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Voorplaat / front cover

Oosterse Zwarte Roodstaart / Eastern Black Redstart *Phoenicurus ochruros phoenicuroides*, eerstejaars mannetje, West-Terschelling, Terschelling, Friesland, 5 november 2016 *(Arie Ouwerkerk)*

Gedurende 40 jaar Dutch Birding is grote vooruitgang geboekt op het gebied van herkenning van ondersoorten, waarbij Dutch Birding een belangrijke rol heeft gespeeld. De trend – waarin Dutch Birding altijd voorop heeft gelopen – om ondersoorten bij voldoende onderbouwing op te waarderen tot soortstatus en up-to-date te blijven met betrekking tot nieuwe gepubliceerde taxonomische inzichten heeft daar zeker aan bijgedragen. Een sprekend voorbeeld is Oosterse Zwarte Roodstaart *Phoenicurus ochruros phoenicuroides*, een taxon waarvan het voorkomen als dwaalgast in Europa tot het eind van de 20e eeuw onduidelijk was, en gebaseerd op onvolledige kennis. Dat veranderde toen in oktober 2003 een exemplaar opdook in IJmuiden, Noord-Holland (en in dezelfde periode naar later bleek ook een exemplaar op Guernsey, Kanaaleilanden), en Laurens Steijn twee jaar later een baanbrekend artikel publiceerde (Dutch Birding 27: 171-194, 2005). Op basis van dit artikel werd het mogelijk om sommige mannetjes in het veld te onderscheiden van vermeende hybriden Zwarte x Gekraagde Roodstaart *P ochruros x phoenicurus*. Door nieuwe determinatiekennis, betere documentatie, meer aandacht van vogelaars en mogelijk ook een daadwerkelijke toename steeg het aantal gevallen in Europa snel, met in Nederland gevallen in 2011, 2012 (twee), 2016 (drie), 2017 (drie) en begin 2018 en een opmerkelijke influx in Noordwest-Europa in het najaar van 2016.

During 40 years of Dutch Birding, good progress has been made regarding the identification of subspecies. Dutch Birding played a significant role in the trend to upgrade subspecies to species level as soon as convincing evidence was available and to keep up to date with new published taxonomic insights. A telling example is Eastern Black Redstart *Phoenicurus ochruros phoenicuroides*, a taxon of which the status as vagrant in Europe was obscure until the end of the 20th century, and based on incomplete knowledge. This all changed when, in October 2003, a bird turned up at IJmuiden, Noord-Holland (and later it appeared one had been in the same period on Guernsey, Channel Islands). Laurens Steijn published a ground-breaking paper two years later (Dutch Birding 27: 171-194, 2005); based on this paper, it became possible to separate some males from alleged hybrids Black x Common Redstart *P ochruros x phoenicurus*. Through new identification knowledge, better documentation, increased interest from birders and possibly also a genuine increase, the number of records in Europe rose quickly, with subsequent records in the Netherlands in 2011, 2012 (two), 2016 (three), 2017 (three) and early 2018, and a notable influx in north-western Europe in autumn 2016.

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Hybrid Northern Shoveler x Blue-winged Teal on Schiermonnikoog, Netherlands, in May 2014, and identification and WP occurrence

