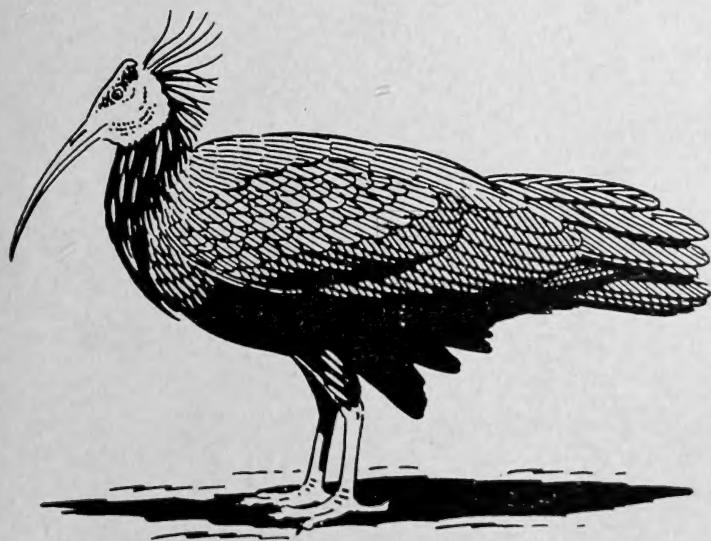


THE ORNITHOLOGICAL
SOCIETY OF THE
MIDDLE EAST



BULLETIN 17
AUTUMN 1986

EDITOR: D J Fisher

All records in this Bulletin are subject to acceptance by the relevant records committee of the country concerned.

Please note that details of expeditions, availability of expedition reports, news of members, other Societies and ornithological events are welcomed and may be printed in the Bulletin free of charge subject to the discretion of the Bulletin Editor. Contributions for the next Bulletin should be sent to the Editor by 15th February 1987.

A RECORD OF BALD IBIS FROM THE SINAI MOUNTAINS

Henry C Kyllingstad

On 31 March 1962 on a trip to the Monastery of St Katherine, our car stopped near the stream that flows westward from the garden subsidiary in the Wadi Feiran ($28^{\circ} 42' N$, $33^{\circ} 38' E$). Near the stream an ibis was feeding, apparently on beetles. I watched it with 8 x 40 binoculars for fifteen minutes, noting its red bill, face, and legs. A ruff of long purplish feathers at the back of its neck gave an unkempt appearance to the bird. I was able to approach it to within five metres and there is no doubt that it was a Bald Ibis Geronticus eremita.

Meinertzhagen (1930) notes that "Moreau observed a flock of eight birds (Bald Ibis) at the pyramids of Giza on 8/5/1921, and there is little doubt about the identification, but it is inadvisable to admit this interesting species into the Birds of Egypt until it has actually been obtained". The only other modern record of this species in Egypt is the observation reported herein. (S.M. Goodman and P.L. Meininger pers. comm.) However, there are recent records of a single individual at Suakin, Sudan ($19^{\circ} 05' N$, $37^{\circ} 20' E$) on 18 March 1983 (Nikolaus 1984) and four birds at Elat, Israel, on 4 April 1970 (Krabbe 1983).

Bald Ibis wintering in north-eastern Africa are thought to be from the only known Turkish breeding site at Birecik along the upper Euphrates (Cramp and Simmons 1977). It is presumed that the recent observations of Bald Ibis in Israel, Sinai, and Sudan are of spring migrants returning to the breeding grounds from wintering areas in north-east Africa.

I thank S M Goodman for valuable aid in preparation of this note.

References:

Crampt, S and K E L Simmons (Eds.). 1977. The Birds of the Western Palearctic Vol. 1. Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Krabbe, N. 1983. Bald Ibis Geronticus eremita seen on Migration in Israel. Bull. Orn. Soc. Middle East 10:13.

Meinertzhagen, R. 1930. Nicoll's Birds of Egypt, 2 vols. Hugh Rees, London.

Nikolaus, G. 1984. Distinct status changes of certain Palearctic migrants in Sudan. Scopus 8:36-38.

205 Sixth Street South, Marshall, MN 56258, USA.

SPRING OBSERVATIONS ON THE BIRDS OF NORTH YEMEN

Rod Martins

In April 1986 I travelled in the Yemen Arab Republic (North Yemen) from 8th - 24th (inclusive dates in the field). Ornithological observations were made by Dr Ira Joel Abramson, myself and others in all the major regions and habitat zones of the country. A detailed log of locality-based daily observations was maintained and several copies have been lodged with OSME Council.

Migrant passage occurred throughout the duration of our visit and was particularly evident on the Tihama and in the Interior Desert. As expected, there were differences in the relative abundance of certain common migrant species compared to autumn passage. Details of this subject will appear elsewhere. The purpose of this note is to record observations of the status, breeding biology and distribution of birds in the YAR which add significantly to current knowledge. When deciding which records to include I have been guided by my experience as a

participant in the OSME Expedition to the YAR from early October to early December 1985 and the literature in previous OSME publications.

Comments are given for some species, where appropriate, but these have been kept to the minimum necessary as a detailed assessment of all information on the status of the country's birds is currently in preparation and will be published as part of the Expedition's results. Nevertheless, certain spring observations merit publication at this time and I have considered records of the following 51 species to be significant with regard to one or more of the following categories:

- (1) Distribution: seasonal distribution of migrants and spatial distribution of resident species.
- (2) Breeding biology, eg season.
- (3) Species with restricted ranges and/or endangered populations.
- (4) Under-recorded species for which the limited series of records presently available is inadequate for a complete evaluation of status.

SYSTEMATIC LIST

Notes: 1) Due to logistical and security problems access to several good coastal localities was restricted and many wetland species were thus either not observed or severely under-recorded.

- 2) Records refer to single individuals unless otherwise stated.

Little Grebe Tachybaptus ruficollis

Ta'izz sewage ponds and marsh/reservoir, 150 on 12-4 and 14-4. A pair were present at an apparently active nest at sewage ponds on 12-4.

Little Bittern Ixobrychus minutus

An adult day-roosting in Acacia woodland in a wadi 5 km north of Suq'Abs on 18-4, was clearly a migrant. The fourth record for the YAR.

Cattle Egret Bubulcus ibis

A colony of 150-200 pairs at the junction of the Bajil and Bayt Al Faqih roads 15 km east of Hodeidah on 15-4. Most birds were incubating.

White Stork Ciconia ciconia

Near Zabid, 10 on 16-4.

Bald Ibis Geronticus eremita

The 12 birds recorded in autumn 1985 by the OSME Expedition (14 prior to the arrival of the expedition) were searched for at all known sites on several occasions on 12 and 13-4. Though a slim possibility exists that the birds were present at an unknown site it seems more likely, given the apparent suitability of areas visited, that they had moved on.

Wigeon Anas penelope

Ta'izz sewage ponds on 12-4.

Teal Anas crecca

Ta'izz sewage ponds, 2 on 12-4

Garganey Anas querquedula

Ta'izz sewage ponds, 10 on 12-4. At least two pairs.

Ferruginous Duck Anas nyroca

Ta'izz sewage ponds. on 12-4.

Tufted Duck Anas fuligula

Ta'izz sewage ponds on 12-4.

Marsh Harrier Circus aeruginosus

Ta'izz marsh/reservoir, female or immature on 12 and 13-4.

Dark Chanting Goshawk Melierax metabates

A sitting bird was flushed from a nest at Al Midman on 16-4.

Sparrowhawk Accipiter nisus

Kawkaban on 9-4; Bayt Baws on 10-4; between Sana'a and Ta'izz, 2 on 11-4; Ta'izz sewage ponds on 13-4.

Buzzard Buteo buteo

Ta'izz sewage ponds on 12-4; near Bajil (flying north at about 500 metres and thus presumably a migrant) on 15.4.

Imperial Eagle Aquila heliaca

Ta'izz sewage ponds, immature on 12-4.

