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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 15 August 1988.

Illustrations

We are grateful to the following artists for the illustrations used in this bulletin:

S. M. Andrews: Striated Scops Owl (cover), Red-wattled Lapwing (p.15), Bald Ibis (p.26) and Arabian Bustard (p.59).

M. G. Hodgson: Crab Plover (p.5).

P. J. Powell: Desert Lark (p.16).

DJIBOUTI III - PRELIMINARY REPORT

Geoff and Hilary Welch

Our third Djibouti expedition monitored the autumn migration of raptors across the Bab-el-Mandeb straits from Arabia into Africa between 3 October - 9 November 1987. The team of seven observers, five British and two Dutch, were based initially at Ras Siyan and later at Moulhoulé on the north-east coast of Djibouti. As winds were predominantly south-east throughout the count period, the movement of raptors was concentrated in the region of Doumeira on the Djibouti-Ethiopia border.

During the period 246,478 birds of prey were noted, the principal species being Steppe Buzzard Buteo buteo vulpinus and Steppe Eagle Aquila nipalensis with over 100,000 of each. In total 26 species of migrant raptor were noted including three new to Djibouti - Griffon Vulture Gyps fulvus, Lesser Spotted Eagle Aquila pomarina and Red-footed Falcon Falco vespertinus. Other notable counts were 554 Egyptian Vultures Neophron percnopterus, 1,202 Short-toed Eagles Circus gallicus, 2,135 Sparrowhawks Accipiter nisus, 131 Long-legged Buzzards Buteo rufinus and 70 Imperial Eagles Aquila heliaca.

Besides the raptors good numbers of migrant storks, bee-eaters, waders and seabirds were observed, and, in addition to the raptors mentioned above, we added a further four species to the growing Djibouti list - Crane Grus grus, African Spoonbill Platalea alba, Alpine Swift Apus melba and Socotra Cormorant Phalacrocorax nigrogularis.

In addition to documenting this spectacular migration the project had a strong educational element. Following the interest in migration expressed by the Djiboutiens during our spring 1987 visit, (to deliver the Djibouti II Report - see OSME Bulletin 19), invitations were issued to people in Djibouti city to visit our camp and observe the migration for themselves. Despite the difficulties in reaching the north-east coast, c.100 people came, both French and Djiboutien, and all were duly impressed. At the end of October, two student teachers from the Ecole Normale joined us for two days and on our final evening in Djibouti, Hilary was interviewed by Djibouti television and then went on to give a talk about our work to an audience of over 100 at the Ecole Normale. Hopefully this increasing interest in birds will lead to a greater awareness of the need for conservation in Djibouti as a whole.

A paper giving fuller details of the raptor migration is in preparation for Sandgrouse 10 and an expedition report will be available from ourselves in due course.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all the people and organisations who supported this project, especially our main sponsors - OSME, Fauna and Flora Preservation Society, United States Fish and Wildlife Service, Royal Society for the Protection of

Birds, Raptor Research Foundation Leslie Brown Memorial Award, International Council for Bird Preservation (International and French sections), Israel Raptor Information Center, Eagle Star Insurance, P.J. Thory, Bollihope Management Limited and, in Djibouti, the Institut Supérieur d'Etudes et de Recherches Scientifiques et Techniques, Gellatly Hankey and Ets Marill.

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WADERS AND WATERFOWL IN SOUTHERN TURKEY, SPRING 1987

Tom van der Have and Vincent van den Berk

The lagoons between Tarsus and Yumurtalik in the Gulf of Iskenderun, south of Adana, form the largest coastal wetland in Turkey. The fertile soil of the Adana plain with its vast cotton fields is divided by the rivers Berdan, Seyhan and Ceyhan and fringed with approximately 600 sq km of lagoons, sand dunes and salt marshes. Although this area is known for good numbers of wintering waterfowl (Dijksen and Wolf 1987), a short visit in spring 1986 showed it to be an important staging area for waders too.

The imminent hunting and agricultural pressure on this area prompted a more thorough survey, which was carried out in the spring of 1987 (OSME Bull. 18: 33-34). A team of twelve Dutch and three Turkish ornithologists spent three months in different groups in these deltas, with the base camp in the Omer Golu region near Yumurtalik. This proved to be a wise choice as this region had never been censused thoroughly, and much larger numbers of waders than expected were present during the spring.

The importance of these deltas for migrating waders and waterfowl was the central issue of this project, and we also hoped to learn more about how the Mid-Eurasian Flyway is related to the well studied East Atlantic Flyway. Additionally, a migration profile was established for passerines with the help of mist netting. Some 1,650 birds of 62 species were ringed including over 250 waders. The colour marking of Little Stints Calidris minuta was very successful and a turnover rate could be estimated. This indicated that, although the maximum number of Little Stints counted in the whole study area was 9,350, something between 70,000 and 95,000 birds possibly used the Cukurova deltas as staging area during the whole study period.

Although only 29 Dunlin Calidris alpina were caught, one (the very first!) was subsequently retrapped at the mouth of the Vistula in Poland on 4 August 1987. This recovery (as far as we know the first of a Turkish ringed Dunlin) confirmed the existence of a loop-migration in the eastern populations of the Dunlin: in autumn they migrate through Europe, winter in the Eastern Mediterranean and

return in spring through Turkey and Russia to their breeding grounds in Siberia.

Forty wader species were observed, including Great Snipe Gallinago media, White-tailed Plover Vanellus leucurus, 81 Greater Sand Plovers Charadrius leschenaultii and 123 Broad-billed Sandpipers Limicola falcinellus. The Kentish Plover Charadrius alexandrinus was the most numerous breeding wader with more than 2,000 pairs together with good numbers of Spur-winged Plovers Hoplopterus spinosus, Collared Pratincoles Glareola pratincola and Black-winged Stilts Himantopus himantopus. Interesting breeding birds were Marbled Duck Marmaronetta angustirostris, Black Francolin Francolinus francolinus and White-breasted Kingfisher Halcyon smyrnensis.

In the summer of 1987 the local government of Yumurtalik decided to protect some 9,500ha of the Yumurtalik Lagoons. Hunting has been banned from Akyatan Golu since 1986 (6,000ha), although this ban is variable in effect.

This project was organised with the help of the DDKD (The Turkish Society for the Protection of Wildlife) and funded by the Beijerinck-Popping Foundation, the Dutch Ministry of Agriculture and Fishery, World Wildlife Fund (Dutch Section), IWRB, OSME, L. Hoffmann, Royal Sluis and Friedrich Europe BV. The Turkish Forestry Service was of vital help and repeatedly offered hospitality, as were the local fishermen of Deveciusagi.

Two follow-up projects were launched in the spring of 1988, and will concentrate on Central Anatolia. A full report on the results of the South Turkey Project will appear in spring 1988.

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SELECTED SPRING OBSERVATIONS FROM THE SUEZ CANAL AND THE GULF OF SUEZ

Mike Everett

From 7 to 23 March 1988 I was RSPB Ornithologist on a Swan Hellenic Cruise on board MTS "Orpheus": the cruising area was the eastern Mediterranean and the Gulfs of Suez and Aqaba, with assorted shore trips, including to Sinai, Jordan and Egypt.

During 10 March, the Mediterranean north of Egypt was singularly birdless until a single Arctic Skua Stercorarius parasiticus was seen about 50 miles out from Port Said. Thereafter, until we docked

at Port Said in the late afternoon, many more birds were seen, the most notable being seven more Arctic Skuas and two single Gannets Sula bassana (one of the latter a full adult). Just outside Port Said, an all-dark shearwater joined the large tail of Black-headed Gulls Larus ridibundus behind the ship, twice passing very close under the stern and giving superb views: it was a Wedge-tailed Shearwater Puffinus pacificus, apparently the first recorded in the Mediterranean and (subject to confirmation) perhaps also the first for the Western Palearctic. A more detailed account of this extraordinary record will appear in Sandgrouse in due course.

Having entered the Suez Canal after midnight, we had almost reached the Great Bitter Lakes by dawn on 11 March. After an enforced five-hour wait in the Lakes, we completed the Canal passage during the afternoon, arriving at Suez towards dusk. We were too late to encounter any raptor passage over Suez and the only migrants seen during the day, all flying north along the Canal, were two Ospreys Pandion haliaetus, a Marsh Harrier Circus aeruginosus and a ringtail which was probably Montagu's Harrier C. pygargus. A strong northward passage of gulls was evident throughout the day. Black-headed Gulls were easily the most numerous species, but both yellow-legged Herring Gulls Larus argentatus and Lesser Black-backed Gulls L. fuscus were frequent, in a ratio of roughly 2:1. (The two larger species were more or less equally represented at Port Said, but later observations in the Gulf of Suez showed Lesser Black-backs to be commoner there than Herring Gulls.) A pale-backed Herring Gull with pink legs was seen on a marker buoy north of the Great Bitter Lakes, while at least 10 adult "Armenian" Gulls L. a. armenicus fed around the ship while it was at anchor in the Lakes.

Other birds moving north up the Canal included two Arctic Skuas (together), small numbers of Slender-billed Gulls L. genei and quite a lot of Sandwich Terns Sterna sandvicensis - but the star birds were the Great Black-headed Gulls Larus ichthyaetus, with 84 seen in all, over half of them adults in full breeding plumage.

15 March was spent at Safaga, on the Egyptian coast at the foot of the Gulf of Suez - an unprepossessing spot, but rich in assorted migrants, including Quail Coturnix coturnix and Cretzschmar's Bunting Emberiza caesia. The importance of vegetation cover was amply demonstrated by 12 Turtle Doves Streptopelia turtur and a Bluethroat Luscinia svecica in a small garden and a Black-headed Wagtail Motacilla flava and a Chiffchaff Phylloscopus collybita in what was little more than a window-box! A Brown Booby Sula leucogaster fished in the harbour for much of the day, while afternoon roosts of two other species there, Slender-billed Gulls and White-eyed Gulls Larus leucophthalmus, built up to 40+ and 70+ respectively. Four Arctic Skuas flew north, together.

A few White-eyed Gulls were seen as we sailed north to Suez on 17 March, but the highlight of this day came as we passed Gebe! el

Zeit, a high ridge on the Egyptian coast already known as a stepping-off point for migrant raptors crossing to Sinai (OSME Bull. 11: 8). About 20 Steppe Eagles Aquila nipalensis and at least 15 Steppe Buzzards Buteo buteo were circling over the ridge, while a total of some 1,300 White Storks Ciconia ciconia, in two flocks (one of which was accompanied by a Black Stork C. nigra) flew north-east across the Gulf to Sinai.

Finally, a count of 80 House Crows Corvus splendens in Port Tewfik/Suez on 18 March is worthy of mention.

Over 150 species were seen during this cruise. A full annotated list is available to anyone who is interested: write to me at the RSPB enclosing an A4 SAE or an 18p stamp.

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OBSERVATIONS ON THE BEHAVIOUR OF THE CRAB PLOVER

Mike Evans

The breeding range of the Crab Plover Dromas ardeola lies mostly within the area covered by OSME, yet little has been published concerning its biology, especially heterosexual behaviour (Cramp and Simmons 1983), and thus it seems worth recording the following observations made in the Yemen Arab Republic during 13-15 April 1986 at a lagoon 3km south of the fishing village of Al 'Urj (15°08'N 42°52'E).

The lagoon is sheltered from the sea by a bank of shell-sand and contains within it a small area of mangrove. Seawater floods the lagoon with each tide and drains out via a main channel onto an extensive area of intertidal mudflats. During 13-15 April I located a minimum of 166 Crab Plovers on these mudflats; most birds appeared to be paired and, interspersed between feeding activity, noisy display between members of pairs was frequently observed.



Pair display involved one bird running up to its mate whilst calling. Sometimes it would be ignored but usually both would then stand side-by-side, facing in towards each other slightly and standing as if on tiptoe with necks extended, whilst both called with a loud, raucous cackling. During this calling the birds' visibly-opened bills, held slightly below the horizontal, were repeatedly touched together; it often appeared as if each bird was trying to place its opened bill, or one of its mandibles, in between

its partner's open bill. Sometimes a third bird, presumably an unattached male, would approach a pair and attempt to initiate this display with one of them, presumably the female (both whilst the pair themselves were displaying or while they were engaged in feeding separately). In these instances the "female's" mate would bow low in (presumed) threat posture and would rush towards the intruder, chasing it to a distance of 5-10 metres away; all this would be accompanied by much calling. This threat posture is similar to a description of that used by adults against food-soliciting juveniles (Cramp and Simmons 1983).