Rob S A van Bemmelen, Jörn Lehmhus & Steven G Mlodinow

After wandering far from their normal range, vagrant birds may never find their way back. If they manage to survive, they are unlikely to find a mate of their own species. The 'desperation hypothesis' (or Hubbs principle) explains the occurrence of hybrids between a vagrant species and a locally common species (Hubbs 1955). The Dutch rarities committee (CDNA) keeps track of records of hybrids when at least one parent is a vagrant species, and six such hybrids have been admitted to the Dutch list: Barnacle x Ross's Goose *Branta leucopsis x Anser rossii*, Ring-necked x Tufted Duck *Aythya collaris x fuligula*, Eurasian x Green-winged Teal *Anas crecca x carolinensis*, Roseate x Common Tern *Sterna dougallii x hirundo*, Azure x Eurasian Blue Tit ('Pleske's Tit') *Cyanistes cyanus x caeruleus* and Blue-headed x Citrine Wagtail *Motacilla flava x citreola*. In addition, there are records of (presumed) hybrids that have not been accepted as such because it was not fully excluded that the bird could have been a pure individual of one of the (rare) parent species: Common x Ring-billed Gull *Larus canus x delawarensis*, Common x Blue Rock Thrush *Monticola saxatilis x solitarius* and Eastern Black-eared x Pied Wheatear *Oenanthe melanoleuca x pleschanka*. In this paper, we document the first record of a hybrid Northern Shoveler x Blue-winged Teal *A clypeata x discors* for the Netherlands in May 2014 and discuss the occurrence of this hybrid type in the Western Palearctic (WP); we also discuss the separation from other hybrids and from species that resemble these hybrids. We focus only on adult males.

90 Hybrid Northern Shoveler x Blue-winged Teal / hybride Slobeend x Blauwvleugeltaling *Anas clypeata x discors*, male, Schiermonnikoog, Friesland, Netherlands, 4 May 2014 *(Thijs Glastra)*

Hybrid Northern Shoveler x Blue-winged Teal on Schiermonnikoog in May 2014

For years, each spring and autumn, a group of birders traditionally spent a long weekend birding on Schiermonnikoog, Friesland, the Netherlands. On 4 May 2014, Niels van Houtum and Martijn Renders found a striking duck at Westerplas, which showed a white facial crescent similar to that of Blue-winged Teal. However, the spoon-shaped bill and several other characters immediately ruled out this species. Photographs of the bird were rapidly shared using social media, which led to the consideration of Australasian Shoveler *A rhynchotis* – a species known to occur as an escape and to have caused confusion with Blue-winged in the past. Later that day, Rob van Bemmelen and Swen Rijnbeek had a look at the duck. By playing recordings of Northern Shoveler, it was lured close, within a few meters of the observation hide. Doubts arose as to its identification as Australasian, and they concluded that it was not that species. Considering the combination of features, which did not fit any species, a hybrid seemed likely. The most obvious candidate was Northern Shoveler x Blue-winged Teal. A few internet searches resulted in images of very similar birds recorded in North America and Europe. The sighting was submitted to the CDNA and was accepted as the first record of this hybrid type for the Netherlands (Haas et al 2015).

Description

SIZE & SHAPE Size similar to Northern Shoveler but less bulky. Bill spoon shaped but less so than in Northern, with shape intermediate between Northern and Blue-winged Teal.

HEAD Dark with greenish iridescence. Narrow, white crescent before eye, culminating at upperside in narrow line running over eye. Lore, forehead and crown in front of white crescent were darker, more blackish than rest of head.

UPPERPARTS Mantle dark speckled on white underground. Elongated scapulars with black inner vane and white outer vane similar to Northern Shoveler. Uppertail-coverts black. Outer tail-feathers white, inner grey.

UNDERPARTS Breast white with fine dark speckles. Flank rusty brown, paler than in Northern Shoveler, with fine barring along upperparts and rear parts. White spot on vent. Undertail-coverts black.

WING Primaries dark. Tertials with similar pattern as scapulars. Wings not seen open.

BARE PARTS Bill dark grey. Iris dark red-brown. Leg yellow-orange.

VOICE Not heard.

PRESENCE OF RINGS Both legs without rings.

Identification

The main challenges of identifying a hybrid Northern Shoveler x Blue-winged Teal are posed by the superficial similarity of Australasian Shoveler and by excluding other hybrids involving shovelers. Additionally, Northern Shoveler can show a thin whitish crescent on the face (easily considered an indication of hybrid influence), when moulting from eclipse to breeding plumage (Kemp 2000). The whitish crescent is generally rather weak or diffuse but, in some individuals, it can be quite pronounced (cf plate 91-93). Therefore, this possibility should be considered first when observing an unusual shoveler.