Booted Eagle Hieraaetus pennatus

Ta'izz sewage ponds, dark phase on 12-4; Wadi Siham 10 km east of Al Qutay, pale phase on 17-4.

Lesser Kestrel Falco naumanni

Four birds resting on the crests of dunes in almost entirely unvegetated erg 15 km west of Ma'rib an hour after dawn on 22-4 were clearly migrants.

Philby's Rock Partridge Alectoris philbyi

18 km north-west of Sana'a, 3 on 9-4. A male was persistently calling and presumably holding territory. The call was "Ah, ga-ga-ga.....", the first note was abrupt, assertive and always the same and was followed by a continuous and variable guttural chuckle, typically repeated three to five (but sometimes more) times.

Avocet Recurvirostra avosetta

Ta'izz sewage ponds, 13 on 12 and 13-4.

Spotted Thick-knee Burhinus capensis

1 km east of the coast road in Wadi Rima, a pair on 16-4. This normally secretive species was most conspicuous from 15 minutes before till 15 minutes after dusk when sexual chases in flight and much calling took place. Calls included "Pi, PI, Pee-Pee-Pee-Pee" and "Pip-i-pup, Pip-i-pup": shrill whistles resembling Oystercatcher Haematopus ostralegus.

Black-headed Gull Larus ridibundus

Ta'izz sewage ponds, one in second summer plumage on 12 and 13-4.

Slender-billed Gull Larus genei

Hodeidah fish docks, 12 (2 adults and 10 in second summer plumage) on 15 and 17-4.

White-cheeked Tern Sterna repressa

Hodeidah fish docks, one in second summer plumage on 15-4.

Bridled Tern Sterna anaethetus

Off Al Mukha, 2 on 14-4. (The stop here was unavoidably brief: it is likely that many very distant terns at sea were this species also).

Crowned Sandgrouse Pterocles coronatus

10 km north-west of Ma'rib, 20 on 23-4: flock of 19 (8 males, 11 females and one lone unsexed individual). Display noted. Not previously documented from the YAR, though not unexpected.

Lichtenstein's Sandgrouse Pterocles lichtensteinii

5 km south-west of As Sayiuf Zaghabari, 2 on 14-4.

Chestnut-bellied Sandgrouse Pterocles exustus

15 km north-west of Yakhtul, a pair on 14-4.

Didric Cuckoo Chrysococcyx caprius

Wadi Dahr, female on 8-4.

Cuckoo Cuculus canorus

Between At Turbah and Al Ajlaniyah (north of Hodeidah) on 17-4.

Hume's Tawny Owl Strix butleri

1 km west of Bayt Baws, one (three note) call heard 20 minutes before dusk on 10-4. Also heard calling more frequently at the same site by M Evans on at least two evenings within the previous three weeks.

Spotted Eagle Owl Bubo africanus

Ta'izz marsh/reservoir on 12-4.

Nubian Nightjar Caprimulgus nubicus

5 km east of coast road in Wadi Rima on 16-4; Wadi Siham 5 km west of Al Qutay', a pair roosting about ten metres apart on bare earth shaded by scattered riverine scrub on 17-4.

Caprimulgus sp.

2 km north-west of Ta'izz on 12-4: an extremely small short-tailed nightjar (estimated length 15-20 centimetres) was seen briefly on two occasions perched on a dirt track in car headlights. Few field features were observed other than broad white tips to outer (possibly outer pairs of tail feathers (distal 3-4 centimetres) and a conspicuous white patch at the base of the primaries. Based on the information presently available and the comments of R F Porter (in litt) it appears likely that the bird was either Plain-backed Nightjar

(Plain nightjar) Caprimulgus inornatus, a species recorded from elsewhere in south-west Arabia but as yet unrecorded from the YAR, or perhaps Donaldson-Smith's Nightjar Caprimulgus donaldsoni which is unrecorded from the Arabian Peninsula but occurs across the Red Sea in Somalia and is widespread throughout parts of north-east Africa.

Further records of unidentified nightjars were: Old Ma'rib dam, calling at dusk on 21 and 22-4. 10 km south-west of Ma'rib, 2-3 calling at dusk on 23-4. Adequate views were never obtained of these birds as they frequented inaccessible steep unvegetated rocky slopes but the song was often heard: a churring sound similar to, but perhaps quieter and lower pitched than, (Eurasian) Nightjar Caprimulgus europaeus. The birds may well have been migrants of this species as J Simms (in litt) reported a heavy passage of Nightjars on the fringes of the Rub' Al Khali east of Ma'rib in April 1986. However, as the birds were not adequately observed the possibility remains that they were resident(?) Plain-backed Nightjars.

Alpine Swift Apus melba

15 km east of Ma'rib, 10 flying strongly north on 22-4 were almost certainly migrants.

Black-crowned Finch-Lark Eremopterix nigriceps

15 km west of Ma'raq al Murkha, a pair feeding a recently fledged juvenile on 14-4. Throughout our stay in the Tihama (14 to 18-4) aerial song-fighting was observed daily at many localities.

Red-capped Lark Calandrella cinerea

Near Al Munaqqab (between Sana'a and Shibam), 8 including at least two pairs in fresh plumage on 9-4. This observation implies that breeding occurs at this time of year though no direct evidence was noted.

Red-rumped Swallow Hirundo daurica

16.4 km south-west of Ma'bar, a pair visiting a freshly-constructed nest on 11-4.

Arabian Accentor Prunella fagani

Kawkaban, nest containing 3 pulli about seven days old on 9-4. The nestlings had developed a dark slate-grey down and had orange gapes with three small black spots on the tongue (one near the tip, two at the same distance toward the rear). The nest was sited at the base of the dense canopy of a small thorny shrub situated close to a well vegetated gully in a thirty degree slope and was about one metre above the ground. The cup was constructed of fine herbs woven onto an untidy but densely woven platform of small twigs and was copiously lined with large brown chicken feathers. While the nest was being investigated the female was in close attention, constantly uttering a high-pitched "Pee-Pee-Pee" call (always three notes). The bird never ventured more than twenty metres from the nest. During a thirty minute watch of the nest visits were made by one of both of the adults, carrying large-insect food, on three occasions.

The construction, site and situation of the nest and appearance of the nestlings were extremely similar to a nest of Radde's Accentor Prunella ocularis which I observed at Demirkazik, Turkey, in late May 1983.

This would appear to be the first documented nest of Arabian Accentor.

Nightingale Luscinia megarhynchos

10 km north-west of Ma'rib on 24-4.

White-throated Robin Irania gutturalis

Bayt Baws, 10-4; 5 km west-north-west of Bajil on 15-4.

Whinchat Saxicola rubetra

Kawkaban on 9-4.

Yemen Warbler (Arabian Tit Warbler) Parisoma buryi

Kawkaban, on in full song from the crown of Acacia sp. on 9-4.

Upcher's Warbler Hippolais languida

Al Midman on 15-4; 8 km west of Al Mukayminiyah on 17-4; 5 km north of Suq'Abs, on 18-4; 15 km south-west of Ma'rib, 2 on 23-4; 10 km north-west of Ma'rib on 24-4.

Olive-tree Warbler Hippolais olivetorum

5 km west-north-west of Bajil, on 15-4. Previously first recorded for the YAR by the autumn 1985 OSME Expedition, this is the second occurrence (and the first in spring).

Arabian Warbler Sylvia leucomelaena

30 km east of Manakhah, 2 on 19-4; 10 km north-west of Ma'rib, 2 on 24-4. The birds at Ma'rib are the second record for the Interior Desert region or indeed anywhere east of the main highland massif. One was collected by Philby at Wadi Khabb, south-east of Najran on 30-7-1936 (per. F.E. Warr).

