
**ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY
OF THE MIDDLE EAST**



**BULLETIN 26
SPRING 1991**

OSME Bulletin 26

Editor: Mark Boyd

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

Any articles, announcements or requests to do with birds in the Middle East are welcome, and may be published free of charge, subject to the discretion of the Editor. Accompanying photographs and line-drawings are welcome. Bird names generally follow those of Birds of the Middle East and North Africa.

Contributions to the next Bulletin should be received by 15 August 1991.

They should preferably be double-spaced and typed. Disks (3.5 or 5.25 inch only) can be accepted, provided the files are unformatted ASCII. A paper copy must also be supplied.

Illustrations

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

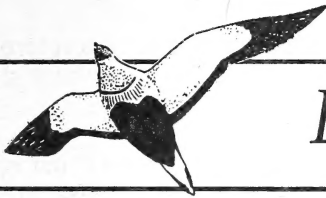
SM Andrews: Dalmatian Pelicans 7; Pallid Harrier 18; Eversmann's Redstart 24; Painted Snipe 62; Cream-coloured Courser 64.

Nik Borrow: White-headed Ducks, cover and 55.

Hilary Welch: Little Crake 64; Desert Wheatear 66.

Acknowledgments

Special thanks to Chris Tucker for help with the production of this Bulletin.



Editorial

The Gulf War

The recent war centred on Kuwait has caused devastation for man and wildlife. As this Bulletin goes to press, the complete picture of the effects on the area is still emerging. The huge oil slicks within the Red Sea and the oil well fires on land have killed many resident birds and pose major hazards to the huge numbers of migrants passing through the area.

Already, reports suggest that as many as half of the individuals in some migrating wader flocks are visibly oiled. The effects on particular species, such as Red-necked Phalaropes *Phalaropus lobatus* that migrate in huge flocks and feed and rest on water during their voyage, can only be guessed at.

The whole environmental tragedy of the Gulf still makes headline news, and now is not the time for a full assessment of the damage in the OSME Bulletin. We hope to be able to print a round-up of the situation in Bulletin 27. If anyone resident in or visiting the Middle East in coming months can provide information on the environmental effects of the war on the different Middle Eastern states, please write to the Editor, by 15 August 1991.

Finally, we send our best wishes and hopes for a return to a stable peace to all OSME members, their families and friends.

Priority bird species in Turkey

Richard Porter

This paper has been written with the view of inviting comment. The author welcomes the views of anyone on criteria used, assignment of species to these criteria and omissions.

If wise use is to be made of the currently limited resources available to wildlife conservation, it is important that conservation objectives are established and that these are based on priorities. The building blocks of any conservation strategy are the species of animals and plants in the

ecosystem or political zone (eg country) under examination. It therefore follows that prioritising species, according to certain criteria, is the first step.

On a world scale, priorities are set out in Red Data Books using internationally accepted criteria drawn up by IUCN. These are summarised in the important works - 'Birds To Watch' (Collar & Andrew 1988) and 'Rare Birds of the World' (Mountfort 1988). These show, for example, 1000 (over 10%) of the world's 9,000 or so bird species are threatened with extinction. Of these, 15 occur in Turkey, either as breeding or non-breeding birds. In addition, Turkish experts on flora and fauna of the Prime Ministry Undersecretariat for Environment (TC Basbakanlik Cevre Mustesarligi) have recently drawn up a draft list of Threatened Animals in Turkey on which there are 54 bird species.

These publications and lists do not, however, always address an important issue - that of determining the species for which a country, zone or ecosystem has an international responsibility, though Baris (1989) made an important contribution towards this. It is for this reason that a list of birds of conservation importance in Turkey (table 1) has been drawn up. It acknowledges those species that are world endangered and those on the Turkish Draft Red Data List of Threatened Species.

Eight criteria were set to recognise birds suitable for inclusion in this priority list. Though the thresholds are arbitrary, and it is hard to compare the relative merits of different classes, the resulting list gives an idea of the birds that are most important in Turkey and those most in need of action. Species unlisted do not meet these criteria and appear to show secure, non-localised populations that are not of international or regional importance. These criteria have been adopted from those used to determine the species for inclusion in Red Data Birds in Britain (NCC & RSPB 1990).

The Sources of Data

In drawing up these criteria and thus table 1, it quickly became obvious that for many species there simply was not sufficient data on which to make an objective assessment. Therefore where it proved impossible for determining International or Regional significance (see below) based on population data, the proportion of the range was assessed based on the most up to date distribution maps available. The sources of reference used were 'The Birds of the Western Palearctic', 'An Atlas of the Birds of the Western Palearctic', and the 'Turkish Bird Reports'.

Internationally Significant Breeder (IB)

For inclusion in this category, more than 20% of the world population, or 20% of the world range, must be in Turkey. 20% is a subjective figure,

rather like the Ramsar 1% level for international importance for a site holding 1% of the flyway population of a species of wildfowl or wader is a subjective figure, but one which, nevertheless, has gained universal acceptance by national governments.

One could argue for say 10% or even 50%, but as a contribution to the debate it seems sensible that if a country holds at least one fifth of the world's population of a species then it should accept an international responsibility to conserve it. Furthermore 20% attempts to strike a balance between the views of conservationists who may wish to see a lower threshold (so entailing a larger commitment by a government) and administrators who may wish to see a higher threshold for reducing implications for government policy and actions.

Internationally Significant Wintering/Non-breeder (IW)

As IB, except for populations outside of the breeding season.

Regionally Significant Breeder (RB)

More than 20% of the regional population, or 20% of the regional range must occur in Turkey. For the purpose of this exercise, the region has been defined as the eastern half of the West Palearctic, but also including the whole of Iran. The western boundary is Yugoslavia, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Poland and the Baltic. The Western Palearctic is a recognised faunal zone and choosing the eastern half for Turkey's 'region' seemed logical as well as manageable.

Regionally Significant Wintering/Non-Breeder (RW)

As above, but for wintering/non-breeding birds, including those passing through Turkey on migration, notably birds of prey.

Rare breeder (Rare)

Less than 300 known breeding pairs in Turkey. Though it must be stressed that in most cases, this is a best guess. Also included in this category are species which are thought to be breeding, although this has not been proven; some of these have only recently been discovered, mostly in SE Turkey and the circumstances suggest recent colonisation.

Localised Breeder (BL)

Occurs in a small number of areas or specialised habitats. Generally, about 50% of the population occurs in less than ten sites.

Localised Non-Breeder (WL)

As above, but for non-breeding populations.

Declining Breeder (DB)

Population is known to be significantly declining. Because of the absence of population surveys, in most cases, such declines are not quantifiable.

Table 1: The species of conservation importance in Turkey according to criteria of entry (see text for details).

KEY: T Threatened Globally, as defined by IUCN Criteria (see Collar & Andrew 1988); t On draft Red List of threatened birds in Turkey as compiled by Turkish experts for the Prime Ministry Undersecretariat for Environment (note this list is still under discussion); IB Internationally significant breeder: >20% of world range/population; IW Internationally significant wintering/non breeder: >20% of world range/population in Turkey; RB Regionally significant breeder: >20% of regional population/range (eastern half of West Palearctic plus Iran) in Turkey; RW Regionally significant wintering/non breeder; Rare Rare breeder (<300 pairs) best guess in most cases; BL Localised breeder: occurring in a small number of areas or specialised habitat; WL Localised non-breeder; DB Declining breeder: known to be significantly declining.

<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>	Great Crested Grebe	RW
<i>Podiceps grisegena</i>	Red-necked Grebe	Rare
<i>Podiceps nigricollis</i>	Black-necked Grebe	RW
<i>Puffinus puffinus yelkouan</i>	Levantine Shearwater	t IW
<i>Phalacrocorax pygmaeus</i>	Pygmy Cormorant	T t IB IW BL DB?
<i>Pelecanus onocrotalus</i>	White Pelican	IW
<i>Pelecanus crispus</i>	Dalmatian Pelican	T t IB? IW? RB RW Rare BL DB
<i>Botaurus stellaris</i>	Bittern	Rare
<i>Ardea purpurea</i>	Purple Heron	RB
<i>Ciconia nigra</i>	Black Stork	t IW
<i>Ciconia ciconia</i>	White Stork	IW RB DB?
<i>Geronticus eremita</i>	Bald Ibis	T t RB Rare BL DB
<i>Platalea leucorodia</i>	Spoonbill	t RB BL DB?
<i>Phoenicopterus ruber</i>	Flamingo	RB RW
<i>Cygnus olor</i>	Mute Swan	Rare
<i>Anser albifrons</i>	White-fronted Goose	RW
<i>Anser erythropus</i>	Lesser white-fronted Goose	T t Rare (winter)
<i>Anser anser</i>	Greylag Goose	RW
<i>Branta ruficollis</i>	Red-breasted Goose	T t Rare (winter)
<i>Tadorna ferruginea</i>	Ruddy Shelduck	RB RW
<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>	Shelduck	RW
<i>Anas penelope</i>	Wigeon	RW
<i>Anas strepera</i>	Gadwall	RW
<i>Anas crecca</i>	Teal	RW
<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	Mallard	RW
<i>Anas acuta</i>	Pintail	RW
<i>Anas clypeata</i>	Shoveler	RW
<i>Anas angustirostris</i>	Marbled Teal	T t RB RW DB
<i>Netta rufina</i>	Red-crested Pochard	RB RW
<i>Aythya ferina</i>	Pochard	RW
<i>Aythya fuligula</i>	Tufted Duck	RW
<i>Melanitta fusca</i>	Velvet Scoter	Rare BL
<i>Oxyura leucocephala</i>	White-headed Duck	T t IW RB WL DB?
<i>Pernis ptilorhynchus</i>	Honey Buzzard	IW
<i>Milvus migrans</i>	Black Kite	RW DB
<i>Haliaeetus albicilla</i>	White-tailed Eagle	T t RB? Rare DB
<i>Cypaetus barbatus</i>	Lammergeier	t RB

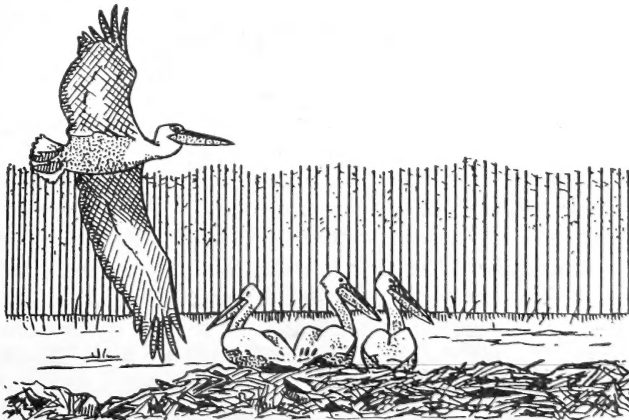
Neophron percnopterus Egyptian Vulture t RB DB?
Gyps fulvus Griffon Vulture RB
Aegypius monachus Black Vulture T t RB DB
Circaetus gallicus Short-toed Eagle RB RW
Accipiter brevipes Levant Sparrowhawk IW
Buteo buteo Common Buzzard IW? RW
Buteo rufinus Long-legged Buzzard t RB
Aquila pomarina Lesser Spotted Eagle IW
Aquila clanga Spotted Eagle t RW
Aquila heliaca Imperial Eagle T t RB DB
Aquila chrysaetos Golden Eagle RB
Hieraaetus pennatus Booted Eagle t RB? RW
Hieraaetus fasciatus Bonelli's Eagle t RB
Falco naumanni Lesser Kestrel T RB DB
Falco eleonorae Eleonora's Falcon t Rare
Falco biarmicus Lanner t Rare
Falco cherrug Saker t Rare
Lyrurus mlokosiewiczi Caucasian Blackcock t RB Rare
Tetraogallus caspius Caspian Snowcock t IB
Alectoris chukar Chukar RB
Ammoperdix griseogularis See-see Partridge t RB
Porphyrio porphyrio Purple Gallinule t Rare
Grus grus Common Crane RW
Anthropoides virgo Demoiselle Crane t Rare
Tetrax tetrax Little Bustard T t Rare
Otis tarda Great Bustard T t RB DB
Burhinus oedicephalus Stone Curlew RB
Cursorius cursor Cream-coloured Courser Rare
Glareola pratincola Collared Pratincole t RB
Glareola nordmanni Black-winged pratincole t Rare
Charadrius leschenaultii Greater Sand Plover RB
Hoplopterus indicus Red-wattled plover Rare
Hoplopterus leucura White-tailed Plover Rare
Philomachus pugnax Ruff RW
Numenius tenuirostris Slender-billed Curlew T t IW?
Larus melanocephalus Mediterranean Gull IW RB
Larus genei Slender-billed Gull RW
Larus audouinii Audouin's Gull T t Rare
Gelochelidon nilotica Gull-billed Tern RB
Chlidonias hybrida Whiskered Tern BL
Chlidonias leucopterus White-winged Black Tern BL
Pterocles orientalis Black-bellied Sandgrouse RB
Pterocles alchata Pin-tailed Sandgrouse t RB?
Streptopelia senegalensis Palm Dove - Isolated Istanbul population
Clamator glandarius Great Spotted Cuckoo IB
Otus brucei Striated Scops owl Rare
Ketupa zeylonensis Brown Fish Owl Rare
Aegolius funereus Tengmalm's Owl Rare
Apus melba Alpine Swift RB
Apus affinis Little Swift Rare
Halcyon smyrnensis White-breasted Kingfisher t RB

Ceryle rudis Pied Kingfisher t RB
Merops superciliosus Blue-cheeked Bee-eater t Rare
Jynx torquilla Wryneck Rare
Dendrocopos leucotos White-backed Woodpecker Rare
Ammomanes deserti Desert Lark Rare
Melanocorypha calandra Calandra Lark RB
Melanocorypha bimaculata Bimaculated Lark RB
Calandrella cinerea Short-toed Lark RB
Eremophila alpestris Shore Lark RB
Hirundo rupestris Crag Martin RB
Anthus cervinus Red-throated Pipit RW
Anthus spinoletta Water Pipit RB
Motacilla citreola Citrine Wagtail Rare
Pycnonotus barbatus Common Bulbul RB
Prunella ocularis Radde's Accentor IB
Irania gutturalis White-throated Robin IB
Oenanthe isabellina Isabelline Wheatear RB
Oenanthe hispanica Black-eared Wheatear IB? RB
Oenanthe finschii Finsch's Wheatear IB
Oenanthe xanthopyrmyna Red-tailed Wheatear Rare
Monticola saxatilis Rock Thrush RB
Cettia cetti Cetti's Warbler RB
Hippolais pallida Olivaceous Warbler RB
Hippolais olivetorum Olive-tree Warbler IB
Sylvia cantillans Subalpine Warbler RB
Sylvia ruppelli Ruppell's Warbler IB
Phylloscopus nitidus Green Warbler RB
Ficedula parva Red-breasted Flycatcher Rare
Parus lugubris Sombre Tit IB
Sitta kruperi Krüper's Nuthatch IB
Sitta neumayer Rock Nuthatch IB
Tichodroma muraria Wallcreeper RB
Lanius minor Lesser Grey Shrike RB
Lanius nubicus Masked Shrike IB
Pyrrhocorax graculus Alpine Chough RB
Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax Chough RB
Sturnus roseus Rose-coloured Starling RB?
Passer hispaniolensis Spanish Sparrow RB
Passer moabiticus Dead Sea Sparrow IB
Petronia brachydactyla Pale Rock Sparrow RB?
Petronia xanthocollis Yellow-throated Sparrow Rare
Serinus pusillus Red-fronted Serin IB
Serinus serinus Serin RB
Carduelis flavirostris Twite RB
Rhodopechys sanguinea Crimson-winged Finch IB
Emberiza circlus Cirl Bunting RB
Emberiza cia Rock Bunting RB
Emberiza cineracea Cinereous Bunting IB
Emberiza buchanani Grey-necked Bunting RB
Emberiza caesia Cretzschmar's Bunting IB
Emberiza melanocephala Black-headed Bunting IB

Examination of the list shows that some 20 species have internationally important breeding populations in Turkey and for a further 13 their wintering or migrating populations are of international importance. On a regional scale (the eastern half of the West Palearctic, including Iran). Turkey holds over 60 species that are important for their breeding populations and 26 for their wintering or migratory populations. Furthermore, 14 species are known to be declining, some seriously. These are the groups of species for which Turkey has a real responsibility. Many of those of international or regional importance are not threatened - and hopefully never will be - but if their fortunes were to change adversely then the conservation significance of the event would be measured in global terms.

This paper has attempted to identify those species which should form the priorities for determining any future bird conservation action. This is only, however, the first step, the next must be to identify the threats to those species and their habitats for which the work of Baris (1989) will provide an invaluable basis. This will be attempted once agreement has been reached on the "Red Data" list in table 1.

Finally, it is important that the populations of birds listed in table 1 and indeed all species that occur in Turkey are adequately monitored. It is only in this way that conservationists, whether they be in Turkey or elsewhere, will be alerted to potential problems which need to be addressed. To illustrate this point I will use two examples: black kite and cirl bunting (one on table 1 and one not). It is my subjective opinion, based on my own observations, that both have declined markedly as breeding birds in Turkey over the past 25 years. If that is the case the collective records of visiting ornithologists should be confirming it - or otherwise. Furthermore, we should at least be getting some clues as to the reasons for any declines (eg habitat loss, effects of poisons etc) . Sadly we are not in a sufficiently advanced stage of record collecting and assessment to make this possible.



Acknowledgments

I would like to thank Tansu Gurpinar for making available the draft Red List of Threatened Animals in Turkey; Gernant Magnin and his colleagues in the Turkish Wildlife Protection Society (DHKD) for encouragement to prepare this discussion paper; Ian Hepburn for his valuable criticism and helpful comments and Yvonne Brown for assistance in preparing this paper.

References

- Baris, Sancar Y (1989) Turkey's Bird Habitats and Ornithological Importance. *Sandgrouse* II : 42-51. OSME, Sandy.
- Beaman, M 1986. Turkey: Bird Report, 1976-1981. *Sandgrouse* 8:1-41.
- Collar, NJ and Andrew P, 1988. *Birds to Watch: the ICBP World Check-list of Threatened Birds*. ICBP Cambridge.
- Cramp, S et al. 1977, 1980, 1983, 1985, 1988. *The Birds of the Western Palearctic* Vols 1-5. OUP, Oxford.
- Harrison, C 1982. *An Atlas of the Birds of the Western Palearctic*. Collins, London.
- Martins, RP 1989. Turkey Bird Report 1982-6. *Sandgrouse* 11:1-41.
- Mountfort, G 1988. *Rare Birds of the World*. Collins, London.
- NCC and RSPB 1990. *Red Data Birds in Britain* (Eds: Batten L A, Bibby C J, Clement P, Elliott G D & Porter R F) T and AD Poyser, London.
- Ornithological Society of Turkey (OST) 1969 Bird Report No 1 (1966-1967) Sandy.
- Ornithological Society of Turkey (OST) 1972 Bird Report No 2 (1967-1969) Sandy.
- Ornithological Society of Turkey (OST) 1975 Bird Report No 3 (1970-1973) Sandy.
- Ornithological Society of Turkey (OST) 1978 Bird Report No 4 (1974-1975) Sandy.

Richard Porter, RSPB, The Lodge, Sandy, Bedfordshire, SG19 2DL, UK

Towards a Turkish Atlas?

Max Kasparek

In the mid-1970s, the Ornithological Society of Turkey decided to prepare an atlas of the breeding birds of Turkey. Initially, the whole country was to be worked in 10km x 10km squares, as with most of the European countries. But because of the high number of squares - some 12,000 - and the lack of suitable maps (maps with a 10km x 10km UTM grid are still not available for Turkey), it was decided to reduce the scheme to half-degree squares (Porter and Beaman, OST Bull 15: 4-5). The number of squares thus decreased to less than 500.

Two years after the initial announcement, Simon Albrecht encouraged OSME members to submit their records and to make atlassing field trips (OSME Bull 2: 6-8). Atlas record sheets, with detailed instructions for completing them, were produced, but no information on the progress of the work was subsequently published. It seems that the project was cancelled because few, if any, record sheets were sent in. In addition, most of the Turkish bird records which were collated by OST/OSME since 1966 as the basis for the Turkish Bird Reports were lost, including all the material on the more common species, which was neither evaluated nor published.

This attempt at producing an atlas of the breeding birds of Turkey failed because an insufficient number of field workers were involved. As there are very few bird watchers resident in Turkey, Turkish ornithology is still carried out primarily by foreign tourists. Birdwatching activity is thus strongly related to the tourist development. It reached a peak in the early 1970s, decreased later in the 1970s, and increased again during the 1980s. During the past two to three years, it has been at an all-time high, but an absolute minimum can be predicted in 1991 because of the Gulf war.

Most of the bird watchers spending their holidays in Turkey try to see as many species as possible. Although this is understandable from a personal point of view, it is disastrous for any atlas work: whereas hotspots such as Bafa Gölü, the Ereğli Marshes, the Sultan Marshes, the Göksü Delta and Birecik are visited by many bird watchers each year, it is almost impossible to get data from more remote or lesser known sites. Several attempts to direct bird watchers to such areas have so far been unsuccessful.