Other instances of heterosexual behaviour included an occasion when one bird of a pair caught a small crab, leading its mate to 'laugh-call' and approach it in a crouched, begging posture similar to that adopted by juveniles soliciting food from adults (pers. obs.); however the bird with the crab ignored its mate and devoured its prey. On another occasion two birds in a group of c.30 Crab Plovers in an evening high-tide wader roost were seen to copulate, the act lasting at least 25 seconds; the preliminaries to this event were not observed however.

Aggressive behaviour was also noted in the aforementioned high-tide roost of Crab Plovers. Birds were generally less than two metres apart, and most appeared to be paired. This closely-packed flock was never quiet for very long; initial, small squabbles and chases between a couple of birds would cause neighbouring birds to shift positions and similar disputes to arise, precipitating mass disruption of the flock and a frenzy of calling before the flock settled again. The most serious aggressive encounter observed was when one bird doggedly chased another in and around the flock for 10-15 seconds, ignoring the pecks of other birds, before managing to grasp its quarry's tail. It then proceeded to drag its struggling victim backwards through a large, 20-30cm deep pool. Calling from both birds was intense; the victim repeatedly lost its balance and fell flopping in the water. It was eventually released after c.60-90 seconds of this behaviour, exhausted and bedraggled. Although I did not observe what factors initiated these aggressive encounters, the intensity of aggression shown in some instances, eg that described above, suggests that mate-guarding was involved rather than mere defence of 'individual distance' within the roosting flock. In addition, there does not appear to be much, if any, aggression between roosting adults in the non-breeding season, even though flocks are similarly dense (Cramp and Simmons 1983; pers. obs.).

Overall it appears that most of these birds in mid-April were still in the process of pair-formation. On a later visit to this same site on 10 June 1986 I found at least 48 Crab Plovers of which most were obviously paired, but no pair-display or aggressive encounters were seen over the three-hour period of observation, suggesting that pair-formation was complete.

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ORNITHOLOGICAL OBSERVATIONS AT SEA AROUND ARABIA

W.R.P. Bourne

It does not appear to be generally realised what extensive observations have been made of birds in Arabian seas. They start in 1839 with a survey of the guano deposited on the Kuria Muria Islands by the birds exploiting the upwelling off south-east Arabia during the south-west monsoon (Bailey 1966), and there have been many subsequent reports on the other seabird breeding stations (Gallagher et al 1984). Conditions in the winter and further up the Persian or Arabian Gulf, subsequently referred to as "the Gulf", have been described by R.O. Morris (1969) and P.W.G. Chilman (1982, Smith 1970) among others. Observations of migration were started at the Egyptian lighthouses before World War I (Ticehurst 1924, Meinertzhagen 1924), and at sea soon afterwards (Alexander 1929, 1931; R.E. Moreau 1938).

Since the 1950s the (British) Royal Naval Bird-watching Society (RNBWS) have regularly summarised their observations in their annual report Sea Swallow (SS). There are now thousands of records of seabirds and about 600 reports of migrant landbirds, usually individuals, occasionally "falls" of dozens, and exceptionally passages of hundreds at bottlenecks for migrations such as the Gulf of Suez, Straits of Bab el Mandeb and Hormuz, and the head of the Gulf. They include 99 records of wheatear sp., 51 of falcons, 46 of wagtails, 43 of swallows, 41 of warblers, 28 of herons, 27 of doves and 24 of bee-eaters. The commonest species include 41 Common Wheatears O. oenanthe (probably often misidentified?) and 33 Hoopoes Upupa epops (possibly more reliable?). Some representative highlights include:

On 18 March 1954 G.S. Willis reported over 100 (probable White) Pelicans Pelecanus (crispus?) and large numbers of Lesser Black-backed Gulls Larus fuscus resting in Suez Bay on their northward migration (SS 8: 9-10).

In February-March 1955 the crew of the survey vessel HMS Owen recorded that off the United Arab Emirates colonies of Socotra Cormorants Phalacrocorax nigrogularis were hatching on the south-east aspect of the summits of the islands, that there were also two Osprey Pandion haliaetus nests on J. Quarnain, and that a Lesser Frigatebird Fregata ariel came on board in late March (SS 19: 77-78).

On 17 September 1957 J.S. Landers saw a Cape Pigeon Daption capense at 18°N 57.7°E south of Ras Madraka, Oman, and hundreds of Sooty (or Aden) Gulls Larus hemprichi going to roost on the Kuria Muria islands at sunset (SS 10: 13).

In the spring of 1961 W.L. Fiskien reported that 40-50 "red kites" (Milvus sp.?) which could have come abroad at Bab el Mandeb remained overnight at 16.4°N 41.2°E in the south Red Sea on 21 April, P.P.O. Harrison saw over 100 large raptors, possibly also kites, strung out across the mouth of the Gulf of Suez on 5 May, and R.P. de R. Openshaw saw "thousands" of "sparrowhawks" (Accipiter sp.?) flying north-east at 20-150ft there six days later (SS 14: 39).

In early April 1962 Lt. M.B. Casement saw 5-10,000 White Storks Ciconia ciconia moving north across the mouth of the Gulf of Suez (SS 15: 29). Third Officer P.A. Brown also reported three groups of about 5,000 White Storks spread over ten miles moving north into a north-west Force 5 wind at 28.0°N 33.5°E here on 15 April 1965 (SS 18: 46), and Captain D.M. Simpson 500 White Storks spread over half a mile flying north-east at wave height at 28.2°N 33.3°E on 8 April 1985 (SS 35: 54).

On 30 August 1965 D. Stam reported that one Spotted Crake P. porzana, one Little Crake P. parva, one Turtle Dove Streptopelia turtur, five Hoopoes, two Yellow Wagtails Motacilla flava, one Nightingale Luscinia megarhyncha, one Bluethroat L. svecica, one Common Wheatear, one Reed Warbler Acrocephalus scirpaceus, one Great Reed Warbler A. arundinaceus, one Lesser Whitethroat Sylvia curruca, two Garden Warblers S. borin, one Icterine Warbler Hippolais icterina, four Red-backed Shrikes Lanius collurio and one Woodchat Shrike L. senator arrived and remained until after dark at 29.5°N 49.5°E in the northern Gulf (SS 18: 46).

On 15 September 1977 Engineer S.J. Hingston saw 9-11 Lesser Kestrels Falco naumanni (five roosted overnight), one Sand Martin R. riparia at 15.30 rising to over 200 at 17.30, Nightingales, 10-12 Common Wheatears, over 20 Isabelline Wheatears O. isabellina, four Black-eared Wheatears O. hispanica, Pied Wheatears O. pleschanka, Lesser Whitethroats, Whitethroats Sylvia communis, Wood Warblers Phylloscopus sibilatrix, Common Babblers Turdoides caudatus, Red-backed Shrikes and Lesser Grey Shrikes Lanius minor between 08.30-20.00 hours at 29.7°N 49.9°E in the northern Gulf (SS 28: 39).

Captain P.W.G. Chilman first noticed flocks of 500+, 100+, 50+, and smaller groups of Pallid Swifts Apus pallidus flying north-north-west from the Musandam Peninsula, Oman, towards the Quoin islands in the Strait of Hormuz on 25 March 1974 (SS 24: 58). When he was approaching this area again with a Force 8 dropping to Force 5 west wind on 31 March 1979 he saw another flock of 200 birds fly west-north-west at 26.5°N 56.6°W at 16.43 hours, followed by at least

10,000 mainly in flocks of about 200 before it got dark at 18.30. When he anchored and then berthed at Kharg Island at the head of the Gulf during 4-7 April he also saw at least another 161 landbird migrants of 35 species (Chilman 1982).

On 3 October 1980 SS British Pioneer reported to the British Meteorological Office that several hundred, possibly over a thousand, raptors about the size of buzzards or small eagles were seen flying west in small groups at 0-500ft at 12°40'N 43°18'E near the Strait of Bab el Mandeb (SS 32: 35).

During the period 14 July-1 November 1985 D.M. Simpson, A. Carney and N. Drummond reported 288 notable birds of 89 species at the Zuluf and Marjaf oilfields at 28°15'-25'N 49°14'-40'E off east Saudi Arabia, without enumerating the commoner ones, of which the most remarkable were single probable Cory's Shearwaters Calonectris diomedea on 19 and 30 August; P. Meeth has also reported another in the Great Bitter Lake when passing through the Suez Canal on 22 September 1986 (SS 36: 15-19, 38). Together with the earlier report of a Cape Pigeon these last records reinforce growing evidence, notably from Somalia (Ash 1983) and Eilat (Jennings 1985), that a variety of stray southern, Atlantic and Pacific seabirds may sometimes either drift north across the equator into the Arabian Sea with the south-west monsoon, or attempt an abnormal northward migration from the Indian Ocean.

During November 1987-February 1988 I spent a three-month tour as a ship's surgeon with a support vessel for the Armilla Patrol which escorts merchant shipping through the Strait of Hormuz to supplement Roger Bailey's survey of the seabirds frequenting the Arabian Sea during the south-west monsoon in the 1960s (quoted above) with observations inshore during the opposite season of the year. It would be premature to say much about what has been seen yet, except that there has been surprisingly little oil pollution and a scandalous amount of floating rubbish, but it may be useful to list the main new observations of faunistic importance.

In addition to the Yellow-legged Herring Gulls L. (argentatus?) cachinnans wintering commonly around the Gulf coast the Armenian Gull L. (a.?) armenicus, discussed by Hume (1983) and Bundy (1986), was sometimes the commonest large gull out at sea, and was also the main form seen along the Suez Canal on the way home. Immature Brown-headed Gulls Larus brunicephalus were also seen among the numerous Black-headed Gulls L. ridibundus feeding some 30 miles out at sea north of Qatar on 25 November 1987, off Muscat on 6 January 1988, off Fujairah on 26 January, and in Port Rasnid, Dubai on 3 February, and an Indian Skimmer Rhynchops albicollis was also seen at Kalba on 15 January. Grey Phalaropes Phalaropus fulicarius were also seen among the innumerable Red-necked Phalaropes P. lobatus wintering in the Gulf of Oman on 2 January and 5 February, and a Plain Nightjar Caprimulgus inornatus came on board 25 miles off the Kuria Muria Islands on 10 November.

I am indebted to the late Captain G.S. Tuck who started to collect the RNBWS reports, Commander Michael Casement and Stephen Chapman who have also collated them, and Roger Bailey and Michael Gallagher who have shared my interest in them; we would be interested to hear of other observations.

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SELECTED BIRD OBSERVATIONS FROM TURKEY: SPRING AND SUMMER 1983

Rod Martins and Craig Robson

From 17 May to 13 July we travelled extensively in Turkey. We were accompanied by Chris Murphy during most of this period. This note documents observations of 72 species which, based on an examination of previous Turkish Bird Reports (published by OST/OSME), we feel are worth recording. Included are records of three species; Red-wattled Lapwing Hoplopterus indicus, Striated Scops Owl Otus brucei and Desert Lark Ammomanes deserti for which there are no previous published records from Turkey. With the exception of Striated Scops Owl - first discovered by S. Gysel and other Swiss birdwatchers in 1982 - these records are the first known occurrence in the country.

Also included are records of scarcely recorded species, species recorded within areas of Turkey where their known range is supported by few published records (and thus where precise distribution may be unclear) and all relevant records of species listed by Harrap and Martins (1986), for which data are particularly sought for forthcoming Turkish Bird Reports. In the latter case, reasons for selection are given by Harrap and Martins. Some interesting breeding records, particularly of wetland species in the East, are also included. Comments are given where appropriate.

Black-throated Diver Gavia arctica

Two, Lake Van, 18 June (second calendar year birds in non-breeding plumage).

Only the second summer record (the last was at the same locality).

Cormorant Phalacrocorax carbo

Two between Ikisdere and Trabzon, 3 July, c.10 between Ordu and Samsun, 5 July and two, Çavus, 8 July.