Barred Warbler Sylvia nisoria

15 km north-west of Mafraq al Mukha on 14-4; 5 km west-north-west of Bajil, 2 on 15-4; Al Midman, 150-200 and Wadi Rima, 4 on 16-4; Wadi Siham, 20 and between At Turbah and Al Ajlaniyah (north of Hodeidah), 3 on 17-4; 5 km north-west of Suq'Abs, 12 on 18-4; Old Ma'rib dam, 2 on

21-4; 15 km east of Ma'rib, 4 on 22-4; 10 km south of Ma'rib, 10 on 23-4; 10 km north-west of Ma'rib, 20 on 24-4. Hitherto recorded as a spring migrant only in small numbers in April, this series of records indicates that the species can be widespread and locally numerous as a spring passage migrant.

Brown Woodland Warbler Phylloscopus umbrovirens

Song was noted more frequently than in autumn.

Spotted Flycatcher Muscicapa striata

Bayt Baws, 6 on 10-4; 16.4 km south-west of Ma'bar, 3 on 11-4; near Al'Ajlaniyah, 2 on 17-4; Al Mahwit on 20-4; 10 km north-west of Ma'rib, 2 on 24-4.

Gambage Dusky Flycatcher (Dusky Flycatcher) Muscicapa gambagae

18 km west-north-west of Ta'izz on 13-4; Al Midman, 2 on 16-4, Al Mahwit on 20-4.

Ruppell's Weaver Ploceus galbula

Singing and nest-building observed at colonies from 11-4 and thereafter.

Golden-winged Grosbeak Rhynchostruthus socotranus

16.4 km south-west of Ma'bar, 4 including a juvenile on 11-4 (recorded at the same locality in October 1985 by the OSME Expedition); Ta'izz marsh/reservoir, 2 on 13-4 (apparently preparing to roost in a small tree on the edge of the reservoir); midway between At Tawilah and Al Mahwit, 2 on 20-4.

House Bunting Emberiza striolata

Old Ma'rib dam, pair on 21-4; 15 km south-west of Ma'rib, pair on 23-4; 10 km north-west of Ma'rib, pair on 24-4. These are the only records east of the highland massif apart from one collected by Philby at Shudhayf, to the north of Jawf district (near Ma'rib) on 1-8-1936. (per F E Warr).

Acknowledgements

The expedition was made possible by a grant from Bird Conservation Surveys Inc to whom grateful thanks are due.

75 Stafford Street, Norwich, Norfolk NR2 3BG, United Kingdom.

NEW RECORDS OF GOLIATH HERON, YELLOW-BILLED STORK, BLYTH'S REED WARBLER AND CLAMOROUS REED WARBLER IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Dr R K Kinzelbach

In the period from 1975 to 1985 a working group on the zoology and zoogeography of the Near and Middle East carried out 22 scientific expeditions to the region. Although the main purpose of these activities was research on the freshwater faunas and on selected taxa of arthropods, a large quantity of data on birds was also collected. Those concerning Turkey are being worked on by Max Kasperek, while the Syrian results are to be published by the author. All other occasional observations will be made available to the relevant interested institutions or persons. The following short note only presents a few species of special interest as "appetizers". The numbers of the collecting stations mentioned correspond to those of our official list to be published in 1986 (Kinzelbach, Krupp, Roth, Schneider in prep.).

Goliath Heron Ardea goliath

The Goliath Heron is distributed all over Africa, south of the Sahara. Nesting has also been reported from lower Mesopotamia, and from the Southern Sinai and the opposite Red Sea coast of Egypt (Etchécopar & Hüe 1964). Migrating or vagrant birds have been observed as far away as India and Sri Lanka in the south-east and in Iran (Baluchistan) in the north-east. Only a few records are known from the western part of the Middle East, eg. from the swamps of the Huleh basin (R. Ortal, pers comm.), from Syria (Hüe & Etchécopar 1970): "pas recemment"), from Saudi Arabia near the Red Sea coast and Tabuk (Jennings 1981), and from Egypt (Bijlsma & Roder 1982).

The new records are:

Aqaba, Jordan, 23 March 1977, one bird seen approaching from west and then following the coast within the town. The right wing lacked several primaries due to shooting.

Lake Assad near Tabqa, Syria, 1979, several observations according to R. Beck (pers comm.).

Aswan, Egypt (collecting station no. 85/37), 14 March 1985 one bird flying upstream of the old Aswan Dam.

Yellow-billed Stork Mycteria ibis

The Yellow-billed Stork is resident in Africa, south of the Sahara. Bones of this species have been identified from excavations of the Satet-temple (5th/6th Dynasty) on Elephantine Island, now in Lake Nasser (Boessneck & von den Dries 1982). The species has also been identified by the author on some mosaics from Pompeii depicting Nile scenes, in the National Museum at Naples,

The new records are:

Aswan, Egypt, mummified head of a specimen found dead near Aswan a few years ago, collection of the Institute of Zoology, University of Assiut, Aswan branch. Photograph taken 13 March 1985.

Aswan, Egypt (collecting station no. 85/37), 14 March 1985, one adult bird circling over the old Aswan Dam.

Blyth's Reed Warbler Acrocephalus dumetorum

This species breeds from Finland and Estonia through Siberia, Transcaspia, and Mongolia, to the Yenisei Basin. There are a few records from Afghanistan and Eastern Iran. It migrates through the Middle East and winters in India, Sri Lanka, Assam and Burma. Only a few migrants have been identified in the west of the vast region through which this bird probably regularly passes on the way to its winter area, eg. in Rumania (Paspaleva 1977) and on Cyprus (Hüe & Etchecopar 1970: 14 August 1962, compare date of the new record below).

Lake of Homs (34° 40' N 36° 37' E), Syria (collecting station no. 78/07), 2 August 1978, one bird caught near the ancient dam of the storage lake and released after examination.

Clamorous Reed Warbler Acrocephalus stentoreus

Resident in Egypt from Bahr el-Maryut (Kattinger 1970), from Wadi Natrun, and from the Fayum throughout the Nile Delta, the Gulf of Suez, and Sinai to Israel between Lake Huleh and the northern shore of the Dead Sea. In Jordan recorded from Azraq (Nelson 1973). One record from Syria from the lake of Muzairib near Darra. (Kattinger 1970). The occurrence in Saudi Arabia is somewhat doubtful (Jennings 1981). Old records known from the Blue Nile (Brehm 1878) and from Massowah in Eritrea (v. Heuglin 1869).

The following new observations partly confirm this range and partly extend it to the north of the Levantine Rift Valley and to Upper Egypt, thus corroborating the old records mentioned above. All the birds listed below were seen and heard very well.

Orontes River near al-Qussair, Syria, (collecting station no. 79/108), 1 April 1979, one bird singing in the very dense thickets of willows and reed on the river banks.

Ain Fash, Dead Sea Coast, Jordan (collecting station no. 81/13, 17 May 1981, several birds singing in the reed beds.

Al-Badari, Egypt, 26 km south-east of Assiut on the bank of the Nile River, 1 March 1985, one bird singing in phragmites.

Asjut, Egypt, 4 km south-east of Asjut on the bank of the Nile River (collecting station No. 85/20), 3 March 1985, several birds singing in phragmites.

Deir el-Muharrak, Egypt (collecting station no. 85/30), 9 March 1985, one bird singing in reeds around a fishpond near the monastery.

Thebes-West, Egypt (collecting station no. 85/33), 11 March 1985, one bird singing in phragmites-thickets at a small pond near the ferry to Luxor.

References:

Bijlsma, R. G. & F. E. de Roder 1982. Goliath Heron in Egypt in 1981. Dutch Birding 4 : 82-84.

Boessneck, J. & A. von den Driesch 1982. Studien an subfossilen Tierknochen aus Agypten. Münchener Agyptolog. Studien 40 : 98-99.

Brehm, A. E. 1978 Brehms Tierleben. 2. Aufl. Vögel 1. Leipzig.

Etchécopar, R. D. & F. Hüe 1964. Les Oiseaux du Nord de l'Afrique. Paris.

v. Heuglin, Th. 1869. Ornithologie Nordost-Afrikas. Vol. 1. Cassel.