There are even a number of bird areas which are known or thought to be of international importance, but for which hardly any information is available. For example:

Buyuk Cekmece (Istanbul province)	Beynam Forest (Ankara province)
Terkos Gölü (Istanbul Province)	Cavuscu Gölü (Konya province)
Iznik Gölü (Bursa Province)	Todurge Gölü (Sivas province)
Bay of Saroz (Canakkale Province)	Karatas Gölü (Burdur province)
Ilgaz Mountains (Cankiri and Kastamonu provinces)	Nazik Gölü (Bitlis province)
Yesilirmak Delta (Samsun Province)	Hacli Gölü (Mus province)
Gölbek Gölü (Ankara province)	Cildir Gölü (Kars province)

It is striking that even large wetland areas near cities like Istanbul and Ankara are among the less-known sites. It is very important that these areas are visited. I would be pleased to give hints and further information to anyone who intends to visit these or other areas.

For conservation, a survey of these areas has a high priority and is more important than covering the whole country with an atlas project over

many years. An atlas project would bind forces which are urgently required elsewhere. Turkish ornithology is thus at a stage in which not even basic data for a number of urgent conservation issues are available. It seems, then, reasonable to concentrate all efforts on surveying and protecting particular areas and particular species. With limited resources, this is the more effective way than an overall atlas project.

On the other hand, it is often difficult to judge the frequency of a bird species in Turkey and to find out what is 'unusual' and what is 'normal': neither an up-to-date avifauna, a checklist of the birds of Turkey, nor a reliable Red Data Book of Turkish birds are available. There is, however, much information available through publications and unpublished reports, and considerable contributions can be made by using these sources. A thorough compilation, review and evaluation of these sources may prove more useful than active fieldwork at present.

During the last five years, a number of species accounts have been published by the author and others. Detailed information on distribution, frequency, population, phenology and migration is contained in these papers, and they may be used as the basis for protection measures and for directed intensive field surveys. These studies include the following:

Greater Flamingo *Phoenicopterus ruber* A. Kilic, *Zoology in the Middle East* 2, 1988: 41-42. The observation that the Flamingo made a breeding attempt in the Eregli Marshes gave rise to a review of all Turkish breeding records. A map with all localities is included.

White Stork *Ciconia ciconia* H. Kumerloeve, *Bonn. zool. Beitr.* 27, 1976: 172-217; A. Kilic and M. Kasperek, p161-174 and 197-306, in G. Rheinwald, J. Ogden and H. Schultz (eds) *Proceedings of the First International Stork Symposium, Schriftenreihe des Dachverbandes Deutscher Avifaunisten* (no 10). 472 pp. All known Turkish breeding sites of the White Stork were listed. The distribution pattern is shown with a map of half-degree squares and the pattern explained. The absence of White Storks from certain areas is discussed in relation to habitat requirements. A decrease in the Turkish breeding population was found. The seasonal migration pattern at main observation points was shown with histograms, and the migration route is given with maps based on ringing recoveries.

Bittern *Botaurus stellaris* M. Kasperek, *Zoology in the Middle East* 1, 1986: 33-41. Lists all Turkish records and shows them on a map. Breeding was never proved for Turkey, but is assumed for eight localities, resulting in a breeding population of less than 20 pairs.

Demoiselle Crane *Anthropoides virgo* M. Kasperek, *Zoology in the Middle East* 2, 1988: 31-38. The Turkish breeding population numbers less than 30 pairs at only a few localities. This paper includes also records of migrants.

Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus* M. Kasperek, *Zoology in the Middle East* 4, 1990: 25-32. The migration pattern in Turkey is described with the aid of a histogram

of the seasonal distribution which includes all Turkish records. A map of records is included.

White-tailed Plover *Chettusia leucura* M. Kasperek, Sandgrouse 13 1991 (in press) All Turkish records were mapped, with different symbols for confirmed breeding, presumed breeding and migrants.

Sociable Plover *Chettusia gregaria* M. Kasperek, Sandgrouse 13 (in press) The Sociable Plover is a migrant in both seasons. All available records are shown on a map and the migration periods are described and discussed in relation to other Middle Eastern countries.

Turnstone *Arenaria interpres* M. Kasperek, Beitr. Vogelkde. (in press) All Turkish records were evaluated. A map shows the distribution of migrants. The size of the symbols shows the number of records. The phenology in Turkey is shown with a histogram of all records.

Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus* M. Kasperek, Verh. orn. Ges. Bayern 24 (6), 1988: 725-735. Maps show the distribution during the last century, the present distribution and indicate those localities where Pheasants occur after introduction by man. The gene pool of the natural population is being lost.

Osprey *Pandion haliaetus* M. Kasperek, Limicola 3, 1989:251-255. All Turkish records were mapped with different symbols for breeding records, passage records and winter records. There is no recent Turkish breeding record and the population is believed to be less than 10 pairs. The phenology of migrants is shown in a histogram.

Eleonora's Falcon *Falco eleonorae* M. Kasperek and D. Ristow, Zoology in the Middle East 1, 1986:60-69. A table and map of all Turkish records is presented and the seasonal appearance of Eleonora's Falcons along the Turkish coasts is discussed. The only known breeding site is not shown for reasons of site security.

Palm Dove *Streptopelia senegalensis* M. Kasperek, Verh. orn. Ges. Bayern (in press). All localities where Palm Doves were recorded are shown on a map with different symbols for breeding or possible breeding sites. Another map shows the present distribution in the Levant countries up to Egypt. Although the Palm Dove colonised new localities in Turkey, the overall breeding area has not grown significantly during recent decades.

Purple Gallinule *Porphyrio porphyrio* M. Kasperek, C. C. Bilgin and A. Akin, Zoology in the Middle East 3, 1989: 19-30. All breeding sites in the eastern Mediterranean are mapped. Former breeding localities are shown with the approximate year of extinction. The Göksü Delta proved to be the last breeding site of *P. p. seistanicus* in the eastern Mediterranean. Its population is thought to be less than 30 pairs.

Little Bustard *Tetrax tetrax* M. Kasperek, Bustard Studies 4, 1989: 80-113. All Turkish records are mapped. Different symbols indicate records from the breeding season. The Little Bustard was a local breeding bird in all of Turkey, but has apparently disappeared recently. No record from the last decade was available.

Great Bustard *Otis tarda* M. Kasperek, *Bustard Studies* 4, 1989: 80-113. All records mapped with different symbols for breeding season records, non-breeding season records, and records without date. Other maps show the present distribution (since 1974) and the winter distribution in relation to climate.

Striated Scops Owl *Otus brucei* A. B. van den Berg, M. Kasperek and P. Bison, *Dutch Birding* 10(4), 1988 161-166. Up-to-date information on all three known Turkish sites.

Barn Owl *Tyto alba* M. Kasperek, *Zoology in the Middle East* 1, 1986: 44-51. H. Kumerloeve, *Alauda* 54, 1989: 263-267. All Turkish records are summarised and shown on a map. Two subspecies overlap and intergrade in Turkey.

Wryneck *Jynx torquilla* M. Kasperek, *Ecology of Birds* 11, 1889: 251-256. All records were mapped with different symbols for migrant and (presumed) breeding birds. Although breeding has been proved only twice in Turkey, the distribution pattern is clearly demonstrated by breeding season records. The migration pattern is shown by histogram.

White-breasted Kingfisher *Halcyon smyrnensis* V. van den Berk and M. Kasperek, *Zoology in the Middle East* 2, 1988: 19-25. A dot map of breeding and possible breeding sites is given; main breeding areas are shown by larger symbols. 75% of the Turkish population is concentrated in five localities that makes the species vulnerable. Different symbols are used to show non-breeding records.

Grey-headed Woodpecker *Picus canus* A. B. van den Berg, *Zoology in the Middle East* 2, 1988: 12-15. List and map of all Turkish records since the last century.

Citrine Wagtail *Motacilla citreola* M. Kasperek, *Limicola* (in press). All records mapped with different symbols for migrants and breeders and possible breeders.

Red-tailed Wheatear *Oenanthe xanthopyrma* H. Kumerloeve, M. Kasperek and K-O. Nagel, *Bonn. zool. Beitr.* 35, 1984: 97-101. M. Kasperek, *Zoology in the Middle East* 1, 1986: 51-54. All Turkish records were mapped with different symbols for presumed migrants and presumed breeders. The Turkish population belongs to the rare nominate subspecies.

Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla* M. Kasperek, *Vogelwarte* 35, 1990: 169-176. A distribution map is based on all available breeding season records. The distribution pattern is described in relation to climate and discussed in relation to evolution. The route taken by migrants is shown by another map and the seasonal migration pattern is shown by a histogram.

Rook *Corvus frugilegus* M. Kasperek, *Sandgrouse* 11, 1989: 89-95. All known breeding colonies of the Rook in Turkey are enumerated. A map of the breeding localities also shows the areas which were originally covered by natural steppes. A clear relationship can be seen.

Max Kasperek, Bleichstr. 1, 6900 Heidelberg, Germany

Atlas of the Breeding Birds of Arabia: Progress Report

Mike Jennings

The Atlas of the Breeding Birds of Arabia (ABBA) project has now completed six years of fieldwork. The atlas covers the whole of the Arabian Peninsula, and generally follows the European Ornithological Atlas Committee's breeding evidence categories. It aims to bring together all knowledge of Arabian breeding birds, from published records, museum specimens and recent observers' reports, to compile a definitive study on Arabian breeding birds. The basic Atlas unit is the half degree square (approximately 50km x 50km), which is 25 times the size of each square of the British Atlas grid. There are 1,100 Arabian atlas squares.

The Ornithological Society of the Middle East was a major sponsor of the project during its important formative years, but now the project is backed by the National Commission for Wildlife Conservation and Development in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. This generous financial help will enable the computerisation of records, the employment of a researcher and the eventual publication of the results of the project.

So far, the project has received generally good coverage by recent observers in the Gulf States and northern Yemen, as well as parts of Oman and Saudi Arabia. OSME's contribution to northern Yemen records has been very significant. The help and assistance given by many individual OSME members and those of local natural history societies in Arabia has greatly assisted the credibility of the data collected so far. Southern Yemen remains relatively poorly covered, but hopefully this situation will be remedied following the OSME expedition. The other large area where coverage has been poor to date is the Empty Quarter (mainly Saudi Arabia, but including parts of UAE, Oman and Yemen). This zone has, however, a very poor range of breeding species, perhaps only five or six, throughout its extent, and so is probably one of the least important areas to cover.

I have now made ten separate atlassing surveys to Arabia (eight in Saudi Arabia and one to southern Yemen) to fill in the gaps left by other visiting and resident observers. This still represents approximately only half of Saudi Arabia. From results so far, it was particularly interesting to see that a large bird like the Lappet-faced Vulture, which is now known to breed in numerous squares in central Arabia, was not even known to Meinertzhagen when he wrote *Birds of Arabia* in 1954. This illustrates the point that most Arabian ornithologists travelled only short distances from the coast and the main towns until about 1980. The known range of

several endemic species has been much extended through my Atlas surveys, notable among them are the Arabian Red-legged Partridge, the Arabian Woodpecker and Arabian Serin, all of which are now known to occur in the northwestern areas of Saudi Arabia, some several hundred kilometres farther north than was previously thought. The project has revealed that several species have dynamic distributions. It was no surprise to learn that the Eurasian Collared Dove is colonising large areas of Arabia; but the Palm Dove, Namaqua Dove and Black Bushchat have shown significant range extensions in recent years. On the other hand, a number of species have contracted their range or are getting less numerous. Large scavengers such as the Griffon Vulture and Lammergeier are especially worrying: they have markedly declined in the last 15 years.

ABBA has generated significant attention and interest through its publications. The project has the policy of publishing as much data as possible rather than storing it away in dusty vaults. So far, seven issues of the project newsletter Phoenix (currently running at 20 pages per issue) have been sent free to all contributors and correspondents. Five major reports on individual surveys have been prepared, and another dozen or more summaries of information collected so far have been made available. For the future, the project plans an interim atlas of maps and very brief information on breeding resident species, based on the observer reports received since 1984. This will hopefully be complete by the end of 1991. A bibliography is planned of all papers relevant to ornithology in Arabia, as well as a review of ringed birds and perhaps even a full Arabian checklist. The final atlas which will encompass all information from all sources is still some way away.

In May 1990, I surveyed northern central Saudi Arabia. Being too late in the year for the majority of species, most breeding activity and singing has ceased. The survey had the target of visiting 39 atlas squares (each about 2,700 sq km) in three weeks. The topography of central Arabia is very varied, with granites in the east, basalt rocks in the north and south, and sandy gravel plains and volcanic harrats in the west. Sand seas are relatively scarce in this part of Arabia but, not surprisingly, there was neither surface water nor forest in the area.

I rose daily at about 5.30 am, just before dawn, to complete a half-hour census transect of all birds present. After breakfast, I would drive across the desert until lunchtime, stopping at likely looking hills, wadis and other habitats to produce as great a variety of species in each square as possible. Being hot, midday was usually a quiet time, with not much bird activity. Then the afternoon survey would continue with another three or four hour transect of the desert by vehicle. The evening camp was usually struck about 5pm, allowing a couple of hours in the vicinity of the campsite before sunset, to get a very good impression of the local bird life.

In all, the May 1990 survey involved travelling 5,300km, of which about 1,300km were getting to and from the study area on asphalt: the rest of it was off road. In an area about the size of England, I recorded 44 breeding species. Two others, Hume's Owl and the Lanner Falcon, were known to have been missed. On average, between nine and 17 species occurred per square, although the maximum was 23 and the minimum was only four.

The highlights of the survey included Alpine Swift found breeding on two granite jebels, some hundreds of kilometres northeast of the limit where they had previously been known to breed. The doves were very interesting: African Collared Dove occurs 200km farther east than was previously known; whereas the European Collared Dove has extended its range about 300km west in recent years. Turtle Doves were breeding in almost every square visited. As the number of Turtle Dove breeding records in Arabia was very few indeed until this visit, it seems that mid-summer observers are rare in Arabia.

Interesting raptors included breeding Golden Eagles, two colonies of Griffon Vultures and widespread and numerous records of the Lappet-faced Vulture, including one record of 22 together at a dead sheep.

Other notable records included Chestnut-bellied Sandgrouse found inland of the western mountains for the first time, Mourning Wheatears well east of their previous breeding limit and confirmation that Yellow-vented Bulbul and Blackstart are absent over large areas of central Arabia. Nomadic species such as Black-crowned Finchlark and Cream-coloured Courser were very scarce.

Mike Jennings

If anyone has records of Arabian breeding birds or may be able to help with future records for ABBA, please contact Mike Jennings, ABBA Co-ordinator, at his new address: 1 Warners Farm, Warners Drove, Somersham, Cambridgeshire PE17 3HW, UK.

Impressions of autumn migration in mid-October along the Çukurova coast, near the Belen Pass, southern Turkey

Vincent van den Berk

Between 11 and 17 October 1988, we hurried along the coastal wetlands in the Çukurova between Mersin and Yumurtalik, in southern Turkey. The Çukurova is located at the entrance to the Belen Pass, a known bottleneck for soaring migrants (Bijlsma 1987). We aimed to conduct a wader and waterfowl count within this period: autumn is still little covered.

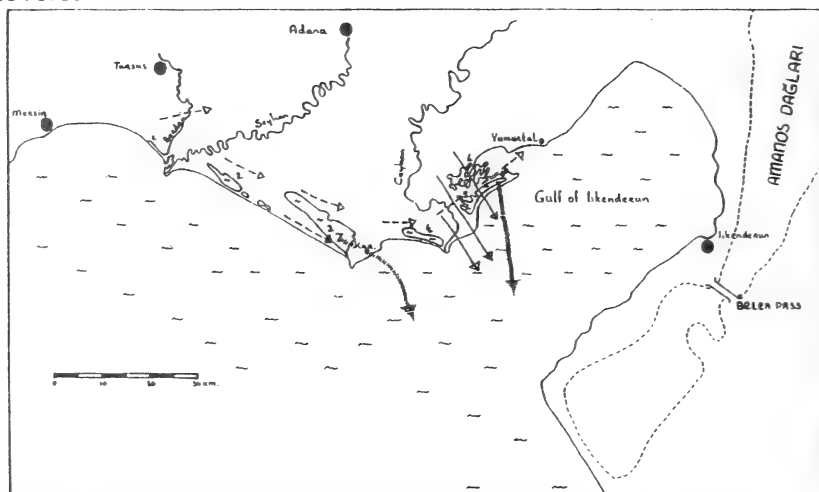


Figure 1. The Belen Pass and the Gulf of Iskenderun

The autumn migration was well underway: warblers were everywhere, mostly Redstarts *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*, Lesser Whitethroats *Sylvia curruca*, Garden Warblers *S borin*, and Blackcaps *S atricapilla*; flycatchers were numerous, Willow warblers *Phylloscopus trochilus* were scarce, but Chiffchaffs *P colybita* were present in hundreds. Tens of Tree Pipits *Anthus trivialis* were present all along the coast; up to three Bluethroats *Luscinia svecica* were recorded at five different localities and the first groups of Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos* and Robin *Erithacus rubecula* appeared. Whinchat *Saxicola rubetra* and Stonechat *S torquata* were already numerous. There was a late Roller *Coracias garrulus*, some Hoopoes *Upupa epops*, at least three Wrynecks *Jynx torquilla* and two or three parties of

Bee-eaters *Merops apiaster* were heard, some late shrikes, plenty of Kingfishers *Alcedo atthis* near every spot of water and the inevitable Black Francolins *Francolinus francolinus*, and White-breasted Kingfishers *Halcyon smyrnensis*, with some 25 around the Berdan bordering the Turan Emiksiz forestry alone.

Nineteen raptor species were seen, including six Ospreys *Pandion haliaetus* west of the Ceyhan river. Barn Owls *Tyto alba* were recorded at four places. The presence of large numbers of Cetti's Warblers *Cettus cettusia* was striking. Their Bearded Tit-like 'ticc' was heard throughout the Delta, and many tens seemed to be concentrated along the reed-fringed lower Berdan. A short sea watch revealed an adult Gannet *Sula bassana*, and a group of 32 Cory's Shearwaters *Calonectris diomedea*. In summary, the Cukurova is an exiting and fascinating place to be in mid October, and is highly recommended, not just for its waterfowl.

Autumn migration around the Gulf of Iskenderun and Belen Pass have been described by Cameron et al. (1967), Heckenroth (1968) and Sutherland and Brooks (1981a,b). Some of our records from the nearby Cukurova may give new and additional information to the pattern described so far.

In autumn 1976, covering 2 August to 23 September, around 8,000 White Pelicans *Pelecanus onocrotalus* were recorded passing Belen, with no well-marked peak and no sign of a decline in the movement at the end of the observation period (Sutherland and Brooks 1981a). The real number passing will be much higher as autumn migration in this region extends from late July to early November. Besides, it is likely that at least some of the White Pelicans that roost in the Cukurova coastal waters don't pass Belen, but fly straight across the Gulf of Iskenderun and around the southern edge of Amanos Daglari.

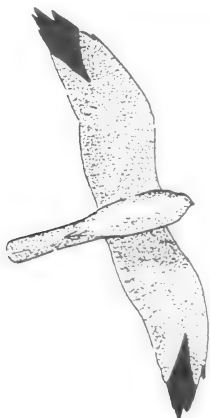
On 12 October around 4pm a group of 1,900 circled down and landed on Yelkoma Golu. The following morning at around 9am, this flock resumed its journey flying straight SSE in long lines up to 50 m above the water. This group did not drift to the east (to the Belen Pass), but continued their course to the southern edge of the Amanos Daglari. This was also noted in 1982, when on 10 October a group of 170 birds flew straight south from the delta near Karatas, and on 11 October around 9am when a group of 1,500 left Akyatan Golu, slowly flapping to the east first, but soon turning southeast towards the southern edge of the Amanos Daglari (Van den Berk et al. 1985). Of two other groups recorded in 1988, it was thought they planned to fly around the Gulf: on 14 October at 12.30pm, some 150 spiralled over the plain north of Akyatan Golu to east, and on 16 October around 9.40am a cloud of some 520 birds circled northwest of Akyatan Golu to the east. This latter group probably came from a roost somewhere in or near the Delta.

In general, most migration of soaring raptors and Black Storks *Ciconia nigra* along the coast was noted in the mornings and related to departing birds. On 15 October, a group of about 60 Buzzards *Buteo buteo* left a presumed roost in the Turan Emeksiz forestry at a round 11am. They slowly started circling towards the hills in a northeastern direction. On 11 October between 10.15 and 11.35am at Camlik, a single Honey Buzzard *Pernis apivorus* and Egyptian Vulture *Neophron percnopterus* (both first calendar year birds), eight Short-toed Eagles *Circaetus gallicus*, 144 Buzzards and three Lesser Spotted Eagles *Aquila pomarina* passed soaring and circling parallel to the coast to the east.

Migrant groups of Black Stork were seen in the morning of 11 October near Kaldirim (25 and 95 flying east) and on 15 October around 8.30am, when a party of 46 departed a presumed roost south of Akyatan Golu.

Height of migration increased during the course of the morning as thermals developed. After midday they passed at considerable height, at the limit of binocular range, and were only detected by chance. Accordingly, few Short-toed Eagles, Buzzards and Lesser Spotted Eagles were reported in this way, all of these east of Karatas. On 12 October around 1.30pm near Zeynepli, at least 15 Buzzards and two Short-toed Eagles were spotted gliding down to SSE. They were at such a height that they weren't visible without binoculars.

With increasing height, the direction shifted from flying around the Gulf of Iskenderun in the morning, to crossing it from midday onwards (see figure 1). The bulk of migration around the Belen Pass occurs between 10am and 1pm (Cameron et al. 1967, Sutherland and Brooks 1981). The main factor influencing this may be the height at which the birds arrive at the Gulf of Iskenderun. It is likely that in general, birds arriving at the Gulf before midday are flying at a low height that forces them around the Gulf and brings them to the Belen Pass. After midday migrants approach the Gulf much higher and are able to cross it on a much broader front.