Compared with Australasian Shoveler, the Schiermonnikoog bird showed much finer speckles on the breast and finer barring on the flank, as well as a dark iris, greenish head and less heavy bill than in Australasian. The only similarity with Australasian was the leg colour. Therefore, the possibility of an escape Australasian can be dismissed. The spoon-shaped bill, the (largely unmarked) reddish flank, white ground colour of the breast, greenish head and elongated black-and-white scapulars pointed strongly to Northern Shoveler as one parent. The all-black bill, lacking bluish or yellow coloration, reduced the likeliness for a number of other species such as wigeons *A penelope/americana*, Mallard *A platyrhynchos* and Northern Pintail *A acuta* as parents, although shoveler hybrids with wigeons can show an all-black bill (Jörn Lehmhus pers obs). However, those shoveler x wigeon hybrids differ in having a Baikal Teal *A formosa*-like facial pattern, unspotted flank and breast and several other features not in agreement with the Schiermonnikoog bird. As to the identification of the Schiermonnikoog bird, hybrid types showing a facial crescent should be considered. The appearance of the bird corresponded well with the photographs and descriptions of presumed male hybrids Northern Shoveler x Blue-winged Teal (see below). The presumed hybrid Australasian x Northern Shoveler (see below) differs substantially from the Schiermonnikoog bird by: ***1*** yellow eye; ***2*** heavy bill-base resulting in a straight transition between culmen and forehead as in both putative parents; ***3*** shoveler-like size; and ***4*** rather scarcely spotted and in part scaly breast markings. The only known specimen of Red *A platalea* x Northern Shoveler shows some similarities to the Schiermonnikoog bird but differs structurally, in the shape of the facial crescent and in iris coloration. Northern Shoveler x Cinnamon Teal *A cyanoptera* differs from the Schiermonnikoog bird by the paler iris colour, cinnamon breast colour and the colour of the normally pale cinnamon patch on the rear flank.

The general identification of hybrid shovelers and Australasian Shoveler is discussed more extensively below.

Hybrids

Identifying the parents of hybrids can be tricky in the absence of known parents or DNA-based evidence. One of the pitfalls of hybrid identification is that a hybrid may show a feature that is not expressed by either parent species (at least some of these features are thought to be ancestral, thus still in the genes of one or both parents but not phenotypically expressed). Some examples of hybrids with unexpected characters are the striking Baikal Teal-like head patterns of Northern Shoveler hybrids with Eurasian Wigeon *A penelope* or Eurasian Teal (Gillham & Gillham 1996), Northern Pintail x Eurasian Teal (Gantlett 1989, Gillham & Gillham 1996) or Gadwall *A strepera* x Mallard and Mallard x Eurasian Teal (Lehmhus 2011).

One of the sources of variation in hybrid phenotypes is the species of each parent: hybrids between a male Northern Shoveler and a female Blue-winged Teal may differ from hybrids between a female Northern and a male Blue-winged. However, we have not been able to take this into account, as the parentage of many study objects was not known, and is unlikely to be known in any field observation.

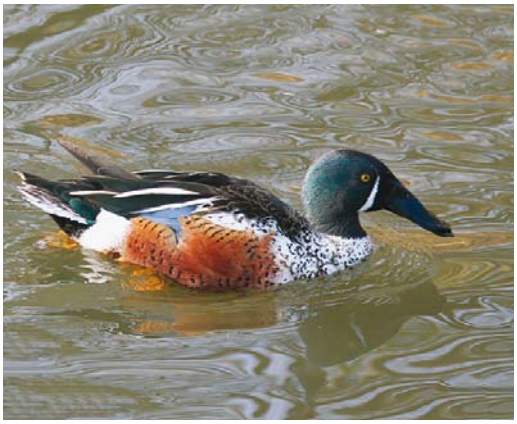
Hybrid ducks with spoon-shaped bills may not