Hüe, F., & R. D. Etchécopar 1970. Les Oiseaux de Proche et du Moyen Orient. Paris.

Kattinger, E. 1970. Vogelbeobachtungen im vorderen Orient: Syrien und unteres Niltal. Ber. Naturf. Ges. Bamberg 45: 57-79 Bamberg.

Jennings, M. C. 1981. The Birds of Saudi Arabia: a check-list. Whittlesford, Cambridge.

Meinertzhagen, R. 1930. Nicoll's Birds of Egypt. Vol. 1. London.

Nelson, B. 1973. Azraq: Desert Oasis. London.

Paspaleva, M. 1977. L'Hirondelle rousseline Hirundo daurica, la Fauvette passerinette Sylvia cantillans, la Perdix bartavelle Alectoris graeca et la Rousserolle des buissons Acrocephalus dumetorum en Roumanie. Alauda 45: 237-238. Paris.

Institut für Zoologie, Technische Hochschule, Schnittpahnstraße 3, D-6100 Darmstadt, West Germany.

FURTHER NOTES ON HERRING GULLS NESTING ON ROOFTOPS IN ISTANBUL

H. Kumerloeve

In the 1950s and in later years I observed sitting Herring Gulls Larus argentatus which I presumed to be breeding on some buildings in Istanbul - on the roofs of Saray Topkapi ("Serail"), on the so-called "Stables of Elephants", on Dolma Bahce Palace and also on some residential houses. In 1933 G. Neithammer and I had not noticed such behaviour, but Mathey-Dupraz (1920/23, 1925) had already mentioned it from 1889/94! During the 1960's and 1970's rooftop breeding Herring Gulls may have spread to residential houses in inner Istanbul as they were observed here by C. Kosswig, E. Hirzel and myself.

I have been trying to monitor the situation in other towns on the Mediterranean and Black Sea coasts as well as in towns and villages within Anatolia but no roof-breeding Herring Gulls have been found. Only in the town of Antakya in the south-east have a few birds been found sitting on roofs near the Orontes River (Asi).

Reference:

Mathey-Dupraz, A. 1920/23, 1925. Notes ornithologiques de la région de Bosphore. Observations ornith. rég. Bosphore. Ornith. Beob. 17/22.

8032 Gräfelting, München, Hubert-Reissner-Strasse 7, West Germany.

COMMENTS ON 'FOUR UNUSUAL RECORDS FROM THE LEBANON'

H Kumerloeve

In N H Khairallah's note concerning records from the Lebanon (OSME Bull. 16: 16-17) the author mentions S. Vere-Benson's book 'Birds of

Lebanon and the Jordan area' in which Vere-Benson wrote "The records, though added to in recent years, are based on H Kumerloeve's Notes on the Birds of the Lebanese Republic, an invaluable collection of all ancient and modern records with the status of each species." It is therefore surprising that N H Khairallah is unaware of the comments I made in that earlier publication.

For Eleonora's Falcon Falco eleonora I wrote:

"Apparently not very rare as straggler... Tristram's note "... scarce summer visitant, I have only noticed it myself in the plain of the Buka'a (Coale Syria)" may refer to the Lebanese territory. One specimen was seen above Beirut on April 28 (Bourne) and Nevins believes to have 4 records: at Ras Chekka 1.V. 1955, at Laklouk 7.X. 1956, in the Damour valley 19.X.1956 and at Ainab 25.VIII 1957".

Magpie Pica pica. " No data from the 1940/50's. But in early 1960's two nests with clutches were collected in late April near Deir-ez-Zor at the Euphrates (Syria) by Leavesley".

Rose-coloured starling Sturnus roseus. "Occasionally breeding. Apparently in 1877 W T Van Dyck founder and for many years curator of the zoological collection (between 1873 to 1878 and 1818/82 he collected some 900 birds from the neighbourhood of Beirut for the American University of Beirut), found 11 juvenile specimens near the capital in July/August. Also Schrader noted adults and juveniles in the Beirut area; Festa met with this species towards end of June in the Beka'a plain and Hardy supposed it breeding in 1945. Also Flach noted some Rose-coloured Starlings in juvenile plumage north of Baalbek on 30th October 1958. In 1958/59 and 1961 I could find 12 Lebanese specimens in the AUB-collection.

References

- Bourne, W.R.P. Birds observed in the Lebanon, April-May 1958 (unpub).
- Bourne, W.R.P. 1960. Notes on autumn migration in the Middle East. *The Ibis* 101: 170-176.
- Festa, E. 1894. Viaggio in Palestina, nel Libano e regione vicine. IX: Uccelli. *Bol. Mus. Zool. Univ. Torino* 147:1-7.
- Flach, B. 1959. Höstobservationer i Libanon. *Fauna o Flora* 1959: 161-180.
- Hardy, E. 1946. Probable nesting of the Rose-coloured Pastor in Lebanon in 1945. *The Ibis* 88: 398.
- Kumerlovee, H. 1960. The bird-collection of W. Th. Van Dyck (1857-1939) in the museum of the American University of Beirut. *Alauda* 28: 124-128.
- Kumerlovee, H. 1962. Notes on the Birds of the Lebanese Republic. *Iraq Natur. Hist. Mus. Publ.* 20/21: 1-80.
- Leavesley, A. Oological notes from Syria (Manuscr. unpub).
- Nevins, J. 1960. Partial check-list of the birds of Lebanon. (Manuscr. unpub).
- Schrader, G. 1982. Ornithologische Beobachtungen auf meinen Sammelreisen. III Syrien. *Ornith. Jahrb.* 3 : 11-17.
- Tristram, H.B. 1982. Ornithological notes of a journey through Syria, Mesopotamia and southern Armenia in 1881. *The Ibis* (IV) 6 : 402-419.
- Van Dyck, W.T. 1915. Birds of the Lebanon (in Arabic) In : Ismail Haqqi bey (1915) : *The Lebanon*, pag. 83-89. Beirut.

NEWS AND INFORMATION

This is the second time that we have included news items under this heading and we are pleased to report that many of the contributors to the items in the last issue received a good response. All groups and societies are invited to contribute news or information items for future issues. The deadline for the next bulletin is 15th February 1987 and all contributions should be sent to the Bulletin Editor.

SUCCESSFUL FIRST CONFERENCE ON BIRD CONSERVATION IN TURKEY

The first conference on bird conservation in Turkey was held this spring on 14th and 15th April in Izmir. The conference, organised by the University of Nine September (Dokuz Eylul), concentrated on the Camalati Tuzlasi - a large salt marsh area on the north side of Izmir Bay. This area, in the south-west of Turkey, has a much milder winter than the rest of Anatolia and is thus an important wintering area for birds. Studies by Dr Mehmet Siki of the Aegean (Ege) University have recorded 182 bird species with 50 species breeding. The main breeders are Little Grebe Tachybaptus ruficollis, Dalmatian Pelican Pelecanus crispus, Little Egret Egretta garzetta, White Stork Ciconia ciconia, Greater Flamingo Phoenicopterus ruber, Ruddy Shelduck Tadorna ferruginea, Mallard Anas platyrhynchos, Kestrel Falco tinnunculus, Moorhen Gallinula chloropus, Black-winged Stilt Himantopus himantopus and Avocet Recurvirostra avosetta. This makes the area more important than the reserve at Manyas Lake (with 39 breeders) and the Sultan Marshes (with 32 breeders) although these latter figures may be underestimates (See review of Max Kasperek's "Die sultanssumpfe" in Bull. 16: pp 33-36).

In recent years the Camalti Tuzlasi has been exploited for salt extraction by the Monopolies Department of the Ministry of Customs and Monopolies which has apparently destroyed 8000 hectares of wetlands and marshes along the Aegean coast.