Pygmy Cormorant Phalacrocorax pygmeus

One or two, Goksu Delta, 7 June and c.13, Bulanik 25 June.

The latter appears to be the first summer record from the East. It has previously been recorded there as a rare autumn visitor.

White Pelican Pelecanus onocrotalus

Three, Goksu Delta, 7 June, c.500 Bendimahi, 21 June, c.55 Dögubayazit, 23 June and seven Haçli Gölu, 24 June.

Dalmatian Pelican Pelecanus crispus

One (immature), Haçli Gölu, 24 June.

Recorded infrequently from the East.

Cattle Egret Bubulcus ibis

One, Kulu Gölu, 24 May.

Black Stork Ciconia nigra

One, between Midye and Saray, 23 May, two, south of Agri, 23 June and one between Erzurum and Ispir, 29 June.

Bald Ibis Geronticus eremita

c.30 (including 17 young, mostly close to fledging), Biricek, 10 June.

Spoonbill Platalea leucorodia

17, Haçli Gölu, 24 June.

Apparently the first record from the East.

White-fronted Goose Anser albifrons

Two, Biricek, 10-11 June (adult birds, both lacking a few outer primaries on the right wing) and two, Bendimahi, 21 June (both immature birds).

These appear to be the first summer records for Turkey.

Greylag Goose Anser anser

Two, Bendimahi, 21 June and c.70, Haçli Gölu, 24 June (including at least 23 small young).

There are few records from the East, where a detailed picture of this species distribution is still required.

Teal Anas crecca

One female with a single chick, Haçlı Gölü, 24 June.

This is the first confirmation of breeding for the East.

Marbled Duck Marmaronetta angustirostris

Three, Kulu Gölü, 24 May and 15, Goksu Delta, 7 June.

Pochard Aythya ferina

Eight females with young, south Van marsh, 19 June.

This is the first confirmation of breeding for the East.

White-headed Duck Oxyura leucocephala

C.57, Kulu Gölü, 24 May and 22 (including a female with three young) south Van marsh, 18-19 June.

Lammergeier Gypaetus barbatus

One, Demirkazık, 27 May.

Black Vulture Aegypius monachus

Two, near Karaisalı Bucáğı (between Pozanti and Yenice), 30 May.

Goshawk Accipiter gentilis

One, Pozanti, 29 May.

Sparrowhawk Accipiter nisus

One, between Maçka and Sumela, 4 July.

Long-legged Buzzard Buteo rufinus

Single birds unless stated; Çamardı, 28 May, four, Biricek, 10-11 June, between Cizre and Siirt, 16 June, Van, 19 June, two north of Çatak, 20 June, Bendimahı, 21 June, between Çaldıran and Döğubayazıt, 22 June, between Hamur and Tutak, 23 June, Patnos, 23 June, three between Patnos and Malazgirt, 24 June, three between Varto and Erzurum, 28 June and five between Erzurum and Ispir, 29 June.

Bonelli's Eagle Hieraaetus fasciatus

Four, between Cizre and Eruh, 16 June.

Eleonora's Falcon Falco eleonorae

One, Silifke, 30 May.

Saker Falco cherrug

Singles at Biricek, 10 June, between Van and Erçek, 19 June and Patnos 23 June.

Caucasian Black Grouse Tetrao mlokosiewiczzi

Three (males), Sivri Kaya, 2 July.

Caspian Snowcock Tetraogallus caspius

Five, Demirkazik, 27 May and five, Sivri Kaya, 2 July.

Black Francolin Francolinus francolinus

Nine, Cizre, 15 June (calling and display were noted). Previously unrecorded from South-East Turkey.

Grey Partridge Perdix perdix

Two, between Erzurum and Ispir, 29 June.

The second record from the East of this locally distributed species.

Common Crane Grus grus

169 (apparently all non-breeding adults), Bulanik, 26 June.

This is a remarkably large summer concentration.

Demoiselle Crane Anthropoides virgo

Two pairs, Bulanik, 26 June.

Great Bustard Otis tarda

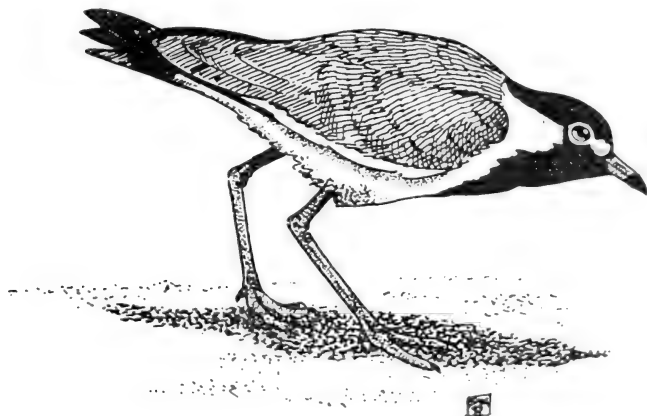
Five (including a female guarding its chick), Çöltepe, 14 June and three, near Patnos (20km along the road to Malazgirt), 24 June.

The breeding record appears to be the first documented for the East.

Red-wattled Lapwing Hoplopterus indicus

One pair (displaying and apparently holding territory), Cizre, 15 June.

This record from the Tigris valley is the first for Turkey.

**Slender-billed Gull** Larus genei

c.60, Kulu Gölü, 24 May.

Audouin's Gull Larus audouinii

One, Tasucu, 6 June and c.12 there on 7 June.

White-winged Black Tern Chlidonias leucopterus

15, Kulu Gölü, 24 May, seven, Goksu Delta 7 June, nine, Bendimahi, 21 June and one, Beysehir Gölü, 6 July.

Records in June are scarce; no evidence of breeding was observed.

Pin-tailed Sandgrouse Pterocles alchata

c.100, Biricek, 10 June and one, Çöltepe, 14 June.

Striated Scops Owl Otus brucei

Two, Biricek, 10-12 June.

Eagle Owl Bubo bubo

One, probably two, Biricek, 10 June. In addition, a feather from this species was found at Çavuş, 8 July.

Long-eared Owl Asio otus

Three (two adults and one fledged young), Biricek, 10 June.

Blue-cheeked Bee-eater Merops superciliosus

At least eight, Biricek, 10 June.

Great Spotted Woodpecker Dendrocopos major

Single birds recorded from Midye, 22 May, between Midye and Saray, 23 May and Ikisdere, 29 June.

Middle Spotted Woodpecker Dendrocopos medius

Single birds recorded from Ikisdere, 30 June and Çavus, 8 July.

White-backed Woodpecker Dendrocopos leucotos

Two, Midye, 22 May.

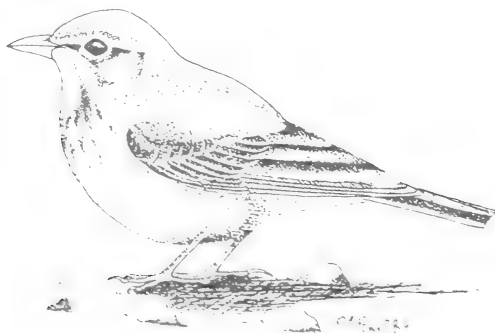
Lesser Spotted Woodpecker Dendrocopos minor

One pair, Çavus, 8 July.

Desert Lark Ammomanes deserti

One pair (singing male) and another one or two (singing male), Biricek, 11 June.

The first Turkish record.

**Citrine Wagtail Motacilla citreola**

Two, Bendimahi, 21 June, one between Çaldıran and Döğubayazıt, 22 June and different singles, Bulanık, 25 and 26 June.

It would seem that this species should no longer be considered a vagrant to Turkey.

Radde's Accentor Prunella ocularis

At least six, and a nest containing four young, Demirkazik, 27 May.

Alpine Accentor Prunella collaris

One, Demirkazik, 27 May and common, Sivri Kaya Köyü, 2 July.

Song Thrush Turdus philomelos

One, Sumela, 4 July.

Few breeding season records from the Black Sea Coastlands.

Fan-tailed Warbler Cisticola juncidis

Two, Priene, 9 July.

Savi's Warbler Locustella luscinioides

Six (singing males), south Van marsh, 18-19 June and seven (singing males), Bulanik, 25 June.

Moustached Warbler Acrocephalus melanopogon

c.39 (including at least 17 singing males), south Van marsh, 18-19 June, two (including one singing male), Bendimahi, 21 June and three, Bulanik, 25 June.

Sedge Warbler Acrocephalus shoenobaenus

At least eight (including five singing males), south Van marsh, 18-19 June, one, near Gevas, Lake Van, 18 June; one (singing male), Bendimahi, 21 June and three, Bulanik, 25 June, with seven (singing males) there on 26 June.

Marsh Warbler Acrocephalus palustris

Two, Midye, 22 May.

Upcher's Warbler Hippolais languida

Four (singing males), Tasucu, 7-8 June, at least 15, Buyuk Araptar, 9 June and one, Biricek, 10 June.

Olive-tree Warbler Hippolais olivetorum

At least three (a pair and one juvenile), Ayvacik, 10 July.

Firecrest Regulus ignicapillus

One (singing male), Sumela, 4 July.

There are few breeding season records from the eastern Black Sea Coastlands.

Red-breasted Flycatcher Ficedula parva

One, Sumela, 4 July.

There are few breeding season records from the eastern Black Sea Coastlands.

Semi-collared Flycatcher Ficedula semitorquata

One, Midye, 22 May and one, Elmaçi, 20 June (both in suitable breeding habitat).

The latter is apparently the first definite record from the highlands of South-East Turkey.

Bearded Tit Panurus biarmicus

Four, south Van marsh, 19 June.

Marsh Tit Parus palustris

Common, Midye, 22 May and one, Sumela, 4 July.

Local and uncommon. There are very few records from the eastern Black Sea Coastlands.

Great Rock Nuthatch Sitta tephronota

Four, Buyuk Araptar, 8 June, with 10 there on 9 June and two or three between Cizre and Eruh, 16 June.

Rock Nuthatch Sitta neumayer

Three, Nigde, 25 May, five, Demirkazik, 27 May, one, Pozanti, 29 May, two, Tasucu, 8 June, five, Buyuk Araptar, 9 June, one between Cizre and Eruh, 16 June, five, Van, 18 June, one between Varto and Erzurum, 28 June, one, Ispir, 29 June, four Akseki, 7 July, one Çavuş, 8 July and two, Priene, 8-9 July.

Wallcreeper Tichodroma muraria

One pair, Demirkazik, 27 May.

Treecreeper Certhia familiaris

Three, Sumela, 4 July.

Short-toed Treecreeper Certhia brachydactyla

Three or four, Midye, 22 May.

Rose-coloured Starling Sturnus roseus

Four, between Çukur Bag and Demirkazik, 26 May, 10, between Urfa and Diyarbakir, 13 June, c.100, between Batman and Midyat, 14 June, c.1,200, between Midyat and Cizre, 15 June, c.200, between Bitlis and Tatwan, 17 June, three, Bendimahi, 21 June, 13, between Döğubayazit and Agri, 23 June, six, between Patnos and Malazgirt, 24 June and three, between Erzurum and Ispir, 29 June.

There was no evidence of breeding.

Tree Sparrow Passer montanus

Single birds, at Nigde, 25 May, Demirkazik, 27 May, Çamardi, 28 May, Çukur Bag, 28 May and two, Ispir, 29 June.

Pale Rock Sparrow Petronia brachydactyla

Seven (including at least two pairs, with singing males), near Idil, 15 June.

The status and distribution of this species in Turkey is unclear and there are marked fluctuations in numbers recorded from year to year; evidence of breeding is seldom noted.

Yellow-throated Sparrow Petronia xanthocollis

One (singing male), Biricek, 10-11 June.

Bullfinch Pyrrhula pyrrhula

Two pairs, Sumela, 4 July.

There are few records from the eastern Black Sea Coastlands.

Hawfinch Coccothraustes coccothraustes

Two, Midye, 22 May.

Cinereous Bunting Emberiza cineracea

At least six (singing males), Büyük Araptar, 9 June.

Appendix: Place names cited in this note and regional divisions of Turkey (as used in the Turkish Bird Report).

Black Sea Coastlands: Ikişdere, Ispir, Maçka, Ordu, Samsun, Sivri Kaya, Sumela, Trabzon.

Thrace: Midye, Saray.

Western Anatolia: Ayvacik, Priene.