Other coasting raptors that week, confined to early mornings, but in much lower numbers, were eight Marsh Harriers *Circus aeruginosus*, Pallid Harrier *C. macrourus* (four records; eight individuals, two males), Honey Buzzard (two records; five individuals), one Buzzard, Red-footed Falcon *Falco vespertinus* (three records; seven individuals).

We saw some direct sea crossing by harriers and falcons. In the early afternoon of 17 October, at the beach between the Berdan and Cehyan mouth, the weather suddenly changed. Dark clouds, thunder-storms and gusty winds tumbled down from the Toros Mountains. Within a few hours, at least 10 Hobbies *Falco subbuteo*, some Marsh Harriers, a male Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus*, Pallid Harrier and Montagu's Harrier *C. pygargus* (the only one seen that week), hurried back to the coast, flying 10 m or less above the water.

Most of the Swallow *Hirundo rustica* passage was over; a few small foraging groups of up to 10 or 20 juvenile birds were recorded daily throughout the Delta. But a rather good passage of about 400 turned up during the more thorough watch of 16 October, with 300 between 9.40 and 10.20am. Coasting Grey Wagtails *Motacilla cineria* - singles, twos and once four - were recorded daily all along the coast (20 records; 52 individuals).

Finch movements were also seen. Migration started around 6am all along the coast. Finches probably need little cover to roost. Most migration was noted until 9.30am. The morning counts from the dunes bordering Akyatan Golu on 15 October revealed 168 finches between 9.30 and 10.30am. On 16 October, 3,570 finches passed between 7 and 10.30am.

Acknowledgements

I wish to thank Wouter Helmer, Naomi Stuiver and Rene Vos for taking part in this autumn survey.

References

- Aukes, P, van den Berk, V, Cronau, JP, van Dorp, D, Ozesmi, U and van Wilden, A 1988. The Curkurova Deltas: Geomorphology, hydrology, climate, biotopes and human impact. In: South Turkey Project. van der Have, TM, van den Berk, VM, Cronau, JP and Langeveld, MJ (ed s). *WIWO Report 22*, Zeist, Netherlands.
- Berk, V van den, van den Berk, N, Bijlsma, RG, and de Roder, Fe 1985. The importance of some wetlands in Turkey for transient and wintering birds in Turkey. *WIWO Report 6*, Zeist, Netherlands.
- Bijlsma, RG 1987. *Bottleneck areas for migratory birds in the Mediterranean region*. ICBP, Cambridge, UK.
- Cameron, RAD, Cornwallis, L, Percival, MLJ & Sinclair, ARE 1967. The migration of raptors and storks through the Near East in autumn. *Ibis* 109:489-501.
- Heckenroth, H 1968. Beobachtungen über die Rechtswendung des wegziehenden Weisstorchs am Golf von Iskenderun. *Vogelwarte* 24:246-262.
- Sutherland, WJ and Brooks, DJ 1981a. The autumn migration of raptors, storks, pelicans and spoonbills at the Belen Pass, southern Turkey. *Sandgrouse* 2:1-21.
- Sutherland, WJ and Brooks, DJ 1981b. The visible migration of passerines and near-passerines at the Belen Pass, southern Turkey. *Sandgrouse* 2:87-90

Vincent van den Berk, Noordereind 3a, 4012 BT Kerk Avezaath, Netherlands

Rare Birds in Bahrain 1989 and 1990

Erik Hirschfeld

This report deals with some of the scarcer birds recorded in Bahrain during 1989 and 1990, as recorded by the Bahrain Natural History Society's (BNHS) Bird Recorder. All records have been examined and accepted by the Bird Recorder, and detailed descriptions and, for some cases, photographs are available in the BNHS files in Bahrain.

Bahrain's birdlife is, compared with that of other Middle Eastern states, poorly understood, and new discoveries are frequent. The number of resident birdwatchers is very low, and not everyone has much time to spend in the field. The dense population and frequent habitat changes also contribute to the fairly low total number of species recorded in the country: only around 290.

A book on the birdlife of Bahrain is currently being prepared (Nightingale and Hill, in press) and I should like to thank Tom Nightingale and Dr Mike Hill for allowing me access to the script and also for their comments on my many queries about rarities in Bahrain. Bundy et al. (1989), Richardson (1990) and the Oman Bird List, edition 3, have been extremely useful for the comparison of Bahraini records with those in neighbouring countries and form the base for the species comments below.

White Pelican *Pelecanus onocrotalus*

One dead juvenile, east coast, December 1989 (Jamie Samour, skin examined by Erik Hirschfeld). There are many old reports of pelicans from Bahrain, but this is only the fourth record considered satisfactory by Nightingale and Hill. Previous records were in January, February and July.

White Stork *Ciconia ciconia*

Six soaring over Muharraq airport, 14 October 1990 (Chris Wilson). Only the tenth record for Bahrain, but soaring birds seldom pass over the island. A scarce migrant, sometimes in large numbers, in neighbouring countries.

Greylag Goose *Anser anser*

One tired and easily approached at Askar, 18 November 1990 (Dr Saeed Muhammed and Phil Basson). This species has been recorded four times by birders, all between November and January. However, Bahraini hunters shot a few each winter when there were more marshes on the island. The nearest wintering sites are in Iran, where around 50,000 were counted in January 1990 (Perennou et al. 1990).

Red-crested Pochard *Netta rufina*

Four wild birds at Al Areen Wildlife Park, 22 January 1990 (Jamie Samour, Erik Hirschfeld). The second reliable record: the first was of up to seven birds in December 1970. About 3,000 were recorded in Iran in January 1990 (Perennou et

al. 1990). There is only one record (July) from the Eastern Province of Saudi Arabia, and the species is considered a vagrant or scarce winter visitor in the UAE and Oman.

Spotted Eagle *Aquila clanga*

Two, Adhari, 24 December 1989 (Dave Davies); one, Bahrain Fort, 23 February 1990 (Erik Hirschfeld); one, Adhari, 13 March 1990; and two, Adhari-Jurdab, 22-27 April 1990 (Jos Kuypers, Dave Davies). Third to sixth records, although they could possibly involve only two individuals. Small numbers are annual in winter in the Eastern Province of Saudi Arabia.

Crab Plover *Dromas ardeola*

One, roosting on rocks, Muharraq, 24 May 1990; and two at high-tide roost, ASRY, 4 September 1990 (Erik Hirschfeld). Annual in small numbers, recorded from March to October with one record from December. Passage migrant in Eastern Province of Saudi Arabia.

Dotterel *Charadrius morinellus*

Up to 27, Qurrayah, 26 December 1988 to 25 March 1989; two southeast Awali, 27 January - 20 February 1989; up to two, Al Meerouge farm, 20 February - 2 April 1989 (Tom Nightingale *et al.*); and six at Saar, third week of February 1989 (Judy Webster). These records have already been detailed by Nightingale (1990).

Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria*

One, Qurrayah, 8-14 February 1989 (Tom Nightingale); and one, Bandar ad Dar, Sitra, 10 December 1989 (Erik Hirschfeld). Third and fourth records, the previous ones being December 1970 and 1978. Status somewhat obscure owing to plumage similarities with Pacific Golden Plover *P. dominica*. There are at least two records from the Eastern Province of Saudi Arabia and four from Oman while none has been recorded in the UAE. Only three were seen in Iran in January 1990 (Perennou *et al.* 1990).

Red-wattled Plover *Hoplopterus indicus*

One, Dumistan pools, 18 October 1990 (Dave Davies, Erik Hirschfeld); one, Badan farm, 20 December 1990 (Martin Adams, Alan Dobson, Erik Hirschfeld). Fifth and sixth records, the previous have been scattered in February, October, November and December. In the Eastern Province of Saudi Arabia, there are about 12 records, mainly in October to December. Breeds in Iraq, Iran, UAE and Oman (Cramp *et al.* 1983).

Sociable Plover *Chettusia gregaria*

Two Dumistan pools 11 October 1990 (Dave Davies). Bahrain's fourth record, the species has now been recorded in March, April-November and October (a flock of 12). One has been seen in February in the Eastern Province of Saudi Arabia, and two (November and February) in the UAE; it is a scarce winter visitor in Oman.

Great Knot *Calidris tenuirostris*

One roosting with Bar-tailed Godwits *Limosa lapponica*, ASRY, 5 January 1990 (Erik Hirschfeld). Bahrain's first record, described in detail in Hirschfeld (1990b).

Woodcock *Scolopax rusticola*

One Riffa 18 October 1990 (Dr Mike Hill). Fourth record; the previous were in September, October and January. A vagrant in the UAE and the Eastern Province of Saudi Arabia (three records), but not yet recorded from Oman.

Common Gull *Larus canus*

One adult Ras Tubli 4 November 1989 (Erik Hirschfeld). First Record. It winters in very small numbers in Iran (eg 85 in January 1990 (Perennou et al. 1990)). The record is described in Hirschfeld (1990a). There are six records from the Eastern Province of Saudi Arabia, four from Oman; it is a winter vagrant in the UAE.

Little Gull *Larus minutus*

One first-winter, Sakhir racecourse 4 November 1990 (Erik Hirschfeld). Second record; the first was in September 1981. A very rare visitor to Arabia, one was in the desert in the Eastern Province of Saudi Arabia in September 1979. None has yet been recorded in the UAE or Oman. Only 90 were counted in Iran in the January 1990 waterfowl count (Perennou et al. 1990).

Armenian Gull *Larus armenicus*

One adult Ras Tubli 27 March 1990 (Erik Hirschfeld). Armenian Gulls have previously been identified close to Bahrain by Dr WRP Bourne (in litt.), but this is the first inshore record.

Common Tern *Sterna hirundo*

One showing characteristics of east Siberian subspecies *longipennis* Ras Tubli 9 June 1990 (Erik Hirschfeld). The subspecies intergrades with the nominate in Siberia (Cramp et al. 1985), and may not be separable in the field.

Black Tern *Chlidonias niger*

One juvenile, with a juvenile Whiskered Tern *C. hybrida*, Ras Tubli, 31 August 1990. The fifth record and the first in August. The others have been in September, with one staying into October. There have been four records in August to November in the Eastern Province of Saudi Arabia, and two (March and April) in Oman; none has yet been recorded in the UAE.

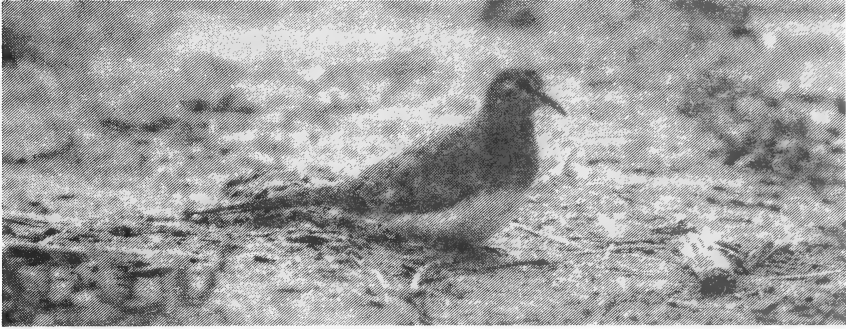
Palm Dove *Streptopelia senegalensis*

One, Sulmaniya, Manama, 20 May 1990; up to seven, Badan farm, 11 November - 31 December 1990; and one Jasra farm 24.11.90 (Erik Hirschfeld). Sixth to eighth November records, the flock at Badan being remarkable. The species has now been recorded from October to April. There are seven records from the Eastern Province of Saudi Arabia, and it breeds commonly in the UAE.

Namaqua Dove *Oena capensis*

One, Awali golf course, 7 October 1989 (Dr Mike Hill); One, male, Qurayyah, 12 April 1990 (Erik Hirschfeld); four males, two females and one juvenile, northwest Bahrain June 1990 (Sheika Noora bint Essa bin Sulman al Khalifa *et al.*); and up to three males and one female, Badan farm 13 November - 31 December 1990 (and to 11 January 1991) (Erik Hirschfeld). Sixth to ninth records, the observation of a flock including a juvenile in June being very interesting as it suggests nearby breeding. This species, like the Palm Dove, is spreading through the Middle East

and has bred in the Eastern Province of Saudi Arabia. It is also a not uncommon cage bird for sale in Bahrain.



Female Namaqua Dove, Badan, Bahrain, December 1990 (Photograph Erik Hirschfeld)

Striated Scops Owl *Otus brucei*

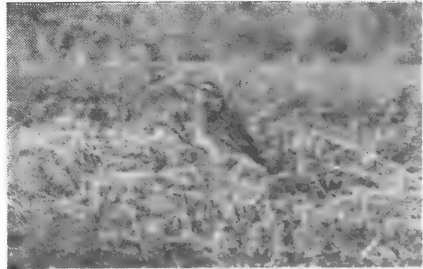
One, examined and photographed, Awali, 27 October 1989 (Dr Mike Hill). Second record; the other was found dead in October 1969. The Awali individual was fatally injured by children who had caught it, and the specimen is lost. Not recorded from the Eastern Province of Saudi Arabia but breeds in the UAE and Oman.

Small Skylark *Alauda gulgula*

At least five, Badan farm, 12 December 1989; four decreasing to one, Jasra farm, 19 October - 10 December 1990; five, Badan farm, 23 October - 31 December 1990; and five, Airport fields, Muharraq, 17 November - 31 December 1990 (Erik Hirschfeld). The first record in the Middle East was in Bahrain (contra Shirihihi 1986), in the winter of 1978/79, and the above records bring Bahrain's total to five. The birds stay well away from Skylarks *A. arvensis* and prefer to skulk in high vegetation. There is one record of a small flock from the Eastern Province of Saudi Arabia (Brown and Palfery 1986), but it has not yet been recorded in the UAE or Oman.

Richard's Pipit *Anthus novae-seelandiae*

One, Jasra farm, 22 October - 16 November 1990; up to five, Airport fields, Muharraq, 17 November - 31 December 1990 (see right); one, Maqabah, 22 November 1990; and one, Dumistan lake, 24 November 1990 (Erik Hirschfeld). Only two acceptable records (in November and April) before 1990. There are four records in the Eastern Province of Saudi Arabia, and it is uncommon but more regular in the UAE and Oman.



Richard's Pipit, Bahrain, December 1990 (photograph Erik Hirschfeld)

White Wagtail *Motacilla alba*

Two different individuals, both showing characters of the subspecies *personata*, Ras Tubli, 2 January and 17 February 1990 (Erik Hirschfeld). The first records of this distinctive subspecies. Winters regularly in Iran (Cramp et al. 1988) but it seems not to have been recorded in Arabia before.

Eversmann's Redstart *Phoenicurus erythronotus*

One male, Radan farm, 13 November 1990; and one female, Busaytin, Muharraq, 17 November 1990 (Erik Hirschfeld). The first records since the winter of 1970/71, when at least 19 were recorded. The species is a scarce winter visitor to Northern Arabia, with four records from the Eastern Province of Saudi Arabia, eight from the UAE (C Richardson pers comm) and at least five from Oman.



Red-breasted Flycatcher *Ficedula parva*

One male, UBF stream, 7-8 February 1990 (Jos Kuypers). Fifth record, previously recorded in October (one) and November (three). Considered an irregular passage migrant and winter visitor in the Eastern Province of Saudi Arabia, the UAE (with most records from October and November) and Oman.

Penduline Tit *Remiz pendulinus*

One male, Janabiyah reeds 8 April 1990 (Erik Hirschfeld). Third record, previously noted in December (flock of three) and March (flock of seven). There are at least three records of small flocks in the Eastern Province of Saudi Arabia and one record from Oman (Gallagher and Woodcock 1980). It is yet to be recorded from the UAE.

Siskin *Carduelis spinus*

Two southeast of Awali, 29 November 1989 (Jos Kuypers); one, Zallaq, 7 November 1990 (Dr Mike Hill); one, Al Meerouge farm, early November (Sheikha Noora bint Essa bin Sulman Al Khalifa); and at least two, over Adliya, 26 November 1990 (Erik Hirschfeld). Fifth to eighth records. Five vagrant records from the Eastern Province of Saudi Arabia were all from November; the only Oman record from December, and it is an irregular winter guest in the UAE.

Common Rosefinch *Carpodacus erythrinus*

One female or young, Jasra 19 September 1990 (Erik Hirschfeld). The two previous Bahrain records were in October and November. It is surprising, considering its abundance in Eurasia and vagrancy pattern in western Europe, that more have not been recorded in Bahrain. An uncommon migrant to the UAE and Oman in autumn, and there are seven records from the Eastern Province of Saudi Arabia during August to October (with one in May).

Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus*

One Dumistan lake 24 November 1989 (Erik Hirschfeld). Fourth record. Very rare in Arabia, not being recorded in Oman and with only one record from UAE (November) and four from the Eastern Province of Saudi Arabia (one December, three March).

References

- Brown, GK and Palfery J 1986.** The Small Skylark, a new species for Saudi Arabia. *Sandgrouse* 7:55-59.
- Bundy, G, O'Connor RJ and Harrison CJO 1989.** *Birds of the Eastern Province of Saudi Arabia*. London and Dahrhan.
- Cramp, S and Simmons KEL 1983, 1985 and 1988.** *The Birds of the Western Palearctic* Vols III, IV and V. Oxford University Press.
- Gallagher, MD and Woodcock, M 1980.** *The Birds of Oman*. London, Melbourne and New York.
- Hirschfeld, E 1990a** Common Gull (*Larus canus*) - a first for Bahrain. *BNHS Newsletter* 1990, 6:5.
- Hirschfeld, E 1990b** The first Great Knot (*Calidris tenuirostris*) for Bahrain. *BNHS Newsletter* 1990, 6:6-7.
- Hollom, PAD, Porter, RF, Christensen, S and Willis I 1988.** *Birds of the Middle East and North Africa*. T & A D Poyser, Calton.
- Nightingale, T 1990.** Dotterels in Bahrain winter 1988/89. *OSME Bull.* 24:11-15.
- Perennou, C, Rose, P and Poole, C 1990.** *Asian Waterfowl Census 1990*. IWRB.
- Richardson, C 1990.** *The Birds of the United Arab Emirates*. Dubai and Warrington.
- Shirihai, H. 1986.** The Small Skylark, a species new to Israel and the Middle East. *Sandgrouse* 7:47-54.

Erik Hirschfeld, c/o IAL, P O Box 144, Manama, State of Bahrain

Spring raptor observations from Djibouti

Geoff and Hilary Welch

We spent four weeks (15 February to 15 March) in Djibouti in spring 1990. The first and last weeks were taken up with meetings in Djibouti city, and the middle fortnight was spent especially in the north and west working on a sites inventory. Thanks to a grant for £300 from OSME's Conservation Research Fund towards vehicle hire, it also proved possible to spend three days on the northeast coast looking for evidence of a return spring migration of raptors across the Bab-el-Mandeb straits.

Our search for migrating raptors was concentrated on the region of Ras Siyan, during the period 5-7 March. The spring movements turned out to be extremely frustrating to monitor. Three species - Egyptian Vulture *Neophron percnopterus* (733), Short-toed Eagle *Circaetus gallicus* (134) and Booted Eagle *Hieraetus pennatus* (953) - made up 97% of the 1,877 birds recorded. In general, birds began moving from 8.15am and approached the Ras Siyan hill from the northwest, crossing the inland lagoon at about 50m. Up until about 9am, small numbers of birds headed out across the straits after gaining height over the hill, but after this time, as the wind increased, they tended to move off south and west; and by 11 am all movement had ceased on the coast. By gradually driving south, we were eventually able to relocate the movement.

Our limited observations suggest that as the wind increases, the birds seek to gain extra height over the inland hills (about 20km from the coast and rising to 300-400m), before heading off across the straits at a height of over 500m. By starting off farther south, in the region of Godoria, and travelling on a north to northeasterly heading, the east-southeasterly winds drift the birds towards the nearest point on the Yemen side of the straits, Perim Island. Whether this is the regular pattern of the spring movement or just the effects of the unusual weather conditions (frequently overcast and very hazy, with a light shower on 7 March) during our visit can be revealed only by further research.

The significance of the spring passage through Djibouti is highlighted when the species counts are compared with those made during 38 days' observation in autumn 1987. Totals for each species for 1987 and 1990 respectively are: Egyptian Vulture 554/733; Short-toed Eagle 1,202/134 and Booted Eagle 1,123/954. Djibouti is clearly a major site for both Egyptian Vulture and Booted Eagle, but the question now arises as to where the birds are heading. The Djibouti birds are not going to form part of the Suez/Eilat movement, where numbers recorded are generally much lower in both spring and autumn (Shirihai 1987 in Eilat an Intercontinental Highway for Migrating Birds); their destination probably lies somewhere farther east in central Russia.

The virtual absence of migrating Steppe Eagles *Aquila rapax* and Steppe Buzzards *Buteo b vulpinus* this spring was also interesting, despite their being the most numerous species in autumn. One of our prime reasons for visiting Djibouti in early March was to look for these particular species. It is possible that we were slightly early for Steppe Buzzard, but Steppe Eagles should have been at their peak. Their numbers peak during mid-February to mid-March at Eilat.

Table 1. Daily raptor totals

Species	5 March	6 March	7 March	Total
Egyptian Vulture	485	40*	208	733
Short-toed Eagle	30	12	92	134
Pallid Harrier	1			1
Montagu's Harrier	1			1
Pallid/Montagu's Harrier	2			2
Steppe Eagle	1	11	1	13
Booted Eagle	105+	461	387	953
Bonelli's Eagle			1	1
Other Raptors		29	10	39
Total Raptors				1,877

* on this day, most of the morning was spent working north along the coast from Godoria, 30km south of Ras Siyan, trying to locate the main part of the movement; we succeeded at 1pm, about 10km inland from Ras Siyan. As Egyptian Vulture passage seemed to be largely concentrated between 8am and 10am, many birds could have been missed.