The successful outcome of the conference is that the Monopolies Department has promised through Mr Gungor Tuncer that:

- 1) Together with the Ministry of Culture and Tourism they will leave the last 500 unexploited hectares as a "Protected Area of First Degree Importance".
- 2) The Ministry of Monopolies and Customs will ensure that the balance between fresh and salty water will be returned to its former natural state.
- 3) The Monopolies Agency will give all possible assistance by the provision of accommodation for wardens, erection of fences and provision of communications.
- 4) The Nine September University will provide research staff and facilities to carry out relevant studies in the area.

It is hoped that the area will become a National Park under the National Parks Division of the Ministry of Forestry and that Turkey will then have its third most important wetland-bird sanctuary under protection. Members of Nine September and Aegean Universities are to be congratulated on organising this successful conference.

Information supplied by The Society for the Protection of Wildlife, Turkey.

PROBLEMS AT LAKE MANYAS

Lake Manyas and its famous 'Bird Paradise' Nature Reserve to the south of the Sea of Marmara in Turkey is seriously threatened by over-drainage and pollution according to an article in a recent issue of the Robert College Newspaper. Last summer a new drainage scheme

left the bed of the lake dry and cracked. The water level has now been returned to its previous level through the efforts of Kamil Seyhan, the National Park Chief, but the threats to the lake remain.

DOGAL HAYATI KORUMA DERNEGI - THE SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF WILDLIFE, TURKEY

The Turkish Society for the Protection of Wildlife has recently elected a new President, Ms Nergis Yazgan who is a former journalist and specialist in foreign affairs. As part of its 1986 programme the Society is participating in the worldwide campaign to explain the importance of wetlands and their vital need for conservation. Turkey, though rich in wetlands, has already lost some, such as Amik Golu and the famous Lake of Antioch, which is now a dust bowl, and others are under threat. The Society has already participated in the protection of the Camalti Tuzlasi and is now actively seeking ways to protect lake Manyas (see above). In addition the Society is continuing its protection work on the Bald Ibis Geronticus eremita and on education which is its main area of activity.

The Education Programme falls into three main areas:

- 1) The production of a notice-board newsheet which is distributed free at least twice a year to secondary schools throughout Turkey.
- 2) Explanatory slide shows, using an audio-visual projector donated by the RSPB, which have become a regular feature of the Society's activities. The shows, which explain the importance of nature and conservation, are shown in various schools, hunting clubs and village centres and have been seen by over 40,000 people over the years.

- 3) Since 1979 the Society has given daily instruction to fifth grade students in selected schools during the special Nature and Child week in May.

The Society is keen to increase its membership and to receive support both moral and financial. Their address is: The Society for the Protection of Wildlife, PK 18, Bebek, Istanbul, Turkey.

NATIVE LANGUAGE POPULAR BIRD BOOKS

The bird book covering Turkey has now been published and distributed both in Turkey and Turkish Cyprus. Further books covering other countries are being planned and prepared. For further details of books already produced see OSME Bull. 16:18.



IMPORTANT BIRD AREAS IN TURKEY



In the last OSME bulletin (16:22-23) your attention was drawn to an important project being organised by the International Council for Bird Preservation in collaboration with the International Waterfowl Research Bureau. The aim of the project is to identify the most important areas for birds throughout Europe, which for the purposes of the project includes all of Turkey - a country well known to many members of OSME. Knowledge of, and information on, the most important areas or sites for birds is a fundamental conservation objective. There are undoubtedly a large number of sites in Turkey that are of international importance, probably more than in any other country in Europe. However, information on these sites is currently fragmented, often poorly known or now out of date. Some sites that have never been

adequately recognised have been lost, whilst others are likely to be undergoing changes. Although OSME's Site Register Scheme and particularly the Birds of Turkey series (Kasperek et al) have taken some steps, very few Important Bird Areas in Turkey are currently internationally acknowledged.

Over the next eighteen months the ICBP/IWRB Important Bird Areas project intends to prepare a comprehensive inventory of Turkish sites. The information gathered, in conjunction with the information gathered for all other countries in Europe, will enable national authorities to determine the international significance of their important areas and will be used by ICBP and IWRB (and other international conservation organisations) to encourage the development of a European-wide network of nature reserves for birds. The work will result in an authoritative ornithological database that will aid the implementation of regional agreements (such as the Bern Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife) and global agreements (such as the Ramsar Convention, the Bonn Convention and the World Heritage Convention). Turkey has signed and ratified the Bern Convention and World Heritage Convention. The former requires the Contracting Party to take measures to conserve the habitats of Appendix II bird species (which includes most of the important species occurring in Turkey), the latter to identify, protect and conserve areas of natural heritage. Furthermore, it is hoped that Turkey will sign the Ramsar and Bonn Conventions in the near future.

Both ICBP and IWRB have gathered data on important bird areas in the country. Of particular value have been the IWRB wetland surveys in the late 1960's and early 1970's. More recently ICBP has gathered, at the request of the Council of Europe (which provides the secretariat for the Bern Convention) information on important areas, with assistance from the National Parks Department in Turkey. This information is currently being expanded and revised and a finalised inventory will be published in early 1988. A valuable source of reference has been the Turkish Bird Reports (1966-75). They have admirably demonstrated how valuable it is to place on record observations in the country.

The information available to ICBP indicates that the following sites are of particular importance, indeed many are likely to be selected and included in the final inventory. We currently have little or no information on the sites marked with an asterisk (*).

Abant Gölü*	Cardak lagoons*
Acigöl	Cavuscu Gölü
Adala Gölü*	Celtik Gölü*
Aktas Gölü	Ceyhan Delta
Aksehir Gölü	Ceylanpinar
Akyatan Gölü (Ceyhan Delta)	Cihanbeyi Gölü (Gez Gölü)*
Akyayan Gölü (Ceyhan Delta)	Cildir Gölü*
Ala Dag (including Demirkazik)	Civril Gölü (Isikli Gölü)*
Alanya, marshes near*	Colak Gölü*
Alpaslan Gölü	Corak Gölü*
Amik Gölü	Cubuk I Baraji*
Apolyant Gölü (Ulubat Gölü)	Cubuk II Baraji*
Arapciftligi Gölü*	Dalyan Gölü
Avlan Gölü	Demirköprü Baraji*
Arin Gölü	Dogubayazit marshes*
Aynas Gölü (Seyhan Delta)*	Durusu Gölü (Terkos Gölü)*
Bafa Gölü (Menderes Delta)	Eber Gölü
Balikdami	Egridir Gölü
Balik Gölü (Kizilirmak Delta)	Egrigöz Dag
Bayinder Gölü (Corak Gölü)*	Emen Gölü (Emer Gölü?)*
Belgrade, forest of*	Emir Gölü
Beynam Ridge*	Ercis, marshes near*
Beyshir Gölü	Ercek Gölü
Birecek	Erdek, Gulf of*
Boreka-Hopa	Eregli Gölü
Bugur Gölü (Bulok Gölü)*	Fahril Gölü*
Burdur Gölü	Gala Gölü
Büyükçekmece*	Gavur Gölü
Calti Gölü	Gogenc Gölü
Catal Dag*	Gokceli Gölü
Camlica Hills	Goksu Delta
Gölbek Gölü (Kurak Gölü)	Meric Delta
Gülen Dag*	Morgan Gölü
Golhisar Gölü*	Murat Valley west of Bulanik

Gulluk Gölü*	Murat Valley north of Mus
Havaalani Ridge*	Nemrut Dag*
Hazapın Gölü	Nip Dag*
Hazar Gölü*	Ova Gölü
Hirfanli Baraji*	Patnos area
Hotamis Gölü (Bataklik Gölü)	Porsuk Baraji*
Hoyran Gölü	Salda Gölü*
Incesu Salt pans*	Samsun Harbour*
Ismi Gölü*	Sapanca Gölü
Iznik Gölü*	Sariyer Baraji*
Kara Dag	Saros Köfezi Bay*
Karagol*	Selevir Baraji*
Karorak Gölü*	Seyfe Gölü
Karamik Gölü*	Seyhan Delta
Karanfil Dag	Silifke Gölü*
Karapınar ovasi (Konya marshes)	Sogut Gölü*
Karatas Gölü	Sugla Gölü*
Kemer Baraji*	Sultan Dag*
Kestrel Gölü	Sultansazligi marshes
Kizilirmak Delta	Suphan Dag*
Kizilcahamam	Todurke Gölü*
Kokarot Gölü (Ceyhan Delta)	Tortum Gölü*
Kovada Gölü	Toros Dag*
Koycegiz Gölü	Tuz Gölü
Krater Gölü	Tuzla Gölü (Seyhan Delta)
Küçükçekmece*	Uludag*
Külü Gölü	Van Gölü
Kurbaga Gölü (Sultansazligi marshes)	Yarisli Gölü*
Kus Gölü (Manyas Gölü)	Yarma marshes (Karapınar ovasi?)
Marmara Gölü	Yenicaga Gölü*
Menderes Delta including Bafa Gölü	Yesilirmak Delta*
	Yuksekoa marshes*

Every attempt has been made to ensure the correct spelling of these sites and to avoid duplication. However, this cannot be guaranteed and some names might in fact refer to the same site.