Southern Coastlands: Akseki, Beysehir Gölü, Buyuk Araptar, Çamardi, Çavus, Çurkur Bag, Demirkazik, Goksu Delta, Karaisali Bucági, Pozanti, Silifke, Tasucu.

Central Plateau: Kulu Gölü.

South-East: Batman, Biricek, Catak, Cizre, Çöltepe, Diyarbakir, Eruh, Elmaçi, Idil, Midyat, Siirt, Urfa.

East: Agri, Bendimahi, Bitlis, Bulanik, Dögubayazit, Erzurum, Ercek, Hacli Golu, Hamur, Malazgirt, Patnos, Tutak, Van, Varto.

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SOME COMMENTS ON THE ARMENIAN GULL IN TURKEY

Yves Bertault, Philippe J. Dubois and Jean-Yves Frémont

During a trip in Turkey in April 1987, we recorded Armenian Gulls Larus (argentatus) armenicus in the East. On 17 April, five birds were seen at the Deve Geçidi, 20km north-west of Diyarbakir and at least 700 birds were observed on the River Tigris just downstream from Diyarbakir. It was the only species of gull present.

Situated along an axis which runs from the Mediterranean coast of Israel - an important wintering area which was recently discovered (Géroudet 1982, Hume 1983, Dubois 1985) - to Armeny, this site is presumed to be a stop-over point on migration - we know of no evidence of birds being present all year.

Most of the birds were adults or third summer individuals, though a small number of first and second summer birds were also present.

First-summer plumage and soft-part colouration

The first summer Armenian Gulls recalled Yellow-legged Gulls Larus (argentatus) cachinnans though they were smaller with a more slender build. They were also recognisable by the more whitish head, paler and less mottled breast (as suggested by Grant 1986) and the typical presence of greyish on the upperparts, mainly on the back and scapulars (Dubois 1985). The bill was blackish except the extreme tip which was yellowish-white. The legs were dull flesh.

Vocalisations

The vocalisations of the species are poorly known. The calls we heard were similar to Common Gull Larus canus: long whining and squealing notes were uttered, though these were less shrill than those of Common Gull. They were sometimes preceded by a low harsh note recalling Yellow-legged Gull.

Conclusion

These appear to be the westernmost observations in Turkey, excepting a probable immature bird on 1 April 1985 near Birecik (J.C. Beaudoin pers. comm.). It appears that the species is probably not sedentary (contra Hue and Etchécopar 1970, Cramp and Simmons 1982). The recent observations in Israel and the fact that the climate of eastern Turkey is characterised by severe conditions in winter lead us to the opinion that most of the birds breeding in eastern Turkey migrate to wintering grounds further south. Thus, the observations detailed here most likely relate to migrants coming from the south, en route to the breeding grounds and their very active vocalisations support this assumption.

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DESERT BIRDS SEEKING SHELTER BESIDE A VEHICLE

Paul Goriup

Migratory birds crossing deserts may seek respite from adverse weather by settling close to rocks, sitting under bushes or even creeping into artificial shelter provided by all-too-frequent rubbish. Not surprisingly, resident birds will also avail themselves of similar opportunities.

On the morning 10 March 1987, while conducting a survey of Houbara Bustards Chlamydotis undulata for the National Commission for Wildlife Conservation and Development, I was sitting in a stationary vehicle in a shallow wadi in the al Harrah region of north-west Saudi Arabia. Over a period of three hours, the south-westerly wind became increasingly strong, buffeting the vehicle and blowing considerable amounts of sand into the air. I began to notice that small flocks of larks began to make their way deliberately toward the vehicle and land within a few metres of the leeward side, resting, preening and feeding. After ten or 15 minutes, these birds would move on, and soon some more would arrive. Crested Larks Galerida cristata were the most frequent species, but Short-toed Larks Calendrella brachydactyla and Temminck's Horned Larks Eremophila bilopha also appeared occasionally. Swallows Hirundo rustica passed close to the vehicle and a White Wagtail Motacilla alba landed on the windscreen wipers and spent about 20 minutes there, preening and resting, oblivious to my presence inside.

A similar phenomenon occurred on the afternoon of 12 March, when Trumpeter Finches Bucanetes githagineus and Bimaculated Larks Melanocorypha bimaculata (probably the first record for al Harrah) appeared briefly beside the vehicle in addition to the more common species. Unfortunately, stationary vehicles in high winds did not prove effective in attracting Houbara Bustards.

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CATCHING OF COMMON TERNS BY CHILDREN IN EGYPT

Wim C. Mullié

On 19 April 1987 while on a field trip to Lake Manzala with representatives of the Egyptian Wildlife Service, the IWRB and the ICBP we encountered a small group of children along the beach at Port Said holding some live Common Terns Sterna hirundo (see also photograph in World Birdwatch 1987 (9-2): 3). Inspection of their stock revealed that they had ten terns of which some had already died. They informed us that they trapped the terns on the beach using fishing lines with hooks, baited with small fish. According to them approximately 15-20 birds were caught daily and afterwards they tried to sell these birds for £E 0.50-0.75 (US\$ 0.25-0.38) each. They claimed to have started catching about one month earlier, and said that 10-15 more groups of small boys practiced tern catching along the Port Said beach in spring. This latter

statement, however, could not be verified. Upon request, we received two MOSKWA rings of terns trapped a week before. The children claimed to have trapped ringed terns with some frequency in previous years, which was confirmed by some other boys in downtown Port Said.

The trapping of terns by children with small dead fish within fine nooses on the tideline (Allison 1959; Mead 1978) or with baited hooks (P.L. Meininger pers. comm.) is well known from West Africa but is a thusfar unrecorded phenomenon from Egypt. Mullié and Meininger (1983) and Mullié (1988) analysed market sales of waterbirds from Port Said, but never found any evidence of Common Tern catching. This is not so strange, since the market hunting is a commercial enterprise, mainly focusing on waterbirds from the adjacent Lake Manzala. Apparently the children try to make some money from their activities.

According to Goodman and Meininger (1988) the main spring migration of Common Terns in Egypt is between late March and mid June, and even on 4 July 1986 considerable numbers were noticed feeding above the tideline opposite the airport west of Port Said (WCM pers. obs.). Therefore it is not unlikely that catching was continued after the date of our observations.

The origin of the birds remains unknown as no information has been received from the Russian ringing centre.

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MASS MOVEMENTS OF ALPINE SWIFTS

Peter Meininger and Rob Bijlsma

On 13 March 1987 at 16.45 we observed an impressive northward movement of Alpine Swifts Apus melba between Bet She'an and Jericho, on the west bank of the Jordan Valley. During a 15 minute watch at least 10,000 individuals passed by, flying in elongated flocks at an altitude of 50-100m above the ground, apparently following the slope of the hills bordering the Jordan Valley. The birds were actively foraging and called frequently. Several dozen Swifts A. apus were identified in the Alpine Swift flocks. The weather was cold (maximum 10°C), rainy and windy, as it had been the preceding days.

Although the Alpine Swift breeds at several localities in Israel and adjacent areas (Paz 1987), the numbers we observed strongly suggest that these birds were on migration from the African wintering quarters to the Eurasian breeding areas. We are unaware of any published account of such mass movements of Alpine Swifts in the Middle East.

Neither Benson (1970) nor Paz (1987) mention any details on the numbers of this species passing through the Lebanon and Israel, respectively. At Elat, Israel, the Alpine Swift is an uncommon migrant in spring, with a maximum daily count of 55 individuals (Krabbe 1980). In Iraq migrating flocks of 20-30 have been observed in spring (Johnson 1958). Jennings (1981) mentioned records indicating a small passage over Saudi Arabia. In Egypt the species is considered a rare passage and winter visitor; most spring records are from March and April (Goodman and Meininger in press).

Alpine Swifts usually migrate at higher altitudes and in smaller flocks than Swifts (Cramp 1985). It seems likely that large numbers normally cross north-east Africa and the Middle East at altitudes out of viewing distances, accounting for the relatively small numbers seen in Egypt and Saudi Arabia. Unfavourable weather conditions may have forced the birds we observed to lower altitudes, the local topography causing the usually extended flocks to bunch up. Similar concentrations have been noted in Kenya as a result of thunderstorms (Williams and Arlott 1980) and in southern Africa by overcast weather (Prozesky 1970).

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A SWIFT OVER ISTANBUL IN OCTOBER

Walther Thiede

According to the literature most Swifts Apus apus leave Istanbul by mid-August, a few later, as for example in 1892 on 20 August (Mathey-Dupaz 1921). In Turkey Swifts have "all gone by late September" (Orn. Soc. Turkey 1969). The last for the whole of Turkey in 1974 was one at Iskenderun on 29 September (Orn. Soc. Turkey 1978). Porter (1983) describes a similar situation giving nine dates up to 27 September 1966 for Kuçuk Çamlıka, Istanbul.

On 19 October 1985 I saw a Swift flying due east over the Beyoglu quarter of Istanbul at 08.30. No other Swift was seen during my stay (18-20 October) though I had a perfect view over the city from the 19th floor of Etap Marmara Hotel and from other high places in and around Istanbul.

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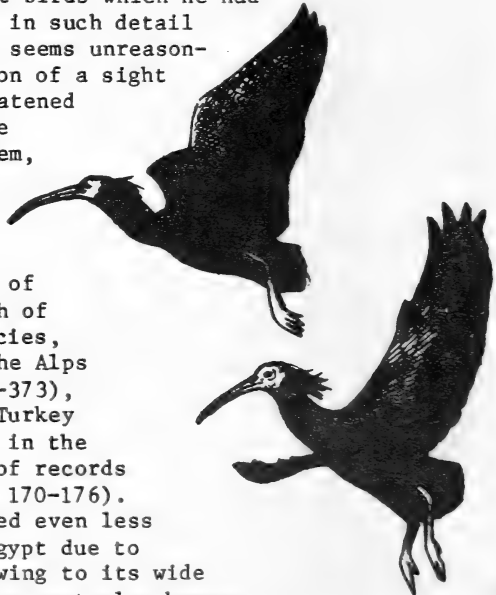
R.E. MOREAU, THE BALD IBIS, AND THE CONSERVATION SITUATION IN ITS WINTER QUARTERS

W.R.P. Bourne

Since H.C. Kyllingstad (OSME Bull. 17: 1-2) when reporting a Bald Ibis Geronticus eremita seen in Sinai still quotes doubts expressed by R.E. Meinertzhagen in Nicoll's Birds of Egypt in 1930 about the only previous modern observation in Egypt by R.E. Moreau on the grounds that the birds were not collected, it may be worth recording that when I sent Reg a report that they had also been seen at Azraq, Jordan, when he was editing the Ibis in the 1950s, he was still able to describe the eight birds which he had seen at Giza in Egypt on 8 May 1921 in such detail that he left no room for doubt. It seems unreasonable to continue citing the rejection of a sight record of an easily-recognised threatened species by a future President of the British Ornithologists' Union (emblem, an ibis...) by such an unreliable authority on such grounds, and high time this record was accepted!

Reg went on to suggest that in view of the recent observation by K.D. Smith of birds wintering in Eritrea this species, which once nested as far north as the Alps (H. Kumerloeve, Biol. Cons. 30: 363-373), must migrate, those which breed in Turkey dispersing south-west across Arabia in the winter, and the developing pattern of records appeared to support this (Ibis 101: 170-176). Unfortunately the conclusion received even less attention than the observation in Egypt due to speculation by Meinertzhagen that owing to its wide distribution on migration the species must also have a wider breeding distribution than was yet known, which resulted in its reaching desperate straits before anyone became concerned about its welfare.

The recent records in North Yemen (OSME Bull. 17: 4, Sandgrouse 9: 12, 115-116) also suggest an additional consideration affecting the conservation of the species which is not discussed either there or in the otherwise excellent review of its status by Nigel Collar and S.N. Stewart in Threatened Birds of Africa and Related Islands (ICBP & IUCN, Cambridge, 1985), since their appearance in southern Arabia may be due to a deterioration of the winter quarters on the far side of the Red Sea as a result of growth of the human population, agricultural development, locust-poisoning campaigns, easier access to firearms, warfare, and droughts, so that the Bald Ibis may now be in need of more protection at both ends of its range.



