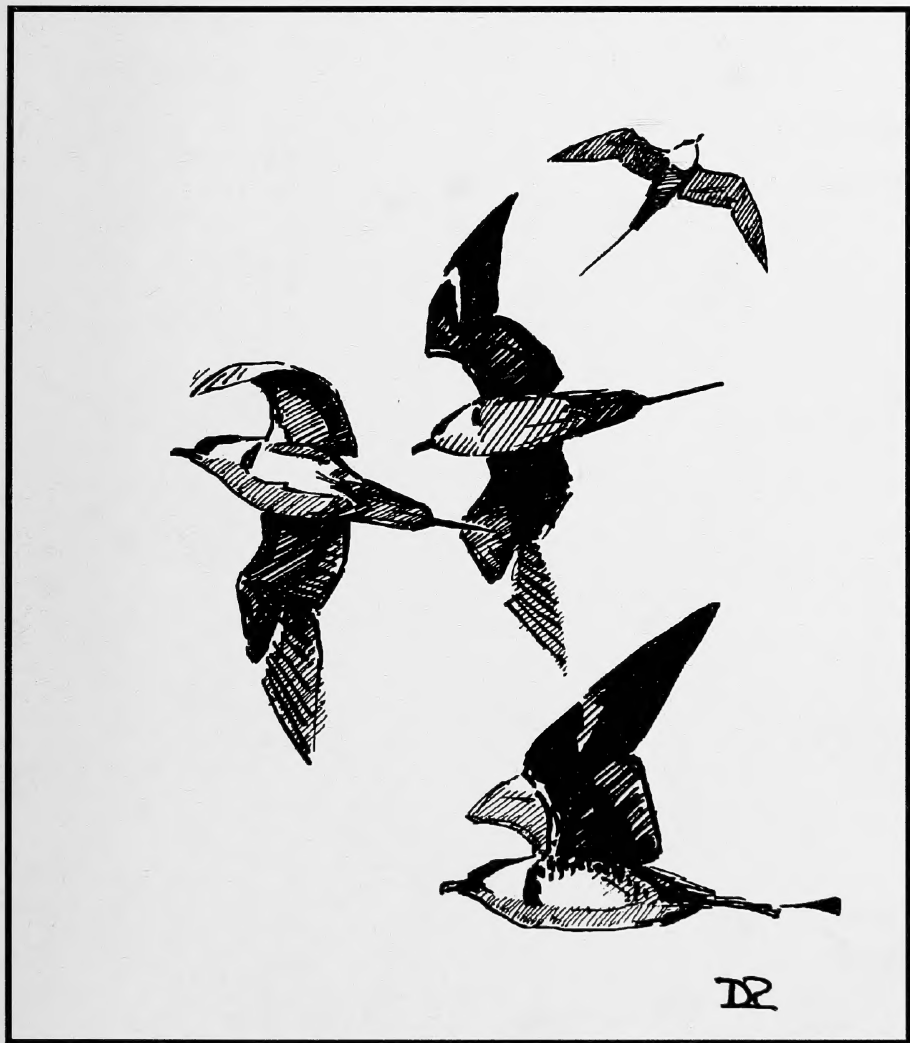


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All records in this *Bulletin* are subject to acceptance by the relevant records committees of the country concerned.

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 July 1995. They should preferably be double-spaced and typed. Articles on disk (3.5 or 5.25 inch only please) are welcome. Please include both formatted and ASCII files *and a paper copy as well.*

Illustrations

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

D. Powell: Pomarine, Long-tailed and Arctic Skuas (Cover) Shag 33; Audouin's Gulls 34; Black-throated Thrush 38; Spotted Crake 41; Brambling 43.

B. Wright: Green Warbler 7; Crab Plover 14/15.

per R.S.P.B.

J Busby: Great-crested Grebe 37; Red-necked Phalarope 42.

The status of Warblers in Kuwait

B. K. Wright

It is interesting to note that both *The Birds of the Western Palearctic* (Cramp 1992) and the recent *Guide to the Warblers of the Western Palearctic* (Parmenter and Byers 1991), provide misleading, if not inaccurate, information on the status of certain species of warblers in Kuwait. The apparent blanket coverage of species listed as accidental or vagrant often belies their true status. The author counted c.78 Meadow Pipits *Anthus pratensis* on 12 January 1994 at one roost near to Kuwait City, yet even this species is listed as accidental (Cramp 1992). The situation regarding the family *Sylviidae* in Kuwait is more subtle but just as misleading.

The small Emirate of Kuwait has been firmly included within the somewhat artificially constructed Western Palearctic region by the editors of the *Birds of the Western Palearctic*; and in view of this I would like to update the status of the *Sylviidae*, based on personal observation, both after and prior to the Gulf war. The problems of birds exhibiting extremes of variation and intergrades may have caused confusion in identification in the past. The author is aware of the danger of attempting visual identification at subspecific level with this group, but awareness of the various races will save the observer much time and frustration when consulting field guides.

Short-term visitors, with an interest in birding, who have a lot of potentially valuable information to give have been frustrated by not being able to obtain initial information on status. I believe the following paper gives a more accurate picture of warblers and their status in Kuwait at the present time.

Unless otherwise stated, all records are by the author.

Cetti's Warbler (*Cettia cetti*). Has wintered but no singing birds in favoured reed bed habitat in recent years. Listed as status uncertain (Cramp 1992).

Zitting Cisticola (*Cisticola juncidis*). One has been ringed in Kuwait in recent years (C. Pilcher pers. comm.), but not detailed (Cramp 1992).

Graceful Warbler (*Prinia gracilis*). Breeding recorded and migrant birds seen in recent years. It could become a regular breeder in post Gulf War habitat. A spring/summer 1994 record of several birds suggests a post-breeding dispersal or increased colonisation.

Scrub Warbler (*Scotocerca inquieta*). One small party of either this or the preceding species recorded in April 1985. It is interesting to note that this record precedes confirmed breeding records of *P. gracilis*.

Grasshopper Warbler (*Locustella naevia*). Probably overlooked and under recorded, frequently occurring in bizarre situations or habitats. Most recent records are of two birds in spring 1994 (A Ross, T Spencer pers. comm.).

River Warbler (*Locustella fluviatilis*). Listed as accidental (Cramp 1992). Birds thought to be this species have been photographed by the author.

Savi's Warbler (*Locustella lusciniodes*). One in winter 1984/1985. Listed as accidental (Cramp 1992).

Moustached Warbler (*Acrocephalus melanopogon*). An annual winter visitor first confirmed over a decade ago. Birds appear to belong to the sub-species *mimica*. Birds in March 1994 ceased singing and appeared to depart by the time the first migrant Sedge Warblers appeared. There is possible breeding potential if the spread of this species in other parts of the Arabian Peninsula is anything to go by.

Aquatic Warbler (*Acrocephalus paludicola*). No recent records though old Ahmadi Natural History Society records may exist.

Sedge Warbler (*Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*). A regular passage migrant, perhaps commoner in autumn than spring.

Paddyfield Warbler (*Acrocephalus agricola*). No recent records though old records may exist in the Ahmadi Natural History Society transactions. Status not described with regard to Kuwait (Cramp 1992).

Blyth's Reed Warbler (*Acrocephalus dumetorum*). A fairly frequent passage migrant, frequently associated with acacia, though migrant birds are not habitat specific. A single bird in May 1994 was later found shot, while in September 1984 an individual was exceptionally tame and confiding.

Marsh Warbler (*Acrocephalus palustris*). A common, fairly widespread passage migrant at times extremely numerous eg. May 1993. Forages at all levels, particularly in acacia on migration. Listed as accidental (Cramp 1992).

Reed Warbler (*Acrocephalus scirpaceus*). A fairly scarce but regular passage migrant, in some years with singing males concentrated in favoured locations such as Jahra Pool. Breeding at present not confirmed. Most individuals examined in May 1994 can be safely attributed to the race *fuscus*. Conversely birds present at Jahra Pool in 1993 were very rufescent by comparison and some engaged in aerial chases through the reed beds, against the background of several males in full song. Interestingly, video of the *fuscus* birds revealed pale webs to the outer tail feathers, inviting confusion with Booted Warbler *Hippolais caligata* in atypical habitat.

Clamorous Reed Warbler (*Acrocephalus stentoreus*). A widespread and regular passage migrant especially in late spring, often in the company of *A arundinaceus*. Probably less frequent in autumn but more confirmation of this is needed. The writer admits to some confusion between *A s. brunnescens* and *A arundinaceus griseldis* in the past, but the darker examples of *A stentoreus* have never been suspected in Kuwait.

Great Reed Warbler (*Acrocephalus arundinaceus*). A widespread and abundant passage migrant in both spring and autumn. It has wintered, with singing males encountered in most months except July and August. There is no conclusive evidence of breeding in Kuwait and there appears to be little subspecific variation. The Basra Reed Warbler *A a. griseldis* is listed for Kuwait, as the close proximity of the Iraq marshes to Kuwait might suggest. The author would not like to speculate on what impact the Gulf War and drainage schemes currently in progress will have on the occurrence of *A a. griseldis* in Kuwait. An example of *A a. griseldis* examined by the writer had an almost identical wing shape and coloration to the nominate race, but the primary projection was 20 mm on *griseldis* as opposed to 32 mm on *arundinaceus*. The difference in size was not immediately apparent in the field, hence the possible confusion with the structurally similar *A s. brunnescens*.

Olivaceous Warbler (*Hippolais pallida*). Present in small numbers in favoured acacia habitat with at least three singing males into early summer. It does not winter regularly, perhaps breeds.

Booted Warbler (*Hippolais caligata*). A scarce migrant, usually in autumn, and an irregular winter visitor. Most birds appear to belong to the subspecies *rama*. Confusion with *H. pallida* is less likely in Kuwait than further south in Arabia, because of less likelihood of habitat overlap.

Upcher's Warbler (*Hippolais languida*). A regular late spring migrant to favoured acacia habitat. Occurs in the same habitat as *H. pallida* with both species singing in the same area.

Olive-tree Warbler (*Hippolais olivetorum*). Easily overlooked and under recorded due to skulking habits. Should be looked for amongst large falls of warblers. Most recent record is from May 1994, but older Ahmadi Natural History Society records lack complete descriptions. Listed as accidental (Cramp 1992). Past records from the Ahmadi Natural History Society transactions of *H. languida*, *H. pallida* and *H. olivetorum* do not correlate well with present trends.

Icterine Warbler (*Hippolais icterina*). A regular spring passage migrant and definitely more common than accidental as listed (Cramp 1992). Most birds observed lack lemon yellow underparts, even in spring (apart from a pale yellow suffusion observable at close range). Subsong heard from some birds on migration in Kuwait.

Melodious Warbler (*Hippolais polygotta*). One exceptional record from August 1984. What was assumed to be this individual was later found shot.

Subalpine Warbler (*Sylvia cantillans*). Old Ahmadi Natural History Society records lacking a complete description may need to be revised. Listed as accidental (Cramp 1992).