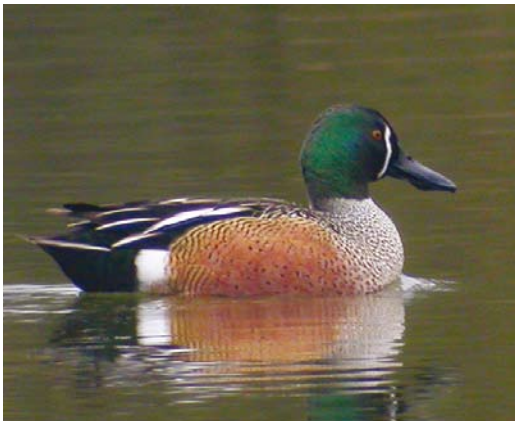
91 Northern Shoveler / Slobeend *Anas clypeata*, male in transitional plumage, South Platte river, Denver, Colorado, USA, 9 February 2013 *(Steven G Mlodinow)* **92** Northern Shoveler / Slobeend *Anas clypeata*, male, Noordwijkerhout, Zuid-Holland, Netherlands, 4 November 2015 *(Maud H Mommers)* **93** Northern Shovelers / Slobeenden *Anas clypeata*, males in transitional plumage, Frederick, Weld County, Colorado, USA, 23 December 2012 *(Steven G Mlodinow)*. Northern Shovelers regularly show white facial feathering, often speckled and reaching onto chin, as in right bird.

only involve Northern Shoveler but also exotic shoveler species kept in captivity in Europe (Red Shoveler and Australasian Shoveler, perhaps also Cape Shoveler *A smithii*). If escaped birds survive, they potentially mingle with their northern hemisphere relatives. Below, we focus on four shoveler hybrids that show a facial crescent: Australasian x Northern Shoveler, Red x Northern Shoveler, Northern Shoveler x Cinnamon Teal and Northern Shoveler x Blue-winged Teal.

Northern Shoveler x Blue-winged Teal

We know of few published descriptions of presumed hybrid males Northern Shoveler x Blue-winged Teal (Kemp 2000, Reeber 2015) but none of captive hybrids with known parentage or parentage established by DNA analysis (but see below for three European records of mixed pairs with ducklings). Several descriptions of presumably this hybrid exist in earlier literature but lack essential details for a secure identification (Childs 1952, Delacour 1956, Hall & Harris 1966). However, a thorough description of this cross is presented with photographs in Kemp (2000) and with drawings in Reeber (2015). Photographs of presumed hybrids Northern Shoveler x Blue-winged Teal from the USA (www.ebird.org) and Europe (eg, Kemp 2000; table 1, plate 90, 96-98) show birds with similarities to Northern Shoveler x Cinnamon Teal hybrid males (eg, smaller bodied and smaller billed than





94 Probable hybrid Australasian x Northern Shoveler / waarschijnlijke hybride Australische Slobeend x Slobeend *Anas rhynchotis x clypeata*, male, Regent's Park, London, England, 11 April 2007 *(Liz Barrett)*. In captivity. According to information from photographer, this bird was purchased as Northern Shoveler egg with five others which developed into phenotypically pure Northern. Its plumage and structure, however, suggest influence of Australasian Shoveler (see main text). **95** Hybrid Northern Shoveler x Cinnamon Teal / hybride Slobeend x Kaneeltaling *Anas clypeata x cyanoptera*, male, Arcata, California, USA, 12 February 2009 *(Rob Fowler)*. Bird resembling hybrid Northern Shoveler x Blue-winged Teal *A discors* but distinguished by plain cinnamon breast and yellow iris. **96** Hybrid Northern Shoveler x Blue-winged Teal / hybride Slobeend x Blauwvleugeltaling *Anas clypeata x discors*, male, Titchwell, Norfolk, England, 7 April 2001 *(Dave Appleton)* **97** Hybrid Northern Shoveler x Blue-winged Teal / hybride Slobeend x Blauwvleugeltaling *Anas clypeata x discors*, male, NSG Lahnaue, Hessen, Germany, 5 April 2008 *(Thorsten Seibel)*. Note finely scalloped pattern on breast, sparse round spotting of central flank and barred upperside and rear side of reddish flank.