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Yavin, S. & O. Hochberg (1986). (The Great Tit in the Kinarot Valley.) Tzufit 4: 103-112. (In Hebrew.)

Zachai, G. (1984). (The reproductive biology of the Mourning Wheatear Oenanthe lugens.) Tzufit 2: 44-56. (English summary pp.124-125).

Zatermann, E. (1986). Survey of breeding species: Mt. Hermon, 1982-1983. Tzufit 4: 39-83. (English summary pp. 127-128.)

Zimmerli, E. (1987). Eilat - Sonne, Meer und Vögel. Vögel der Heimat 57: 147-155.

Zoology in the Middle East (1986). Vol. 1. Eds. R. Kinzelbach & M. Kasperek. (M. Kasperek, Bleichstrasse 1, D-6900 Heidelberg, West Germany.)

Journals containing notes on birds, from which individual bird articles have not necessarily been listed:

Bahrain Natural History Society Bird Lists. Currently issued at six-monthly intervals and compiled by T. Nightingale. (BNHS, P. O. Box 20336, Manama, Bahrain.)

Bahrain Natural History Society Newsletter. Short bird notes in most monthly issues. (BNHS, P. O. Box 20336, Manama, Bahrain.)

Cyprus Ornithological Society (1957) Newsletter. Issued monthly. (COS (1957), P. O. Box 4319, Nicosia, Cyprus.)

Emirates Natural History Group (Abu Dhabi) Newsletter. Bird notes in most monthly issues. (ENHG, P. O. Box 303, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates.)

Gazelle - Dubai Natural History Group Newsletter. Bird notes in most monthly issues. (DNHG, P. O. Box 9292, Dubai, United Arab Emirates.)

Oman Bird News. (Oman Bird Records Committee, c/o P. O. Box 246, Muscat, Sultanate of Oman.)

Ornithological Society of North Yemen (later Nature & Ornithological Society of North Yemen) Newsletter. Bird notes in most issues. (New address awaited.)

Phoenix. (A newsletter compiled and distributed by M. C. Jennings for contributors to the Atlas of the breeding birds of Arabia in prep.) (M. C. Jennings, Moonraker Cottage, 1 Eastcourt, Burbage, Marlborough, Wilts.)

FROM THE ARCHIVES

Geoff and Hilary Welch

Among the items added to the Archives in recent months have been:

Ornithological Observations in Iraq by Pavel Ctyroky - a reprint from Beitr. Vogelkd. 33 (1987) 3/4, S 141-204. This paper gives information about birds recorded in Iraq between September 1969 and August 1971. Although largely restricted to the Baghdad region, the author was able to visit the Euphrates valley in the west and some of the mountainous northern areas. The systematic list gives details of 190 species, two of which (Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris* and Lesser Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos minor*) were new to the country. Details of 11 new Iraqi breeding species are also given. The paper is accompanied by a map and 63 black and white plates showing both birds and habitats.

Bird Observations in Canal Zone (Egypt) and Iraq - 1954/55 by R. Norman. These are a fascinating collection of records made by the author when he was stationed with the RAF in the two countries and reflect the difficulties encountered by birdwatchers before the advent and easy availability of the 'modern' field guide. Besides field observations, a small amount of trapping was carried out at one site. (OSME is grateful to R. E. Scott and the RSPB Library for the donation of this item.)

Compte-rendu d'un Voyage Ornithologique en Egypte by P. de Grissac. This is a paper contained in Bulletin 8 of the Groupe Ornithologique de Loire Atlantique (GOLA) and gives details, on a daily basis, of birds observed between 19 February and 1 March 1987. Records relate to a return journey from Cairo to the southern Sinai and out to the Fayoum Oasis and Lake Qarun. The author can be contacted at 10 rue Ogeé, 44000 Nantes, France, whilst GOLA are based at 7 rue de Gigant, 44000 Nantes, France.

Ergebnisse ornithologischer Beobachtungen in der Syrischen Arabischen Republik. Teil 2: Passeriformes (Results of Ornithological Observations in the Syrian Arab Republic Part 2) by W. Baumgart and B. Stephan. This is a reprint from Mitt. Zool. Mus. Berl. 63 (1987) Suppl.: Ann. Orn. 11, 57-95 and follows on from

Part 1 which covered the Non-Passerines. This paper gives details of 117 species including first Syrian breeding records of Herring Gull, Barn Owl, Pallid Swift, Alpine Swift, White Wagtail, Graceful Prinia, Ménétries Warbler, Black Redstart, Finsch's Wheatear, Mourning Wheatear, Blackbird, Masked Shrike, Scrub Warbler and Moustached Warbler (the latter three also being first records for Syria). Details are also given of 18 species which were probable new breeding species and a further 14 species which had not previously been reported as occurring. German text with English summary.

Über Nachweise dunkler Steinschmätzer (Oenanthe) in Nord- und Südost-Europa (On Records of Dark Wheatears (*Oenanthe* spp.) in North and South-east Europe) by G. Mauersberger. Another reprint from Mitt. Zool. Mus. Berl. 63 (1987) Suppl.: Ann. Orn. 11, 143-160 which critically reviews recent extralimital records of black wheatears in Europe. Of the 25 recent records, only nine can reliably be identified to species - six relate to Black Wheatear *O. leucura*, two to White-crowned Black Wheatear *O. leucopyga* and one to Eastern Pied Wheatear *O. picata*. Details are given on distinguishing adult males of the relevant species. German text with English summary.

Dubai Bird Report - October to December 1987 by Colin Richardson. This is a very useful publication based on observations made by members of the Dubai Natural History Group and deals mainly with migrant species. Anyone visiting the Dubai region of the United Arab Emirates is urged to send their records to Mr. Richardson, c/o Dubai Natural History Group, P. O. Box 1576, Dubai, UAE.

Mid-winter Waterfowl Census - Turkey, January 1987 by L. J. Dijkse and P. van der Wolf. This is Study Report 18 in the excellent series produced by the Foundation Working Group International Wader and Waterfowl Research (WIWO). Twenty-eight wetland areas were visited during the census and the numbers of waterfowl species counted at each are shown in table form. Brief comments are made about 21 of the sites (which were described in full in WIWO Study Report 13) and more detailed accounts given for seven new sites. Comparisons are made with the 1986 census figures and conclusions drawn. Finally, a systematic list gives details of the other birds recorded during the trip. Copies of this report are available, price Dfl 7.50 including postage, by payment to postal giro account 2.666.009 of the 'Stichting WIWO', Ewijk, The Netherlands or by international postal money order to 'Stichting WIWO', Stuyvenbergweg 2-4, 6644 AB Ewijk, The Netherlands.

Notes on the birds of some wetlands in Northeast Greece and Turkey - 6 July to 6 August 1987 by R. Lensink. This is Study Report 19 in the series produced by the WIWO. Eleven Turkish sites were visited and for each a brief description and details of counting methods and problems, human activities and results is given. All species recorded are given in a systematic list and there is a comprehensive

bibliography. Copies of this report are available, price Dfl 7.50 including postage - for details see previous item.

A List of Birds of the Eastern Province of Saudi Arabia compiled by Mrs. F.E. Warr. This is a privately produced systematic list covering all species recorded as occurring in the region. The status of each species is classified using a letter coding and greater detail is given for scarce or vagrant species. Anyone interested in obtaining a copy should contact Mrs. Warr, 6 Mansion Drive, Tring, Hertfordshire HP23 5BD, Great Britain.

Don't discard back copies of British Birds

To help create a sound base for the Archives, OSME would be very grateful to any members who would be prepared to donate unwanted copies of British Birds for incorporation into the library. If you are in a position to help, please contact Geoff and Hilary Welch.

LETTERS

Dear Sir

I was a little perturbed to read in OSME Bulletin 19: 18-19 the scathing comment from Simon Harrap complaining about the impreciseness of nineteenth century records. His comments, while undoubtedly correct from a modern standpoint do seem to imply that he has not been used to using records and papers of this period, and is unaware just how much of the basic groundwork of ornithological data is in fact based on the work of writers who of course saw no need for writing with 20th century precision. The "fully documented sight records" to which Mr. Harrap refers simply did not exist in the nineteenth century, and to complain that Danford did not supply any is like complaining that we have no idea what Queen Elizabeth the First looked like because we have no photographs of her. In the absence of photographs can we even prove that she ever existed?

Michael Walters, Tring Museum, Tring, Hertfordshire, Great Britain.

REVIEWS

Eilat An Intercontinental Highway for Migrating Birds. 1987. International Birdwatching Center Eilat. 80 pages. Paperback. Many photographs (colour and monochrome), diagrams and maps. Price \$10 plus \$1 postage from: IBCE, P. O. Box 774, Eilat 88000, Israel.

The bulk of this work (59 pages) is a paper by Hadoram Shirihai describing raptor migration through Eilat based on extensive studies carried out during four springs and an autumn between 1977 and 1986. The data are comprehensively analysed: with respect to species and age of birds, season, time of day, weather, topography, annual variation and observer effort. Honey Buzzard Pernis apivorus is the star, with 852,000 counted in a spring and 228,000 in a day. There are also summaries of the movement patterns in a broader context, with useful maps showing routes through the Middle East for six species. The introduction lists important sites (mostly Europe/Middle East) for raptor migration studies: I would gloss over the fact that this omits reference to a moderately important spot where I did some work myself, but for the fact that it also omits Falsterbo - so having pointed that out I will mention the existence of work in southern Turkey by Sutherland and Brooks (Sandgrouse 2: 1-21). Also, it is not correct to imply (p. 69) that Bijleveld (1974) Birds of Prey in Europe and BWP believed the east European population of Lesser Spotted Eagle Aquila pomarina to be no more than 1,000 pairs: both those sources cited migration counts which imply a larger population, besides acknowledging that the numbers breeding in European USSR are unknown. Although, strangely, it is not mentioned in the present work, what I presume to be the same paper (in Hebrew) was published concurrently in Torgus 6(2): 36-95, 116-117.

The two remaining papers have much less substance and serve only to indicate the scope of other work at Eilat: Bill Clark and Edna Gorney describe the Eilat Raptor Banding Project, though the results are only discussed in general terms (some have also been published in Sandgrouse 7: 21-8); and Shirihai and Merav Gellert detail the logistics of ringing in general at Eilat, the authors evidently not feeling constrained by their paper's title of 'Ringing of Passerines in Eilat', for the list of ringing totals (11,009 birds for 1984-6) includes non-passerines as well.

Editing is lax (annoyingly, for bibliographers, no overall editor is credited), and there are a few quirks. Many of the references mentioned in the text are not listed in the bibliography, and the details of many which are listed are incomplete; this is not a forgivable offence. Wherever species are present in sequence, the order in which they appear is just about random - or might as well be for all the sense I could make of it. All the tables are perversely described as figures, and two 'figures' are placed quite out of order. Spelling is uniformly chaotic and not worthy of the generally high standard of the English used; in fact the whole thing

appears not to have been proof-read at all - even by a non-English-speaker (which does not promote faith in the accuracy of the numerical data). And the spelling is actually the thing which most strikingly stops the book from being a pretty flash production: the paper is good and glossy, and there's lots of colour inside and out.

The photographs are of birders (in the field or not), birds (in the hand or not), or both. Some of the colour photographs are irrelevant to the text, but several, especially some by Shirihai, are pearls - and, except for some ugly marks, the standard of colour reproduction is as high as that of the photography. Species include first winter Black-winged Pratincole Glareola nordmanni, non-breeding Kittlitz's Plover Charadrius pecuarius, Small Skylark Alauda gulgula and Arabian Warbler Sylvia leucomelaena; there's also Shirihai's stunning Black Vultures Aegypius monachus which have appeared in British Birds. Unfortunately the paste-up man proves twice that he doesn't know which way up Black Kites Milvus migrans fly, and the captions for photographs of Imperial Eagle Aquila heliaca and Kittlitz's Plover are transposed.

Altogether, an important and attractive work, let down by some details of presentation.

Duncan Brooks

The Birds of the Egyptian Western Desert by S. M. Goodman, P. L. Meininger and W. C. Mullié. 1986. 91 pages. Miscellaneous publication number 172 of the Museum of Zoology University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan, 48109-1079, U.S.A.