Ménétries' Warbler (*Sylvia mystacea*). A regular and widespread passage migrant in small numbers, with wintering individuals particularly obvious in 1992/3 in scattered locations throughout the country. Listed as accidental (Cramp 1992). In four years of observation only one adult male Ménétries' Warbler was recorded, in May 1985.

Sardinian Warbler (*Sylvia melanocephala*). Old records lacking a complete description need to be revised. Listed as accidental (Cramp 1992). Race *momus* with upperparts similar to *S. rueppelli* could lead to confusion in identification.

Cyprus Warbler (*Sylvia melanothorax*). A possible contender for the Kuwaiti list. Past taxonomic status and lumping with *S. melanocephala* may obscure records of *melanothorax* in the Ahmadi Natural History Society transactions.

Rüppell's Warbler (*Sylvia rueppelli*). No recent records and no specific mention with regards to Kuwait (Cramp 1992). One record of an adult female in May 1985.

Desert Warbler (*Sylvia nana*). A regular winter visitor and, along with Desert Wheatear, one of the most commonly encountered wintering small birds in Kuwait. Birds with singing display flights have been seen near to Kuwait City, particularly during February 1994.

Orphean Warbler (*Sylvia hortensis*). A scarce but regular migrant in very small numbers. Easily overlooked in some plumages amongst large flocks of warbler, particularly *S. nisoria* and *S. curruca*.

Barred Warbler (*Sylvia nisoria*). A very common and widespread migrant in both spring and autumn in most years, but particularly May 1993. Wide but subtle variation can be noticed amongst groups of adults especially in the amount of crescentic scalloping on the underparts of adult males.

Hume's Lesser Whitethroat (*Sylvia curruca althea*). Status uncertain, but birds showing characters of this species have been tentatively identified by the author in the field, but unfortunately not in the hand.

Desert Lesser Whitethroat (*Sylvia curruca minula*). Claimed in small numbers by the author. Birds in the winter of 1984/85 were particularly noticeable and in evidence in the southern border areas of Kuwait. Certainly this species/subspecies is not as common and obvious in Kuwait as it is further south in the Arabian Peninsula during the winter.

Whitethroat (*Sylvia communis*). A common and widespread migrant particularly in spring, though very few adult males of the species seem to be recorded in Kuwait. Adult females appear very pallid and washed out in the field, but this could be in part due to the intense light. Adult males are generally easy to recognise in the field hence the suspicion that old Ahmadi Natural History Society records of *S. conspicillata*, *S. cantillans* and *S. melanocephala*, if referring only to females or immatures, must be considered dubious.

Garden Warbler (*Sylvia borin*). Regular and widespread passage migrant in both spring and autumn.

Blackcap (*Sylvia atricapilla*). A regular and locally abundant passage migrant in both spring and autumn.

The *Sylvia* genus requires a complete revision with regard to Kuwait. It is not known if any or all the old past records from the Ahmadi Natural History Society transactions refer to males. It is difficult to believe that previous observers would attribute and submit as firm records female or immatures of

this genus given the knowledge available to them at the time, without justifiable reason. It is hoped that records and descriptions will be available for the rarities committee to evaluate and that the records were not irretrievably lost during the Gulf War.

Green Warbler (*Phylloscopus nitidus*). Recently recorded, but formal confirmation required (T Spencer, B Wright) May 1994.

Greenish Warbler (*Phylloscopus trochiloides*). No recent records but old records from the Ahmadi Natural History Society do exist.

Yellow-browed Warbler (*Phylloscopus inornatus*). Both historical and recent records exist (C Pilcher pers. comm.), but not recorded by the author.

Dusky Warbler (*Phylloscopus fuscatus*). Old records exist in the Ahmadi Natural History Society transactions. A bird believed to be this species was photographed by the author.

Bonelli's Warbler (*Phylloscopus bonelli*). A possible in March 1994. More information on this species and its status in Kuwait is required. Status at present must be considered accidental, but no specific mention for Kuwait (Cramp 1992).

Wood Warbler (*Phylloscopus sibilatrix*). A regular migrant, albeit in much smaller numbers than other *Phylloscopus* species. No real justification for being listed as accidental (Cramp 1992).

Mountain Chiffchaff (*Phylloscopus sindianus*). Birds showing the characters of *P. s. lorenzii* were observed during February/March 1994. One individual was ringed, and appeared in the field closer to Dusky Warbler *P. fuscatus* than Chiffchaff *P. c. tristis*.

Chiffchaff (*Phylloscopus collybita*). A very common and widespread winter resident, as much at home in reed-beds as in acacia and tamarisk. Singing birds confirm *collybita/abietinus* but *tristis* equally apparent with distinctive whistle call note.

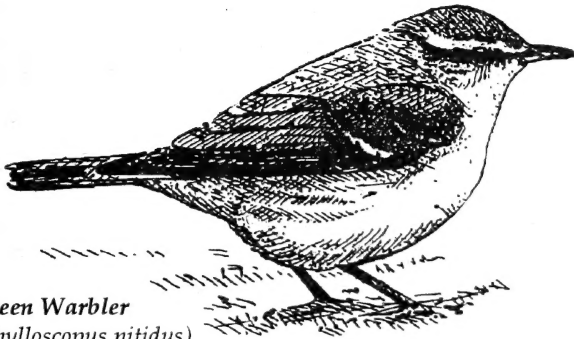
Willow Warbler (*Phylloscopus trochilus*). A common and widespread migrant with the racial variation almost as extreme as *P. collybita* in some years. A May 1994 individual appeared buff olive on the upperparts with a distinct greyish head and off-white underparts, while structurally it was identical to a nearby individual with very conspicuous lemon-yellow underparts. Birds showing some if not all the characters of *yakutensis* were particularly abundant in May/June 1994; but in most years the majority of birds observed are closer to *acredula*. An exceptional concentration of c.150 birds in one small area of fodder cultivation at Abu Halifa was recorded in April 1993.

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B. K. Wright, c/o The New English School, Box 60156, Hawalli Kuwait.



Green Warbler
(*Phylloscopus nitidus*)

Raptor migration in the north-east of Turkey, September 1990

Marcel Kok & Jean Paul Ongenae

In autumn huge numbers of migrating raptors concentrate in the Hopa, Borçka and Arhavi region of north-east Turkey, having been converged by the Black Sea and the Caucasus. They originate mainly from the former U.S.S.R. west of the Urals, north up to Fenno-Scandinavia and up to and including parts of eastern Europe (Bijlsma, 1987). The only relatively complete count in this area, in 1976 (Andrews *et al.*, 1977), produced some 380,000 migrating raptors.

Experiences at other sites, however, show that first censuses at 'new' sites hardly ever produce optimal results because of the time taken to locate the best spots for censusing (Bijlsma, 1987).

According to Kasperek and Kasperek (1990) the best spots are around Hopa and Borçka in the Coruh Valley and Arhavi. Because relatively little is known about this fly-way, we consider it worthwhile to report our observations from 16 to 28 September 1990 and to compare them with previous observations. A full report can be obtained from the first author.

Census sites

Arhavi

From 16 to 20 September we counted on the south-west side of the large valley south of Arhavi. To the north there was an excellent view through the valley at Arhavi and towards the Black Sea coast. Most birds on this route flew apparently rather close to the coast-line. Many birds soared up around a hill east of this valley. To the south there was a good view of some other hills, but it was our impression that not many birds flew past there.

Borçka

We counted above the little village of Tarakli (point number 5 in Kasperek and Kasperek (1990) close to the woods on top of the hill. There was a good view of the Coruh Valley and the transverse valley. Many birds, mainly in the morning, did not follow the Coruh, but disappeared into this transverse valley to the south-west.

Table 1. Observation dates, times and weather at Arhavi and Borçka.

DATE <i>(Sept.)</i>	OBSERVATION TIME <i>(hours)</i>	WEATHER
Arhavi		
16	1100-1600	100% cloud, no wind
17	0900-1600	50% cloud, 50% sun, no wind
18	1300-1700	rain in the morning, 100% cloud in the afternoon
19	0900-1300	100% sun, no wind
20	0900-1200	100% cloud, windy; heavy rain in the afternoon
21	no systematic observations	100% sun, no wind
Total observation time = 23 h.		
DATE <i>(Sept.)</i>	OBSERVATION TIME <i>(hours)</i>	WEATHER
Borçka		
21	no systematic observations	100% sun no wind
22	1000-1400	100% sun, no wind
23	1000-1200 1300-1700	100% sun, no wind
24	0900-1600	100% sun, no wind
25	1000-1600	100% sun, no wind
26	1530-1700	heavy cloud and some rain in the morning, bright after 1430, windy
27	0900-1700	100% cloud, some mist in the valleys
28	0900-1600	40% cloud, 60% sun, no wind
Total observation time = 41.5 h.		

Results

Observations at Arhavi and Borçka are summarised in Table 2. This also shows data collected by other observers, during roughly the same period in 1978 and 1980.

Table 2

Species counts at Arhavi and Borçka (separately) September 1990, and September 1978 and September and early October 1980 (combined).

Species	Arhavi	Borçka	Both	Both ¹	Both ²
	1990 16-20	1990 22-28	1990 16-27	1978 18-27	1980 20-2
<i>Ciconia ciconia</i>	0	0	0	0	4
<i>C. nigra</i>	25	58	83	0	45
<i>Pernis apivorus</i>	3352	104	3456	2300	259
<i>Milvus migrans</i>	1208	478	1686	3800	257
<i>Neophron percnopterus</i>	1	3	4	5	18
<i>Gyps fulvus</i>	0	0	0	1	5
<i>Circaetus gallicus</i>	0	6	6	23	53
<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>	71	25	96	41	79
<i>C. cyaneus</i>	2	3	5	0	1
<i>C. macrourus</i>	5	2	7	14	23
<i>C. pygargus</i>	2	0	2	4	6
<i>C. macrourus/pygargus</i>	27	4	31	0	1
<i>Circus spp.</i>	7	13	20	70	29
<i>Accipiter gentilis</i>	2	1	3	9	16
<i>A. nisus</i>	352	401	753	168	591
<i>A. brevipes</i>	0	4	4	3	12
<i>Buteo buteo vulpinus</i>	3244	16003	19247	146000	162351
<i>B. rufinus</i>	0	0	0	1	2
<i>Aquila pomarina</i>	58	207	265	130	687
<i>A. clanga</i>	2	6	8	1	8
<i>A. nipalensis</i>	1	32	33	7	85
<i>A. heliaca</i>	0	0	0	2	3
<i>A. chrysaetos</i>	0	0	0	2	13
<i>A. spp.</i>	0	0	0	69	47
<i>Hieraetus pennatus</i>	94	33	127	35	40
<i>H. fasciatus</i>	0	0	0	1	1
<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>	1	0	1	0	1
<i>Falco naumanni</i>	0	0	0	4	11
<i>F. tinnunculus</i>	3	6	9	2	20
<i>F. vespertinus</i>	5	5	10	0	0
<i>F. columbarius</i>	1	0	1	0	0
<i>F. subbuteo</i>	22	7	29	1	11
<i>F. spp. (small)</i>	4	8	12	29	1
<i>F. cherrug</i>	0	0	0	0	3
<i>F. peregrinus</i>	1	0	1	2	3
<i>F. spp. (large)</i>	2	0	2	0	3

¹ Unpublished data: A. Broom and P. Doherty

² Unpublished data: P. Heathcote

Discussion

The most striking data are the low numbers of Buzzards seen in 1990 compared with 1978 and 1980. Furthermore, Andrews *et al.* (Andrews *et al.*, 1977) observed 205,000 Buzzards between 17 August and 10 October 1977. A reasonable explanation for this might be that migrating birds follow different routes in the area, according to prevailing weather conditions. During bad weather conditions and when the Coruh Valley is filled with clouds, the birds are supposed to follow the coastline (Andrews *et al.*, 1977); in bright weather they follow roughly the Coruh River.