How OSME members can assist the project

The OSME sites register scheme is an excellent procedure for submitting information. The response for Turkey has so far been very poor. Sites register forms would be welcomed for any one of the above sites. If you have visited any of these areas since the mid-1970s then this would likely up-date much of the information on file. If you have ever visited any of the lesser known areas (particularly in eastern Turkey) then information on habitat, area and ornithological importance is likely to be new. There is in particular a lack of woodland sites (especially sites for breeding raptors), seabird nesting sites and grassland/steppe and montane sites. Alternatively, we would like to hear which areas you know well so that we can be more specific in our request for information. A site register form is enclosed with this bulletin. Now, more than ever is the time to fill one in.

Richard Grimmett : Co-ordinator of Important Bird Areas project.

Michael Rands : Co-ordinator of OSME sites register scheme.

ICBP, 219c Huntingdon Road, Cambridge CB3 0DL.

THE ICBP CONSERVATION EXPEDITION COMPETITION

In 1986/1987, ICBP will again be running a Conservation Expedition Competition to encourage more expeditions to carry out conservation based ornithological research abroad and to gain experience of international issues and co-operation.

The competition is open to university or other ornithological teams and ICBP will contribute up to \$1,000 to each of the best two proposals and may provide letters of endorsement and management support to the runners-up. Projects will be judged on their conservation content, feasibility and likely impact; they must involve a local counterpart and have clearance from the host government and/or a local institute.

In 1986, awards went to teams planning ornithological surveys of the Reserve Naturelle no. 12 Marojejy in Madagascar and Rio Mazan in southern Ecuador. The two expeditions have been incorporated into ICBP's Conservation Programme which includes nearly 100 conservation projects all over the world.

To enter the competition, a project proposal must be submitted to the ICBP Secretariat not later than 31 January and prizes will be announced at the end of March. Full details and entry forms are provided in a guide to the competition, which costs £3 and can be returned from ICBP, 219c Huntingdon Road, Cambridge CB3 0DL, UK.

THIRD WORLD CONFERENCE ON BIRDS OF PREY, ISRAEL, 1987

This International Conference will be held from 22 to 27 March 1987 at Elat, in Israel. It will be organised by ICBP's World Working Group on Birds of Prey in conjunction with the Israel Raptor Information Centre and the US Hawk Mountain Sanctuary Association.

It will consist of seven paper sessions, each of which may occupy up to one whole day. The themes and their organisers will be:

- 1) Conservation and biology of rare raptors - B U Meyburg & N Collar.
- 2) Conservation and biology of rare owls - R J Clark & H Mikkola.
- 3) Raptors on migration and wintering grounds - M Fuller & J M Thiollay.
- 4) Population biology and breeding - I Newton.

5. Raptors in polluted environments - R Risebrough & J Ledger.
- 6) Education - Y Leshem & J Brett.
- 7) Legislation - P Robinson.

Contributions to these different themes can also take the form of poster papers.

The conference will take place within the framework of an international festival which will include a raptor photography competition (under the patronage of Eric Hosking), a painting and drawing competition (patron, Roger Tory Peterson), a film festival and competition, and ornithological and cultural excursions and tours.

At this season the famous and massive migration of raptors over Elat is in full swing. This, in 1985, included 1.1 million raptors of 30 species.

For further information, write to the Hon. Secretary of the World Working Group: Mr R D Chancellor, 15 Bolton Gardens, London SW5 0AL, UK.

ORNITHOLOGY IN THE SULTANATE OF OMAN

Public and scientific interest in the birds of Oman has grown remarkably during the last 20 years, and the trend is increasing, aided by development and higher education, and by the media, particularly with the publication of The Birds of Oman (1980) and its companion in Arabic, Tuyur Oman (1985).

The opening of the Sultan Qaboos University in September 1986, with a Department of Biology in the Faculty of Science, provides an opportunity not only for further academic and practical studies of the ornithology of this large and varied country, but also for the construction of a database of the known fauna and flora, which has been started in conjunction with Government ministries and departments already involved.

With these developments in view the committee which since 1977 has been assessing records of species which are scarce, difficult to identify or not on the Oman Bird List, has been enlarged and re-named the Oman Bird Records Committee.

Observers of birds in Oman are invited to send their records to the Committee and asked to ensure that full field notes are provided for claims of scarce or previously unrecorded species.

A copy of the periodically revised Oman Bird List will be sent free of charge to anyone interested. The latest edition is dated June 1986 and includes Intermediate Egret, African Spoonbill and Long-billed Dowitcher (all to be reported in Sandgrouse 8).

Records and requests should be addressed to: David Foster, Recorder, Oman Bird Records Committee, c/o PO Box 246, Muscat, Sultanate of Oman.

THE BIRDS OF OMAN (1980) and TAYYUR OMAN (1985)

Members of natural history groups in the Gulf region who experience difficulty in obtaining these books are invited to contact the author, Michael Gallagher, at the Natural History Museum, PO Box 668, Muscat, Sultanate of Oman. Telephone: Oman 560 267, (evening). He has presented a copy of each volume to the library of each group; any group which has not yet received them should contact him.

RECENT CHANGES OF ADDRESS

The following groups have recently changed their addresses to:

Emirates Natural History Group (Abu Dhabi), PO Box 303, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates.

Qatar Natural History Group. Chairman, Bryan Eccleston, PO Box 7660, Doha, Qatar.

NEW BIRD BOOK FROM LEBANON

A new book about the birds of the Lebanon has just been published in Beirut by the Lebanese University. 'Birds of Lebanon' is written by OSME vice-president Dr George Thomé and his wife Henriette. This A4 sized paperback book which is written in Arabic, runs to 165 pages and includes 24 colour plates illustrating 226 species. There are also many black and white photographs and line-drawings. Hopefully, it should foster considerable interest in birds amongst the Lebanese people and we wish it every success.

RESEARCH PROJECT ON BIRD MIGRATION ACROSS THE SAHARA DESERT

The project organised by Schweizerische Vogelwarte (Station Ornithologique Suisse) has been postponed until 1987 due to delays in obtaining permits to use radar. Enquiries to Dr B Bruderer, Schweizerische Vogelwarte, CH-6204 Sempach, Switzerland.



A NEW JOURNAL COVERING AFRICAN RAPTORS

GABAR (Growth and Biology of African Raptors) is a new journal publishing material on African raptors, here defined as eagles, hawks, harriers, buzzards, falcons and owls, (ie. excluding vultures, seabirds and other predatory birds already covered by specialist publications in the region). Contents will include: short papers on completed studies, progress reports on ongoing research, short notes, unusual sightings, conservation problems and a Forum in which opinions, continuing controversies, constructive criticisms and new ideas are aired and challenged. The first edition has been printed and copies can be obtained free of charge from the address below. Subsequent editions will be distributed on receipt of a subscription fee.