Geoff and Hilary Welch, 21a East Delph, Whittlesey, Peterborough PE7 1RH, UK

Photographing birds in the Middle East

Paul Doherty

To someone who has never visited the area, the Middle East may not seem to have much to offer the bird photographer. Certainly, there are large areas of rather uniform habitat with birds at a low density. Conversely, some of the finest spectacles of the bird world are to be found in the Middle East, and this creates some special opportunities, and problems, for bird photographers. In this article, I hope to be able to provide some information on the special features of bird photography in the region.

Ethics

It is entirely appropriate to begin with this section, as the guiding rule of wildlife photography is that the welfare of the subject must come first. The Middle East has some harsh and demanding conditions, in particular some extremely high temperatures. Birds and especially nestlings can easily become heat stressed.

Experienced nest photographers should be all right; but if you are not experienced and come across an apparently suitable nest, you would be best to leave it alone. By the time you have realised that the adults have not accepted your activities, the nestlings could be badly heat stressed or even dead.

Similarly, each spring and autumn the Middle East is a vital crossroads for a huge migration. These journeys are very demanding, and tired migrants should not be harrassed.

Remember also that your activities could alert local hunters, who were previously unaware of the birds' presence. I have invariably found locals helpful and friendly. It is worth repaying any kindnesses, perhaps by sending prints of your best efforts. This will make life easier for photographers who come after you , and is doubly worthwhile if you plan to revisit the area.



Red-throated Pipit, Eilat, Israel, November 1985. Taken from inside a cardboard box (Photograph Paul Doherty)

Equipment

The 35 mm format is easily the most popular film size, and a single lens reflex camera with a telephoto lens in the range 300mm to 600mm will be the most useful combination. It may seem like an unnecessary luxury, but, if getting good results is important to you, a second camera body is called for. Without this, a minor accident on the first day of an important trip could rule out all photographic opportunities.

Take all the film you expect to need, and a bit more. The film you want may not be available in the area you are visiting, and it will probably be much more expensive. Light conditions in the Middle East are usually good, and this gives you the opportunity to use slower, better quality films. I take most of my photographs on Kodachrome 64, but always take along some faster film (usually 200 ISO) for less favourable light conditions.

Film and other equipment must be protected from dust, particularly sand, as even a single grain can leave permanent marks on a film. Care and common sense should help you avoid serious problems.

Light

The Middle East seems to have ideal light conditions, but in practice the light quickly becomes too strong. By late morning, often earlier, the light is too harsh, with dense unflattering shadows. The answer is to confine photography to the early morning and late afternoon. This means being up, and often in position, before sunrise. The middle of the day can be used for recharging your batteries, though fanatics may prefer to use this time for checking out other likely photographic spots.

Hides

Only the committed photographer will go to the trouble of taking a portable hide around with them, but if you do not fall into that category, do not worry. A car can make an excellent mobile hide. It is surprising the areas that a carefully (ie recklessly!) driven car can penetrate. More importantly, birds will often allow a much closer approach from a car than they would from a person on foot. The list of birds I have photographed out of a car window includes such unlikely species as Glossy Ibis, Imperial Eagle and Sinai Rosefinch. Always consider the safety aspect of using a car off the beaten track: cars are easily stuck in sand and you should carry plenty of water.

Even if you do not have a car or purpose-built hide, be prepared to improvise. At Eilat, Israel, one autumn, I came across a small pond which was attracting many birds to drink. I did not have a hide, but a walk to a nearby rubbish tip produced a large cardboard box which, with minor alterations, was as good as any hide. The result was an exciting morning which gave superb close-up views, and photographs, of some shy birds.



Male Dead Sea Sparrow, Eilat, Israel, December 1987. Photographed from car window as the bird came to drink at a leaky irrigation pipe (*Photograph Paul Doherty*)

Water

The Middle East is an arid region, and standing water is a scarcity. One consequence of this is that wherever water is found, birds will not be far away. Sandgrouse are well known for their daily flights to suitable drinking pools, but a wide range of species are possible. Man-made water holes are always worth looking out for; agricultural developments, fish farms, sewage ponds and reservoirs are all likely spots, but be prepared to ask for permission. You should also be prepared to do some careful gardening to ensure that the photographs are not spoiled by obtrusive vegetation or unsightly rubbish.

Politics

No OSME member needs reminding of the political sensitivity of the Middle East. There are many areas where anyone wandering around with binoculars will be suspect, and anyone with binoculars and a camera will be doubly suspect. Some potential problems should be obvious (such as borders and military installations), but having once had my tripod mistaken for a portable drilling machine (and therefore being suspected of illegal mineral extraction), some are more difficult to foresee.

The politics of the region are problematic, but there is tremendous scope in the Middle East for the bird photographer. Many of the endemics are little studied photographically, and there is a wide range of migrating and wintering species, too. Photographically, it is an exciting region, and politics, time and money permitting, I know I will be returning there for many years.

Paul Doherty, 18 Austen Way, Larkfield, Kent ME20 6UL, UK

Great Black-headed Gulls on Lake Nasser, Egypt, in January 1989

Ted Hoogendoorn

On 25 January 1989, 4pm local time, I watched three adult winter Great Black-headed Gulls *Larus ichthyaetus* at Abu Simbil, Egypt. The birds could be identified and aged by their large size, white head with blackish mask from eye to ear-coverts, medium to pale grey mantle, back, scapulars and upper wing, featuring white outer primaries with an irregular, subterminal black crescent across the wing-tip.

They flew closely past the flat tops of several steep promontories jutting into Lake Nasser near the Nubian temples, following the heavily indented western shoreline of the lake, in a roughly northeastern direction. For about five minutes, they maintained a distance of 100-200m between each other, until they encountered a small flock of Black-headed Gulls *L. ridibundus* feeding on the lake, about 1.5km to the northeast. After harassing the Black-headed Gulls for several minutes, the Great Black-headed Gulls continued flying northeast, heading out of sight. They were not seen again that day, nor during the first half of the next day, after which I left the area.

Apparently, this is the first record of Great Black-headed Gull for Lake Nasser. Goodman and Meininger (1989) mention three rather recent records for the southern Egyptian Nile Valley between Idfu and Dishna, 400-600 km north of Abu Simbil, one in November and two in February. The species usually migrates singly or in parties of up to five (Cramp and Simmons 1983). Judging from their behaviour, the birds at Abu Simbil were probably early migrants to more northern areas (cf Hoogendoorn 1991). Nevertheless, since the shores of Lake Nasser are largely inaccessible to birders, a hitherto undiscovered population may winter on the lake. Cramp and Simmons (1983) and Goodman and Meininger (1989) have

suggested that the birds wintering on Ethiopian Rift Valley lakes (Ash and Ashford 1977) reach this area via the Red Sea. However, it cannot be excluded that there is a link between the southern Egyptian Nile Valley and Lake Nasser records and the Ethiopian wintering area, via the Nile and its tributaries.

I am grateful to Peter Meininger for commenting on a draft of this note and for supplying literature.

References

- Ash, JS and Ashford, OM 1977 Great Black-headed Gulls *Larus ichthyæetus* [sic] and Red-necked Phalaropes *Phalaropus lobatus* inland in Ethiopia. *J. East Afr. Nat. Hist. Soc. Nat. Mus.* 31 (162):1-3.
- Cramp, S and Simmons, KEL (eds) 1983 *The Birds of the Western Palearctic*, Vol 3. Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- Goodman, SM and Meininger, PL (eds) 1989. *The Birds of Egypt*. Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- Hoogendoorn, W 1991. Gull Records from the northern Egyptian Red Sea coasts in January and February 1989. *OSME Bull.* 26:32-

Gull records from the northern Egyptian Red Sea coasts in January and February 1989

Ted Hoogendoorn

On a trip through Egypt from 18 January to 8 February 1989, I observed 11 species of gulls on the northern Red Sea coasts. According to Goodman and Meininger (1989), two of these have not been recorded in Egypt before. Several other species were found in unprecedented numbers or at out-of-range localities. These records may be related to the 1988/89 winter weather, which was unusually cold, according to local inhabitants.

The literature does not provide many clues to the age classes of gulls wintering in the area. The general scarcity of gulls and other seabirds in the area, as compared with that in western Europe, was striking. Only Suez and Hurghada hosted concentrations of up to 1,000 individuals. Elsewhere, numbers were considerably lower, and along many stretches of coastal road not a single seabird could be found.

Sooty Gull *Larus hemprichii*

19-22 January, Hurghada, up to 35, of which about 15 first-winters and about 20 older birds.

7 February, Abu Zenima, two second-winters or older.

All were in fresh plumage. At Hurghada, of the birds older than first-winter, the majority had small whitish tips, increasing in size inwards, on all but the one or two outermost primaries, and a conspicuous subterminal blackish tail band, broad in the middle and narrowing outwards, being absent on the outer rectrices; in the others, the whitish tips were also present on the outermost primaries and the tail band was reduced to blackish subterminal patches of variable size and shape on up to six central rectrices.

The birds of the first-mentioned group were probably second-winters, while those of the latter group were possibly third-winters (cf Cramp and Simmons 1983). Despite prolonged searches, not a single full adult (with a completely white tail) could be found. The islands at the mouth of the Gulf of Suez are the most northerly breeding area of the Sooty Gull. 119 adults were counted in April-May 1983, and 225 adults and eight juveniles in September-October 1984 (Jennings *et al.* 1985). The lack of adults at Hurghada in January may indicate that the species is not resident in the northernmost Red Sea.

White-eyed Gull *L leucophthalmus*

Roughly 570, of which two first-winters, five second-winters, the others adult. Highest numbers were about 140 at Ain Sukhna on 19 January, about 240 at Hurghada from 19-22 January and about 145 at Abu Zenima on 7 February. All were in fresh plumage.

In May 1984, Goodman and Storer (1987) found a preponderance of adults in the Hurghada-Safaga region. Jennings *et al.* (1985) counted about 3,489 adults on the islands at the mouth of the Gulf of Suez in April-May 1983 and about 5,652 adults and about 3,523 juveniles in September-October 1984. Apparently, most immatures disperse from the northernmost Red Sea after the breeding season.

It is remarkable that, while both Sooty and White-eyed Gulls are at the northern limit of their breeding range in the Hurghada-South Sinai area (cf Goodman and Meininger 1989), adult Sooties were absent in Hurghada in January, while adults were the most common White-eyed by far.

Great Black-headed Gull *L ichthyaetus*

7 February, 14 km south of Abu Rudeis, five, of which four adults and one first-winter.

One of the adults was nearly in full summer plumage, the black hood being completely developed apart from some small white spots on the forehead. Initially the birds were resting on the beach. When I approached, they took flight, each individual separately, heading north and forming a loose party similar to that seen on Lake Nasser (Hoogendoorn 1991). They may have been early migrants.

Mediterranean Gull *L. melanocephalus*

21-22 January, Hurghada, one first-winter.

There are several records from the northern Red Sea (Goodman and Meininger 1989). A report from the Sudanese Red Sea (Nikolaus 1984) lacks documentation.

Black-headed Gull *L. ridibundus*

More numerous than all other species combined, but only locally common. Highest numbers were about 600 at Hurghada on 22 January and about 700 at Suez on 8 February. About 70% were adults.

Slender-billed Gull *L. genei*

About 210, of which 60 at Hurghada, 19-22 January; and about 110 at Suez on 8 February. Over 90% were adults.

Common Gull *L. canus*

22 January, 12km south of Hurghada, one first-winter.

The rather large size and dark grey upperparts of this individual suggest *L. cheinei*, which has not been recorded previously in Egypt (Goodman and Meininger 19189). Until now, the southernmost record of the species was of three individuals 14km north of Hurghada in November 1982. (Baha el Din and Saleh 1983). This record was not documented, and confusion with Armenian Gull *L. armenicus* cannot be excluded.

Lesser Black-backed Gull *L. fuscus*

19 January, Ain Sukhna, two adults.

20-22 January, Hurghada, two adults.

22 January, 12 km south of Hurghada, three adults.

3 February, Abu Darag, eight, of which six adults and two subadults.

4 February, Suez, five, of which four adults and one subadult.

8 February, Suez, two adults.

All adults had black upperparts and upperwings, suggesting the subspecies *L. fuscus*.

Yellow-legged Gull *L. cachinnans*

20-22 January, Hurghada, about 12, of which three adults, one third-winter and about eight first-winters.

22 January, 12km south of Hurghada, about 90, of which six adults, 10-12 second-winters to subadults, and about 70 first-winters.

3 February, Abu Darag, four adults.

4 February, Suez, 15, of which eight adults, two third-winters, two second-winters and three first-winters.

6 February, Nabq, one first-winter.

7 February, Abu Zenima, two first-winters; Abu Rudeis, 13, of which 11 adults and two first-winters.

8 February, Suez, 10, of which five adults, one third-winter, one second-winter and three first-winters.

According to Goodman and Meininger (1989), small numbers are occasionally observed south of Hurghada in winter. Therefore, the flock of 90 must be regarded as exceptional.

Armenian Gull *L. armenicus*

22 January, 12km south of Hurghada, three adults.

7 February, Abu Rudeis, two adults.

The three adults near Hurghada on 22 January were in the same flock as the 90 Yellow-leggeds, the three Lesser Black-backed, the Great Black-backed Gull *L. Marinus* and the Common Gull. In this flock were also one subadult and two first-winter *armenicus*-type individuals, judging from their size and build.

A report of at least 10 adults on 11 March 1988 at the Great Bitter Lake (Everett 1988) lacks documentation and the occurrence of Armenian Gull in Egypt is considered to be unproved (Goodman and Meininger 1989). The Mediterranean coast of Israel is probably a major wintering area of the species (Hume 1983; Geroudet 1984, Dubois 1985, Grant 1987). Bundy (1986) observed three individuals in southern Oman in November and December 1984 (not documented) and mentions individuals noted by John Palfery in eastern Saudi Arabia which probably belong to this species. It seems likely, therefore, that Armenian Gulls occur in winter in small numbers in the company of Lesser Black-backed and Yellow-legged Gulls at scattered localities throughout the Middle East.

Great Black-backed Gull *L. marinus*

22 January, 12km south of Hurghada, one adult.

This species has not been recorded in Egypt previously (Goodman and Meininger 1989).

Acknowledgments

I am grateful to Peter Meininger for commenting on a draft of this note, and for supplying literature.

References

- Baha El Din, SM and Saleh, MA 1983. *Report on the ornithological results of the Egyptian Red Sea pollution expedition*. Ornithological Society of Egypt, Cairo.
- Bundy, G 1986. Notes on seabirds in south-eastern Arabia. *Sandgrouse* 7: 29-42.
- Cramp, S and Simmons, KEL (eds) 1983. *The Birds of the Western Palearctic* Vol. 3. Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- Dubois, P 1985. Considerations sur le Goeland d'Armenie *Larus armenicus* Buturlin en Israel. *Alauda* 53: 226-228.
- Everett, M 1988. Selected spring observations from the Suez Canal and the Gulf of Suez. *OSME Bull.* 20: 3-5.
- Geroudet, P 1984. Le Goeland d'Armenie, *Larus (cachinnans) armenicus*, en Israel. *Alauda* 52: 310-311.
- Goodman, SM and Meininger, PL (eds) 1989. *The Birds of Egypt*. Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- Goodman, SM and Storer, RW 1987. *The seabirds of the Egyptian Red Sea and*

adjacent waters, with notes on selected Ciconiiformes. *Gerfaut* 77: 109-145.

Grant, PJ 1987. Notes on Armenian Herring Gull. In Grant, PJ et al (eds). *International bird identification, proceedings of the 4th International Identification Meeting in Eilat*, 1st-8th November 1986: 43.

Hoogendoorn, W 1991. Great Black-headed Gulls on Lake Nasser, Egypt, in January 1989. *OSME Bull* 26:31-32.

Hume, RA 1983. Herring Gulls in Israel. *Brit Birds* 76: 189-191.

Jennings, MC et al. 1985. *Ornithological survey of the Ras Dib area and the islands at the mouth of the Gulf of Suez, Egypt*. Report BP Oil Pollution Research Unit, Pembroke.

Nikolaus, G 1984. Further notes on birds new or little known in the Sudan. *Scopus* 8: 38-42.

An appendix giving supporting descriptions of rare individuals reported in this paper has been omitted owing to lack of space.

W (Ted) Hoogendoorn, Notengaard 32, 3941 LW Doorn, Netherlands

News and Information

Compiled by Simon Albrecht

The aim of this section is to inform our readers about events in the OSME region. It is not intended as a definitive report or write up of the projects concerned. Most of the projects are sponsored; such support is appreciated but is not generally acknowledged here.

Turkey

Integrated management in the Göksü Delta
A project entitled 'Integrated Wetland Management' is being started this spring in the Göksü Delta. DHKD (The Society for the Protection of Nature) is organising the project in conjunction with the Biological Station at La Tour du Valat, France, and the Dutch Agriculture Ministry. The aim is to integrate wildlife, agriculture and development into the management of the area. Vincent van den Berk has been seconded from the Netherlands, and Nafiz Guder is the DHKD Project Officer working in the delta. This is the

first project of its kind in the eastern Mediterranean.

Educational focus on Turkish deltas

During 1990, DHKD focused its educational activities on the deltas of the Cukurova, Göksü and Menderes. During a four-week period, about 40,000 copies of an educational booklet on birds (Kushlarin Dunyasi), as well as 10,000 copies of the ICBP popular identification guide (Kushlarin Tanyalim), were distributed to primary schools around the three deltas. A similar campaign should take place in the Kizilirmak Delta this spring.

Kizilirmak project postponed

A joint DHKD, WIWO and OSME breeding bird survey of the Kizilirmak Delta (on the Black Sea) had been planned for the spring of 1991. Due to the uncertainties caused by the war in the gulf, sponsorship money has been postponed for a year. The project should hopefully now take place in 1992. It is not known whether the educational campaign (see above) will also be postponed.

10,000 birds killed by hailstones

From time to time, there are deaths of birds caused by weather or other natural conditions. Generally speaking, populations can recover from these natural disasters, provided they are not also threatened by other

factors like human persecution or destruction of habitat.

In December 1990, during educational work in the Göksü Delta, DHKD staff witnessed a 15 minute hailstorm. Hailstones the size of small chicken eggs caused extensive damage to crops, glasshouses, cars and buildings. It is estimated that up to 10,000 birds were killed during the storm. DHKD staff collected several hundred birds. The birds particularly affected were flamingos, waders (*Avocets Avocetta recuvirostra* and Redshanks *Tringa totanus*) and gulls, including three Armenian Gulls *Larus armenicus*. The next day, local fishermen collected thousands of birds from the lakes. These were subsequently sold on local markets.



Victims of hailstorm at Göksü Delta, Turkey, December 1990 (Photograph DHKD)

North Cyprus

We have already reported on the North Cyprus Society for the Protection of Birds, in the last bulletin. This is the only society actively campaigning specifically for bird preservation in North Cyprus. The society was formed during ICBP's year-long conservation

awareness campaign, which ended in October 1990 (see Bulletin 24:23).

Education

A major feature of the conservation awareness campaign was a slide show on bird migration, which visited over

50 of the larger primary schools. In all, about 5,000 pupils in some 200 classes saw the show. Books on birds were donated to school libraries, and a bird painting competition was organised.

Hunting and liming

Surveys were carried out during the 1990 thrush (January to February) and Turtle Dove *Streptopelia turtur* (April to May) hunting seasons. A survey of 382 thrush hunters indicated that thrushes are being overhunted. A survey of 141 Turtle Dove hunters indicated that laws were largely ignored and that many endangered and protected species were being hunted in large numbers. While about 80% of both groups of hunters declared themselves against liming and netting birds, over 20% of hunters shot birds of prey.

Liming and netting remain serious problems. A survey of 54 schools in 39 localities showed that 82% of these village and town people catch birds with limesticks. Of these people, 51% use mist-nets to catch birds and this practice is spreading. In all, it is estimated that between 570,000 and 950,000 birds are killed annually by mist-netting or limesticks in North Cyprus.

Griffon Vultures

A census of the Pentadactylos mountains in 1989/90 found no signs of any breeding Griffon Vultures *Gyps fulvus*. A poster campaign to promote awareness amongst hunters and shepherds was carried out.

Wetlands inventory

Nearly all the wetlands (both natural and reservoirs) in North Cyprus were visited at least three times during the campaign. The inventory includes water levels and the species observed, as well as an assessment as to their value as a stopover for migrating birds. For one of the most important wetlands

(Gonyeli), a development project has been prepared and submitted to the relevant authorities.

ICBP XX World Conference resolution on bird killing in Cyprus and use of mist-nets

The 20th World Conference of the International Council for Bird Preservation (ICBP), held in Hamilton, New Zealand, from 21 to 27 November 1990, unanimously passed a resolution congratulating the Cyprus government for banning the spring shooting of migratory birds and urging the government to enforce Law No. 24 of 1988, implementing the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats. It is hoped that this will be enforced throughout Cyprus.

Japan is a major producer and exporter of mist-nets. The World Conference also recommended that the Japanese government: '(a) prohibit the production, sale, possession, and transfer, as well as the export of mist nets, except for scientific research, and strictly enforce the existing legislation'; and '(b) control the export of mist nets by a system of licencing from authorities designated to judge scientific purpose.'