In very good weather conditions we observed hardly any passage on 19 September in the Arhavi area. On 21 September there was similarly little passage so we left at 1100 h.. At c. 1300 h. we arrived at Borçka where many raptors were migrating and this went on until the end of the afternoon. We suppose that on these two or three days (19, 20 and 21 September) with good weather a substantial proportion of Buzzards passed by Borçka, following the Coruh route. Note that we had bad weather on 20 September at Arhavi, but this does not necessarily suggest there was bad weather further inland (at Borçka). Counting at Hopa might solve the problem of choosing an observation point.

For the other species some differences in numbers can be seen, but it is hard to compare these data since there are more than ten years between different censuses. It is also clear that to obtain reliable data simultaneous observations at Borçka and Arhavi are needed. This would also provide an opportunity to find out whether some species prefer the coastal route (e.g. Black Kite?) or the Coruh route (e.g. eagle spp.?) irrespective of the weather.

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Foraging behaviour of Arctic, Pomarine and Long-tailed Skua on migration in the Red Sea

Reuven Yosef

Skuas from the Arctic region are seen on migration in Eilat, at the northernmost point of the Gulf of Eilat (Aqaba) on the Red Sea, mainly in late spring when they are migrating north to their breeding grounds (PAZ 1987). On 26, 27 and 28 May 1994, from 0700-0900 h, I observed a Pomarine Skua *Stercorarius pomarinus*, a Long-tailed Skua *S. longicaudus*, and a pair of Arctic Skuas *S. parasiticus* foraging along the North Beach of Eilat. Observations were made at these times only because later tourist activity drove the skuas too far away from the shoreline for behavioural observations. The skuas foraged about 20-800 m from the shoreline enabling observation with binoculars (10 x 40) and telescope (x30).

I divided the observed foraging strategies of the individual birds into three categories: strikes on fish from the surface of the sea, scavenging and kleptoparasitism. Because distances were sometimes too great, no attempt was made to evaluate the size or species of prey taken. A great proportion of the fish however, might have been *Tilapia Oreochromis mozambicus*, which escape from the mariculture pens that cover over 100 m² of the bay adjacent to the shoreline.

Pomarine and Long-tailed Skuas were always observed singly and the Arctic Skuas together. They were conspicuous with their fast flight, erratic chases across the skies, often skimming the waves for short distances prior to gaining height. Initially this flight behaviour appeared to be random searching, however, in some cases birds were observed to suddenly drop onto prey near the surface, grasping such items with the bill. If successful most prey was eaten at sea, brought to a buoy near the shoreline for consumption (7 cases), or brought to the shore for eating (3 cases).

During 4.3 h of observation of the Pomarine Skua it made four successful catches of fish from the surface, scavenged seven fished tossed out by fisherman at the wharf and kleptoparasitized fish, once each,

from an Armenian Gull *Larus armenicus* and a Little Tern *Sterna albifrons*.

During almost 5.5 h of observation, the Long-tailed Skua, captured 11 fish at the surface, scavenged three dead fish at the beach and kleptoparasitized Little and Common terns *S. hirundo* 21 times. The individual also caught and ate a male House Sparrow *Passer domesticus* that was entangled in a fishing net on the beach.

The two Arctic Skuas were observed for a cumulative 3.76 h. They were observed to hunt in proximity to each other but no intentional co-operative hunting occurred. Neither were they observed to skim the surface in search of prey, but appeared to get their food almost exclusively by kleptoparasitizing Armenian Gulls (11 cases), Little (14 cases) and Common Terns (9 cases) and once each for Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo* and Osprey *Pandion haliaetus*.

The foraging at sea strategies of the Pomarine and Long-tailed Skuas were not very different (surface: 4 to 11 prey; scavenging: 7 to 4 prey), however the Long-tailed Skua differed in that it resorted heavily to kleptoparasitizing other birds for additional prey. This is similar to the strategy adopted by the Arctic Skuas that were observed to feed exclusively on kleptoparasitized food. My observations concur with those of Cramp and Simmons (1983) who described Pomarine Skuas as a species that "out of the breeding season, takes mainly fish, and occasionally feeds by scavenging and kleptoparasitizing". However outside the breeding season very little data are available for Long-tailed Skuas. Similar to this study, Cramp and Simmons (1983) describe the Arctic Skuas as feeding mainly on "fish obtained by food-piracy following aerial pursuit of other seabirds."

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Observations on copulating Crab Plovers *Dromas ardeola* in Kuwait

B. K. Wright

On 14th March 1994, I was fortunate to witness what seemed to be the courtship behaviour of Crab Plover (*Dromas ardeola*). I have been watching and counting roosting Crab Plovers at Doha, Kuwait, Arabian Gulf, regularly since 1992.

The section on social pattern and behaviour (Cramp and Simmons 1983) states "studied in winter quarters, Aldabra [M. J. Penny] little known otherwise".

Adult Crab Plovers were seen along the shoreline, widely spread, but occasionally in concentrated flocks of up to forty, especially at one high tide. Other species present and mixed with the flocks included Curlew *Numenius arquata*, Lesser Sand Plover *Charadrius mongolicus* and Yellow-legged Gull *Larus cachinnans*.

One pair of Crab Plovers began to walk side by side with an exaggerated upright stance. One bird (sex uncertain at this stage) would jump up into the air, making an abrupt arc flight. On landing, uttering the typical *ki-ki-kew-ki kee* notes, the bird would initiate a short forward run to be joined by another bird in a distinct strut walk with both birds walking side by side in tandem (see fig 1). Whilst walking in this manner, the pair would pass through the main group and emerge only to be followed by other Crab Plovers and the group would often converge and crowd together, sometimes using wings and bills to effect contact.

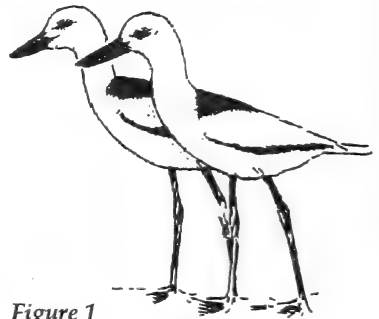
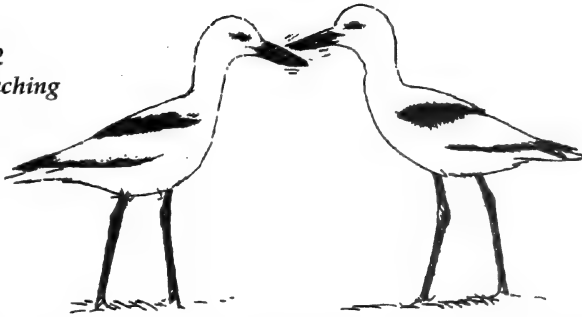


Figure 1
Strutting in tandem

Once separated the pair made contact with their bills as if trying to solicit food (see fig 2). The group interaction caused much excitement within the flocks, with most birds uttering the call notes previously

Figure 2
Bill touching



described. A Curlew within the group was lunged at by one individual but it remained in the same position, with necked outstretched, bill open and wings half outstretched.

Walking out of the main group again as in (fig 1), the male mounted the female, lying with tarsi flat along its back for several seconds before coition coitus took place. Although extended wings helped to maintain balance, at times this position was similar to the typical resting position of the species (see fig 3).

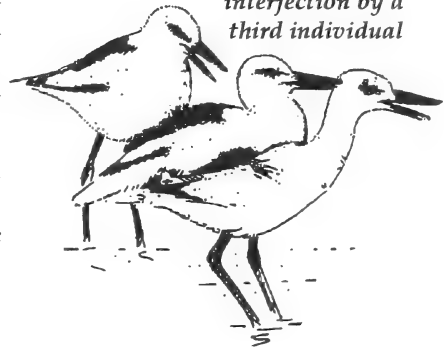
Even at this stage interruptions by other individuals leaving the main flock occurred. The male tilted off centre to reach the female's ventral region. Contact persisted for five seconds before the male dismounted.

It seems likely that flocks of Crab Plovers (in a social aggregation) were a necessary stimulus to induce this behaviour. It was also particularly interesting to note such behaviour so far from the known breeding grounds in other areas of the Arabian Gulf. Historically, the Crab Plover bred on Bubiyan Island, Kuwait and in view of the observed behaviour, may still do so.

References

CRAMP, S. AND SIMMONS, K. E. L. (eds) (1982). *The Birds of the Western Palearctic*, Vol.III. Oxford University Press.

Figure 3
Copulation and
interjection by a
third individual



B. K. Wright, c/o The New English School, Box 60156, Hawalli Kuwait.

News and Information

February 1995

Compiled by Simon Albrecht

The aim of this section is to inform readers about events in the OSME region. It relies on members and others supplying relevant news and information. If you have any information concerning birds, conservation or development issues in the OSME area please send it to **News and Information, OSME, c/o The Lodge, Sandy, Bedfordshire, SG19 2DL, U.K.**

This section is not intended as a definitive report or write up of the projects concerned. Many of the projects are sponsored; such support is appreciated but is not generally acknowledged here.

EGYPT

An *Important Bird Area* directory for Egypt is due to be produced in August 1995. A poster which included a map showing the location of the IBAs was displayed at the World Conference in Germany last August. (Source: Network News 2(3).)

IRAQ MARSHES

A 224 page report entitled *An environmental and ecological study of the marshlands of Mesopotamia* has recently been edited by Exeter University and published by the AMAR Appeal. The report has used data from the Important Bird Area inventory for the sections on wildlife. The drainage of these marshes in southern Iraq has seriously affected many species of bird. **The report is available from:** The AMAR Appeal, c/o Emma Nicholson M.P., The House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA, England. Price: £30.00.

ISRAEL (Information from: UKSPNI newsletter December 1994).

Public campaign to protect open landscapes from road building - the Society for the Protection of Nature in Israel (SPNI) has expressed its opposition to the construction of a Trans-Israel Super Highway (Road No.6) planned to cover the 300 kilometres from Shlomi in the north to Beer Sheva in the south. The total area of land that the road will take is the same as the size of an average city (3,000 hectares) and will irreversibly damage the few remaining open areas and scenic land resources left in central Israel.

SPNI has demanded a thorough assessment on the environment impact of the road and an examination of alternative ways of solving present traffic problems. Although these demands have recently been rejected, SPNI see this as one of their most crucial campaigns. The Society is fighting to preserve the remnants of Israel's open landscapes; for prudent and reasoned planning processes; and for a rational balance between development and conservation.

