯觀石柱長期受海浪侵蝕，似香港人齊心面對巨大風浪 |
| 2 | 東平洲 | 大鵬灣 | 六千五百萬年前形成的沉積岩，年青美貌兼備 |
| 3 | 印洲塘海 | 印洲塘 | 海水平如鏡，有香港小桂林之美譽 |
| 4 | 果洲群島 | 果洲群島 | 獨特酸性六角柱，是香港爭取世界自然遺產之寶藏 |
| 5 | 大浪灣 | 西貢 | 繁華都市背後的世外桃源 |
| 6 | 橫洲角洞 | 西貢 | 大自然的鬼斧神功，刻劃出兩岸三地的微妙關係 |
| 7 | 蚺蛇尖 | 西貢 | 觀日出勝地，亦是香港東面的橋頭堡 |
| 8 | 獅子山 | 沙田 | 形態如堅毅雄獅，剛勁自強，代表香港之精神 |

資料來源：香港地貌岩石保育協會