Slender-billed Curlew monograph

In the last Bulletin, we reported that ICBP's Slender-billed Curlew *Numenius tenuirostris* project had finished and that a report was being prepared. The report, The status and conservation of the Slender-billed Curlew by A Gretton, is to be published as ICBP monograph no. 6; details from ICBP, 32 Cambridge Road, Girton CB3 0PJ, UK.

Egypt

Quail hunting

We congratulate the governor of North Sinai and the Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency for successfully banning the hunting of Quails *Coturnix coturnix*, at the Zaranik nature reserve for the first time last autumn.

Following complaints to the Italian Embassy and by WWF and the Italian Bird Protection Society (LIPU), trapping of passerines such as Redstarts *Phoenicurus phoenicurus* and Willow Warblers *Phylloscopus trochilus* at the Italian War Memorial at El Alamein has been stopped. The birds had apparently been caught for food.

Saudi Arabia

Export of live birds to Britain

According to the recently published Importation of Birds Mortality Statistics for 1989, some 184,600 birds were imported into Britain in 1989. Of these, 4,000 were dead on arrival, and a further 19,500 died in post-import quarantine. Saudi Arabia is the only country in the OSME region listed in

the report. Two Sakers *Falco cherrug* and a Peregrine *F peregrinus* were imported into Britain from Saudi Arabia. All three birds survived.

Israel

A new project has started to gather information on the migration of storks, pelicans and raptors, with the aid of satellites. The project is headed by Professor Odo Renner and Amnon Ginati of the Space Research Centre of the Berlin Technical University, with the participation of SPNI's Israel Raptor Information Centre.

Tiny transmitters were attached to four storks, which were then tracked from the ground and from a motorised glider. One flock including a tagged stork covered a distance of 120km during a three-hour flight northwards. The satellite which will track the birds was launched in January. It will supply ongoing information about nesting and wintering locations, dates, routes and speeds of migration. *Contributed by Maurice E Boyce*

Recent Literature

compiled by Mrs F. E. Warr

This list does not include OSME publications.

Anon 1990 European News (26th and 27th). *British Birds* 83(1 & 3): 8-17, 222-230. (includes Cyprus and Israel).

Anon 1988 Marine Observers' Log. July, August, September. *Birds. Red Sea. Marine Observer* 58, no.301: 113-114.

Anon 1990 Profiles in action - Sherif and Mindy Baha El Din. *World Birdwatch* 12(3): 16.

Al-Dabagh, KY et al 1988 The diet of the White-cheeked Bulbul *Pycnonotus leucogenys*. (Iraq) *J. Bombay Nat. Hist. Soc.* 85: 530-537.

Alfia, C 1989 The nocturnal migration of birds over Israel. *Torgos* 8(1) (16): 22-25. English summary p.94.

Alstrom, P and Mild, K 1989 Identification of Pechora Pipit (Israel photos). *Birding World* 2(8): 276-282.

- Alstrom, P and Mild, K 1989 Red-throated Pipits with rufous throat in winter. (Israel photos). *Dutch Birding* 11(2): 78-81.
- Amies, PA 1990 Spectacled Warblers feeding in association with Finsch's Wheatear. (Israel) *British Birds* 83(2): 72-73.
- Ash, JS 1989 The status of the White Stork in Ethiopia, Somalia and Djibouti. pp341-353 in G Rheinwald et al. q.v.
- Ash, JS and Miskell, JE 1990 Presumed breeding of Tawny Pipits *Anthus campestris* in the Afrotropics. *Bull. Brit. Orn. Club* 110(4): 222-225.
- Baha El Din, M and S 1990 Egypt examined. *World Birdwatch* 12(3): 8-9.
- Baha El Din, M and S 1990 Gabal Asfar: Egypt's premier birdwatching site. *Birding World* 3(3): 105-107.
- Baha El Din, M and S 1990 Hurghada: a Western Palearctic hot-spot. *Birding World* 3(11): 395-400.
- Baha El Din, SM 1989 A contribution to the ornithology of the western desert. *Courseur* 2: 14-23.
- Bahat, O 1989 Hunting behaviour of the Golden Eagle *Aquila chrysaetos homeyeri*. *Torgos* 8(1) (16): 63-67. English summary p.91.
- Bannon, J 1989 First record of White-throated Bee-eater *Merops albicollis* in the UAE. *Gazelle* 4(12): 3.
- Barthel, PH 1990 Hinweise zur Bestimmung der Zitronenstelze *Motacilla citreola*. *Limicola* 4(4): 149-182. English summary - identification of Citrine Wagtail.
- Bartov, E 1990 Reproduction and nesting behaviour of the Lappet-faced Vulture *Torgos tracheliotus negevensis* in captivity. *Torgos* 8(2) (17): 17-24. English summary p.76.
- Ben-David, M and Sobol, M 1989 A peek into the nest of the Bee-eater *Merops apiaster*. *Torgos* 8(1) (16): 39-41. English summary p.93.
- Benoist, J 1988 (Bird migration and capture in the eastern part of the Black Sea, Turkey.) *Vogeljaar* 36(3): 124-127. in Dutch.
- Bergier, P 1988 Observations ornithologiques a Bahrain. *Oiseau Rev. Fr. Orn.* 58(2): 145-153.
- Bezzel, E and Wartmann, B 1990 Neue Beobachtungen des Waldrapps *Geronticus eremita* im Jemen. *Journ. fur Orn.* 131: 456-457. English summary - new records of the Bald Ibis in North Yemen.
- Biricik, M et al. 1989 Fortpflanzungsverhalten der Palmtaube *Streptopelia senegalensis*: Paarbildung bis Eiablage. (Turkey) *Journ. fur Orn.* 130(2): 217-228. English summary - reproductive behaviour of the Laughing Dove.
- Blitzblau, S 1990 Migration of waders along the Carmel coast - Spring 1990. *Torgos* 8(2) (17): 59-68. English summary p.73.
- Bourne, WRP 1988 Seabirds (notes from a talk on UAE and Oman). *Bull. Emirates Nat. Hist. Group (Abu Dhabi)* 35:13.
- Bourne, WRP 1989 Seabird Reports recieved in 1987 and 1988. *Sea Swallow* 38: 7-30.
- Bruun, B 1989 The migration of birds of prey in Egypt. *Courseur* 2: 2-13.
- Bundy, G 1990 Sandgrouse taking water from its own breast feathers. *British Birds* 83(2): 332.
- Bunni, MK 1988 First record of Rufous Turtle Dove *Streptopelia orientalis* (Latham) for Iraq. *Bull. Iraq Nat. Hist. Mus.* 8(1): 131-134.
- Casement, MB 1989 Landbirds from ships at sea. *Sea Swallow* 38: 36-51.
- Casement, MB 1990 Landbirds from ships at sea. *Sea Swallow* 39: 38-48

- Chapman, A 1990 Egyptian Nightjar - A new record for the ENHG List. *Bull. Emirates Nat. Hist. Group (Abu Dhabi)* 41: 9-10
- Chapman, A 1990 Bird notes from offshore. *Bull. Emirates Nat. Hist. Group (Abu Dhabi)* 42: 25-30.
- Clancey, PA 1987 The Tree Pipit *Anthus trivialis* (Linnaeus) in southern Africa. *Durban Mus. Novit.* 14(3): 29-42. (Includes new subspecies in Turkey).
- Clancey, PA 1988 The Pied Kingfisher of the Afrotropics - a case of a 'decayed' subspecies? *Honeyguide* 34(1): 16-18.
- Clancey, PA 1990 A review of the indigenous pipits (Genus *Anthus* Bechstein: Motacillidae) of the Afrotropics. *Durban Mus. Novit.* 15: 42-72.
- Clark, WS, Frumkin, R and Shirihai, H 1990 Field Identification of Sooty Falcon. *British Birds* 83(2): 47-54.
- Clark, WS 1989 The rufous morph of Booted Eagle. *Dutch Birding* 11(2): 57-60.
- Clark, WS 1990 Plumage of subadult Marsh Harrier. *Dutch Birding* 12(4): 181-185.
- Clark, WS 1990 Birding in Israel. *Birding* 22(1): 48-50.
- Clark, WS 1990 Spotted Eagle with rufous nape patch (Israel). *British Birds* 83(9): 397-399.
- Colin, D 1988 Dupont's Lark in Cyprus in April 1988. *Oriolus* 54(4): 182-183. Dutch with English summary.
- Crumbie, M 1986 Observations to clarify the status of the Reef Heron *Egretta gularis*, Little Green Heron *Butorides striatus* and Clamorous Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus stentoreus* in Abu Dhabi Island, 1985, with additional notes. *Bull. Emirates Nat. Hist. Group (Abu Dhabi)* 28: 10-28.
- Ctyroky, P 1988 (Autumn migration of birds in the western desert of Iraq.) *Beitr. Vogelkd.* 34(4-5): 230-236.
- Ctyroky, P 1989 (Knowledge on migration of birds in Iraq.) *Zpravy MOS* 47: 107-124. Czech with English summary.
- Cyprus Ornithological Society 1989 *Birds of Cyprus* Fifteenth Bird Report, for 1984. 67pp.
- Czackes-Rado, H and Yom-Tov, Y 1988 On the incubation biology of the Spur-winged Plover *Hoplopterus spinosus* (Aves: Charadriidae) in Israel. *Israel Journ. Zoology* 34: 155-157.
- De Bruin, S 1989 Spotted Sandpiper in Turkey in August 1988. *Dutch Birding* 11(3): 121-122.
- De Jong, HM 1988 (House Martins on Cyprus) *Vogeljaar* 36(4): 171.
- Deppe, H-J 1990 Beobachtungsnotizen zur Vogelwelt der Türkei. *Orn. Mitteilungen* 42(10): 257-258.
- Dijksen, LJ and Blomert, A-M 1989 Midwinter waterfowl census, Turkey, January 1989. *WIWO Report* 31. 48pp.
- Doherty, P 1989 Ageing of White-winged Black Terns. *Birding World* 2(9): 328-329.
- Dutton, EW (ed) 1988 The scientific results of the Royal Geographical Society's Oman Wahiba Sands Project 1985-1987. *Journ. Oman Studies Special Report* no. 3. 596pp.
- Eriksen, H and J 1990 Distribution maps (Palm Dove, Collared Dove, Chestnut-bellied Sandgrouse). *Oman Bird News* 9: 14-16.
- Eriksen, J 1989-90 Reports from the recorder. *Oman Bird News* 7: 12-14, 8: 12-14, 9: 10-13.
- Eriksen, J 1990 Asian Waterfowl Census - Oman 1990. *Oman Bird News* 8: 14-15.

- Ertan, A, Kilic, A and Kasperek, M 1989 *Turkiye'nin Onemli Kus Alanlari* (Important bird areas of Turkey). Dogal Hayati Koruma Dernegi and ICBP. (DHKD, P.K.18, Bebek, 81810 Istanbul, Turkey).
- Evans, PGH 1987 Sea Birds of the Red Sea. pp 315-338 in Edwards, AJ and Head SM (eds) *Red Sea*. Pergamon Press, Oxford, UK and New York, USA.
- Everett, M and Grimmett, R 1990 Europe's most threatened breeding birds. *RSPB Conservation Review* 4: 86-92.
- Farhadpour, H 1987 Capturing Common Crane (*Grus grus*) with alpha-chloralose. (Iran) *Aquila* 93-94: 237-240.
- Ferro, K 1988 Zypern-Insel de Aphrodite. *Luscinia* 46(1-2): 67-81.
- Fleming, T 1990 White Storks at Zeak. *Oman Bird News* 8: 6-7.
- Footitt, J 1990 Note on Indian House Crows in Dubai. *Gazelle* 5(1): 3-4.
- Foster, D 1990 Meetings of the Oman Bird Records Committee (new records). *Oman Bird News* 8: 9-10.
- Fouda, MM 1989 National Parks in Egypt: Bardawil and Gebel Elba. *Courser* 2: 31-38.
- Franckx, H and Verschuere, W 1985 (The migration of large birds over the Bosphorus) *Wielewaal* 55: 56-65. in Dutch.
- Frumkin, R et al. 1986 Metabolic heat production and evaporative heat loss in desert phasianids: Chukar and Sand Partridge. *Physiol. Zool.* 59:592-605.
- Frumkin, R (ed) 1989 Bird News. *Torgos* 8 (1)(16): 83-85.
- Frumkin, R 1989 First Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus* nesting records in Israel. *Torgos* 8(1)(16):48-49. English summary p.92.
- Frumkin, R 1989 The Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus* post-fledging and parasitic behaviour. *Torgos* 8(1)(16):50-53. English summary p.91.
- Frumkin, R 1990 From Hoopoe's heart to Egyptian Vulture's bones: use of birds for love-charms and medicine in the Arabian folklore. *Torgos* 8(2)(17):9-10. English summary p.76.
- Frumkin, R and Eidelman, A 1989/90 Secrets of the Negev highlands. Spring in Nahal Zin. *Israel Land and Nature* 15(2):86-93.
- Fry, H and Eriksen, J 1989 The Eastern Pied Wheatear *Oenanthe picata* in Arabia. *Oman Bird News* 7: 4-7.
- Fry, CH 1990 Foraging behaviour and identification of Upcher's Warbler. (Oman) *British Birds* 83(6):217-221.
- Gallagher, MD 1988 Birds. in The Scientific Results of The Royal Geographical Society's Oman Wahiba Sands Project 1985-1987. *Journ. Oman Studies Special Report* No 3.
- Gallagher, M 1989 Wahiba Sands, Sultanate of Oman. *Phoenix* 6: 7.
- Gallagher, MD 1989 The White Stork in Oman, eastern Arabia. pp327-330 in Rheinwald et al. qv
- Gallagher, M 1989 Notes on the House Crow at Aden. *Oman Bird News* 7: 10-11.
- Gallagher, M 1989 Vultures in Oman, eastern Arabia. *Vulture News* 22; 4-11.
- Gallagher, M 1990 Does Jouanin's Petrel nest in Oman? *Oman Bird News* 8: 7-8.
- Gellert, M and Laird, B 1990 Eastern Yellow Wagtails. (Israel) *Birding World* 3(8): 277-280.
- Goodman, SM and Haynes, CV Jr 1989 The distribution, breeding season, and food habits of the Lanner from the eastern Sahara. *Natl. Geogr. Res.* 5: 126-131.
- Goodman, SM and Meininger, PL 1989 The discovery of the Arabian Warbler (*Sylvia leucomelaena*) in southeast Egypt *Courser* 2: 24-26.

- Goren, O 1990 A Bedouin flute made of bones of Griffon Vulture *Gyps fulvus*. *Torgos* 8(2)(17):6-7. English summary p.76.
- Goriup PD 1988 The avifauna and conservation of steppic habitats in western Europe, north Africa and the Middle East. *ICBP Tech. Publ.* 7: 147-157.
- Green, M 1990 A key shorebird site in Oman. *BTO News* 171: 7.
- Haffer, J 1989 Parapatrische Vogelarten der palaarktischen Region. *Journ. fur Orn.* 130: 475-512. English summary (some Middle eastern species discussed).
- Harrap, S 1989 Nile Valley Sunbird. *Birding World* 2(11): 386.
- Harrap, S 1990 Photopage: Great Grey Shrike (Israel). *Birding World* 2(12): 427-428.
- Harrap, S 1990 Ardeola Herons. *Birding World* 3(6):209-210.
- Harrap, S 1990 White-crowned Black Wheatear. *Birding World* 3(4): 134-135.
- Harris, A 1990 Mystery photographs - Spanish Sparrow (Eilat). *British Birds* 83(4): 163-164.
- Hatzofe, O 1989 Raptor recoveries in Israel and abroad. *Torgos* 8(1)(16):31-37. English summary p. 93.
- Hatzofe, O and Getreide, S 1990 Sex determination in vultures and other monomorphic raptors. *Torgos* 8(2)(17): 27-29. English summary p.75.
- Hellyer, P. 1988 A brief survey of the Abu Dhabi nature reserve. *Bull. Emirates Nat. Hist. Group (Abu Dhabi)* 35: 2-5.
- Hellyer, P 1989 New breeding records from the UAE East Coast - part 2. *Oman Bird News* 7:1-2.
- Hellyer, P (ed) 1989 The Qarnein Expedition. *Bull. Emirates Nat. Hist. Group (Abu Dhabi)* 39: 2-14.
- Hellyer, P (ed) 1990 The natural history of Merawah Island. *Bull. Emirates Nat. Hist. Group (Abu Dhabi)*. 42: 2-20.
- Hellyer, P 1990 Birds at Buraimi. *Oman Bird News* 9: 10.
- Hirschfeld, E 1990 Notes on identification (Herring and Lesser Black-backed Gulls). *Newsl. Bahrain Nat. Hist. Soc.* 1990 (2): 8-10.
- Hirschfeld, E 1990 Citrine Wagtails with black head markings (Dubai). *Birding World* 3(7): 250-251.
- Hirschfeld, E 1990 Bahrain - October 1989 to April 1990. *Oman Bird News* 8: 5-6.
- Hirschfeld, E 1990 Bird reports from Bahrain - May to September 1990. *Oman Bird News* 9:7-8.
- Hollingworth, J 1986 Birds in Recorders reports for 1985. *Bull. Emirates Nat. Hist. Group (Abu Dhabi)* 28:6.
- Hollingworth, J 1988 Bird recorder's report (for 1987). *Bull. Emirates Nat. Hist. Group (Abu Dhabi)* 34: 4-9.
- Hollingworth, J 1990 Bird recorder's report for 1989. *Bull. Emirates Nat. Hist. Group (Abu Dhabi)* 40: 3-5.
- Horin, O 1989 Survey of White Stork migration: Israel, spring 1984. pp 307-316 in Rheinwald et al. qv.
- Horner, KO 1989 Bahrain Natural History Society Fact Sheets - Great Grey Shrike 1989 (5); Sacred Ibis 1989 (7); Bar-tailed Desert Lark 1990 (1). *Newsl. Bahrain Nat. Hist. Soc.*
- Hoter, E 1989 A Portrait of the Great Grey Shrike *Lanius excubitor*. *Torgos* 8(1)(16):54-59. English summary p91.
- Howe, S 1989 Western Reef Heron eating *Phylloscopus* warblers. (Egypt) *British Birds* 82 (11): 564.

- Ibn Quadama Al-Gassani, Al Gitrif 1988 *Die Beizvogel* =(Kitab dawari at-tayr): ein arabisches Falknereibuch des 8. Jahrhunderts. Georg Olms.
- Inbar, R 1990 Bonelli's Warbler *Phylloscopus bonelli* nesting on Mount Hermon. *Torgos* 8(2)(17): 43-45. English summary p.74.
- Ivri, Y et al 1990 Observations on a colony of the Little Swift *Apus affinis galilejensis*. *Torgos* 8(2)(17): 30-41. English summary pp74-75.
- Jannes, H 1990 Aavikkotulkku *Bucanetes githageneus*. *Lintumies* 25(2): 87.
- Jennings, MC and Al Salama, MI 1989 Atlas of the Breeding Birds of Arabia: Survey no 6. Results of an ornithological survey of the Northern Asir and Southern Hedjaz Region of Saudi Arabia, 25 June to 16 July 1988. *NCWCD Technical Report* 14.
- Jennings MC 1990 *Summary report of an ornithological survey of the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen, October/November 1989*. ABBA survey no 8.
- Jiad, JH et al 1988 Estimation of the damage caused by collared dove on grain storehouse. *Journ Biol Sci Res* 19 (suppl.):41-52. In Arabic, with English summary.
- Jiad, JH and Bunni, MK 1988 The breeding habits of the Scrub Sparrow *Passer moabiticus* Tristram. *Bull. Iraq Nat. Hist. Mus.* 8(1): 145-148.
- Kai, A et al 1988 ESR dating of teeth, bones and eggshells excavated at a Paleolithic site of Doura Cave, Syria. (eggs of Ostrich) *Quat. Sci. Rev.* 7(3-4): 503-507.
- Karavaev, AA 1988 Long-term changes in the population of waterfowl in the lower reaches of the Atrek River and in the shoals of the south-eastern part of the Caspian Sea. *Byull Mosk O-va Ispyt Prir Otd Biol* 93(1): 52-61. In Russian with English summary.
- Kasperek, M 1989 Zum ursprunglichen Vorkommen und zur Weidereinburgerung des Fasans, *Phasianus colchicus* in der Türkei. *Verh. orn. Ges. Bayern* 24(6): 725-735. English summary.
- Kasperek, M et al 1989 The Purple Gallinule, *Porphyrio porphyrio*, in the Eastern Mediterranean. *Zoology in the Middle East* 3: 19-30.
- Kasperek, M 1989 Zum Durchzug und zur Brutverbreitung des Wendehalses (*Jynx torquilla*) in der Türkei. *Ökologie der Vogel* 11(2): 251-256.
- Kasperek, M 1989 Status and distribution of the great bustard and the little bustard in Turkey. *Bustard Studies* 4: 80-113.
- Kasperek, M 1990 Zur Brutverbreitung und zum Zug der Monchsgrasmücke (*Sylvia atricapilla*) im Nahen Osten. *Vogelwarte* 35: 169-176. English summary.
- Katzir, G and Labinger, Z 1989 Pied Kingfisher - problems of an amazing fisherman. *Torgos* 8(1)(16): 68-75. English summary pp90-91.
- Kızıroglu, I 1987 Zum Vogelschutz und zur Einwirkung der Meisenarten (*Parus* spp) auf die Fortschädlinge in der Biologischen Bakaempfung. *Doga Turk. Zool. Derg.* 11(2):104-109.
- Kızıroglu, I and F 1988 Die Vogelarten in Vogelparadies des 'Kus Cenneti/Bandırma'- Nationalparks und seiner Umgebung. (Turkey) *Verh orn Ges Bayern* 24(4-5):515-532. English summary.
- Kızıroglu, I 1989 über die Nestbesuchsaktivität der Altvogel und die Gewichtsentwicklung der Nestjungen bei einigen Meisenarten (*Parus* spp)(Turkey). *Verh orn Ges Bayern* 24(6): 743-750. English summary.
- Kjellen, N 1989 The White Stork *Ciconia ciconia* in Europe - occurrence, ecology and population changes. *Anser* 28(2): 87-114. Swedish with English summary.
- Kuijpers, J (compiler) 1989 Birds recorded from January until June 1989. *Newsl.*

Bahrain Nat. Hist. Soc. 1989 (7).