SPNI's position is that the benefits gained from Road No.6 are unproved and controversial; there is no proof that the road will solve Israel's transportation crisis; transportation policies need an emphasis on diverse and efficient public transport; and agricultural lands, forests and open spaces along the proposed route must be protected to avoid the coastal plain becoming continuously urbanised and to preserve the remaining "green lungs" in the coastal plain.

SPNI 40 years old - 1994 saw a number of events celebrating the foundation of the Society for the Protection of Nature in Israel in the summer of 1954.

Free the dolphins (and the alligators) - SPNI has objected to the display of dolphins in amusement parks and to staged combat between humans and alligators at Hammat Gader. They sent a message to Israel's Environment Minister Yossi Sarid stating: "As an organisation specialising in education for nature conservation, we consider the transfer of these animals to an amusement park uneducational, lacking in concern for the environment, and inhumane."

There is a debate world-wide on the use of wildlife in zoos and amusement parks. There seems to be a thin line between the use of zoos for education and conservation (e.g. the captive breeding of endangered species) and inhumane exploitation of our wildlife resource.

Planning decisions - Plans to build 5,000 hotel rooms at the mouth of Nahel Hever, north of Massada, are being opposed. The development will cause the loss of the last segment of untouched shore around the Dead Sea and sever the connection between the Judean Desert and the Dead Sea.

Israel's last sand dune on the outskirts of Ashdod has been saved from the bulldozer. Following an outcry the Ashdod municipality is seeking a different site for the expansion of the city and the Knesset is considering turning the dune into a "Sand Park".

The Sharon Park in the centre of the Coast Plain between Hadera and the river bed known as Nahal Alexander is threatened by developers. Although the Park is the remnant of an ancient forest that once covered the entire Sharon Plain it has not yet been designated as a nature reserve. There are plans for a traffic intersection, an expansion of Hadera and a series of tourist resort sites.

The hills of Beit Oved, west of Ness Ziona, have had their status as a national park upheld following a long battle against building proposals made in 1985 for the 375 acre (152 hectare) site. The hills, made of a type of sandstone known as kurkur, mark an ancient coastline of the Mediterranean Sea and present a profusion of wild flowers in spring.

LEBANON

The Lebanese Government has signed a new law banning the hunting of (all) birds in Lebanon for three years from 1 January 1995. Lebanon has a reputation for the indiscriminate shooting of wildlife and this legislation is hailed as a great success for conservation. (Source: Network News 2(3).)

ABU DHABI

A major ringing project was under way in Abu Dhabi from 20 August to 30 September 1994, organised by Erik Hirschfeld. A team of eight ringers from France and Poland took part in the study which co-operated closely with the National Avian Research Centre in Abu Dhabi. Among the many objectives were a study of turn-over and species composition among waders on the Abu Dhabi coastline, feeding strategies of Lesser Sand Plover *Charadrius mongolus* and Greater Sand Plover *C. leschenaultii*, moult strategies and utilisation of mudflats at night by migrant waders. Studies of dispersal among local populations of Crab Plovers *Dromas ardeola* and the newly discovered congregations of Great Knots *Calidris tenuirostris* were also planned. During this period it was planned to have organised high tide counts throughout the United Arab Emirates in order to understand the importance of the countries coastal sites during migration. It was also planned to extend the studies to Broad-billed Sandpipers *Limicola falcinellus* later in the autumn if possible. The project was sponsored by

the Avian Research Centre in Abu Dhabi, Office National de la Chasse in France, the French petroleum company Total, Polish Airlines, the Al Fahim Group in Abu Dhabi, local oil companies ADMA-OPCO and ADNOC, the Hilton Hotel and the Union National Bank.

ATLAS OF THE BREEDING BIRDS OF ARABIA (ABBA)

ABBA Surveys 11 & 12 - Last September we received a copy of the report of these surveys to Oman, UAE and Northern Saudi Arabia carried out from February to May 1992. The ABBA project aims to determine the distribution and occurrence of all breeding birds in the Arabian Peninsula. Survey 11 visited the UAE and Oman from 18 February to 2 March 1992 while Survey 12 was to Northern Saudi Arabia from 11 April to 3 May 1992. The report gives information on the topography and bird habitats of the areas visited as well as breeding bird distribution maps and details of all birds seen including migrants. The authors of the report, which was commissioned by Saudi Arabia's National Commission for Wildlife Conservation and Development (NCWCD), have produced a valuable document for anyone interested in the distribution of birds in Arabia. A further report is in preparation on Surveys 13 to 16 which visited Oman and Saudi Arabia between December 1992 and April 1994.

Copies of the report *Results of Ornithological Surveys to Oman, UAE and northern Saudi Arabia: February - May 1992* are available from: Michael Jennings, 1 Warners Farm, Warners Drove, Somersham, Cambridgeshire PE17 3HW, England. Price £12.00 including postage.

BIODIVERSITY CONVENTION

Under the Biodiversity Convention, countries are required to produce National Environmental Strategies. In the Middle East these have now been completed by Bahrain, Jordan, Lebanon, Oman and Saudi Arabia. (Source: Network News 2(3).)

IMPORTANT BIRD AREAS OF THE MIDDLE EAST

The English edition of *Important Bird Areas in the Middle East* was published last autumn and is available from OSME sales.

An Arabic edition is in preparation by the National Committee for Wildlife Conservation and Development (NCWCD) of Saudi Arabia. It is hoped that it will be launched during 1995.

MARINE PROTECTED AREAS FOR ARABIAN SEAS

A review is currently underway to identify priority areas for conservation in the Arabian Sea region. The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority is carrying out the review using data from all the IBAs in these biologically rich waters. (Source: Network News 2(3).)

MEDMARAVIS

The Convention on Coastal and Marine Biodiversity in the Mediterranean was held at Alghero in Sardinia, Italy from 19 - 22 January 1995. The main objective was to agree a list of biological criteria to be implemented for the creation of new coastal and marine parks or reserves in the Mediterranean. It is hoped that this incentive will lead to the legal protection of priority habitats to guarantee sustainable populations of rare and endangered species including seabirds, seaturtles and Mediterranean Monk Seal *Monachus monachus*. There were workshops on both the Black Sea and the Eastern Mediterranean. We hope to report further in our next bulletin. **Further information may be obtained from:** Medmaravis, BP2 - 83470 Saint-Maximin, France. Fax: (33) 94-59-47-38.

MIDDLE EAST COMMITTEE

BirdLife International established a Middle East Committee during the International World Conference in August 1994. It is hoped that the committee, chaired by Mr Assad Serhal of Lebanon, will facilitate co-operation between countries, help promote the IBA book to key decision-makers in the region and establish an on-going BirdLife conservation programme. A newsletter will be produced regularly from the region.

The Highlands, Islands and Flyways Project is the first project initiated by the Middle East Committee. It will address the conservation of three broad geographic zones in the Middle East, rich in IBAs:

Flyways: the migration systems centred on the Rift Valley in the west of the region.

Highlands: the endemic-rich mountains of south-west Arabia, Socotra and Oman.

Islands: the huge, globally important seabird colonies in the Gulf and Red Sea.

PAR AVIAN PENFRIEND SCHEME

Last November the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) in Britain launched *Par Avian*, a penfriend scheme for young people interested in wildlife and the environment. The scheme links people aged 8 to 18 who share this interest. Participants from some 40 countries have already joined.

Anyone interested should send their name, address, age, interests, whether they are a girl or boy, whether they want their penfriend to be a girl a boy or do not mind and what languages they speak/write to: Par Avian, YOC/RSPB, The Lodge, Sandy, Bedfordshire SG19 2DL, UK. Also send if possible a recent photograph of yourself and if you live in the UK a stamped self-addressed envelope (23.5cm x 16cm). You should hear within 6 weeks. You should be matched with someone with similar interests and will get their name and address - the rest is up to you.

SLENDER-BILLED CURLEW SURVEY

A 3,000 km²/two week survey of the Novosibirsk and Omsk regions of Siberia last summer failed to locate any Slender-billed Curlews *Numenius tenuirostris*. (Source: Network News 2(3).)

COLOUR-RINGED GULLS

The Vooorne Bird Observatory in the Netherlands is collecting information on a number of colour-ring projects.

In LATVIA, Yellow-legged Gulls *Larus omissus* have been ringed with a single engraved black ring.

In UKRAINE, Yellow-legged Gulls *Larus cachinnans* have been ringed with a single engraved red ring.

In SIBERIA (RUSSIA), Siberian Lesser Black-backed Gulls *Larus fuscus heuglini* have been ringed with a single engraved white ring.

Gulls and Avocets *Recurvirostra avosetta* carrying rings with different colours may originate from the Netherlands.

Please send full details of any sightings to: Vooorne Bird Observatory, PO Box 305, 3233 ZG Oostvoorne, The Netherlands.
Tel: (0) 1815-4816.

LESSER WHITE-FRONTED GEESE WITH COLOURED NECK BANDS

The Lesser White-fronted Goose *Anser erythropus* is an endangered species in Fennoscandia the population having fallen from at least 10,000 in the 1940s to about 100 in the 1990s.

Lesser White-fronted Geese in Finnish Lapland have been fitted with coloured neck bands with two numbers or letters. Some geese also have coloured ankle rings. The aim is to find out the most important resting and wintering areas of this Nordic population so that these areas can be protected in cooperation with local authorities and nature protection organisations.

Please send details of any observations of Lesser White-fronted Geese including the date, time, and location of observation with any details of other species with which the species is associated to: Juha Markkola, WWF Lesser White-fronted Goose Project, Marssytie 1 F 6, FIN-90560 OULU, Finland. Tel: +358-81-341 363. Fax: +358-81-553 1227. On receipt of the information you will be sent facts about the history of the bird.

RINGING IN SPAIN

Volunteers (expert ringers and assistant ringers) are needed to help in passerine ringing programme in The Coto Donana in 1995 and 1996. Relevant months are: February, March to April, May and September to November. **Those interested should write to:** J.J. Chans, Estacion Biologica de Donana, Pabellon del Peru, Avda. Ma Luisa, S/N. 41013 Sevilla, Spain. Tel: 959-440032. Fax: 959-440033.

1994: ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL YEAR FOR THE TURKISH IMPORTANT BIRD AREAS PROJECT

The Important Bird Areas Project has been carried out in Turkey by the Society for the Protection of Nature (DHKD) since 1991 under the framework of BirdLife International's European IBA Programme. In the past, the project had received financial support from RSPB, Vogelbescherming Netherlands and DOF.

Since 1994, Garanti Bank, a major Turkish bank, has given full financial support to the project. The bank will continue funding activities in 1995, which includes the preparation of the new Turkish IBA inventory, planned to be published by the end of the year.

In 1994, the Turkish IBA Project was actively involved in the conservation of the 79 IBAs in Turkey, carrying out activities in the following fields: Network Building, Information and Awareness, Research, Advocacy and Campaigning.

The ratification of the Ramsar Convention by the Turkish Parliament and the campaign for the protection of Burdur Lake, one of the original five Turkish Ramsar sites, were amongst the highlights of the year 1994.