This report concerns the birds and the oases of a very poorly known area of approximately 681,000 sq km west of the Nile, east of the Libyan border and north of the Egyptian border with Sudan at 22° north. In this vast area some 242 species of birds have been recorded, including 47 extant breeding species and six former nesting species. The report describes in detail each of the nine oases in the area and gives information on the ornithological history of each, using as its sources museum specimens, published accounts, the author's own observations and unpublished works from various corners. Not all of the oases in the area have been surveyed equally or at all times of the year, and this leads to unequal treatment for each. For all nine there is an understandable dearth of records for the summer months when the area becomes one of the most inhospitable on earth. Set against records of ornithologists of the previous century whose scientific zeal was only matched by their resourcefulness in getting to such remote places, are records of recent years from the new habitats created in the oases through irrigation and reclamation projects. There is a comprehensive list of species occurring in the region which gives details of all observations by locality, which are fully documented to source material. In the general discussion section of the paper

the authors consider at some length the zoogeography of the region likening the avifauna of these isolated oases to island avifaunas and in this respect compare the birds found in the Western Desert to other parts of north, central and north-east Africa and central Arabia. The work is supported by ten maps and photographs and a very comprehensive literature list. This report is clearly the most important document ever prepared on the ornithology of the Egyptian Western Desert and is essential reading to anyone contemplating a visit to that region.

Michael Jennings

Zur Vogel-Fauna einer semi-ariden Gebirgsregion in Suid-Jordanien (Petra and Umgebung) (Aves) by Jorg Wittenberg, Verh. naturwiss, Ver Hamburg (NF) 29 5-49 Hamburg 1987. In German with English summary.

Jorg Wittenberg has written a useful and comprehensive paper on the birds of a south Jordan mountainous area of 65 sq kms in and around Petra. One-hundred and twenty-two species are recorded (up to 1985), 48 of which are breeders. About a third of the breeding species reach their northernmost distribution in the area. Particularly interesting are Tristram's Grackle Nychognathus tristramii (30 pairs per 10 sq km), Palestine Sunbird Nectarinia osea (40-50 pairs per 10 sq km) and Sinai Rosefinch Carpodacus synoicus (60-80 pairs per 10 sq km). Approximately 90 species are recorded as visitors/migrants.

The most frequent migrants (over 80 birds per day) were Blackcap Sylvia atricapilla, Lesser Whitethroat Sylvia curruca, Honey Buzzard Pernis apivorus and Steppe Buzzard Buteo buteo vulpinus.

The author (Dehnhaid 31, D-2000 Hamburg 76, West Germany) appeals for any other unpublished records from the area.

Don Parr

Urban, E. K., C. H. Fry & S. Keith (1986). The Birds of Africa, Vol. II. Pp. xvi + 532, 32 colour plates by Martin Woodcock, numerous line drawings by Ian Willis. London: Academic Press. £65. ISBN 0-12-13702-9.

Volume II of The Birds of Africa is a truly remarkable achievement. It is a multi-author work which has been carefully and skilfully edited by a team of three dedicated ornithologists and Martin Woodcock has provided a superb collection of illustrations.

Volume II covers gamebirds, button-quail, rails, crakes, gallinules, cranes, finfoots and bustards, waders, sandgrouse, pigeons and doves. For each species the basic content and layout of the text is as it was in Volume I. The policy for English names (always a problem) is clearly justified on p. xii and I only hope Francophone Africa is happy with their loss. The Range and Status section is

very good, providing more details than in Volume I, although I would like to see it expanded still further to include more information on threats and even, possibly, conservation measures needed. The distribution maps use shading to indicate dense/sparse, breeding/non-breeding and migratory populations. The descriptions seem to be thorough and the Field Characters section is an improvement on Volume I with more detail, although The Birds of Africa cannot really have been written 'mainly for field ornithologists' as was originally claimed, can it? The Voice Section is gratifyingly brief, but provides a short description of song and calls and leads the reader to detailed sources of tapes for those researchers requiring further details. Remaining sections deal with General Habits, Food and Breeding Habits. Finally, particularly useful references are given for each species which must be consulted in conjunction with both a list of general and regional references and a further list of references for each family.

Overall the text is extremely well written (or edited) and comprehensive, and the standard of the illustrations is very high, although not yet quite as high as in the latest volumes of Birds of the Western Palearctic. Fortunately for Academic Press this book, and the volumes of The Birds of Africa that follow are essential for ornithologists throughout the world and, while I find the production quality very pleasing, the price still frightens me.

Mike Rands

Bibliographie der Säugetiere und Vögel der Türkei (Rezente Fauna):
A Bibliography of Recent Turkish Mammals and Birds - with reference
to the neighbouring countries and to papers of more general scope by
Hans Kumerlowe, 1986. Bonner Zoologische Monographien, Number 21.
132 pages. (Obtainable through Zoologisches Forschungsinstitut
 und Museum Alexander Koenig, Adenaverallee 150-154, 5300 Bonn 1,
 West Germany. Price DM30).

The literature on the fauna of Turkey is extensive, and has hitherto been widely scattered and difficult to find. Before the publication of this compendium of what I guess to be over 2,500 references, more than half relating to birds, there was no exhaustive list of what exists between two covers. This much-needed publication fills that gap - the author has sought completeness, though it is not claimed. An introduction with explanatory notes in German, Turkish, English and French documents the history of ornithological exploration in Turkey and adjacent regions up to the 1960s. (It is perhaps surprising that no attempt has been made to outline developments during the last 25 years or so as this period has witnessed the greatest upsurge in interest in the country and a wholesale advance in understanding of status and distribution.) The list of references follows - those dealing with countries adjacent to Turkey, whole (ie not just Turkish) distributions or more general themes are identified.

This publication will be essential for all who have an interest in what has been written over the years on the fauna of Turkey. It is also very useful as a source-book for the Middle East as a whole.

Rod Martins

Birds of Turkey. Number 5: Kulu Gölü by Max Kasparek. 1987. 42 pages. Number 6: Yenicaga Gölü by Aygun Kılıç and Max Kasparek. 1987. 32 pages. Both obtainable through OSME Sales, price £2.00 including postage.

The Birds of Turkey series provides conservationists, birdwatchers and ornithologists with documents on specific areas or sites in Turkey. This is accomplished by combining the records of many birdwatchers. With one exception, all booklets so far (including the two titles reviewed here) have dealt with wetland sites. This trend is most welcome given the vulnerability of such sites - many important wetlands in Turkey have been completely destroyed in recent years.

The booklets follow a fairly standard format similar to previous issues in the series with a number of explanatory paragraphs including details on Geographical position (Yenicaga Gölü is in the western Black Sea Coastlands region, Kulu Gölü lies on the Central Plateau), Altitude, Surface-area and depth, General description of the area, Climate, Ornithological importance of the area and Nature conservation and human activities. A detailed list of all known visits to each site is given, including both published and unpublished material. A systematic list follows, documenting all known records, with comments where appropriate.

In the Yenicaga Gölü booklet under Great Snipe Gallinago media I was surprised to find a statement that for this species "the field identification is almost impossible" though this is coupled with a sensible plea that all Turkish records should be re-checked.

Rod Martins

World Birds by Brian Martin. 1987. Guinness Books, Enfield. 208 pages. Over 150 colour and black and white photographs and illustrations. Price £12.95.

This is the first of the Guinness books to concentrate on avian records, and as such it is most likely to find a home on a keen young birdwatcher's bookshelf. However, those scouring through for facts with which to confound the rest of us must accept that some of the entries are already out-of-date (a reflection on our fast changing world more than on the book) and some are misleading (a map implying that the Arctic Tern Sterna paradisaea migrates from the U.K. to Australia via north and east Africa for example).

Considering this is a 'popular' bird book, for £12.95 I would have expected a less cheaply produced volume, with more exiting photographs and better line illustrations. However, the author has done well to bring together all the facts and figures into one volume, and the long accounts supporting each record give interesting additional information about the individual species. Nonetheless, Brian Martin's belief that World Birds should help to focus on critical areas in the world and thus make a contribution to the future of ornithology and conservation is perhaps a little extravagant.

Hilary Welch

Handbook of the Birds of Europe, the Middle East, and North Africa. The Birds of the Western Palearctic. Vol. V: Tyrant Flycatchers to Thrushes. Edited by Stanley Cramp et al. 1988. Oxford University Press. 1,076 pages. 84 colour plates, over 500 drawings, 180 maps. Price £75.00.

So here it is, at last, the first BWP volume devoted to the passerines. It is bigger than Vol. IV (but not by much), prompting the thought that somebody could make a fortune out of reinforced bookshelves... Whether it will prove tough enough to survive the years of heavy use it will get remains to be seen.

My general impression of BWP is that each volume surpasses the last - and not just in terms of physical size and price: the species accounts seem longer and more detailed and, whether you like the styles or not, the coloured plates get better and better. The first volume seems a bit of a poor cousin alongside this one. Ten days of browsing before being asked to dash off this review is too short a time in which to do justice to such a huge and detailed work, but I have already concluded that it is quite outstanding in every respect. No doubt it contains a few mistakes, or some views with which some will disagree, but in my view a reviewer should not over-emphasise such things: I don't think it is of any great moment, for example, that some bird-spotters might raise their eyebrows at the comments on pipit identification and calls, or that some county enthusiasts might be offended by the remark a 'Black-bellied Dipper'. The really important thing is that this volume is likely to be by far the best and most comprehensive work of reference on the species it covers than any of us will see in our lifetimes.

OSME members will welcome so much detailed and fascinating information on some of the most tricky, least known and 'special' birds of our 'region' - the larks, pipits and wheatears, for instance, not to mention those marvellous chats and 'starts from the eastern fringes of the Western Palearctic. The illustrations of many of these are outstanding and likely to be a constant source of reference in themselves. All told, Vol. V covers 115 species - larks, hirundines, pipits and wagtails, bulbuls, Waxwing and Grey Hypocolius, Dipper, Wren, accentors and thrushes and chats are the

main ones. Inevitably, these include quite a lot of vagrants or rare visitors and three more of them, Brown Thrasher, Grey Catbird and Acadian Flycatcher complete the list, the last gaining immortality with its improbable-sounding family name included in the book's title (I can imagine few things less tyrannical than an Acadian Flycatcher). Goodness knows how many subspecies are mentioned or described. Rock, Water and American Pipits are lumped under one species entry, but have been treated separately within it, as if in anticipation of the recent BOU decision; perhaps conservatively (and unlike Birds of the Middle East and North Africa), BWP continues to class Cyprus Pied Wheatear as a race rather than a full species.

The only way to appreciate this important publication fully is to get your own copy. Most readers will do just that, I'm sure: those who don't will be missing out.

Mike Everett

GROUPS AND ORGANISATIONS IN THE MIDDLE EAST

* indicates society membership of OSME

Bahrain

Bahrain Natural History Society, P. O. Box 20336, Manama, Bahrain.

Cyprus

*Cyprus Ornithological Society (1957), P. O. Box 4319, Nicosia, Cyprus.

Cyprus Ornithological Society (1970), c/o P. Neophytou, Kanaris Street 4, Strovolos 105, Cyprus.

Egypt

Ornithological Society of Egypt, c/o Dr. Moustfa Fouda, Department of Zoology, Al Azhar University, Nasr City, Cairo, Egypt.

Iran

Department of Environment, P. O. Box 1430, Tehran, Iran.

Iraq

*Natural History Museum, University of Basrah, Post Box 432, Basrah, Iraq.

Israel

*The A. D. Gordon Agriculture and Nature Study Institute, Deganya A 15-120, Israel.

Israel Bird Ringing Center, Queen Helena 13, P. O. Box 930,
Jerusalem 91 008, Israel.

Israel Raptor Information Center, Har Gillo FSC, Doar Na Harei,
Jerusalem 91 076, Israel.

*Israel Ornithological Center, c/o S.P.N.I., 4 Hashfela Street, Tel
Aviv 66183, Israel.

International Birdwatching Center Eilat, P. O. Box 774, Eilat,
Israel.

*Society for Protection of Nature in Israel, 4 Hashfela Street, Tel
Aviv 66186, Israel.

United Kingdom Society for the Protection of Nature in Israel, c/o
Anglo-Israel Association, 9 Bentinck Street, London W1M 5RP.

Jordan

*Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature, P. O. Box 6354,
Amman, Jordan.