Kuijpers, J (compiler) 1990 Birds recorded in Bahrain from July to December 1989. *Newsl Bahrain Nat Hist Soc* 1990(2): 4-7.

Kumerloeve, H 1989 Status und Verbreitung des Weissstorchs in der Türkei 1958/1987. pp in Rhienswald et al. qv

Kumerloeve, H 1989 (Nesting Ortolan Bunting (*Emberiza hortulana*) at high altitude in Anatolia (Turkey)). *Oiseau Rev. Francaise Orn.* 59: 179.

Lachman, E 1989 Why bird ringing? *Torgos* 8(1)(16): 26-30. English summary p.94.

Langer Y et al 1990 Recaptures of birds which were ringed elsewhere in Israel. *Torgos* 8(2)(17):57-58. English summary p.73.

Lavee, D and Safriel, UN 1989 The Dilemma of cross-desert migrants - stopover or skip a small oasis? *Journ. Arid Environments* 17: 69-81.

Lavie, G 1988 Plovers, terns and sea caves on the Akhziv coast. *Israel Land and Nature* 14(1):236-239.

Leshem, Y 1989 Observations on White Storks *Ciconia ciconia*: new technologies and their applications for aviation safety. *Torgos* 8(1)(16): 14-19. English summary p.94.

Leshem, Y 1989 Odyssey from lake to sea: flying with pelicans. *Israel Land and Nature* 15(1): 22-31.

Leshem, Y 1988 Der Negev und die judaische Wüste: letzte Chance für Israels Greife. *Luscinia* 46(1-2):89-95. Translation of English original by W Sibert.

Leshem, Y 1989 Observations: Israel - a World Birdwatching Center. *Israel Land and Nature* 14(3): 108-109.

Leshem, Y 1990 on a White Stork *Ciconia ciconia* from Germany caught in Israel in 1846, *Torgos* 8(2)(17): 55. English summary p.73.

Levy, N 1988 Storks: shashlik on the wing. *Israel Land and Nature* 15(1): 38-39.

Levy, N and Mendelssohn, H 1989 Egyptian vultures: feeding behavior. *Israel Land and Nature* 14(3): 126-131.

Maclean, GL 1985 Sandgrouse: models of adaptive compromise. *S Afr Journ Wildlife Res* 15: 1-6.

Madge, S 1990 Eine Armeniermöwe *Larus (cachinnans) armenicus* ohne schwarze Schnabelzeichnung. (Israel) *Limicola* 4(4): 216-217. English summary.

Mansoori, J 19889 The status of the white stork in Iran. pp 177-182 in Rheinwald et al. qv

Marder, J et al 1989 Defense strategies against environmental heat stress in birds. *Israel Journ. Zoology* 36: 61-75.

Meininger, PL 1990 Egyptian wetlands on the verge. *IWRB News* No 4: 1-2.

Meinis, HK 1988 New land snail prey records for the little owl *Athene noctua* in Israel. *Corresp. Ned. Malacol. Ver.* 242: 422-423.

Meitz, P and Schurmann, A 1988 Der Ibis mit der Punkfrisur (Turkey). *Kosmos (Stuttg)* 84(6): 32-34, 36-37.

Mendelssohn H and Marder, U 1989 Reproduction of *Torgos tracheliotus negevensis* in captivity (in Israel). *Vulture News* 22: 2-33.

Merrie, D 1989 Some birding spots in Egypt. *Courser* 2: 27-30.

Meyburg, B-U and C 1987 Present status of Diurnal Birds of Prey (Falconiformes) in various countries bordering the Mediterranean. pp. 147-152 in N Baccetti and M Spagnesi (eds) *Rapaci Mediterranei, III. Suppl. Ric. Biol. Selvaggina XII.*

Meyburg, B-U 1989 Wild status of Old World Vulture species. *Proceedings American Association of Zoological Parks and Aquariums Regional Conference 1989*; 626-631.

- Mian, A 1988 A contribution to the biology of the Houbara (*Chlamydotis undulata macqueeni*); some observations on 1983-84 wintering population in Baluchistan. *Journ. Bombay Nat. Hist. Soc.* 85: 9-25.
- Mian, A 1989 A contribution to the biology of the Houbara Bustard: 1983-84 population levels in western Baluchista. *Journ. Bombay Nat. Hist. Soc.* 86: 161-165.
- Mikhailov, K et al 1990 A continental rendezvous of the Red-necked Phalarope *Phalaropus lobatus* in Iran. *Ornis Fennica* 67: 141-142.
- Milchteich, Y 1990 Winter visitor: the Olive-backed Pipit *Anthus hodgsoni yunnanensis*. *Torgos* 8(2)(17): 71-72. English summary p.73.
- Mindell, DP 1988 First nesting record for the Namaqua Dove (*Oena capensis*) in Israel. *Israel Journ Zoology* 34: 237-238.
- Monval, JY and Pirot, J-Y (compilers) 1989 Results of the IWRB International Waterfowl Census 1967-1986. *IWRB Special Publication* No 8.
- Moore, HS 1989 Another Cyprus interlude. *Bull. Army Bird-watching Society* 1/89: B1-B4.
- Moss, S 1990 The Hadoram Experience (Israel). *Birding World* 2(12): 435-438.
- Moyal, C 1989 'Killing Fields': Kestrels *Falco tinnunculus* under threat in Sinai. *Torgos* 8(1)(16): 44-47. English summary p. 93.
- Moyal, H 1990 Birds' names: origin and meaning. *Torgos* 8(2)(17): 11-16. English summary p.76.
- Nathan, R 1989 Griffon Vultures *Gyps fulvus* in the Golan on the edge of the precipice. *Torgos* 8(1)(16):76-82. English summary p.90.
- Nightingale, T (compiler) 1989 *Birds recorded in Bahrain from July to December 1988*. Bahrain Natural History Society.
- Olsen, KM 1990 Spotted and Lesser Spotted Eagles soaring with wings raised. *British Birds* 83(7): 280.
- Oman Bird Records Committee 1989 *Oman Bird List, Edition 3*. Privately printed, PO Box 246, Muscat.
- Osborne, PE 1989 The bustard morphometrics database: an introduction and some preliminary findings (incl *Chlamydotis undulata*). *Bustard Studies* 4: 125-134.
- Pitt, M 1990 Fieldnotes on the difference between juvenile Little Crake *Porzana Parva* and Baillon's Crake *P. pusilla*. *Gazelle* 5(11): 2-3.
- Platt, JB 1990 The Flamingos of Dubai. *Gazelle* 5(11): 4.
- Prinzinger, R 1988 Nektar als Regelmässige Zugnahrung bei Grasmucken? (Israel) *Journ. fur. Orn.* 129(4): 475-477.
- Ramadan-Jaradi, G and MG 1989 Breeding the Houbara Bustard at Al Ain Zoo and Aquarium, Abu Dhabi, UAE. *Zool. Gart.* 59: 229-240.
- Rands, G and M 1987 Rare birds in arabia's garden. *Country Life* Sept 24.
- Raviv, M 1989 Ring recoveries of the White Stork in Israel and Sinai, 1909-82. pp. 317-324 in Rheinwald et al. qv.
- Razdan, T and Mansoori, J 1989 A review of the bustard situation in the Islamic Republic of Iran. *Bustard Studies* 4: 135-145.
- Reza Khan, MA 1989 Migratory status of the White Stork in the United Arab Emirates. pp 325-326 in Rheinwald et al. qv
- Rheinwald, G et al (eds) 1989 *Weissstorch - White Stork. Proceedings of the First International Stork Conservation Symposium*. Schriftenreihe des Dachverbandes

Deutscher Avifaunisten 10.

Richardson, C 1989 An ornithological survey along the Oman/UAE border. *Oman Bird News* 7:8-9.

Richardson, C (compiler) 1989-90 *Emirates Bird Report* Nos 9-13. Dubai Natural History Group.

Richardson, C 1989 Breeding Little Grebe in Dubai. *Phoenix* 6: 5.

Richardson, C 1989 Blue-cheeked Bee-eaters on the UAE East Coast. *Oman Bird News* 7: 2.

Richardson, C 1989 Poisoned Seagulls. (Dubai) *Gazelle* 4(12): 2.

Richardson, C 1990 Reports of species breeding close to Oman's borders with the UAE. *Oman Bird News* 9: 5-7.

Richardson, C 1990 *The Birds of the United Arab Emirates* Hobby Publications.

Richardson, C and Pitt, M 1990 Pintail Snipe *Gallinago stenura* at the fish farm, a first for Dubai. *Gazelle* 5(11): 4.

Richardson, C 1990 A study of the status of breeding seabirds on Qarnein Island. Appendix 1 in the Qarnein Expedition - recommendation on conservation. *Bull. Emirates Nat. Hist. Group (Abu Dhabi)* 40: 20-26.

Roberts, A 1989 Combining Israel and Egypt. (Tourist Information) *Birding World* 2(8): 296.

Rose, P 1990 Wintering waterfowl in Turkey. *IWRB News* 3: 10.

Rosenzweig, M 1989 A 1988 status report of the Red Sea Islands off the coast of Hurghada. *Courser* 2: 39-43.

Safriel, UN and Lavee, D 1988 Weight changes of cross-desert migrants at an oasis - do energetic considerations alone determine the length of stopover? *Oecologia (Berl.)* 76(4): 611-619.

Sahin, R 1990 Werdegang und Bedeutung sdes Kopfnickens beim Waldrapp (*Geronticus eremita*). *Journ. fur Orn.* 131(4): 445-451. English summary - Head nodding in Bald Ibises.

Saleh, MA 1989 The status of the Houbara Bustard in Egypt. *Bustard Studies* 4: 151-156.

Scherf, H 1988 Altagyptische Ibis-Bilder. *Naturwiss Rundsch* 41(8): 492-494

Schmidt, R 1990 Der aktuelle Ringfund - Zwergtaucher (*Podiceps ruficollis*). (Turkey) *Der Falke* 37(1): 30.

Schramm, A 1988 Schwane (Cygnae) in Aegypten - in Beziehung zum historischen Geschehen (Teil 1). *Ber. Naturhist. Ges. Hannover* 130: 75-109. English summary.

Scott, DA and Rose, PM 1989 *Asian Waterfowl Census 1989*. (Includes Middle East totals) IWRB, Slimbridge.

Shamsuddin, M and Mohammad, MK 1988 Incidence, distribution and host relationships of some ticks (Ixodoidea) in Iraq. *Journ. Univ. Kuwait (Sci)* 15(2): 321-330.

Shirihai, H 1989 Red-tailed and Red-rumped Wheatears in Israel. *Birding World* 2(11): 389-390

Shirihai, H 1990 Black Bush Robin. *Birding World* 3(10): 357-358.

Shirihai, H 1990 Possible hybrids between Yellow and Citrine Wagtail in Israel. *Dutch Birding* 12(1): 18-19.

Shirihai, H and Alstrom, P 1990 Identification of Hume's Short-toed Lark. *British Birds* 83(7): 262-272.

Shirihai, H, Cotteridge, D and Harris, A 1991 Photospot 31. Desert Warbler. *British Birds* 84(1): 24-26.

- Shirihai, H and Doherty, P 1990 Steppe Buzzard plumages. *Birding World* 3(1): 10-14.
- Shirihai, H, Mullarney, K and Grant, P 1990 Identification of Dunn's, Bar-tailed and Desert Larks. *Birding World* 3(1): 15-21.
- Siman, HY and Bunni MK 1988 Young and parental care of the Grey Hypocolius *Hypocolius ampelinus* Bonaparte. *Bull. Iraq Nat. Hist. Mus.* 8(1): 89-111.
- Simmons, KEL 1990 Bill colour of Graceful Warbler. *British Birds* 83(3): 125-126.
- Sorensen, UG 1990 Det kan nytte: Egypten er pa vej. *Fugle* 10(4): 16.
- Stagg, a 1989 The Ring-necked Parakeet in Saudi Arabia. *Oman Bird News* 7: 7-8.
- Stagg, AJ 1989 Tabuk airbase sewage lagoon, north west Saudi Arabia. *Phoenix* 6:7-8.
- Tavakoli, EV 1989 The White Stork distribution in Iran. pp183-187 in Rheinwald et al. q.v.
- Telfer, M 1988 *Turkey Bird Report*. (Visit June/July 1988) Privately published. Copy in BM (Nat. Hist.).
- Temple Lang, J 1989 Successful ICBP conference in Turkey. *Oryx* 23: 187.
- Turner, S 1989 Surprise appearance of Namaqua Dove *Oena capensis* at Ramtha Tip, Sharja. *Gazelle* 4(11): 6-7.
- Tye, A 1989 Superspecies in the genus *Oenanthe* (Aves, Turdidae). *Bonn. Zool. Beitr.* 40(3/4): 165-182.
- Tzovel, A 1990 Autumn migration of soaring birds in the northern valleys, 1988-9. *Torgos* 8(12) (17): 47-53. English summary pp 73-74.
- Ullman, M 1989 Toprakkale, Turkey: migrating raptors and storks. *Birding World* 2(3): 108-109.
- Ullman, M 1990 Pied and Black-eared Wheatear identification (inc. Israel photo). *Birding World* 3(2): 68-69.
- Ullman, M 1990 Bill shape of Calandra and Bimaculated Lark. *Dutch Birding* 12: 82-84.
- Ullman, M 1990 En aprilvecka pa Cypren. *Anser* 29(2): 159-161.
- Ullman, M 1990 Svart frankolin. *Var Fagelvarld* 49: 489.
- Ullman, M and Martins, R 1990 Nordjemen. *Var Fagelvarld* 49(2): 112-121.
- Upton, R 1989 The Houbara Bustard and the Arab falconer. *Bustard Studies* 4: 174-176.
- Uttley, J et al. 1990 Barr al Hikman - West Asian Shorebird Survey, Dec 1989 - Jan 1990. *Oman Bird News* 8: 2-4.
- van den Berg, AB 1989 Mystery Photographs 32: Olivaceous Warbler, (Turkey). *Dutch Birding* 11(3):116-117.
- van den Berg, AB 1989 Bald Ibis, *Dutch Birding* 11(3): 128-131.
- van der Schot, WEM 1989 Atlantic Petrel in Israel in April 1989. *Dutch Birding* 11(4): 170-172.
- van der Ven, J 1987 *Asian Waterfowl 1987, Mid-winter bird observations in some Asian countries*. IWRB, Slimbridge.
- van Meurs, RA 1989 Possible breeding of African Skimmer in Egypt in June 1987. *Dutch Birding* 11(2): 77-78.
- van Reit, C 1988 Cormorant records. *Bull. Emirates Nat. hist. Group (Abu Dhabi)* 35: 20.
- van Wingerde, J 1988 (House Martins in Cyprus). *Vogeljaar* 36(2): 88. In Dutch.

Varisco, DM 1989 Beyond rhino horn - wildlife conservation for North Yemen. *Oryx* 23: 215-219.

Varley, MJ 1989 Exercise Spring Victory 20-31 Mar 89 (Cyprus). *Bull. Army Bird-Watching Society* 2/89: B23-B25.

Welch, G and H 1989 A preliminary survey of the Arabian Bustard in Djibouti. *Bustard Studies* 4: 177-184.

Whittaker, A 1990 Lesser Whitethroat and Chiffchaff trapped by aphid excreta. (Israel) *British Birds* 83(10): 427-428.

Yekutieli, D 1989 *Birdwatching in Eilat*. International Birdwatching Centre, Eilat.

Yom-Tov, Y and Mendelsohn, H 1988 The zoogeography of Israel. 14. The zoogeography of the birds and mammals of Israel. 18. Birds migration in Israel.

19. Changes in the distribution and abundance of vertebrates in Israel during the 20th century. *Monogr. Biol.* 62:389-410, 497-514, 515-547.

Yom-Tov, Y 1989 Late breeding records of some Israeli desert birds. *Israel Journ. Zoology* 36(2): 77-80.

Zahavi, A 1988 Mate-guarding in the Arabian Babbler, a group-living songbird. *Proc. Int. Orn. Congr.* 19: 420-427.

Zahavi, A 1988 Mate choice through signals. *Proc. Int. Orn. Congr.* 19: 956-960.

Zakkai, G 1989 Breeding biology in the desert: the Mourning Wheatear. *Israel Land and Nature* 14(4):174-181.

Zimmerli, E 1988 Westzypem im Spatherbst. *Vogel Heimat* 58(7-8): 130-140.

Letters

Armenian Gulls

While I have no great desire to defend most current British usage for the nomenclature of the Herring and Lesser Black-backed group of gulls whose extreme forms of variation are represented by *Larus argentatus* and *L. fuscus*, some additional considerations need to be born in mind before there is any general move to adopt the 'splitting' classification advocated by some recent Continental authors such as Werner Suter (*OSME Bulletin* 25:12-15).

In the first place, it is not entirely accurate to imply that British authors were originally responsible for adopting a 'lumping' classification for the Old World forms (in sharp contrast to the 'splitting' classification still used for comparable North American birds presenting similar problems), since the southern populations were originally treated as a distinct species, the Yellow-legged Herring Gull *L. cachinnans*, as in the representative first guide to all seabirds, *Birds of the Ocean*, by WB Alexander (1928), until they were amalgamated by B Stegmann in 1934 (*J. Orn.* 82:340-380). In consequence it is now widely felt here that the need for any further revision should be demonstrated much more conclusively.

Secondly, this problem does not only involve the number of forms that we are dealing with, and their relation to each other, but also which scientific name then has priority for each of them. Thus while the Armenian Gulls '*L. armenicus*' currently sitting beside us seem rather different from the Yellow-legged Gulls, they also appear to intergrade imperceptibly through a mass of birds apparently belonging to the ill-defined intermediate forms *barbensis*, *taimyrensis*, and probably *mongolensis*, with another longer-recognised entity, Heuglin's Gull *L. heuglini*, so that if they are considered conspecific but distant from the Lesser Black-back this name would appear to have priority for all of them (Proceedings of the Second Mediterranean Seabird Symposium on the Status and Conservation of Seabirds: Ecogeography and Action Plan, Calvia, 21-26 March 1989, *Ardeola* suppl. in press).

In the circumstances it really seems much safer to refer to such birds by nice neutral descriptive terms such as 'forms' and 'groups' until it becomes possible to secure much wider general agreement on not only their relationship to each other but also their nomenclature.

Dr WRP Bourne, RFA Sir Percivale, BFPO Ships, UK.



Reviews

Turkey including Cyprus June 5th-19th 1989. *T Broome et al.* A privately produced report of 27 pages including 10 pages of maps. £3. Available from T Broome, 'Sibirica', 9 Vicarage Lane, Poynton, Cheshire SK12 1BG, UK. Profits from sales go to the Cheshire Ornithological Society.

Turkey has become a very popular destination for European birders in recent years and innumerable trip reports are now available. This report from a 1989 trip is perhaps the best.

A suggested 15-day itinerary, concentrating on the eastern specialities, opens the report and is followed by a 10-page site guide, including no less than 39 maps. The site guide is very comprehensive, including not only sites visited during the trip, but also covering additional localities gleaned from other reports. Although a few of the maps are somewhat basic, the majority are extremely detailed and should make finding most of the more difficult species 'easy'.

A further three pages provide additional background information relating to food, accommodation, road conditions etc. plus details of the itinerary followed on the trip. The report is completed with a systematic list covering 253 species, including most of the Turkish specialities.

I should like to have seen a list of additional references provided, but all in all this is an excellent report and an essential reference for anyone planning a trip to Turkey.

Richard Webb

Bird Songs of Israel and the Middle East. *By Krister Mild.* 114 species on two audio cassettes, with explanatory booklet and checklist of Israeli birds. £24.95 including postage. Available from Bird Recording Services/OSME Offer, PO Box 942, London E10 6RZ, UK.

These two cassettes are a follow up to Krister Mild's Soviet Bird Songs and are of a similar high standard. They cover 114 species, with a total playing time of three hours. As would be expected, the length and quality of each recording varies, but in the main the sound reproduction is good. Each species is introduced by its English name and a selection of recordings; for example alarm call, flight call and song are provided for most species. Details of the different calls, along with 'timings' are provided in the accompanying 77-page booklet, which also summarises the status of each species in Israel. A bibliography is included.

A wide range of species, the majority of which were recorded in Israel, have been included. The recordings include several species, such as Hume's Tawny Owl *Strix butleri*, Dunn's Lark *Eremalauda dunnii*, and Sinai Rosefinch *Carpodacus synoicus*, for which recordings have not previously been readily available, and as such will be a valuable source of reference for anyone interested in Middle Eastern ornithology. In addition, they will undoubtedly bring back countless pleasant memories of trips to the area for listeners.