The court case opened against the airport development on the shores of Burdur lake, the single most important wintering site for the globally threatened White-headed Duck on earth, has already become a milestone in the history of Turkish nature conservation. After two injunctions issued by the Council of State, the case was dismissed due to a procedural shortcoming, but DHKD applied again to the council on appeal. Other plans concerning the construction of an industrial complex in the area were successfully countered by DHKD and have now been shelved. For the time being Burdur Lake and its White-headed Ducks are safe.

We believe that with the support of the Garanti Bank and the BirdLife network, 1995, the 20th anniversary of DHKD, will be another successful year for the conservation of birds and their habitats in Turkey.

For further details contact: Murat Yarar, DHKD Bird and Wetland Section Co-ordinator, Society for the Protection of Nature, P.K. 18, Bebek 80810 Istanbul, Turkey. Tel:(+90) 212-279 01 39/40
Fax: (+90) 212-279 55 44

OSME News

1995 Summer Meeting. This will be held on Saturday 15 July at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), Russell Square, London - see accompanying programme for full details and directions.

Letter to the Editor

Sir,

As a keen ornithologist resident in Egypt I was interested to find no less than three new species for Egypt reported in *Sandgrouse* 14 part 2. I was disappointed and concerned that two of these species, the Woodpigeon *Columba palumbus* (110) and Great Bustard *Otis tarda* (111) were 'described' from shot specimens collected and reported in a manner that might kindly be described as Victorian.

My first concern is the fact that records based on specimens thus collected are treated as equally valid as records of live birds meticulously observed in the field and subsequently recorded in detail with critical analysis such as the Pin-tailed Snipe *Gallinago stenura* in the same issue. Neither of the Egyptian articles offered any critical evaluation of the circumstances in which the corpses were obtained or discussion of the possibility of escapes. The assumption seems to be the dangerous one that if there is a cadaver then the record must be valid, an impression enforced by the articles' titles.

My second concern is for the way in which the notes were published. By printing, with no editorial comment or censure phrases such as 'Discovering a large bird he [Dr Essam Hamdy] had never seen before, he decided to shoot it for his collection...' OSME gives the impression of endorsing such behaviour. Is OSME aware, for instance, that all *Columba* species, and thus the Woodpigeon, are protected under Egyptian Law 28 for 1963. This is especially galling when the bird in question is as rare, and declining, as the Great Bustard. Even more worrying is the fact that the only bird that the Great Bustard could realistically be confused with in Egypt is the Houbara, also protected under Egyptian Law and under CITES Appendix 2. Egypt is a signatory of the Bonn Convention covering migratory species. If it is Dr Hamdy's normal practice to blast away at any bird larger than normal I dread to think what his collection consists of. Surely this cannot be in line with OSME's objective to 'promote an interest in ornithology and bird conservation throughout the Middle East'. I am surprised that Giza Zoo provides a taxidermy service for such rare species, and even more surprised it should be stated so explicitly.

Unfortunately the two articles provide a fairly accurate reflection of the state of natural history in Egypt, with certain notable exceptions. While I clearly recognise the importance of publishing first records I find it disappointing that this antiquated shoot first, identify later

approach should find uncritical acceptance within the pages of *Sandgrouse*.

Richard Hoath
The American University in Cairo, Egypt

OSME would agree that the manner in which these records for Egypt were discovered is regrettable: the birds in question were shot by local hunters and then came to the notice of ornithologists who identified and described them. However, by publishing them in Sandgrouse the records have been brought to the attention of the ornithological community instead of being lost forever. Each year millions of birds are killed in Egypt by this type of uncontrolled hunting. We suggest that Mr Hoath write to the Egyptian authorities to express his indignation and ask them to control hunting in order to protect these and other birds. The validity of records such as these is left to the appropriate rarities committees.

SITUATIONS VACANT

Have you got spare time which you would like to spend doing something useful? Do you feel OSME could be more active and effective? Do you have lots of ideas which you have long wanted to put into practice? Do you have a good sense of humour and a commitment to OSME? Are you happy to work on your own initiative? Or are you just keen on the Middle East and its birds? - read on!

Arising from OSME's recent Development Workshops, a range of new and exciting posts have been identified for which volunteers are invited.

SITUATIONS VACANT

Principal Editor

As from 1996 it has been decided to merge the Bulletin and Sandgrouse into one biannual publication, the development and production of which will be overseen by a Principal Editor. As head of an editorial team the editor must be a good communicator, and will have the challenge of developing the new publication's editorial style, quality and content. Key tasks will include assuming overall editorial responsibility; liaising with authors regarding submissions; planning future issues; devising and maintaining production schedules, both short and long term; and developing guidelines for authors. Previous editorial experience is essential and a knowledge of Middle Eastern birds is desirable. Some knowledge of journal production methods would be an advantage but working closely with the Editor will be a designer who will handle design, desktop publishing and arrange printing. A good editor is seen as a vital to the development of OSME. A small honorarium is being considered for this post.

Events Officer

One of the key areas where Council is keen to expand OSME's activities is that of organising events and meetings for members both in the UK and overseas, to give members more opportunity to meet, and to promote OSME's profile. Working closely with other members of Council, the Events Officer will be responsible for developing and organising all of OSME's events; identifying those UK regional ornithological events at which OSME should be present; liaising with overseas organisations, both in Europe and the Middle East, to identify opportunities for joint meetings; and to research other types of events relating to the region at which OSME should have a presence. The post calls for someone who enjoys meeting people, has sound organisational skills, and is a good correspondent.

Publicity Officer

Fundamental to the development of OSME is the role of Publicity Officer, a wide-ranging role encompassing all aspects of the promotion of the Society. Key areas of work include arranging OSME promotional advertisements/exchanges with appropriate journals; identifying and liaising with companies wishing to advertise in OSME publications; promoting OSME meetings; and capitalising on opportunities to promote the Society through press releases etc. This position requires someone with the ability to write good copy, sound organisational skills, initiative and flair, and an outgoing personality.

SITUATIONS VACANT

Sales Development Officer

At present OSME sales consist primarily of journals and reports plus a small range of membership items. Whilst providing a valuable service to members, Council recognises that there is potential to develop a wider range of items both to benefit members and promote the Society. This new post is aimed at achieving this expansion. As with all publicity and promotional activity, this post requires someone with flair and initiative.

Secretary

Due to a job opportunity overseas, the current Secretary is having to resign from Council in July, therefore OSME is seeking a replacement for this key position. The Secretary is responsible for arranging and taking minutes at Council meetings, arranging the Summer meeting and much of the general day to day running of the Society. The post requires someone with good administrative and organisational skills who is a good communicator.

All these posts will run for 5 years, and the ability regularly to attend Council meetings will be desirable - Council meets 4-5 times per year, currently on a weekday evening, in London. However, whilst the majority of Council is presently based in south and east England, over the coming months, as OSME develops, it is envisaged that more opportunities for members to become involved in the operation of the Society will arise and a more flexible approach to running the Society will be adopted. OSME remains a volunteer-run organisation and relies on the commitment and involvement of its members to function. If you would like to see a more active, dynamic, progressive society, this is your opportunity to make things happen! If any of these posts appeals to you or you feel you have another special skill to bring to OSME, then contact the Chairman, Geoff Welch (tel (0)1728 648298, fax (0)1728 648529 or write c/o OSME).

Recently Received

Recently received

RICHARDSON, C. ASPINALL, S. HIRSCHFELD, E. & BANNON, J. (1994) *Emirates Bird Report 18*. Emirates Bird Records Committee.

131 pages, black and white illustrations, diagrams and four pages of colour plates.

Once again, a well produced and intensely readable United Arab Emirates bird report, covering 1993. This item is available through OSME's sales list.

KIVIT, H. NIJIMEIJER, H. & OVAA, A. (1994) *Wader And Waterfowl Migration In the Çukurova deltas, South Turkey, spring 1990*. WIWO report 48.

164 pages with maps and graphs throughout.

Available from WIWO, c/o Dribergseweg 16c, NL-3708 JB, Zeist, Netherlands - enclose cash or a Eurocheque for 25 Dutch guilders. If paying by giro (to account 2 666 009) or by bank transfer (to ABN-AMRO account 57 02 16 613 at Stichting WIWO, Lindengracht 9, 3633 AS Vreeland, Netherlands) please add 15 guilders to cover administration costs.

BAILEY, T. & HORNBY, R. (1994). *National Avian Research Centre Annual Report, 1993 UAE*

56 pages, printed in full colour throughout with diagrams, a map and many photographs, Arabic and English texts.

A lavish publication documenting the first operational year of this new centre in the United Arab Emirates, dedicated to studying and breeding bustards (particularly Houbara) and falcons.

Arabian Wildlife Vol 2 number 1 (1995)

42 pages, full colour magazine

Now in its second year of publication, this issue covers subjects as diverse as the consequences of the Gulf War, birds of Western Saudi Arabia, Arabia's hedgehogs and tracking houbaras by satellite. The magazine is available by subscription (£16.00 for four issues) from Arabian Wildlife, Dept S, Planet Publishing Ltd, 20 Berkeley Street, Berkeley Square, London W1X 5AE, England.

WINKLER, H. CHRISTIE, D. A. & NURNEY, D. (1995). *Woodpeckers, Piculets and Wrynecks of the World*. Pica Press, Mountfield Sussex. Hard Cover, 406 pages, 64 colour plates: £30.00.

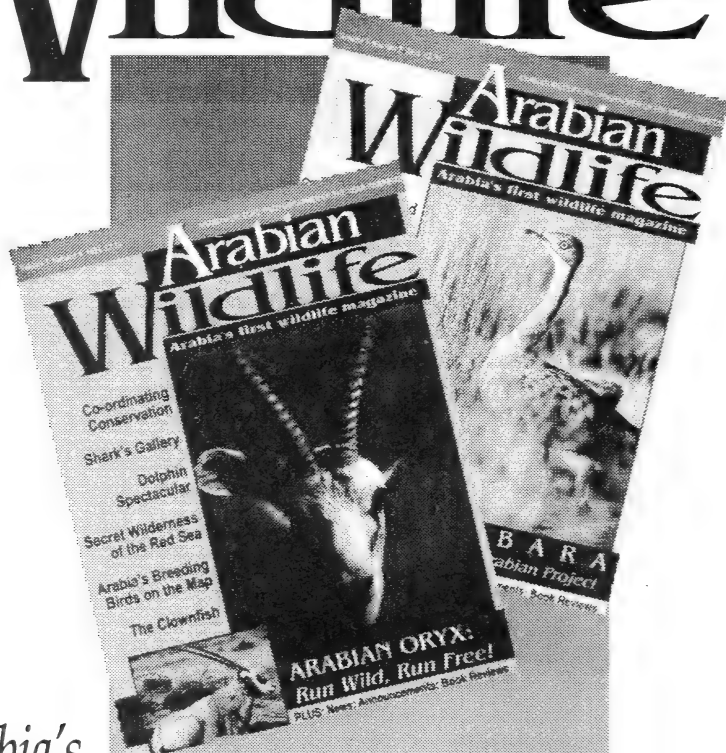
All 214 species of woodpecker are described and illustrated in colour. Each species account has paragraphs on identification, distribution (with map), movements, habitat, detailed description, geographical variation, measurements, voice, habits, food, breeding and bibliographic references.