Kuwait

Kuwait Natural History Group, c/o Professor C. W. T. Pilcher,
Department of Pharmacology, Faculty of Medicine, P. O. Box 24923
- Safat, Kuwait 13110.

Environment Protection Council of Kuwait, P. O. Box 24395, Safat,
Kuwait.

Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research, P. O. Box 24885, Safat,
Kuwait.

Lebanon

Friends of Nature, P. O. Box 11-8281, Beirut, Lebanon.

Society for the Protection of Nature and Natural Resources in
Lebanon, P. O. Box 11-5665, Beirut, Lebanon.

Oman

*Adviser for the Conservation of the Environment (Mr. R. H. Daly),
P. O. Box 246, Muscat, Sultanate of Oman.

The Historical Association of Oman. Hon. Secretary, P. O. Box 6941,
Ruwi, Sultanate of Oman.

Oman Bird Records Committee, P. O. Box 246, Muscat, Sultanate of
Oman.

Oman Natural History Museum, P. O. Box 668, Muscat, Sultanate of
Oman.

Qatar

Qatar Natural History Group. c/o Bryan Eccleston (Chairman), P. O.
Box 7660, Doha, Qatar.

Saudi Arabia

- Arabian Natural History Association, Box 6336, Dhahran, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. (No recent information, may no longer exist.)
- Desert Ramblers, c/o Michael Denton, Saudi Telephones, P. O. Box 6350, Riyadh 11442, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.
- Meteorological and Environmental Protection Administration, P. O. Box 1358, Jeddah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.
- National Commission for Wildlife Conservation and Development, P. O. Box 61681, Riyadh 11575, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.
- *National Wildlife Research Centre, P. O. Box 1086, Taif, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.
- Saudi Arabian Natural History Society, c/o The Bursar, The Continental School, P. O. Box 6453, Jeddah 21442, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.
- Saudi Biological Society. General Secretary, College of Science, University of Riyadh, Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Turkey

- *Biyoloji Enstitüsü. Dr. I. Kiziroglu, Hacettepe Univarsitesi, Beycepe Kampusu, Ankara, Turkey.
- *Dogal Hayati Koruma Dernegi (= Society for the Protection of Wildlife), PK 18, Bebek, Istanbul, Turkey.

United Arab Emirates

- Dubai Natural History Group, P. O. Box 9292, Dubai, United Arab Emirates.
- Dubai Wildlife Research Centre, P. O. Box 11626, Dubai, United Arab Emirates.
- *Emirates Natural History Group (Abu Dhabi), P. O. Box 303, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates.
- Emirates Natural History Group (Al Ain), P. O. Box 16027, Al Ain, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates.

Yemen Arab Republic (N. Yemen)

- Nature and Ornithological Society of Yemen.
Name and address of current secretary unknown at present.

NEWS AND INFORMATION

(Compiled by Simon Albrecht)

Turkey - Investigation into the Shooting and Catching of Birds

Last year (Bull. 19: 42) we reported that Dogal Hayati Koruma Dernegi (DHKD) was about to survey the extent of illegal bird shooting and catching especially in north-east Turkey. The project, which is being carried out jointly with the International Council for Bird Preservation (ICBP), is now well under way. Its aims are to (a) investigate the magnitude of bird persecution at selected sites in Turkey, (b) document deficiencies in current wildlife legislation and (c) present the findings to the Turkish Government.

Surveys led by Gernant Magnin began during August 1987 in the Borcka-Arhavi region of north-east Turkey. This is an important migratory bottleneck area where well over 100,000 raptors have been recorded on passage in a single day and where the catching of Sparrowhawks Accipiter nisus for hawking Quail Coturnix coturnix is known to be common. Preliminary results indicate that over 10,000 Sparrowhawks were caught during the autumn of 1987, some of which died in captivity. Goshawks Accipiter gentilis and Peregrines Falco peregrinus were also kept by falconers. In addition large raptors, particularly Honey Buzzards Pernis apivorus, Booted Eagles Hieraetus pennatus, harriers Circus sp. and falcons Falco sp., were being discriminatorily shot or caught. The raptors killed were fed to shrikes, mainly juvenile Red-backed Shrikes Lanius collurio, which are kept as a decoy to catch Sparrowhawks.

Investigations in the lakes and coastal wetlands show that there is also some pressure from hunters on pelicans Pelecanus sp. and Cranes Grus grus as well as other waterbirds.

A full report is in preparation which will be presented to the Turkish Government and to the Standing Committee of the Bern Convention (which requires the protection of the migratory species listed in the Convention's Appendices) to which Turkey is a Contracting Party. This will be accompanied by a publicity campaign in Turkey directed by DHKD.

We shall continue to report progress in this area. Meanwhile, while Turkey is keen to promote its tourist image abroad, visitors should be aware of the situation and report any relevant observations to DHKD at Pk 18, Bebek, Istanbul, Turkey.

Turkey - Central Anatolia Survey

DHKD and WIWO (Working Group International Wader and Waterfowl Research, a Dutch based Foundation) will carry out wetland surveys in central Anatolia during spring 1988. The project aims to determine the importance of the lakes of the region for passage waders and waterfowl. In previous years WIWO teams have investigated wetlands on the anatolian plateau during autumn and

winter. This is the first time that detailed information on the spring migration on the interior lakes of Turkey will become available. We look forward to further information on this important subject.

Turkey - Lake Gala, Meric Delta

Lake Gala (Gala Golu), a 5,000ha wetland near Enez in the Meric Delta, is one of Turkey's most important flyway sites for migratory waterfowl during their migration to and from their breeding areas. The Meric Delta, on the Turkey/Greece border, is undoubtedly of international importance and is included in the preliminary list of Important Bird Areas in Europe to be published by ICBP later in 1988. In the 1960s Lake Gala supported breeding populations of Little Bittern Ixobrychus minutus, Squacco Heron Ardeola ralloides, White-tailed Eagle Haliaeetus albicilla, Lesser Spotted Eagle Aquila pomarina and Marsh Harrier Circus aeruginosus. In addition, the lake was particularly important for wintering waterfowl and raptors, especially Pygmy Cormorant Phalacrocorax pygmeus, Greylag Goose Anser anser, White-fronted Goose A. albifrons, Wigeon Anas penelope, Pintail A. acuta, White-tailed Eagle, Spotted Eagle A. clanga and Hen Harrier C. cyaneus. The lake is currently unprotected and is threatened by drainage schemes to provide farmers with land for rice cultivation. Adjacent reedbeds are being regularly burnt and shooting takes place illegally during the close season.

A DHKD project team is conducting regular surveys of Lake Gala between October 1987 and August 1988. Each survey will assess the importance of the area as a breeding, staging and wintering site for migratory birds as well as for other wildlife. The impact on the wetland of various existing and proposed development projects, especially agricultural schemes, is being assessed and pressure from shooting is being monitored. Survey work has started and the team is interviewing villagers, hunters and local authorities (including the State Waterways Department) to complement the data obtained from the field.

A symposium is scheduled for May 1988 in Enez bringing together DHKD, Government officials and representatives of the local communities to discuss recommendations for the sustainable utilisation and conservation of the lake.

DHKD will seek to publish articles on Lake Gala in conservation periodicals and magazines in Turkey and abroad to promote the preservation of the site.

Turkey - Wetland Protection

Turkey has 18 National Parks but only one is a wetland, Kuscenneti, which is only a small area (64ha) amounting to less than a half percent of Manyas Golu.

According to the General Directorate for the Environment, the State Planning Organisation has now given protection to three wetlands: Manyas Golu (which includes Kuscenneti), the Sultan Marshes and Seyfe Golu. The main threats to Manyas include pollution and drainage and irrigation schemes (see OSME Bull. 17: 22 for recent problems at Lake Manyas). The Sultan Marshes, one of the most important wetlands in the Middle East, is also threatened by drainage which has already had a serious negative impact on the local populations of several birds (see Kasperek: Die Sultanssumpfe. On OSME sales list). Seyfe Golu has also been threatened by a drainage project (see Husband & Kasperek: Birds of Turkey 2, Seyfe Golu. On OSME sales list) but this has apparently been cancelled.

We congratulate the Turkish authorities on these initiatives and hope that the State Planning Organisation will take effective measures to protect and conserve these vital and fragile areas.

Turkey - Tourist development at Dalyan Beach

Dalyan beach is one of the few places where the endangered Mediterranean Loggerhead Turtle Caretta caretta breeds. A hotel development has been given planning permission in spite of opposition. The International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN) have prepared a management plan for the beach and its surroundings. We hope the Turkish authorities will adhere to this management plan both during the development of the site and during its subsequent use.

Turkey - Bird book for primary school children

Following the publication of "Kuslari Taniyalim" - the native language popular birdbook - in 1986 (OSME Bull. 16: 18), DHKD are now directly entering the world of education with the production of "Kuslarin Dunyasi". This 20 page booklet is about birds and their environment and is aimed at encouraging children to become interested in birds and the places where they live. The booklet will provide information and ideas for topics to be used in class incorporating the study of birds near the youngsters' homes and schools.

Turkey - new book on important bird site

Following the production of Die Sultanssumpfe in 1985 (see Bull. 16: 33-36 for review) Max Kasperek has produced another publication in the same format. Like the first publication on the Sultan Marshes "Bafasee Natur und Geschichte in der turkischen Agais" is also in German. The 174 pages give a detailed account of both the history and wildlife of the Bafa Golu area on the Aegean coast. This book will be reviewed in a future bulletin. It is available from Max Kasperek, Bleich Strasse 1, 6900 Heidelberg, West Germany, price DM34.50.

Turkey - ICBP European section conference. Spring, 1989

The European section of ICBP will hold its next conference in Adana, Turkey in spring 1989. In addition to the usual business of the conference there will be a two day workshop covering bird conservation in Turkey and migratory birds in Africa. The date of the conference will be announced shortly. Further details from DHKD, Pk 18, Bebek, Istanbul, Turkey or ICBP, 219c Huntingdon Road, Cambridge CB3 0DL, Great Britain.

Cyprus - Bird-liming continues despite international campaign

Following the production and distribution of the anti-liming poster (OSME Bull. 19: 44) the Cyprus Anti-liming Committee, now known as the Cyprus Conservation Committee (CCC), and the ICBP exerted international pressure on the Republic of Cyprus Government to effectively enforce existing laws against bird-liming and netting. Over 100,000 pre-printed "Stop the Massacre" postcards were sent in autumn 1987 to the President of Cyprus and/or the High Commission in London by ICBP's network of member organisations. The World Society for the Protection of Animals, Western Hemisphere office spearheaded a campaign in the U.S.A.

Unfortunately large scale bird-liming continued last autumn according to CCC. The Government has admitted candidly that due to this year's Presidential Election no unpopular measures would be taken such as rigidly enforcing the wildlife laws. CCC and ICBP will continue to monitor the situation and are considering alternative ways of putting pressure on the Government.

We congratulate Mr. Vassiliou as the new President of the Republic of Cyprus and hope that he will respect and preserve Cyprus's natural heritage initially by enforcing the laws on hunting and trapping.

Egypt - Establishment of environmental education unit to promote wetlands conservation

Egypt is one of the most densely populated countries in Africa, with the highest population densities being found along the Nile Valley. The wetlands of the river and particularly the delta are vital life-support ecosystems on which the future of Egypt's agriculture and fisheries depends. However, these biological resources are becoming increasingly depleted and over-exploited. While reclamation and habitat degradation increase there is a complete lack of awareness of the importance and plight of these wetlands or of their need for sustainable development.

The Egyptian Wildlife Service (EWS), the Government body in charge of day-to-day management of protected areas, has no staff currently assigned to environmental education. Egypt also lacks an infrastructure of non-Governmental organisations addressing

environmental matters. Three societies do exist: the Wildlife Society (1962), the Society for the Conservation of Natural Resources and the Ornithological Society of Egypt, but all have a small membership consisting of mainly Government officials, university lecturers, students and research workers.

EWS and ICBP have developed a three-year programme to establish an environmental education unit with EWS. The unit will develop and implement a public awareness programme on conservation in general and on wetlands and migratory birds in particular. The Friends of Animals Club (FAC) was established by EWS some years ago to promote environmental awareness among 10-18 year old school children. As part of the programme FAC will be strengthened and given a new headquarters at Giza Zoo.