The presentation pack also includes a 14-page checklist of Israeli birds, which details the status of each species on the Israeli list (up to and including 1989), season by season, using a system of codings. Israel is a popular destination with European birders and these cassettes should be a useful purchase for anyone visiting the area.

Richard Webb

The Birds of the United Arab Emirates. By *Colin Richardson*. Hobby Publications (Dubai and Warrington). 180 pages, 28 Colour plates, line drawings and maps. Softback £15.

The United Arab Emirates lie along the southern shore of the Arabian Gulf, from the Qatar Peninsula to the Gulf of Oman; bisecting northern Oman, thus separating the northern peninsula from the rest of that country. Consisting of seven Emirates (Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah, Ajman, Umm al Quwain, Ras al Khaimah and Fujairah), the total area of the UAE is about 110,030sq km. Many readers, particularly those unfamiliar with the region and perhaps holding preconceptions that Eastern Arabia consisted only of flat desert, will wonder at the photographs in this book which depict typical habitats: deserts, coasts, parks and gardens, mountains and wadis.

All you need to know about the birds of the UAE is here: monthly summaries; typical habitats; where, when and what to watch; together with useful location maps. Some 109 pages are devoted to an annotated national list of 360 (many mouth-watering) species, the majority illustrated in unfussy line drawings by Bill Morton. There are succinct remarks on status and habitat, supplemented by breeding distribution maps and migration timing charts. Twenty colour plates intersperse the text with 101 small, but mostly good quality photographs of birds.

In the list, the reader can appreciate some of the care with which this work has evidently been prepared. For example, with an average of three species per page, the line-drawn figures are placed to face each other across opposite pages. The eyebrows of some taxidermists and more than a few Gulf birdwatchers may well be momentarily lowered by the apparent absence of Herring Gull from the national list, an omission which the author is at pains to explain. Supplementary lists of unconfirmed species and escapes are given.

I like the compact size of this volume; just right for the glove compartment and light enough to be carried in the field. It appears reasonably robust, although the covers of my copy are starting to de-laminate. But this book is not a field guide, rather, as the cover states, a guide to status and distribution.

The photographs of habitat convey the physical diversity and, in many places, the wild beauty of this part of Arabia. Writing this while a blizzard rages beyond my window brings back warm memories of birdwatching trips to the UAE: seeing my first Red-wattled Plover in a hayfield at Ras al Khaimah; looking for White-collared Kingfisher amongst the mangroves of Khor Kalba; counting Crab Plovers on the mudflats of Umm al Quwain; and stark mountain ranges harbouring deep wadis, habitats for various birds of prey.

The birdwatching potential of the UAE is exemplified by this admirable, reasonably priced publication, which results from the enthusiasm and enterprise of its knowledgeable author. When peace is restored to Arabia, the UAE will surely be on the itinerary of those birdwatchers who roam the world. Perhaps, if you have not yet bought a copy of this welcome addition to the literature on Arabian Ornithology, you should.

Tom Nightingale

Weisstorchzug. Ökologi, Gefährdung und Schutz des Weisstorchs in Africa und Nahost. (1988) By H Schulz, WWF-Umweltforschung 3, 459p, Verlag Margraf, Weikersheim, Germany. (White Stork Migration. Ecology, Threats and Conservation of the White Stork in Africa and the Near East)

This nicely produced book is the result of an ICBP/WWF Germany project to investigate threats posed to White Storks *Ciconia ciconia* on migration and in their wintering areas. The impressive amount of information presented in this volume was gathered during the two years 1986-1987, by searching through available literature, sending out questionnaires, establishing individual contacts with specialists, and visits by the author to Israel, Sudan, South Africa, Zimbabwe, Lesotho, Kenya and Tanzania.

Schulz reviews the migration paths of White Storks, their habitat choice, threats and legal status. Habitat loss and habitat degradation, poisoning through pesticides and PCBs, collisions with power-lines, and direct human persecution (especially in some Sahelian countries where White Storks are considered a tasty protein resource) present the most serious dangers to this fragile species. A useful table lists the occurrence, status, threats and conservation measures needed, broken down for 56 African range states, while also providing a quick reference for the national accounts which form the largest part of the book. Each country's account is broken down in chapters reviewing the occurrence, habitat choice, threats, legal status, and conservation measures already undertaken, plus proposals for those still needed. Lists of literature references and maps of migration flyways (if applicable), White Stork observations (within one-degree grids) and recoveries of ringed birds complete the accounts. Where possible, the author discusses evidence of pesticide and PCB poisoning, human hunting impacts, or other threats on a national scale in more detail.

This report presents an information source of incredible value to conservationists about the ecology and threats faced by White Storks on migration and while wintering in Africa. It has already been used extensively by ICBP to draw up a management plan for an agreement to protect the species which will hopefully be signed by range states (in connection with the Bonn Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals) later this year. WWF Germany and Verlag Margraf are to be congratulated for making the results of the ICBP/WWF project available to a large audience in this highly informative book.

T Salathe



Library Report



In an effort to improve the service offered to members by the OSME Library, future reports will list all items specific to the Middle East received by the Society. This will hopefully make members more aware of the wide range of publications relating to the region.

Items received since the publication of Bulletin 25 :

Books/Study Reports

Bilet, M, Clarke, AW and Sandve, G 1990 Turkey 1990 further details from AW Clarke, Kyrresvingen 21, 3190 Horten, Norway.

Green, IA, Moorhouse, CN and West S 1990 Report of the Turkish Ornithological Expedition 1987 further details from Ian Green, 17 Temple Road, Norwich, Norfolk, UK.

Jennings, MC, al Shoudoukhi, SA, al Abbasi, TM and Collenette, S 1990 ABBA Survey No 7: Results of an Ornithological Survey of Central and North Western Saudi Arabia 12 March - 8 April 1989 copies available from Mike Jennings, 1 Warners Farm, Warners Drove, Somersham, Cambridgeshire PE17 3HW, UK; price £12.

Journals

Cyprus Ornithological Society (1957) Newsletters 06/07, 08, 09, 10, 11/90, covering the period June to November 1990, published by COS, c/o CJL Bennett, PO Box 4319, Nicosia, Cyprus.

Emirates Bird Report No 12, April to June; No 13, July to September 1990, published by Colin Richardson, PO Box 2825, Dubai, UAE.

The Gazelle Vol 5, Nos 7, 8, 9, 10 & 11 covering the period July to November 1990, published by the Dubai Natural History Group, PO Box 9234, Dubai, UAE.

Kelaynaktan Haberler (DHKD Newsletter) Nos 36 - 38, published by DHKD, PK 18, 80810 Bebek, Istanbul, Turkey. Turkish text.

Medmaravis News No 8, August 1990, published by Mediterranean Bird Association, 20 Rue St Martin, 75004 Paris, France.

Oman Bird News No 9, Winter 1990, published by Oman Bird Group, c/o Michael Gallagher, Oman Natural History Museum, PO Box 668, Muscat, Sultanate of Oman.

Porphyrio Vol 2, No 1/2 (1990), published by Groupe d'Ornithologie du Maroc Central (GOMAC), Departement de Biologie, Faculte des Sciences, Meknes, Morocco. French text.

The Torgos Vol 8 (2), No 17, published by Israeli Ornithological Centre, SPNI, 155 Herzl Street, Tel-Aviv 68101, Israel.

Trip Lists/Preliminary Reports

Benstead, P and Jeffs, C 1990 Selected bird records from a trip to Southern Turkey 8 May 1990 to 23 May 1990; privately produced.

Blunt, G 1990 The birds and flowers of Eastern Turkey 31st of May to 15th of June 1990; privately produced.

Dubois, PJ 1990 Turquie Oriental (25 mai - 10 Juin 1990); privately produced.

Paulson, G 1990 Trip list for Turkey visit April 1990; privately produced.

WIWO 1990 Preliminary report on the WIWO Israel Project, Spring 1989; more details from WIWO, c/o Dutch Society for the Protection of Birds, Dribergseweg 16c, 3708 JB Zeist, Netherlands.

The OSME Library welcomes copies of any material relating to the birds of the Middle East, especially unpublished trip lists and reports; all records add to our knowledge of the region.

OSME News

Cover auction

The original pen-and-ink drawing for the front cover of this Bulletin, a White-headed Duck by Nik Borrow, measuring 13 x 13cm, is for sale in a postal auction. The proceeds will go to the Conservation Research Fund. Please send your bid (no money at this stage) to Cover Auction, OSME, The Lodge, Sandy, Bedfordshire SG19 2DL, UK; to arrive by 31 July 1991. If your bid is successful, we will inform you immediately, and send the drawing on receipt of a cheque.



OSME AGM 1991

The thirteenth AGM will be held on Saturday 20 July 1991 in the Lecture Theatre, Natural History Museum, Cromwell Road, South Kensington, London. Doors open at 1.15pm for a 1.45pm start. This year, we are planning to have four speakers - see enclosed programme for details - but as three of them have been affected by the recent Gulf war, it is possible that there may last-minute changes.

Everyone is welcome at the AGM (including non-members), but to obtain free entry to the museum, you must have tickets in advance. Two tickets are included in the AGM programme and additional tickets are available free, from the Secretary, OSME, c/o The Lodge, Sandy, Bedfordshire SG19 2DL, UK. Please enclose a stamped addressed envelope and allow at least 14 days for delivery.

After the AGM, why not join OSME Council members, speakers and friends in the bar of the Norfolk Hotel, Harrington Street (opposite South Kensington Underground Station) for an informal drink and chat. The hotel serves a range of food. We look forward to seeing you there.

OSME in Amsterdam, September 1990

A group of eight Middle Eastern 'bird buffs' left England for overnight travel to the Netherlands for OSME's first participation in a European event. Organised by the Dutch Ornithologists' Union (NOU) and incorporating the Foundation Working Group on International Wader and Waterfowl Research (WIWO), the event was to prove a success. Approximately 150 people from as far afield as Turkey, southern France and Denmark arrived at the University of Amsterdam to hear the day's speakers.

The spirit and professionalism of the Dutch speakers, who talked in both Dutch and English, overcame technical problems with the projection equipment. Tom van der Have (NOU/WIWO) gave an informative and witty talk on 'the eastern Mediterranean wader project 1990 - crossroads of wader flyways'. This was a summary of research carried out in Egypt, Tunisia, Turkey, Greece and the Sea of Azov and Black Sea. His opening - 'The English may rule the waves, but the Dutch are good in mud' - gave way to slides of WIWO teams, waist-deep, counting rather confused-looking waders in habitat more associated with hippopotamuses.

Hans Shekkerman (Foundation for Ornithological Research in Egypt) followed with a presentation on Egyptian wetland research during the winter and spring of 1990. The activities involved 22 team members from six countries. They counted waterbirds, particularly waders, in selected areas, including trapping in the spring. They also paid regular visits to the markets of Port Said and Damietta to obtain information on hunting pressures.

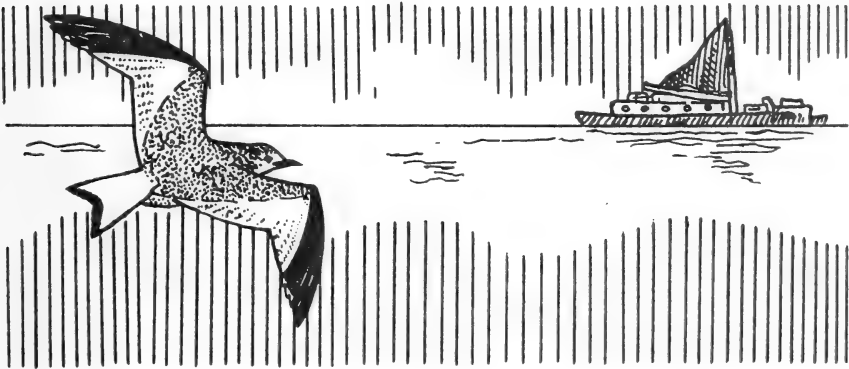
After a break, Alex Yurlov was warmly welcomed as the first Soviet speaker, his subject being 'migrating waders in the Middle East and their relation to eastern breeding sites in the Barabba Steppe, west of Novosibirsk'.

After lunch, OSME made its mark on the meeting, with Hilary Welch on twin projectors and Geoff Welch speaking. After the increasing technical problems during the morning's talks, the Welch's talk stirred the audience. Geoff's declaration that Djibouti was 'gateway to Heaven' was backed up by superb photographs of the country's potential for migration studies.

Rod Martins then spoke on bird conservation opportunities in the new, united Yemen, and Gernant Magnin (DHKD) then presented an overview of illegal hunting in Turkey and its possible impact on bird populations.

Following the meeting, many of us travelled to Flevoland where a formal meeting between representatives from DHKD, OSME and WIWO took place to pool ideas for bird conservation research initiatives in Turkey. All three organisations had proposed major survey work on the Kizilirmak Delta, and so a joint project was readily agreed.

On the Sunday, a smaller group spent the day birdwatching on the superb Oostvaardersplassen, the largest and best known wetland nature reserve in Flevoland, which is designated a 'National Nature Monument'. The UK contingent particularly enjoyed the constant stream of birds of prey, but the highlight of the day was a very tame, juvenile Sabine's Gull, feeding on the hard shoulder of a busy road. This created a Dutch 'twitch'.



The whole event was most enjoyable, and OSME would warmly like to thank NOU and WIWO, and in particular Vincent van Den Berk, for making it all possible.

Mark Andrews



Announcements

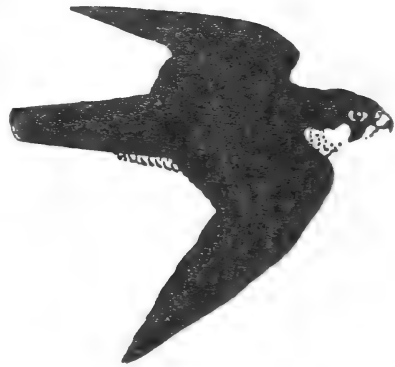
Göksü Delta Project 1991-1992

DHKD, with support from the Netherlands government and La Tour du Valat Research Station, is organising a pilot survey of the Göksü Delta to determine the feasibility of producing an integrated land-use management plan for the area. The project will be running for at least one year, from 1 April 1991.

Any birdwatchers visiting the area are encouraged to provide copies of their records to the project team - Nafiz Guder (DHKD Project Officer) or Vincent van den Berk (Project Consultant). In return, Nafiz and Vincent are happy to provide information on what to see where, copies of maps of the delta, etc. They can be contacted at the project's headquarters on the edge of the delta: DHKD Göksü Delta Project Office, Taylan Apartments, Abdi Ipekci Caddesi 74, 33900 Tasucu, Icel, Turkey.

Small Falcons Conference

The first of its kind, this international conference on all aspects of wild and captive 'Biology and Conservation of Small Falcons' and organised by the Hawk and Owl Trust is to be held at the University of Kent, Canterbury, UK, during 6-8 September 1991. It has attracted a wide range of speakers from all over the world. Leaflet and registration details are available from Fiona Swingland, DICE, University of Kent, Canterbury, Kent CT2 7NY, UK. Offers of poster papers and contributions to workshops should be addressed to Dr M Nicholls, Christchurch College, North Holmes Road, Canterbury, Kent CT1 1QU, UK.



Requests

Egyptian Geese

Leander de Ceulaer is studying Egyptian Geese *Alopochen aegyptiacus*, and is keen to receive information on population size, migration patterns and ringing results from anywhere in the Middle East. Please contact Leander directly at: Pompstraat 12, 3012 Wilsele, Belgium.

Little Bustards

Dr Amoozadeh, of Sari, Iran, is studying this species. We do not have details of the study, but if any members have special knowledge of the species or are keen to help, they should contact: Dr Amoozadeh, PO Box 48185-679, Research Center of the Environment, Mazandaran, Sari, Iran.



Around the Region

This section details recent bird sightings within the OSME region. Whenever possible, the significance of the record will be included. Records are published for interest only, and their publication here neither implies acceptance nor rejection by the records committee of the relevant country. Any OSME member is welcome to contribute to this feature, and we are particularly keen to hear from anyone resident in the Middle East who could submit records. To submit records for Bulletin 27, covering the period March to August 1991, please write to: Around the Region, OSME, c/o The Lodge, Sandy, Bedfordshire SG19 2DL, UK.

Compiled by Guy Kirwan

Bahrain

All records have been accepted by the Bahrain Natural History Society Bird Recorder.

Honey Buzzard *Pernis apivorus* Eleven records during 12 September to 3 November 1990; scarce but possibly regular and overlooked migrant (see Bull. 25:42). *E Hirschfeld*

Black-winged Stilt *Himantopus himantopus* Third breeding site, at Dumistan pools, where two pairs raised at least three chicks. *D Davies, E Hirschfeld*

Caspian Plover *Charadrius asiaticus* One juvenile, Janabiyah reeds, 3-4 September 1990; one juvenile, BAPCO Bay, 17 September 1990; Scarce migrant. *E Hirschfeld*

Broad-billed Sandpiper *Limicola falcinellus* Maximum of 900 adults in one roost during August 1990; large numbers now appear to be regular. *E Hirschfeld*

African Collared Dove *Streptopelia riseogrisea* One Muharraq, 12 January 1991; first record, although possibly escaped from captivity. *E Hirschfeld*

Palm Dove *Streptopelia senegalensis* Up to eight at Badan farm, 11 November 1990 to 11 January 1991; at least one, Jasra, 24 November 1990; eighth and ninth records. *E Hirschfeld*

Citrine Wagtail *Motacilla citreola* Small influx, involving at least 12 juveniles, all showing characteristics of *M. c. werae*, during August and September 1990; Earliest ever autumn records. *E Hirschfeld*

atroregularis Up to 10 birds at three sites; influx. *E Hirschfeld*

Cinereous Bunting *Emberiza cineracea* Two, Jasra, 19 September 1990; first autumn record. *E Hirschfeld*

Black-headed Bunting *Emberiza melanocephala* Two juveniles, Janabiyah reeds, 9 September 1990, and one 16-17 September 1990; only seven previous records, presumably overlooked as species is common in Eastern Province of Saudi Arabia. *E Hirschfeld*

Egypt

Green Heron *Butorides striatus* One, Aswan 30 December 1990, and two there 6 January 1991; uncommon visitor to Upper Nile Valley. *Derek J Evans*



Citrine Wagtail, Bahrain, September 1990 (Photograph Erik Hirschfeld)

Bluethroat *Luscinia svecica* One, Sanad mangroves, 31 August 1990; earliest ever autumn record. *E Hirschfeld*

Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris* One Muharraq, 12 January 1991; Eighth record, seventh was in 1977. *E Hirschfeld*

Black-throated Thrush *Turdus*

Corncrake *Crex crex* One, Port Said, 15 September 1990, a captive live bird offered for sale which had been obtained locally; scarce passage visitor. *Derek J Evans*

Jack Snipe *Lymnocyptes minimus* One, Sidi Abd El Rahman, 31 October 1990;

scarce passage visitor. *Derek J Evans*
Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa* Five, Aswan, 29 December 1990, three there 31 December 1990 and eight 6 January 1991; rare in winter. *Derek J Evans*
Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica* Two, Suez Bay 2 October 1990; rare passage visitor. *Derek J Evans*
Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus* Five, Suez Bay, 29 September 1990, scarce passage visitor. *Derek J Evans*
Gull-billed Tern *Gelochelidon nilotica* Two, Aswan, 30 December 1990, one there 31 December, and four there 5-6 January 1991; rare winter visitor. *Derek J Evans*
Swift Tern *Sterna bergii* Three, Ain Sukhna, 29 September 1990; rare migrant. *Derek J Evans*
Black Tern *Chlidonias niger* Two, Aswan, 26 December 1990; rare winter visitor. *Derek J Evans*
Woodlark *Lullula arborea* One, Sidi Abd El Rahman, 23 November 1990; rare winter visitor. *Derek J Evans*
Dunnoch *Prunella modularis* One, Sidi Abd El Rahman, 2 and 23 November; rare and irregular winter visitor. *Derek J Evans*
Ring Ouzel *Turdus torquatus* One, Sidi Abd El Rahman, 24 and 25 November; rare and irregular winter visitor. *Derek J Evans*
Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris* Four, Sidi Abd El Rahman, 23 November 1990, nine there 24 November and five there 25 November; irregular winter visitor. *Derek J Evans*
Redwing *Turdus iliacus* One, Sidi Abd El Rahman, 28 October 1990; scarce and irregular winter visitor. *Derek J Evans*
Mistle Thrush *Turdus viscivorus* One, Sidi Abd El Rahman, 25 November; rare and irregular winter visitor. *Derek J Evans*
Red-breasted Flycatcher *Ficedula parva* One Sidi Abd El Rahman, 28 October 1990, two there 29 October; scarce

migrant. *Derek J Evans*
Brambling *Fringilla montifringilla* Two Sidi Abd El Rahman, 28 October 1990, rare winter visitor. *Derek J Evans*
Siskin *Carduelis spinus* One, Sidi Abd El Rahman, 25 November 1990; scarce winter visitor. *Derek J Evans*

Israel

Ruddy Shelduck *Tadorna ferruginea* Four, Eilat, 15 September 1990; five Ma'agan Mikhael, 2-3 November 1990; scarce passage and winter visitor. *S Keen*
White-eyed Gull *Larus leucoptthalmus* Maximum of 14, Eilat, October 1990; unusually high count. *S Keen*
Roseate Tern *Sterna dougallii* Adult, Tishlovet Reservoir, near Afula, 10 September 1990; fourth record, being the first adult and the first inland. *S Keen*
Olive-backed Pipit *Anthus hodgsoni* One Grofit kibbutz, 24 October 1990; rare migrant, most often recorded in autumn. *S Keen*
River Warbler *Locustella fluviatilis* One, Maoz Hayyim, near Beit Shean, 22 August 1990; uncommon passage migrant. *S Keen*
Icterine Warbler *Hippolais icterina* One Maoz Hayyim 22 August 1990; scarce passage migrant. *S Keen*
Barred Warbler *Sylvia nisoria* First-winter, Yotvata, 30 September 1990; uncommon passage migrant, scarce in autumn. *S Keen*