Requests for Information

Egyptian Bird Report

Records are being compiled for the publication of the *Egyptian Bird Report* which will summarise records since the last major study on Egyptian birds in 1989. The editors would greatly appreciate all records of Egyptian birds (including trip reports) for their files. All contributions would be suitably credited in the report. Descriptions of first records are also welcome for publication. **Please send information to:** Sherif Baha El Din, 4, Ismail El Mazni St., Apt. 8, Heliopolis, Cairo, Egypt or fax: 20-2-3457234.

Arabian Wildlife



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Reviews

Nightingale, T. & Hill, M. (1993) *Birds of Bahrain*. Immel Publishing Ltd, London, pp 283 price £45

For those of us who enthuse over Middle Eastern ornithology this publication represents another landmark in the somewhat sparse range of literature available for the region. Although the large size and price of the *Birds of Bahrain* may initially be off-putting - look closer. The whole book is lavishly illustrated with a superb collection of colour photographs many of which capture truly the hot, humid, migrant-laden air of this, the smallest Gulf State. In particular the picture of the Grey Hypocolius coming into roost brings back rich memories of my occasional birding trips to Bahrain. There are very few places in the world where one can witness this much sought-after Middle Eastern speciality in such numbers.

The book does not delve into bird identification (we'll all still need a copy of Hollom *et al.* for this) but focuses on the status and distribution of all species recorded in Bahrain. These are thoroughly covered in chapters five (Migrants), nine (The Breeding Birds) and ten (The Systematic List) the latter including breeding, migrant and wintering species in a final list. In addition the authors describe the range of biogeographical features found on the group of islands, its ornithologists (past and present), and give the reader a review of Bahrain's top birding sites. It is a pity that some of the information is not more graphically displayed (migration charts and distribution maps for each species for example) however this minor point detracts little from this distinguished book. Those lucky enough to have seen the authors speak at last years' OSME summer meeting will appreciate the work that went into this publication.

Rob Morris

Due for publication in February 1995

The BIRDS of the Hashemite Kingdom of JORDAN by Ian J. Andrews

The Birds of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan is the first comprehensive summary of the status and distribution of all 374 bird species recorded in Jordan.

- Foreword by His Majesty King Hussein I
- Description to all habitat types accompanied by 30 photographs
- bird photographs by the author, Tim Loseby and others
- Detailed species accounts, giving up-to-date information on where and when each species occurs
- Breeding distribution maps
- Migration timing charts
- Detailed birdwatching sites guide, with maps
- Full Jordan checklist
- Illustrations by John Busby
- ISBN 0 9524978 0 8 (Softback), 200 pages

Price £18.50 (plus £1.50 P&P UK, £2.50 Europe, £4.35 elsewhere, per copy)

Enquiries and orders to the author/publisher:
I.J. Andrews, 39 Clayknowes Drive, Musselburgh,
Midlothian EH21 6UW, Scotland

☎ 0131-665 0236



Around the Region

Records in Around the Region are published for interest only, and their inclusion does not imply acceptance by the records committee of the relevant country. To submit records for OSME Bulletin 35, covering mainly the period March to September 1995, please write to Around the Region, OSME, c/o The Lodge, Sandy, Bedfordshire SG19 2DL, U.K.

Compiled by Pete Davidson and Guy Kirwan

Records refer to 1994 and to single birds unless otherwise stated.

CYPRUS

Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus*

Spiros Pool, 5 December. Third record for Cyprus. per C D R Heard.

White-headed Duck *Oxyura leucocephala*

Bishop's Pool, 9 December. per C D R Heard.

EGYPT

Unless otherwise stated all records submitted by Mindy & Sherif Baha el Din.

Black-necked Grebe *Podiceps nigricollis*

5,811, southern Lake Nasser, 30 January to 3 February 1995. Largest wintering concentration since 1980.



Shag *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

five on islet off Ras El Hikma, 1 October. Conversation with local residents indicate that the species breeds in the area representing a new breeding species for Egypt. A Grieve, W Salama, M & S Baha el Din.

White Pelican *Pelecanus onocrotalus*

1,157, southern Lake Nasser, 30 January to 3 February 1995. Largest wintering concentration since Meinertzhagen (1930).

Bittern *Botaurus stellaris*

Wadi el Rayan, 28 January 1995. M Evans, S Baha el Din.

Greater Flamingo *Phoenicopterus ruber*

over 6,500, El Malaha, 30 December.

Red-crested Pochard *Netta rufina*

male, Wadi el Rayan, 28 January 1995. S Baha el Din, M Evans.

Ferruginous Duck *Aythya nyroca*

130 between Old and New Aswan Dams, 5 February 1995.

Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula*

19,281, southern Lake Nasser, 30 January to 3 February 1995. Largest wintering concentration since 1981.

Red-breasted Merganser *Mergus serrator*

Lake Qarun, El Fayoum, 3 December; female, El Malaha, 30 December. Second and third record since 1953.

Goshawk *Accipiter gentilis*

female, Sheikh Zeweid, 27 December. Rare winter visitor.

Imperial Eagle *Aquila heliaca*

adult, Lake Nasser, 31 January 1995.

Golden Eagle *Aquila chrysaetos*

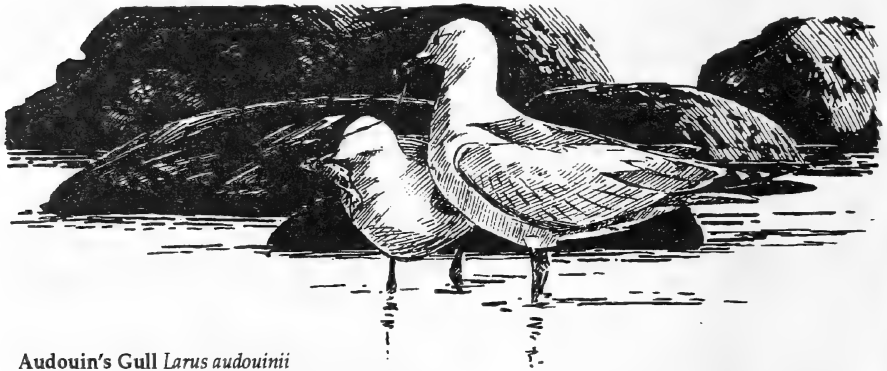
Quseima, 9 October.

Sooty Falcon *Falco concolor*

c150 pairs found breeding, Zabargat Island, Red Sea. Largest concentration recorded in Egypt. T & A M Moore.

Houbara *Chlamydotis undulata*
Ras El Nabq, 29 October. Rare winter visitor. *W Salama.*

Great Black-headed Gull *Larus ichthyaetus*
adult and immature, Sheikh Zeweid, 27 December. Second record for Northern Sinai. Also 8, Lake Qarun, 20 January 1995; 17, Wadi el Rayan, 27 & 28 January 1995; 22, Lake Nasser, 31 January to 3 February 1995. *M & S Baha el Din, R Hoath, M Evans.*



Audouin's Gull *Larus audouinii*
adult, Port Said, 20 September. Rare passage migrant. *A Grieve, M Baha el Din.*

Armenian Gull *Larus (argentatus) armenicus*
many wintering North Sinai coast, December & January 1995. *S & M Baha el Din, L Fishpool, W Salama.*

Stock Dove *Columba oenas*
Zaranik Protected Area, 26 December; several flocks totalling over 100, Wadi El Arish, 16 January 1995. Rare winter visitor. *S & M Baha el Din, W Salama, L Fishpool.*

African Collared Dove *Streptopelia roseogrisea*
seven, Abu Simbel, 30 January 1995; eight, Abu Simbel, 3 February 1995. Presumed resident.

Namaqua Dove *Oena capensis*
Zaranik Protected Area, North Sinai, 11 October. *A Grieve, M Baha el Din.*

Scops Owl *Otus scops*
Quseima, 9 October.

Hume's Tawny Owl *Strix butleri*
pair, Wadi Mukattab, 25 November. A new location for the species. *S Baha el Din.*

Syrian Woodpecker *Dendrocopos syriacus*
Rafah, 18 September. Rare breeding resident. *M Baha el Din, A Grieve.*

Dunn's Lark *Eremalauda dunni*
three Wadi Gerafi, 21 December.

Dupont's Lark *Chersophilus duponti*
small numbers on the road to Siwa (52 km south of Marsa Matruh) 2 October; one heard 35 km east of Matruh, 3 October.

Richard's Pipit *Anthus novaeseelandiae*
Sharm El Sheikh, 14 and 25 October. *F Wong.*

Pied Wheatear *Oenanthe pleschanka*

three, Wadi El Arish, 9 October;
two, Abu Simbel, 30 January to 3
February 1995.

Cyprus Pied Wheatear *Oenanthe cypriaca*

two, 10th of Ramadan, 23 October;
five, Abu Simbel, 30 January to 3
February 1995. *M & S Baha el Din, F
Wong.*

Finsch's Wheatear *Oenanthe finschii*

female, El Arish, 28 December and
16 January 1995. Rare winter visitor.
*S & M Baha el Din, L Fishpool, W
Salama.*

Red-rumped Wheatear *Oenanthe moesta*

two males, El Omayed Protected
Area, near El Alamein, the only area
from which the species is now
recorded.

Cetti's Warbler *Cettia cetti*

Sidi Abd El Rahman Hotel, El
Alamein, 4 October. Former
vagrant, now considered a rare win-
ter visitor.

Desert Warbler *Sylvia nana*

two, Wadi Mukattab and two near
Sarabit el Khadim, 25 November;
three, Wadi Gerafi, 21 December;
three, 45km southwest of El Arish,
17 January 1995. Rare winter visitor.
*S & M Baha el Din, W Salama, L
Fishpool.*

Yellow-browed Warbler *Phylloscopus inornatus*

Taba, 20 December. First winter
record.

Red-breasted Flycatcher *Ficedula parva*

10th of Ramadan, 19 October.
Second known record for Eastern
Desert. *S & M Baha el Din, S Eccles.*

Isabelline Shrike *Lanius isabellinus*

male, Abu Simbel, 3 February 1995.
First known record since 1984.

Steppe Great Grey Shrike *Lanius excubitor pallidirostris*

Wadi Gerafi, 21 December 1994.
Third record.

Scarlet Rosefinch *Carpodacus erythrinus*

juvenile, El Arish, 11 October. *A
Grieve, M Baha el Din.*

House Bunting *Emberiza striolata*

over six, Taba, 16 October.
Uncommon south Sinai resident. *S
Eccles, M Baha el Din, A Grieve.*

ISRAEL

Red-billed Tropicbird *Phaethon aethereus*

Eilat North Beach, 19 December.