It is planned to establish an education centre at one of the wetlands and that teachers become involved with FAC. Workshops on environmental education will be organised and hopefully the lessons incorporated into classroom teaching.

ICBP is initiating this project in conjunction with EWS and the Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency and aims to enhance the conservation status of migratory birds in Egypt. It is hoped that the project will be formalised by an agreement signed by all parties this spring.

Egypt - Lake Manzala gets protection

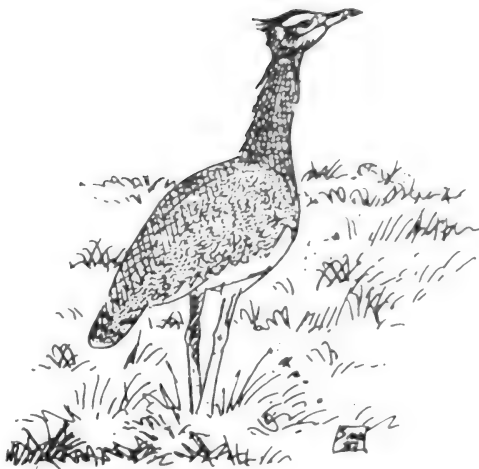
Perhaps the most important lake on the Nile delta, Lake Manzala, is now getting official protection. The lake is nominated as a Ramsar site of international importance and the EWS has proposed it to be gazetted as a protected area.

Saudi Arabia - Arabian Bustard Survey, 1987

The National Commission for Wildlife and Development has produced its first technical report on the endangered Arabian Bustard *Ardeotis arabs*. The authors (Asad Rahmani of the Bombay Natural History Society, India and Mohammed Shobrak of the National Wildlife Research Centre, Saudi Arabia) travelled 3,000km from 19 October to 3 November 1987 in the Tihama region of Saudi Arabia and saw one Arabian Bustard and footprints in two other places. In addition they were told of sightings at five other places in the last five years.

The authors conclude that the Arabian Bustard is not extinct in Saudi Arabia. Their recommendations include that the Arabian Bustard be given total protection and that the law be strictly enforced. That a bustard sanctuary be established at Jabal Labiba in the Asir National Park where they sighted their bustard. That more detailed surveys be carried out to find if there is a viable bustard population. That detailed ecological studies be carried out

on the Arabian Bustard either in Saudi Arabia or elsewhere to discover its conservation requirements. The main cause of the species' rarity appears to be uncontrolled shooting from 4-wheel drive vehicles and habitat deterioration through overgrazing. They recommend a publicity and education campaign including making the Arabian Bustard a national bird. They support the views of others that captive breeding is not the answer to the protection and conservation of the Arabian Bustard. The National Wildlife Research Center's address is P. O. Box 1086, Taif, Saudi Arabia.



Slender-billed Curlew - any more records?

Last autumn (Bull. 19: 47) we reported that ICBP were carrying out a survey of Slender-billed Curlews *Numenius tenuirostris* in Morocco this winter and requested any sightings from the Middle East. By 7 March 1988 only four had been reported from Morocco and none from the Middle East. If you have any relevant information please send it without delay to Mike Rands, ICBP, 219c Huntingdon Road, Cambridge CB3 0DL, Great Britain. ICBP are trying to raise money to appoint a full-time worker on the project for the next two years. We expect to be able to report more fully on this in the autumn.

Yemen Arab Republic

Following the visit of Jamil Al Ba'dani to Britain last summer to study conservation education (see Bull. 19: 45) Richard Porter and Mike Langman made a return two week visit over the new year period to Yemen. The purpose of the visit was twofold. First to prepare drawings for an educational book on the birds of the Yemen Arab Republic. This will be another title in the native language birdbook series - devised by ICBP - on which we have reported from time to time (Bull. 16: 18). Second to help develop Jamil's understanding of Yemen wildlife and its conservation.

Mike made numerous drawings and so far has finished over 20 plates for the new book. It is hoped that the illustrations and text of the book will be finished in the next three months and that publication will follow fairly quickly.

Jamil, who works for the Ministry of Agriculture, is being encouraged to take a leading role in wildlife conservation issues in Yemen. Following his successful visit to Britain last summer he shows great aptitude in handling the conservation issues at his fine

country. During the course at the International Centre for Conservation Education (ICCE) Jamil designed and produced a booklet called "Saving Yemen's Endemic Birds". The booklet devotes a page to each of Yemen's endemic birds and features a line drawing of the bird, a short description of its distribution and habitat and a summary of the threats to its continued existence. He also designed a car sticker, poster and calendar depicting rare and endemic birds and adapted a slide talk concerning wildlife conservation in the Yemen.

Jamil accompanied Richard and Mike on their two week trip and was able to distribute the material he had prepared at ICCE. The material was very well received and much interest was shown particularly in the booklet on endemic birds which resulted in long discussions.

During the trip Jamil had his first experience of many of Yemen's endemic birds as well as experiencing flocks of Cranes Grus grus and Demoiselle Cranes Anthropoides virgo at Ta'izz. One of the excitements of the trip was three Long-tailed Cormorants Phalacrocorax africanus at the Marib Dam, though at a distance of two miles it may be difficult to get the record accepted! If confirmed it would be the first record for Arabia.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Kuwait Natural History Group

The Ahmadi Natural History and Field Studies Group is now known as the Kuwait Natural History Group. They have no permanent address at present but correspondence can be addressed to Professor C. W. T. Pilcher, Department of Pharmacology, Faculty of Medicine, P. O. Box 24923 - Safat, Kuwait 13110.

REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

Len Reaney saw a colour marked Black-headed Gull Larus ridibundus (probably a first-winter) on Das Island in the Arabian Gulf on 17 January 1988. Its underwings and undertail were bright red. He has been unable to trace its origin and would appreciate any relevant information. Please write to 67 Bigby High Road, Brigg, South Humberside DN20 9HB, Great Britain.

OSME NEWSStick with OSME and join a friend

In this our 10th Anniversary year, we are aiming to promote awareness of OSME and hope that you will help us. Enclosed with this copy of the Bulletin you will therefore find:

1. Stickers - depicting the Society's Sandgrouse logo. Stick these anywhere that they will be noticed - on binoculars, telescopes, notebooks, friends... and
2. Flyer - an attractively produced leaflet giving details of the Society's aims and achievements, with a membership form on the back. It is astonishing just how many people with an interest in the Middle East do not know of the existence of OSME. So, if you cannot get a friend to join straight away, display the flyer in your local library, at a natural history group meeting or on your office noticeboard.

If each of us recruits just one new member, our membership will break the four-figure barrier. This will not only increase OSME's standing and influence in the Middle East but will also enable us to carry out more important conservation work in the region.

Further copies of the flyer are available from the Publicity Officer on request.

10 Years of OSME - A celebration

1988 marks 10 years of the Society, and coincidentally 21 years of its predecessor the Ornithological Society of Turkey. To celebrate the occasion, OSME is organising a 'birthday afternoon' and we hope you will come along and join in the festivities.

Saturday 26 November at the Friends' House, Euston Road, London is the date to remember. At present, the precise details of the afternoon are still to be finalised but there will be talks about conservation in the Middle East (speakers to include William Wilkinson and Richard Porter); an exhibition and sale of paintings of birds of the region; a small number of 'trade stands' (optical firms, publishers, tour companies etc); a quiz and raffle. Refreshments, in the form of Cream Teas will be provided.

Besides celebrating OSME's 10th birthday, the afternoon is aimed at raising funds for the next OSME Expedition - a fitting and practical way to go forward into the next 10 years of the Society. With this in mind, there is no fixed price for tickets, other than a minimum charge of £5.00 per person - if you wish to pay more, please do. All proceeds from the afternoon will go directly towards active conservation in the Middle East. Full details will be announced in due course. In the meantime, anyone wishing to reserve tickets can do so by sending their fee to the Secretary. We look forward to seeing you.

Subscriptions

All those who paid a full subscription of £7 for 1987 should have received Bulletins 18 and 19 and Sandgrouse Vol. 9. If not, please let the Secretary know as soon as possible.

New Display Boards for OSME

OSME would like to take this opportunity to record its thanks to Pergola Products Ltd of High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire, for the generous donation of a set of Portamaster display boards for the Society's use. The set of eight double-sided boards will be used to exhibit displays about the work of the Society at future talks and meetings. The expo-loop system allows displays to be changed readily and, with the sturdy carrying case provided, the whole system is completely portable.

Membership List

It is the policy of Council not to allow the names and addresses of individual members to be used other than for distribution of the Society's literature or for other administration matters. People wishing to contact specific members should write to them c/o OSME and letters will be forwarded by the Secretary.

From time to time the Society is asked for contacts in particular areas of the Middle East by bona fide birdwatchers. If you would prefer your address not to be given to such enquirers please let the Secretary know.

Notes from the Sales OfficerApology

We apologise to all concerned that Zoology of the Middle East: Volume 1 and Die Sultanssumpfe were omitted from our autumn 1987 sales list. It is worth checking Notes from the Sales Officer against the sales list because mistakes do happen. We also apologise for the delay in dispatch of Birds of Turkey 2 which was out of stock. It is now in stock so if you have not received a copy that you ordered please send a reminder.

Sales have been exceptionally heavy in the first two months of 1988 with over 100 packets dispatched. If you have had to wait several weeks for your order please be patient - there is a limit to what can be done in spare time. On the other hand an oversight is possible so don't be too patient!

Birds of Turkey

We are pleased to announce that both Birds of Turkey 5 (Kulu Golu) and 6 (Yenicaga Golu) have been published since last autumn and are available from OSME Sales price: £2.00 surface postage and £2.50 airmail each. Birds of Turkey 7 on Acigol is in an advanced state of production.

OSME North Yemen Expedition Report

"Birds of the Yemen Arab Republic: Report of the OSME Expedition 1985" is now published and available from OSME Sales price: £4.00 surface and £6.00 airmail postage. The report presents the findings in a non-technical way (in contrast to the papers in Sandgrouse 9) and in addition gives details on and recommendations for conservation which are not published elsewhere.

Wildlife in Bahrain: Fourth Report 1982-1984

We are now out of stock of this report and do not yet know if more copies are available. It has been removed from the sales list for the time being at least.

Sandgrouse - Special Offers

The numbers of the early Sandgrouse for sale have now dropped to a low level (Sandgrouse 1 has sold out). We have already withdrawn the special offer. The remaining available Sandgrouse will be sold on a first come first served basis.

OBITUARIES AND RECENTLY DECEASED MEMBERS

STANLEY CRAMP OBE Stanley Cramp had just retired after ten years as Vice President of OSME when he died on 20th August 1987 at the age of 73.

His first visit to the Middle East was in 1975 when he visited Turkey. This was shortly before his retirement from Britain's H.M. Customs and Excise to take up the position of Chief Editor of The Birds of the Western Palearctic. This covered many of the countries in the Middle East and OSME and its members played a key role in providing information for it. He made several visits to the Middle East during the 1970s and 80s notably to Turkey, Iran, Israel and Egypt which was the last country he visited before he died.

Stanley's abilities as an organiser, committee member and Chairman as well as his numerous ornithological achievements are historical facts and remain a testament to him. They have been widely documented and acclaimed in the numerous obituaries that have already appeared in publications from British Birds to The Times.

PAUL HAYNES It is with regret that we learn of the untimely death of Paul R. Haynes. He was very active as an ornithologist in Kuwait, a member of the Ahmadi Natural History and Field Study Group, a member of OSME and a correspondent for The Birds of the Western Palearctic.

MRS. S. VERE TAYLOR We were also sorry to learn of the recent death of Mrs. S. Vere Taylor (S. Vere Benson) who was perhaps best known to OSME members as the author of Birds of Lebanon and the Jordan area.

STOP PRESS

Just as this bulletin was going to press we received one of the first copies of Birds of the Middle East and North Africa by P.A.D. Hollom, R.F. Porter, S. Christensen and Ian Willis. This, the first field guide to cover all of the Middle East, will be a major asset to those birdwatching in the region, providing excellent illustrations and accompanying text and distribution maps for all Middle Eastern species (except those covered in Peterson, Mountfort and Hollom). A full review will appear in the autumn bulletin but in the meantime a leaflet about the book is enclosed.

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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

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