Jordan

Dunn's Lark *Eremalauda dunnii* Late records: three singing, Wadi Fidan, 21 April 1990; two near Qasr Kharana, 24 April 1990 and one Azraq, 23 April 1990; additional to those of Bull. 25:45. *E Massiah*
Red-breasted Flycatcher *Ficedula parva* Late record: female, Aqaba, 16 April 1990; third record. *E Massiah*

Oman

All records accepted by OBRC

Lesser Flamingo *Phoenicopterus minor*

Two adults, first seen near Khaburah, later at Saham (North Oman) 14 December 1990 to at least 15 February 1991; second record. *R A C Jensen, H and J Eriksen, K and C H Fry, C M Greaves, R A Richardson, M A L Cummins*

White-fronted Goose *Anser albifrons*

Two, Khor Mughsayl (south Oman), 29 November 1990; eleventh record. *I J A Brown*

Greylag Goose *Anser anser* Adult, Khor Dirif (south Oman), 4 December 1990; tenth record. *H and J Eriksen*

Comb Duck *Sarkidiornis melanotos* Adult male, Razat Farm, Salalah, and nearby khors (south Oman), 21 August 1990 to at least 3 February 1991; this species is believed not to have been kept in captivity in Oman and nearby countries; first record. *D R Deeks, I McLeish, I J A Brown*

Honey Buzzard *Pernis apivorus* Two, Near Salalah, 2 August 1990; tenth record. *I J A Brown, E Hirschfeld*

Golden Eagle *Aquila chrysaetos* Four known nesting sites in central Oman - three nests with one chick each and one with two rotten eggs on 7-8 February 1991. *M R Brown, H and J Eriksen, K and C H Fry*

White-breasted Waterhen *Amaurornis phoenicurus* One, Razat Farm, 6 January 1990; juvenile, Masirah, 25 October to 16 November 1990; adult, Khor Rouri (south Oman), 22 November 1990; juvenile, Razat Farm, 7 December 1990 to 7 January 1991; adult and juvenile (different from above), Masirah, 11 December 1990; seventh to eleventh records. *I J A Brown, J Bryan, D R Deeks, C M Greaves, I McLeish, W F Simpson*

Painted Snipe *Rostratula benghalensis* Adult female, Khor Sawli (south Oman), 1 August 1990; third record. *I J A Brown*

Koel *Eudynamis scolopacea* Male, Masirah, 5-11 January 1990; female,

Hilf (Masirah), 18 March-24 April 1990, male, Hilf, 22-29 October 1990; ninth to eleventh records. *C M Greaves, J Bryan*

Long-eared Owl *Asio otus* One, Hilf, 18 February to 2 March 1990; second record. *C M Greaves, J Bryan, D J G Foster*

Olive-backed Pipit *Anthus hodgsoni* One, Hilf, 25 March 1990; third record. *C M Greaves*

Saudi Arabia

Bittern *Botaurus stellaris* One, Yanbu al-Sinaiyah, 25 September 1990; seventh record at Yanbu since 1979. *B S Meadows*

Levant Sparrowhawk *Accipiter brevipes* Flock of about 70, Yanbu al-Nakl, 29 September 1990, passing over in southerly direction. Previous records autumn 1987 and 1988. *B S Meadows*

Steppe Buzzard *Buteo vulpinus* Flock of about 270, Yanbu, 29 September 1990; largest concentration during autumn 1990. Previous records in 1988. *B S Meadows*

Verreaux's Eagle *Aquila verreauxi* Adult, Wadi Hamd, 9 November 1990; first record for central Hejaz, albeit recent observations near Tabuk (Jebel Lawz) and Taif. *B S Meadows*

Quail *Coturnix coturnix* One, Yanbu al-Sinaiyah, 10 December; first December record at Yanbu, previous records January and February 1990. *B S Meadows*



Common Crane *Grus grus* Adult, Yanbu al-Sinaiyah, 18 November 1990; first record for Yanbu, small numbers have wintered south of Jeddah during past two winters. *B S Meadows*

Spur-winged Plover *Hoplopterus spinosus* Adults with three half-grown chicks, Yanbu al-Sinaiyah, 11 November 1990; all previous breeding records between March and July. *B S Meadows*

Sociable Plover *Chettusia gregaria* One, Yanbu al-Bahr (refuse tip), 20 December 1990; three previous records at Yanbu were in October; first record since 1984. *B S Meadows*

Collared Pratincole *Glareola pratincola* One, Yanbu al-Sinaiyah, 8 December 1990; first December record at Yanbu. *B S Meadows*

Black Tern *Chlidonias niger* One, Yanbu al-Sinaiyah, 1 November 1990; only previous record along the Saudi Arabian Red Sea coast was at Yanbu in November 1986. *B S Meadows*

African Turtle Dove *Streptopelia roseogrisea* Pair, Madian Salah, 30 November 1990; most northerly record to date of a species which seems to be expanding its range rapidly. First seen in the Yanbu-Medina area in 1987, now seen regularly. *B S Meadows*

Mourning Wheatear *Oenanthe lugens* One, Yanbu al-Nakl, 23 November 1990; two pairs, Madian Salah, 29-30 November; juvenile, 29-30 November; breeds (*O l lugens?*) in the sandstone localities of the northern Hejaz (first discovered in 1986), now also established as a winter visitor (*O l persica?*) to the Yanbu area. *B S Meadows*

Pygmy Sunbird *Anthreptes platurus* Seven, Yanbu al-Nakl, 2 November 1990; two, near Medina, 9 November; one-two, Yanbu al-Sinaiyah, 6 November 1990 to 7 January 1991; winter influx north of the Tropic of Cancer for the second year in succession. *B S Meadows*

Golden Oriole *Oriolus oriolus*

Correction: the entry in Bulletin 25 should read 'oversummered', not 'overwintered'.

Desert Finch *Rhodospiza obsoleta* Seven, in full breeding plumage, Khaybar, 30 November 1990; a new locality, although in 1985 I found this species as far south as Medina. *B S Meadows*

Sinai Rosefinch *Carpodacus erythrinus* One, Madain Salah, 29 November 1990; third record in this locality since 1984; almost certainly resident in this area of extensive sandstone outcrops. Southerly range extension. *B S Meadows*

African Silverbill *Euodice cantans* Two, Yanbu al-Nakl, 6 November 1990 and one on 1 November; not positively recorded north of the Tropic of Cancer until February 1990. Incidentally, the above birds were in an area where feral Indian Silverbills have been established since 1985. *B S Meadows*

United Arab Emirates

White Stork *Ciconia ciconia* 25 wintering, Digdaga fodder fields, Ras al Khaimah, 21 December 1990 to late January 1991; first flock to overwinter since 1985, generally rare on passage. *C Richardson, WR P Bourne*

Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus* One female, over fodder fields at Digdaga, 5 October 1990; fourth record since 1987, these birds are scarce, usually female and very few identified with certainty. *J Bannon*

Golden Eagle *Aquila chrysaetos* Immature soaring below Jebel Hafit summit (UAE's highest mountain), 23 November 1990; believed resident in locality (probably in neighbouring Oman). First confirmed sighting in many years. *J A D Chapman, D Robinson*

Merlin *Falco columbarius* Female, Dubai (over Zabeel water treatment plant), 4 November 1990; second record. The first was near Abu Dhabi, August 1989. *D Brown*

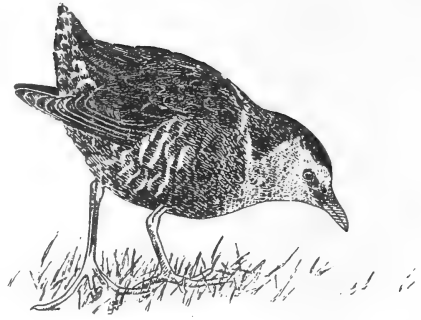
Barbary Falcon *Falco peregrinoides*

Immature, near Fujeirah, 19 November 1990; further evidence to support reports by local people that this birds is trapped (viz. nests) locally. W R P Bourne

Little Crane *Porzana parva* Immature, Saffa park, Dubai, 2-11 October 1990; first record for UAE. The occurrence of juveniles of this species and *P. pusilla* at the same time in Dubai confirmed the difficulties in separating the two in the field. C Richardson, M Pitt

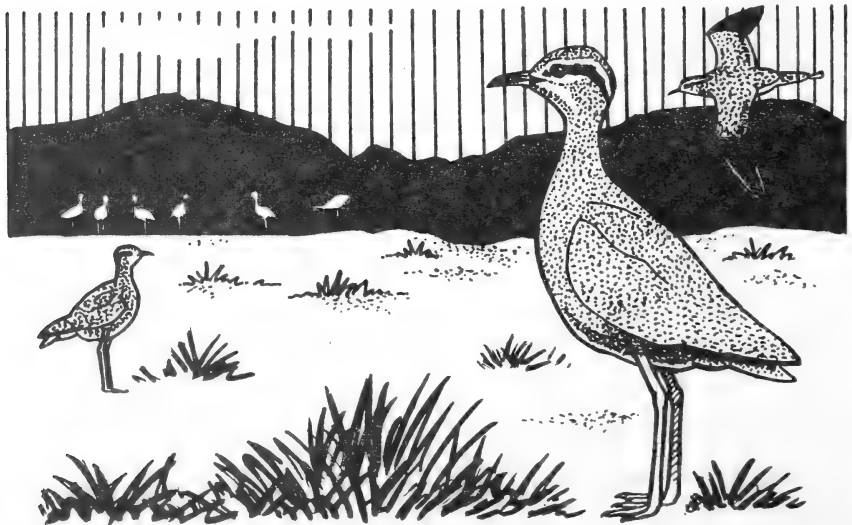
Baillon's Crane *Porzana pusilla* Juvenile, Emirates Golf Course, near Dubai, 9 October 1990; only sixth certain record for UAE, although probably occurs more regularly. Other reports not clearly separated from Little Crane. M Pitt, C Richardson

Cream-coloured Courser *Cursorius cursor* Eighteen, Emirates Golf Course, 19 September 1990; largest flock recorded in recent years. C Richardson
Caspian Plover *Charadrius asiaticus* Two, Emirates Golf Course, 3-4 September 1990; last reported 10 September 1988 at the same site. Less than 10 records. C Richardson, M Pitt



Red-wattled Lapwing *Hoplopterus indicus* Twenty-two (largest flock recorded), Rugheilat Farm, 6 September 1990; included a flock on passage; suspected migrant in UAE, but this is the clearest indication known. C Richardson

Long-toed Stint *Calidris subminuta* One, Ramtha Tip, Sharja, 14 September 1990; first record for UAE. One, Zabeel water treatment plant, 28 September to 2 November 1990; two separate sightings of up to three, near Abu Dhabi, 1-5 October 1990. M Pitt, J A D Chapman, D Robinson, C Richardson



Broad-billed Sandpiper *Limicola falcinellus* Four hundred and eighty three counted at Khor Dubai during Asian Waterfowl Census 18 January 1991, in salt scrub high tide roost in company of sandpipers; rarely recorded in numbers since massive counts of autumn 1986. *C Richardson, G Ricks*

Great Snipe *Gallinago media* One, Saffa Park, 3-12 October; rare passage migrant. First record since October 1987 when one was on Das Island. Less than 10 certain previous records, mostly mid September to October. *J Bannon, C Richardson, M Pitt*

Pintail Snipe *Gallinago stenura* One, Zabeel water treatment plant, 24 October to 2 November 1990, after fall of snipes; first Dubai record, third in UAE. Last recorded, Abu Dhabi, March 1979. *C Richardson, M Pitt*

Pied Kingfisher *Ceryle rudis* Up to two wintering, Ramtha Tip, Sharja, from 4 November 1990; only five other confirmed records, mostly in winter. Last recorded at this site November to December 1989. *S Turner*

Grey Hypoclious *Hypoclious ampelinus* Two males, Emirates Golf Course, 2 November 1990; first record in Dubai and less than 10 other records. *C Richardson*

Robin *Erithacus rubecula* One, Saffa Park, 3 November 1990, and another there 11-31 January 1991; one, Dubai Zoo, 24-26 November; two (possibly three), Jebel Ali Hotel grounds, 17 January 1991; rare winter visitor. *J Hart, C Richardson, M Pitt, R Khan*

Eversmann's Redstart *Phoenicurus erythronotus* Female, Emirates Golf Course, 7 November 1990; first record since one in Dubai, January 1988. One, Ansab, Western Desert, 18-19 November 1990; less than eight other confirmed records in UAE. *C Richardson, W R P Bourne, L Reaney*

Eastern Pied Wheatear *Oenanthe picata* Sub-species *picata*, first recognised in UAE in 1987. Less than a handful of

records since. One male, gravel plains by Qarn Nazwa (south of Dubai) 14 September 1990 to February 1991; two males, 1 October 1990, one in song (establishing wintering territory?); one female, on separate winter territory, mid December 1990 to at least February 1991. *C Richardson, M Pitt*

Ring Ouzel *Turdus torquatus* One at Bu Hasa, an oil field in the Western Desert, 29 November to 10 December 1990; third UAE record; second was of one in Dubai in January 1989. *D Robinson*

Black-throated Thrush *Turdus ruficollis* Two, Asab, 10-12 November 1990; singles, Dubai and Jebel Ali (4 sites), from 4 January 1991; two, Saffa Park, 11-14 January; two, Emirates Golf Course, 27 January; first significant influx since winter 1984/5. *M Pitt, C Richardson, J Hart, J Footitt, R Clevely, G Ricks, L Reaney*

Upcher's Warbler *Hippolais languida* One, Dubai, 6 September 1990, one, Abu Dhabi, 26 September; one, Khor Kalba, 8 November; rare autumn migrant. *C Richardson, M Pitt, J Hollingworth*

Hume's Lesser Whitethroat *Sylvia althaea* One, Asab, 7 December 1990; fourth since this species was separated in 1987. *L Reaney*

Dusky Warbler *Phylloscopus fuscatus* One seen and calling beside Saffa Park's overgrown irrigation pond, 19 October 1990; first record for UAE. *M Pitt*

Great Grey Shrike *Lanius excubitor* Northern Iranian race *L e pallidirostris*, on passage September to mid November, including one juvenile, Dubai, 21 September; *L e excubitor* is common resident, but passage timing of non-resident races usually goes unrecorded. *M Pitt, C Richardson*

Brambling *Fringilla montifringilla* Twenty-five, Wadi Reum fodder fields, Western desert southwest of Abu Dhabi, 7 December 1990; sixth UAE record. *D Robinson*

Siskin *Carduelis spinus* Two, Asab, 3 November 1990; six, Wadi Hayl,

Fujeirah, 9 November; eight, Bu Hasa and three, Asab, 17 November to 8 December 1990; 12 foraging on Casuarina cone seeds, Saffa park, 30 November 1990; first influx of rare winter visitor since 1987. *M Pitt, C Richardson, D Robinson*

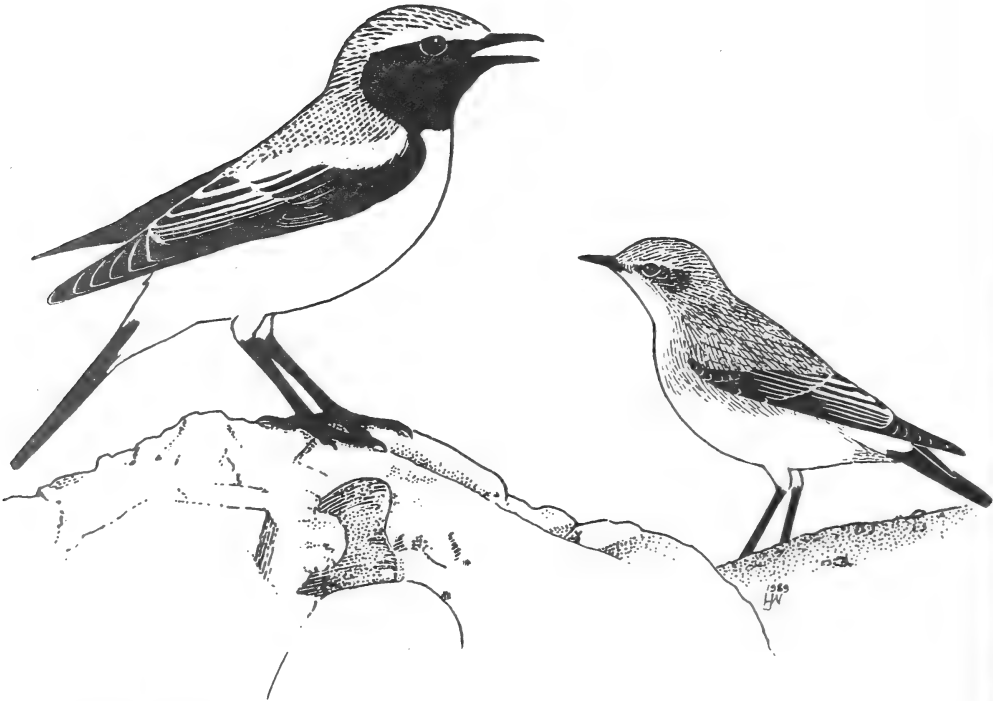
Trumpeter Finch *Bucanetes githagineus* One, 23 November, foothills north of Al Ain; recorded here several times over recent years, but with no evidence

of breeding: status remains mystery.

M Pitt C Richardson

Cinereous Bunting *Emberiza cineracea* One, female, 20 September, Zabeel water treatment plant; first autumn record of this rare migrant. *M Pitt, J A D Chapman, C Richardson et al*

Rustic Bunting *Emberiza rustica* One, female, Asab, 6 December 1990; fourth UAE record. *L Reaney*



Desert Wheatears



Anatolian Sky



Bird-watching in Turkey

Umay Tours of Kusadasi, Turkey, are specialist agents at organizing tours of bird-watching and natural history all over Turkey, for individuals or groups.

For further details, please contact:

Umay Tours Travel Agency (Mr Demir Unsal)

Ataturk Bulvari 38/9

Kusadas-Turkey

Tel: 636-16005/13611

Fax: 636-17145 Telex: 58578 umy

or UK-based representative:

Anatolian Sky Travel & Tours

Premier House

43-48 New Street

Birmingham

B2 4LJ

Tel: 021-633 4018

Fax: 021-643 3546

Zoology in the Middle East

is the only scientific journal covering the whole scope of zoology in the Middle East. It intends to further the understanding of the Middle East as a zoogeographical unit and aims to improve the interchange of knowledge and ideas between specialists on different subjects and taxa. 28 articles on birds in the first four volumes show the high input of the journal into ornithology.

The journal is printed on high quality paper and is illustrated with many maps, drawings and photographs. The current subscription price (vol. 4) is DM 25.00 (£ 8.50) per volume when ordered directly from the publisher. Single volumes can also be obtained from OSME's Sales Officer.

Max Kasperek Verlag · Bleichstraße 1 · D-6900 Heidelberg
Germany

Ornithological Society of the Middle East

c/o The Lodge, Sandy, Bedfordshire SG19 2DL, UK

The Ornithological Society of the Middle East was formed in April 1978 as a successor to the Ornithological Society of Turkey. Its aims are as follows:

To collect, collate and publish ornithological data on the birds of the Middle East.

To encourage an interest in and conservation of birds of the Middle East.

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. Current membership subscription is £7 individual, £10 family; airmail £10 individual £13 family (airmail rates not applicable to Europe). Life membership £150.

Publications *Sandgrouse* is the Society's journal and contains scientific papers on all aspects of the ornithology of the Middle East. The *OSME Bulletin*, issued twice yearly to all members, covers all aspects of birdwatching and conservation within the Middle East.

For further details, please write to:

The Secretary, OSME, c/o The Lodge, Sandy, Bedfordshire SG19 2DL, UK.

Charitable registration number 282938.

Advertising rates: Full page £60; half page £40; quarter page £25. Inserts from £75.

Contents

- 1 Editorial - The Gulf War
1 Priority bird species in Turkey *Richard Porter*
8 Towards a Turkish Atlas? *Max Kasperek*
13 Atlas of Breeding Birds of Arabia: Progress Report *Mike Jennings*
16 Impressions of autumn migration in mid-October along the Cukurova coast, near the Belen Pass, southern Turkey *Vincent van den Berk*
20 Rare Birds in Bahrain 1989 and 1990 *Erik Hirschfeld*
25 Spring raptor observations from Djibouti *Geoff and Hilary Welch*
27 Photographing birds in the Middle East *Paul Doherty*
31 Great Black-headed Gulls on Lake Nasser, Egypt in January 1989 *Ted Hoogendoorn*
32 Gull records from the northern Egyptian Red Sea coasts in January and February 1989 *W (Ted) Hoogendoorn*
36 News and Information *compiled by Simon Albrecht*
39 Recent Literature *compiled by Mrs FE Warr*
49 Letter: Armenian Gulls *Dr WRP Bourne*
50 Reviews
54 Library Report
55 OSME News: Cover Auction
55 OSME AGM
56 OSME in Amsterdam
58 Announcements
59 Requests
59 Around the Region *compiled by Guy Kirwan*



OSME C/O THE LODGE, SANDY, BEDFORDSHIRE SG19 2DL, UK