Bewick's Swan *Cygnus columbianus*

two, Gonen fishponds, north of
Hula, 28 March. Presumed same as
those previously reported (OSME
Bull.33). *Dr D Hummel.*

Crested Honey Buzzard *Pernis ptilorhynchus*

Eilat, 14 May. First record for Israel
and the Western Palearctic (cf.
Shirihai 1994). *H Shirihai.*

White-eyed Gull *Larus leucophthalmus*

four, Eilat, 29 November-5
December. *H R Harrop.*

Striated Scops Owl *Otus brucei*

Eilat, 29 November-5 December at
least. Regular at this locality in win-
ter, during past three years. *H R
Harrop.*

African Collared Dove *Streptopelia roseogrisea*

Eilat, 27 September. *H Shirihai.*

Dunn's Lark *Eremalauda dunni*
km 33, north of Eilat: five, 20
October, two, 1 December; nine, 2
December. *J Barclay et al, H R
Harrop.*

Small Skylark *Alauda gugula*
Eilat, 19-21 October at least. *J
Barclay et al.*

Black Bush Robin *Cercotrichas podobe*
near Eilat airport, 7 April. *Dr D
Hummel.*

Red-breasted Flycatcher *Ficedula parva*
Yotvata, 29 December 1993-1
January 1994. Exceptionally late
migrant, or a wintering bird. *I C
Whitehouse.*

Indian Silverbill *Lonchura malabarica*
200, east of Haifa, September-
October. Unusually large numbers.
N Dingemans.

Yellow-breasted Bunting *Emberiza aureola*
Eilat, 5 November. *J Barclay et al.*

JORDAN

White Pelican *Pelecanus onocrotalus*
130 flew south, Azraq, 9 November.
First record at this locality since the
1960s. *RSCN.*

Ferruginous Duck *Aythya nyroca*
three, Aqaba sewage works, 9
October. *I J Andrews, T & I Loseby.*

Imperial Eagle *Aquila heliaca*
three, Dana Wildlife Reserve,
October-November; Disi area, 9
October; Shaumari, 2 November.
RSCN.

Spotted Eagle *Aquila clanga*
Dana Wildlife Reserve, 5 October.
RSCN.

Verreaux's Eagle *Aquila verreauxii*
adult, Wadi Rum, 8 October; Wadi
Araba: juvenile, 22 October; adult,
14 November. *I J Andrews, T & I
Loseby, RSCN.*

Sooty Falcon *Falco concolor*
recorded on six days in October at
Dana Wildlife Reserve and Wadi
Araba, including a pair with juve-
niles; pair, Petra, 6 October; Disi, 7
October. *I J Andrews, T & I Loseby,
RSCN.*

Corncrake *Crex crex*
Amman, 28 September. *RSCN.*

White-eyed Gull *Larus leucoptthalmus*
three, Aqaba, 8-9 October. *I J
Andrews, T & I Loseby.*

Crowned Sandgrouse *Pterocles coronatus*
recorded regularly in Wadi Araba,
October-November, daily maxi-
mum 68. Apparently first records
for Jordan. *RSCN.*

Pin-tailed Sandgrouse *Pterocles alchata*
nine, Wadi Araba, 13 November.
Very few records for Jordan. *RSCN.*

Hume's Tawny Owl *Strix butleri*
heard, Wadi Dana and Wadi Finan,
October. *I J Andrews, T & I Loseby,
RSCN.*

Dunn's Lark *Eremalauda dunni*
maximum nine, Wadi Araba, 23
October. *RSCN.*

Calandra Lark *Melanocorypha calandra*
1,800, east of Qadisiyya, 5 October.
Unusually large numbers. *RSCN.*

Robin *Erithacus rubecula*
up to 60 daily, Dana Wildlife
Reserve, late November. Large
numbers. *RSCN.*

Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris*

100, Dana Wildlife Reserve, 23 November. Large flock. RSCN.

Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos*

up to 113 daily, Dana Wildlife Reserve, late November. RSCN.

Redwing *Turdus iliacus*

Dana Wildlife Reserve, 23 November. Second record for Jordan. RSCN.

Red-tailed Wheatear *Oenanthe xanthopyrmyna*

male of nominate race, Wadi Araba, 14 November. Third record for Jordan. RSCN.

Mourning Wheatear *Oenanthe lugens*

birds of the dark morph recorded as follows: Safawi area: five, 29 September; two, 9 November; two, 32 km west of Muqat, 29 September. I J Andrews, T & I Loseby, RSCN.

Cyprus Warbler *Sylvia melanothorax*

three males, Dana Wildlife Reserve, 17 November onwards. Apparently first record for Jordan. RSCN.

Red-breasted Flycatcher *Ficedula parva*

Shaumari, 28 September; Wadi Finan, 21 October. Former is unusually early. I J Andrews, T & I Loseby, RSCN.

Blue Tit *Parus caeruleus*

Amman, 11 October. First for this area, and most southerly record ever. I J Andrews, T & I Loseby.

Dead Sea Sparrow *Passer moabiticus*

up to 135 daily, South Shuneh, November. RSCN.

Syrian Serin *Serinus syriacus*

up to 15 daily, Dana Wildlife Reserve, October-November. I J Andrews, T & I Loseby, RSCN.

Sinai Rosefinch *Carpodacus synoicus*

50-100, Wadi Dana, 3-5 October; 130, Dana Wildlife Reserve, 12 October. Unusually large numbers. I J Andrews, T & I Loseby, RSCN.

OMAN

Records were submitted by Hanne and Jens Eriksen, on behalf of the Oman Bird Records Committee.

Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*

Qurm Nature Reserve, 20 December 1994 - 1 January 1995. Sixth record. R. Midgley, A Brown, H & J Eriksen.

Black Heron *Egretta ardesiaca*

khawrs near Salalah, 9 September - 25 October. First record. I J A Brown, W F Simpson, H & J Eriksen.

African Spoonbill *Platalea alba*

Correction of dates: adult at khawrs near Salalah 21 January until at least 1 December, and a second adult there 23 July to at least 1 December. Second record. S Aspinall, I J A Brown, H & J Eriksen, C H Fry, M & W F Simpson, M Ullman.



Greylag Goose *Anser anser*
ten Masirah, 3 January 1995. *J Bryan*.

Corncrake *Crex crex*
Dauka, 1 October. *C H Fry*.

White-breasted Waterhen *Amaurornis phoenicurus*
juvenile Wadi Bani Umar, 6
January; Ain Razat, 15 November;
Sultan Qaboos University Botanic
Gardens, 28 December until at least
10 January 1995. *H & J Eriksen, C H
Fry, M C Jennings, M Ullman*.

Demoiselle Crane *Anthropoides virgo*
Sun Farms, Salalah, 29 September -
6 October. Tenth record. *W F
Simpson, H & J Eriksen*.

Spotted Thick-Knee *Burhinus capensis*
pair at nest with two eggs Haylat
Khalifa, 9-15 May, nest empty 25
May. *M W Lawrence*.

Great Stone Plover *Esacus recurvirostris*
Schnass, 1 December. Fourth
record. *R Midgley, A Brown*.

Little Pratincole *Glareola lactea*
Sultan Qaboos University, 3
November; Khawr Rouri and
Khawr Taqah, 14 November. *H & J
Eriksen, M Ullman*.

Sociable Lapwing *Vanellus gregaria*
four Sun Farms, Sohar, 4
November, two still there 8 January
1995. *H & J Eriksen, C H Fry, M
Ullman*.

Ring-necked Parakeet *Psittacula krameri*
274 at roost Intercontinental Hotel,
Muscat, 25 December. *M D
Gallagher*.

Jacobin Cuckoo *Clamator jacobinus*
Dauka, 16 November 1994. *M
Ullman*.

Alpine Swift *Apus melba*
Wadi Hinna, 23 July. *S Aspinall*.

Redstart *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*
male of race *samamisticus* Dauka, 6
October. *H & J Eriksen*.

Black-throated Thrush *Turdus ruficollis*
near Sunub, 5 November. *H & J
Eriksen*.



Masked Shrike *Lanius nubicus*
juvenile Dauka, 6 October. *H & J*
Eriksen.

Common Mynah *Acridotheres tristis*
355 at roost Intercontinental Hotel,
Muscat, 25 December. *M D*
Gallagher.

SAUDI ARABIA

Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*
Jeddah corniche, 4 March. *J-O*
Hedin.

Red-necked Grebe *Podiceps grisegena*
two, Jeddah corniche, 4 March. *J-O*
Hedin.

Black-necked Grebe *Podiceps nigricollis*
four or five, Jeddah corniche, 4
March. *J-O Hedin.*

Helmeted Guineafowl *Numida meleagris*
34, in three flocks, 24 km south of
Malaki Dam, 28 April. *J-O Hedin.*

Lappet-faced Vulture *Torgos tracheliotus*
adult, Salsalah, 13 May. *J-O Hedin.*

Demoiselle Crane *Anthropoides virgo*
1000, central Jeddah, 16 September;
150, Mecca ringroad, 9 September;
38, Jeddah corniche, 7 September;
300, Jeddah Pools, 11 September,
one, Jeddah Pools, 19-20 September;
25, Shoaiba area, 15 September.
Large numbers have only recently
been proven to pass through west-
ern Saudi Arabia. *P Maton.*

Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta*
two, Medina Airport damlake, 7 &
15 July. *J-O Hedin.*

Spotted Thick-knee *Burhinus capensis*
Malaki Dam, 28 April. *J-O Hedin.*

Black-winged Pratincole *Glareola nordmanni*
five, Medina Airport damlake, 14
April. Scarce passage migrant. *J-O*
Hedin.

White-tailed Plover *Vanellus leucura*
200, Jeddah corniche, 4 March. Very
large numbers. two, Jeddah Pools,
15 September; one same place, 18
September. *J-O Hedin, P Maton.*

Caspian Plover *Charadrius asiaticus*
Jeddah Pools, 30 July & 1
September. *P Maton.*

Jacobin Cuckoo *Clamator jacobinus*
two, east of Edabe, 29 April. *J-O*
Hedin.

Dunn's Lark *Eremalauda dunni*
three or four, 290 km east of
Medina, 25 March; two, 150 km
north of Medina, 8 April. *J-O Hedin.*

Grey Hypocolius *Hypocolius ampelinus*
19, Riyadh, 28 October. Good num-
ber and early at this locality. *I*
Saville.

Pale Rock Sparrow *Carpospiza brachydactyla*
35-40, Medina Airport damlake, 7
April. *J-O Hedin.*

Arabian Waxbill *Estrilda rufibarba*
seven or eight, 24 km east of Malaki
Dam, 28 April; ten, east of Edabe, 29
April. *J-O Hedin.*

Cinereous Bunting *Emberiza cineracea*
Wadi Three Gazal-Ash Shafa, 16
September. Status in south-west
Arabia uncertain. *P Maton.*

TURKEY

Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis*
120, Goksu Delta, 9 September.
Large count. *J Taylor.*

Demoiselle Crane *Anthropoides virgo*
eight, Eregli Marshes, 2 September.
Scarce on passage through central
and western Turkey. *J Taylor*.

Cream-coloured Courser *Cusorius cursor*
pair, with two juveniles, plus a single-
ton, Birecik, 7 September. Few
Turkish records, the species may
only breed sporadically. *J Taylor*.