Robert Simmons, Editor - GABAR, Dept of Zoology, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg 2001, Republic of South Africa.

OSME NEWSOFFICERS OF THE SOCIETY 1986 - 87

VICE-PRESIDENTS:

S. Cramp

Sir Hugh Elliott

P. A. D. Hollom

Dr H. Kumerloeve

Prof H. Mendelssohn

Dr G. Tohmé

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

J. S. M. Albrecht (Sales Officer)

D. J. Brooks

Dr L. Cornwallis

D. Fisher (Bulletin Editor)

M. C. Jennings

R. P. Martins

D. Parr (Sandgrouse Editor)

R. F. Porter (Chairman)

Dr M. R. W. Rands (Sites Register)

N. J. Redman (Treasurer)

Mrs F. E. Warr (Secretary &
Membership Secretary)

G. R. Welch (Publicity)

NINTH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

OSME's ninth AGM will be held on Saturday 4th July 1987 at the Natural History Museum in London and will be accompanied by a programme of short talks and slides. We very much hope that this early announcement of the date will enable a good number of our overseas members to join us. Further details will be given in the next bulletin.

MEMBERS' PUBLICATIONS

All members who paid a subscription of £7 (£10 airmail) for 1985 should have received Sandgrouse Vol. 7 as well as Bulletins 14 and 15.

Members joining the Society this year may order these from the Sales Officer (see Sales List). Those having paid a full subscription of £7 (£10 airmail) for 1986 will have received Bulletins 16 and 17 and Sandgrouse Vol. 8 will be mailed as soon as it is published.

SANDGROUSE 7

Sandgrouse 7 was distributed in June. Unfortunately two maps relevant to Graham Bundy's article "Blackstarts in Southern Oman" were omitted. These have now been printed as an addendum and will be sent out with Sandgrouse 8 which it is hoped will be published before the end of 1986. If any member would like a copy of the addendum before then please contact the Editor, Don Parr. It has also been brought to our notice that certain copies of Sandgrouse 7 were spoiled with ink marks. If any member has such a copy and wants it changed please let us know. We apologise to all for these mishaps.

CAR STICKERS

The original stock of OSME car stickers is almost exhausted and a new car sticker has been produced. The design is the same as before but incorporates the Society's address. Those members who require a new car sticker should write to the secretary who will send them one free of charge. Extra stickers are available as before from the Sales Officer. Price 50p.

OSME BULLETINS

The single of copies of OSME Bulletins 1 to 12 are now out of stock. However the Bulletins have been reprinted in two volumes (1 to 6 and 7

to 12) with card covers and a plastic binding strip. They are similar to the OST set of 15 Bulletins. The price of each volume is £2.00. Single copies of OSME Bulletin 13 onwards remain available at 0.25p each. (See sales list).

"SEASONS GREETINGS" CARDS

We still have a large supply of "Seasons Greetings" cards which continue to be for sale. The selection remains as before. (See sales list).

BIRDS OF ADEN

OSME has recently received two typescripts concerning the birds of Aden. Stan Howe kindly gave us a copy of "A List of Birds of Aden and the Aden Protectorate 1944-1945" by R Bark Jones and P H T Hartley. This particular version lacks the appendix of game birds and ducks included in a version printed in Aden in 1957. We are also grateful to Michael Gallagher for "Birds of Aden" which summarizes the sightings of K J Smith, P W Munday, Mr & Mrs F W Rant, "the writer" (P. W. P. Browne?) and others during the years 1943 to 1947. Please let the Secretary know if you would be interested in borrowing either of these typescripts.

NEW SITES REGISTER SCHEME CO-ORDINATOR

Dr Michael Rands has taken over from Dr Nigel Collar as the co-ordinator for OSME's Sites Register Scheme. As Dr Rands has recently taken up a new post with ICBP in Cambridge where the site register forms are stored he was the obvious man for the job! We thank Dr Collar for all the work he put in running the scheme from its inception in 1983.

OSME ARCHIVES

Each year many of our members make visits to various countries within OSME's recording area and a large amount of information is collected. Sadly, some of this is, "lost" by being left in a notebook never to see the light of day!.

If you are planning a trip, or have notes from the past, and are prepared to write them up, then OSME would be pleased to receive a copy for the Society's Archives.

All contributions, type-written if possible, should be sent to Geoff & Hilary Welch, our new archivists.

REDUCED SUBSCRIPTION TO BRITISH BIRDS FOR OSME MEMBERS

OSME members can subscribe to the monthly magazine *British Birds* at 75% of the normal cost. For members living in Britain and Europe or by surface mail elsewhere the reduced subscription is £18.00 instead of £24.00. There is no reduction on the airmail rate. The magazine includes papers and articles on a wealth of subjects of interest to birdwatchers all over the world and is thoroughly recommended.

For further details see the enclosed leaflet or contact Mrs Erika Sharrock, Fountains, Park Lane, Blunham, Bedford MK44 3NJ.

TURKISH BIRD REPORT: NOTES FOR CONTRIBUTORS

Simon Harrap and Rod Martins

The publication of the four Turkish Bird Reports covering the period 1966-75 (with the fifth, for 1976-81, in press), has not only marked a

qualitative leap in our knowledge of the Turkish avifauna, but also served to highlight the gaps that remain. Our understanding of the status and distribution of many species remains incomplete and new discoveries which radically alter our understanding of the distribution of scarcer species continue to be made. These gaps are of special concern when they involve threatened species or, as is increasingly the case, threatened habitats. None of these reports is currently available and it therefore seems appropriate to point out those species for which information is particularly sought, not only for the period 1982-86 to be covered in the next report, but also of any previously unsubmitted observations. At the same time, there are a number of species which continually cause problems of record assessment, often contributing to a vague and unsatisfactory picture of their Turkish distribution. Some observers seem unaware of the potential pitfalls and do not address the problem of identification with the rigour necessary to produce a fully documented record.

The following list is therefore keyed to four categories:

RD Red Data Book and Candidate Red Data Book Species.

These 20 species are considered to be threatened on a global basis and are either included in King (1978-79) or are candidates for treatment as threatened in the proposed Europe and Asia volume of the ICBP/INCN Red Data Book.

V Vulnerable Species in Europe

111 of the species described by ICBP as vulnerable in Europe (which, for this purpose, includes Turkey) occur in Turkey. A selection of these have been listed, mostly those with limited and/or threatened populations in Turkey. It should be noted that most birds of prey and many species associated with wetland habitats have been excluded. These are, as a group, subject to threat and all information is required. With regard to wetlands, observers are encouraged to complete OSME Sites Register forms (only six Turkish sites have had completed forms submitted so far).

U Status Uncertain

This includes all species categorised as 'status uncertain' in the 1976-81 report or, if they are not given full treatment there, in the 1974-75 report. It also includes those species that have only recently been discovered in Turkey, but may be assumed to occur regularly.

I Identification problematic

Species in this category have all caused problems in the past and observers are asked to take special care, both in the field and when writing-up their observations. In general, written evidence will greatly assist the process of record assessment and in some cases will be essential. This need not be a full description, but should indicate that observers are aware of the pitfalls and that diagnostic features have been observed. (NB This list does not include rarities for which detailed descriptions will always be required.)

Some species may fit into more than one category, and in such cases the symbols are given in the approximate order of importance.