Black-winged Pratincole *Glareola nordmanni*
Cukurova Deltas: 28, 19 September;
60, 21 September. Scarce passage
migrant. *R Thorpe, J Young*.

Blue-cheeked Bee-eater *Merops superciliosus*
three, including a juvenile, flew
west, Cukurova Deltas, 27
September. *R Thorpe, J Young*.

Richard's Pipit *Anthus novaeseelandiae*
four, Akyatan Gölü, Cukurova
Deltas, 12 October. Scarce passage
migrant, most recently recorded in
Kizilirmak Delta in spring 1992. *R
Thorpe, J Young*.

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

Records were submitted by Colin
Richardson on behalf of the UAE
Bird Records Committee.

Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*
off Abu Dhabi corniche, mid
January.

Flesh-footed Shearwater *Puffinus carneipes*
off Dibba, 9 October. First record.

White Pelican *Pelecanus onocrotalus*
Das Island, 26 December. Fifth con-
firmed record, and the first since
1981. *L Reaney*.

Bittern *Botaurus stellaris*
Emirates Golf Club, 14 September,
and Khor al Beidah, 4 December.
Rare migrant.

Squacco Heron *Ardeola ralloides*
25 Abu al Abyadh, mid September.
Largest flock recorded.

Intermediate Egret *Egretta intermedia*
Ramtha lagoons, 23 December-13
January 1995. First record for UAE.
S Aspinall.

Ruddy Shelduck *Tadorna ferruginea*
Ramtha, late November-late
January 1995, seven Al Ghar lake,
Abu Dhabi, 25 January 1995. 12th
and 13th records. *A Topp, S James*.

Cotton Teal *Nettapus coromandelianus*
female, Emirates Golf Course, 24-25
November. Fourth record.

Ferruginous Duck *Aythya nyroca*
up to nine at five different sites
between 28 November and end of
December. A noteworthy influx.

Crested Honey Buzzard *Pernis ptilorhynchus*
dark morph adult male, Ras al
Khaimah, 16 December 1992. First
record for UAE and Arabia, (photo-
graph published in *Birding World*
7:403). *M Saarinen*.

Black-shouldered Kite *Elanus caeruleus*
Dibba dairy farm, 15-16 September.
Third record. *E Hirschfeld et al*.

Spotted Eagle *Aquila clanga*
six Khor Dubai, 28 November, and
over 20 reported northern Emirates,
over several days in early
December.

Imperial Eagle *Aquila heliaca*
Hamraniyah, 5 December, Ramtha,
31 December, Khor Dubai, 29
December-6 January 1995.

Lanner *Falco biarmicus*
Dibba, 16 September, Khor Dubai,
15 December.



Spotted Crane *Porzana porzana*
Zabeel, 19 December. Rare winter record.

Little Crane *Porzana parva*
three Emirates Golf Course 17-20 September. 5th UAE record. C Richardson.

White-breasted Waterhen *Amaurornis phoenicurus*
Jebel Ali, 20 January 1995. Third record. S James:

Kittlitz's Plover *Charadrius pecuarius*
Mirawah Island, Abu Dhabi, 10 September. First record for UAE, and second for Arabia. M Skakuj. First was in Bahrain in August 1992 (cf. Nightingale & Hill 1993).

Caspian Plover *Charadrius asiatica*
three Al Wathba, 3 November.

Sociable Plover *Vanellus gregaria*
Fujairah, 11 November. Eighth record. S Aspinall.

White-tailed Plover *Vanellus leucura*
up to seven Al Ain, from 1 December, up to eight Ramtha, 6 December-February 1995.

Great Knot *Calidris tenuirostris*
regular passage, Mirawah Island, Abu Dhabi, late August-late September; maximum 603, 18 September. Highest ever numbers in UAE and Arabia. One, Khor Kalba, 15 September. Unusual locality.

Red Knot *Calidris canutus*
Mirawah Island, Abu Dhabi, 23 August. Third record. J Lontowski

Red-necked Stint *Calidris ruficollis*
Dhabiya, 9 September. First record for UAE. I Lycett

Long-toed Stint *Calidris subminuta*
Ramtha Tip, 16 September, six Al Ain camel track, 28 September. Ninth and tenth records. E Hirschfeld, S Aspinall.

Great Snipe *Gallinago media*
Al Ghar lake, 2 February 1995.

Red-necked Phalarope *Phalaropus lobatus*
40 Emirates Golf Course, 8
September. A very high inland
count.



Sooty Gull *Larus hemprichii*
1,600 Qarnain Island, 19 January.
Extraordinarily high winter count.

Caspian Tern *Sterna caspia*
incubating eggs, Jazirat Na'itah, 22
January. First confirmed breeding
in UAE.

Lesser Noddy *Anous tenuirostris*
two, off Ras Dibba, Fujairah, 14-19
September, one remaining until 14
October. First record for UAE.

Namaqua Dove *Oena capensis*
Dibba, Fujairah, 14 September.
Ninth record.

Striated Scops Owl *Otus brucei*
Hamraniyah, 18 September. The
status of this species in UAE is only
presently being clarified.

Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus*
Das Island, 12 October, Dibba, 13
January 1995, and Al Wathba camel
track, 3 February 1995.

Egyptian Nightjar *Caprimulgus aegyptius*
three reported in the Abu Dhabi
area, 7-15 October.

Alpine Swift *Apus melba*
Al Ain, 6 September. Eighth record.
S. Aspinall.

Pied Kingfisher *Ceryle rudis*
Zabeel fish ponds, 21 January-at
least 7 February 1995. Eighth record.
K Drissner.

Calandra Lark *Melanocorypha calandra*
Al Wathba camel track, 2-5
February. First record for UAE.
S. James.

Bimaculated Lark *Melanocorypha bimaculata*
12 Al Ain, 1 December, up to 35 Al
Wathba 3 November-early
February 1995.

Small Skylark *Alauda gulgula*
two Al Wathba, 16 December and
subsequent dates until early
February 1995. *S. James et al.*

Lesser Short-toed Lark *Calandrella rufescens*
ten Al Ain, 1 December, 13 Kalba, 3
December, at least 20, perhaps resi-
dent, near Jazeerah al Hamrah,
July-December, 40 Khor al Beidah,
20 January 1995, and 40 Al Ghar
lake from 2 February 1995. Usually
a very rare migrant.

Forest Wagtail *Dendroanthus indicus*
Emirates Golf Course, 10-21
October; Mirawah Island, 16
October. Fifth and sixth records. *C*
Richardson, S Aspinall.

Olive-backed Pipit *Anthus hodgsoni*
Al Wathba camel track, 23
September, at least two Abu Dhabi
for several days from 15 October.
13th and 14th records. *S. James.*

Blyth's Pipit *Anthus godlewskii*
trapped and ringed, Mirawah
Island, Abu Dhabi, 18-24
September; Al Wathba, 27
September & 3 November, then
from 16 December-early February
1995. Eighth to eleven records,
although possibly some of the same
birds.

Grey Hypocolius *Hypocolius ampelinus*
two, Emirates Golf Course, 25
October; eight, Das Island, 30
October. Only records of the
autumn.

Robin *Erithacus rubecula*
Bateen Wood, 26 August. A very
early record of a rare species.

Eversmann's Redstart *Phoenicurus erythronotus*
Dubai, 14-15 November; Mirawah
Island, 21 November, and on Zirca
Island 23 January 1995. 18th-20th
records.

Mourning Wheatear *Oenanthe lugens*
Zirca Island, 23 January and Qarn
Nazwa, 30 January, perhaps early
migrants. A very rare migrant.

Ring Ouzel *Turdus torquatus*
Emirates Golf Course, 22
November, and Das Island, 11
December. Seventh and eighth
records. *C Richardson, L Reaney.*

Black-throated Thrush *Turdus ruficollis*
male, Das Island, 13 October.

River Warbler *Locustella fluviatilis*
trapped on Mirawah Island, 29
August. First UAE record. *T*
Stawarczyk.

Moustached Warbler *Acrocephalus melanopogon*
Mirawah Island, 28 August. 7th
record for UAE. *E Hirschfeld.*

Blyth's Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus dumetorum*
ten trapped and ringed, Mirawah
Island, Abu Dhabi, 23 August-11
September. Only one previous
record, in May 1994.

Booted Warbler *Hippolais caligata*
three of the race *rama* at Khor Kalba,
3 January 1995. *E Hirschfeld.*

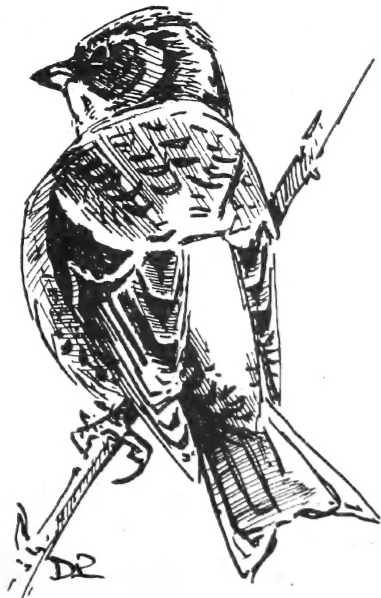
Hume's Lesser Whitethroat *Sylvia althaea*
Zirca Island, 23 January 1995.

Yellow-browed Warbler *Phylloscopus inornatus*
Das Island, 11-16 October.

Rose-coloured Starling *Sturnus roseus*
17, Emirates Golf Course, 25
October-24 November.

Spanish Sparrow *Passer hispaniolensis*
180 Hamraniyah, 4 December.
Highest ever count.

Brambling *Fringilla montifringilla*
Jebel Ali, 16 September. 14th record
for UAE, and the earliest ever.



Pine Bunting *Emberiza leucocephalos*
Das Island, 8 November. First
record for UAE. *L Reaney*.

Cinereous Bunting *Emberiza cineracea*
female, Emirates Golf Course, 17
September. Scarce passage migrant.

Little Bunting *Emberiza pusilla*
two, Das Island, 20-27 October.
Eighth record. *L Reaney*.

We are most grateful to the following for
their help in compiling this review: Ian
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Hilary Welch, I C Whitehouse, John Young.

Ornithological Society of the Middle East

c/o The Lodge, Sandy, Bedfordshire SG19 2DL, U.K.

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. Membership subscriptions are: £10 individual, £15 family; airmail supplement £1.50 Europe, £3 rest of the world. Life membership £200.

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Contents

- 1 The Status of Warblers in Kuwait *B. K. Wright*
- 8 Raptor migration in the north-east of Turkey, September 1990
M. Kok & J. P. Ongenae
- 12 Foraging behaviour of Arctic, Pomarine and Long-tailed Skua on
migration in the Red Sea *R. Yosef*
- 14 Observations on copulating Crab Plovers *Dromas ardeola* in Kuwait
B. K. Wright
- 16 News & Information *Compiled by Simon Albrecht*
- 23 OSME News
 1995 Summer Meeting
 Letter to the Editor
 OSME Situations Vacant
- 28 Recently Received
- 29 Requests for Information
- 31 Reviews
 Birds of Bahrain
- 32 Around the Region *Compiled by Pete Davidson & Guy Kirwan*



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