Black-throated Diver <u>Gavia arctica</u>	V
Cormorant <u>Phalacrocorax carbo</u>	U,V
Pygmy Cormorant <u>P. pygmeus</u>	RD
White Pelican <u>Pelecanus onocrotalus</u>	V
Dalmatian Pelican <u>P. crispus</u>	RD
Bittern <u>Botaurus stellaris</u>	V
Cattle Egret <u>Bubulcus ibis</u>	U
White Stork <u>Ciconia ciconia</u>	RD
Bald Ibis <u>Geronticus eremita</u>	RD
Red-breasted Goose <u>Branta ruficollis</u>	RD
Marbled Duck <u>Marmaronetta angustirostris</u>	RD
White-headed Duck <u>Oxyura leucocephala</u>	RD

Red Kite <u>Milvus milvus</u>	RD, I
White-tailed Eagle <u>Haliaeetus albicilla</u>	RD
Lammergeier <u>Gypaetus barbatus</u>	RD
Black Vulture <u>Aegypius monachus</u>	RD
Goshawk <u>Accipiter gentilis</u>	U, I
Sparrowhawk <u>A. nisus</u>	U, I
Levant Sparrowhawk <u>A. brevipes</u>	U, I, V
Long-legged Buzzard <u>Buteo rufinus</u>	I, V
Spotted Eagle <u>Aquila clanga</u>	V, I
Imperial Eagle <u>A. heliaca</u>	V
Bonelli's Eagle <u>Hieraaetus fasciatus</u>	U, I, V
Osprey <u>Pandion haliaetus</u>	V
Eleonora's Falcon <u>Falco eleonorae</u>	U, I, V
Lanner <u>F. biarmicus</u>	U, I, V
Saker <u>F. cherrug</u>	I, V
Peregrine <u>F. peregrinus</u>	RD, U
Caucasian Black Grouse <u>Tetrao mlokosiewiczii</u>	RD
Caspian Snowcock <u>Tetraogallus caspius</u>	U
Black Francolin <u>Francolinus francolinus</u>	V
Pheasant <u>Phasianus colchicus</u>	U
Spotted Crake <u>Porzana porzana</u>	U, V
Little Crake <u>P. parva</u>	U, I, V
Baillon's Crake <u>P. pusilla</u>	U, I, V
Corncrake <u>Crex crex</u>	RD, U
Purple Gallinule <u>Porphyrio porphyrio</u>	V?
Demoiselle Crane <u>Anthropoides virgo</u>	RD
Little Bustard <u>Tetrax tetrax</u>	RD, U
Great Bustard <u>Otis tarda</u>	RD
Cream-coloured Courser <u>Cursorius cursor</u>	V
Black-winged Pratincole <u>Glareola nordmanni</u>	I, V
Red-wattled Plover <u>Hoplopterus indicus</u>	U
Sociable Plover <u>Chettusia gregaria</u>	RD
White-tailed Plover <u>C. leucura</u>	U

Jack Snipe <u>Lymnocyptes minimus</u>	U
Great Snipe <u>Gallinago media</u>	I, U, V
Slender-billed Curlew <u>Numenius tenuirostris</u>	RD
Audouin's Gull <u>Larus audouinii</u>	RD
Lesser Black-backed Gull <u>L. fuscus</u>	I
Herring Gull <u>L. argentatus/cachinnans</u> (including Armenian Gull ' <u>L. armenicus</u> ')	I
White-winged Black Tern <u>Chlidonias leucopterus</u>	U, V
Pin-tailed Sandgrouse <u>Pterocles alchata</u>	U, V
Barn Owl <u>Tyto alba</u>	U
Striated Scops Owl <u>Otus brucei</u>	U
Eagle Owl <u>Bubo bubo</u>	U, V
Brown Fish Owl <u>Ketupa zeylonensis</u>	U ?
Tawny Owl <u>Strix aluco</u>	U
Long-eared Owl <u>Asio otus</u>	U
Tengmalm's Owl <u>Aegolius funereus</u>	U
Pallid Swift <u>Apus pallidus</u>	U, I
Kingfisher <u>Alcedo atthis</u>	U, V
Blue-cheeked Bee-eater <u>Merops superciliosus</u>	I, V
Wryneck <u>Jynx torquilla</u>	U
Great Spotted Woodpecker <u>Dendrocopos major</u>	U
White-backed Woodpecker <u>D. leucotos</u>	U, V
Lesser Spotted Woodpecker <u>D. minor</u>	U
Desert Lark <u>Ammomanes deserti</u>	U
Sand Martin <u>Riparia riparia</u>	U
Rock Pipit <u>Anthus petrosus</u> (as distinct from Water Pipit <u>A. spinoletta</u>)	U
Citrine Wagtail <u>Montacilla citreola</u>	U
Radde's Accentor <u>Prunella ocularis</u>	U
Alpine Accentor <u>P. collaris</u>	U
Thrush Nightingale <u>Luscinia luscinia</u>	I
*Güldenstädt's Redstart <u>Phoenicurus erythrogaster</u>	U ?
Pied Wheatear <u>Oenanthe pleschanka</u>	I

Red-tailed Wheatear <u>O. xanthopyrna</u>	U
River Warbler <u>Locustella fluviatilis</u>	U
Savi's Warbler <u>L. luscinioides</u>	U
Moustached Warbler <u>Acrocephalus melanopogon</u>	U, I, V
Sedge Warbler <u>A. schoenobaenus</u>	U, I
Marsh Warbler <u>A. palustris</u>	U, I
Upcher's Warbler <u>Hippolais languida</u>	I
Garden Warbler <u>Sylvia borin</u>	U
Green Warbler <u>Phylloscopus nitidus</u>	U ?, I
Mountain Chiffchaff <u>P. sindianus</u>	U, I
Chiffchaff <u>P. collybita</u>	U, I
Spotted Flycatcher <u>Muscicapa striata</u>	U
Red-breasted Flycatcher <u>Ficedula parva</u>	U?, V
Semi-collared Flycatcher <u>F. semitorquata</u>	U, I, V
Collared Flycatcher <u>F. albicollis</u>	U, I, V
Pied Flycatcher <u>F. hypoleuca</u>	U, I
Great Rock Nuthatch <u>Sitta tephronota</u>	I, U?
Rock Nuthatch <u>S. neumayer</u>	I, U
Wallcreeper <u>Tichodroma muraria</u>	U
Treecreeper <u>Certhia familiaris</u>	I
Short-toed Treecreeper <u>C. brachydactyla</u>	U, I
Great Grey Shrike <u>Lanius excubitor</u>	I
Rose-coloured Starling <u>Sturnus roseus</u>	U
Tree Sparrow <u>Passer montanus</u>	U
Yellow-throated Sparrow <u>Petronia xanthocollis</u>	U
Yellowhammer <u>Emberiza citrinella</u>	U
Cinereous Bunting <u>E. cineracea</u>	U

*Recently claimed but no substantiated records.

The length of the list indicates the amount of work that still needs to be done, even in such a comparatively well-known country. It must be emphasised however, that records, especially those relating to breeding, are requested for all species. Our knowledge of the exact

breeding distribution of many birds in Turkey is seriously incomplete or absent for many regions. Most observers fail to take even the simplest notes relating to details of breeding behaviour observed. Such details would for example, enable migrants to be distinguished with certainty from locally breeding individuals of the same species.

We would like to thank Richard Grimmett of the ICBP for help in the compilation of the list of threatened species.

Reference

King, W. B. (1978-79) Red Data Book, 2:Aves. 2nd Edition. IUCN, Morges.

Simon Harrap

Rod Martins

for the Turkish Bird Report Editorial Committee c/o OSME.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to thank Mike Hodgson for his cover illustration of Bald Ibis Geronticus eremita.



The Ornithological Society of the Middle East was formed in April 1978 and is a successor to the Ornithological Society of Turkey.

Aims

1. To collect, collate and publish ornithological data on the birds of the Middle East.
2. To encourage an interest in and conservation of the birds of the Middle East.
3. To develop a mutually beneficial working relationship with all environmental and conservation bodies and natural history societies in and concerned with the Middle East.

Membership is open to all and spans over 40 countries.

Publications Sandgrouse is the annual journal of the Society and contains scientific papers on all aspects of the ornithology of the Middle East. A bulletin is also issued bi-annually to all members.

For further details and current subscription rates, write to: The Secretary, OSME, c/o The Lodge, Sandy, Beds, SG19 2DL, England.