Northern, plus white facial crescent). Overall, these presumed hybrids show a fairly consistent set of characters. Here, we describe these characters and their variation using recent photographs. A white facial crescent of varying width is present, which can extend as a thin line above the eye, and is combined with a dark lore, forehead and crown. Also, the rear flank is barred and the breast is finely speckled. Importantly, the ground colour of the breast is white or pale cream and is diffusely demarcated from the reddish flank. The amount and intensity of dark markings on the breast and flank is variable. The breast is nearly always finely spotted. The flank is reddish, in general slightly paler than in Northern, and gets paler at the upper border. At the upper border of the flank, short parallel dark lines can be found. The lower flank may have a varying amount of short stripes or spots (eg, plate 96, 99), but can also be plainer, with reduced spotting (plate 97, 100) or without spotting (plate 90).

TABLE 1 Records of hybrid Northern Shoveler x Blue-winged Teal *Anas clypeata x discors* in the WP that have been published and substantiated by photographs on the internet or in birding journals; all records refer to males (* not accepted or considered by regional or national rarities committee)

Belgium (1)
* 3 May 2014, Kindernouwbeekvallei, Kindernouw, Lille, Antwerpen

Britain (2)
* April 2000 and November 2000 to 7 April 2001, Titchwell, Norfolk, England (plate 96)
* 12 April 2006, Earls Barton, Northamptonshire, England

Finland (3)
5 June 2001, Lammi/Hämeenlinna, Kanta-Häme
23 July 2013 to 18 August 2013, Solanlampi, Polvijärvi, Pohjois-Karjala
24 April 2016, Mattholmsfladan, Parainen, Varsinais-Suomi

France (1)
* 25 April 2005, Marais Breton Vendéen, Vendée

Germany (6)
5 April 2008, NSG Lahnaue, near Gießen, Hessen (plate 97)
* 6 April 2009, Seeanger, Ebergötzen, Niedersachsen
* 1-8 February 2014 and 10 December 2014, Rheininsel Burkheim, Baden-Württemberg
* 23-25 March, 18-21 April, 23 October, 6 and 24 November 2014 and 22 March 2015, Schwabhausen gravel pits, Gotha, Thüringen (plate 98)
* 1-8 April 2014, Altmühlsee, Gunzenhausen, Weißenburg-Gunzenhausen, Bayern
18-21 April 2015, NSG Lahnaue and Lahnflutrinnen Gießen-West, Hessen

Netherlands (1)
4 May 2014 Westerplas, Schiermonnikoog, Friesland (plate 90)

Norway (3)
28 May 2003, Gaustadvågen, Eide, and 7-9 June 2003, Åheim, Vanylven, Møre & Romsdal
22 May 2006, Oteren, Storfjord, Troms
31 July to 5 August 2006, Lista fyr, Vest-Agder

Spain (3)
* 4 January 2008, Marjal del Moro, Sagunto, Valencia
* 27 March 2013, El Pontón, Requena, Valencia
* 29 November 2014, Gravera del Soto, Valverde de Mérida, Badajoz

Sweden (10)
1-21 April 2006, Nabben, Skåne
* 10 June 2007, Lagaoset, Laholm, Halland
* 22 April 2009, Vänersborgsviken, Vänersborg
* 25 April 2011, Krönbron Sund, Grönområdet, Vimmerby, Småland
9 May 2012, Halmstad, Skåne
* 9 May 2013, Angarnsjöängen, Uppland
* 18 May 2014, Klardammen, Dannemora, Uppland
* 22 May 2014, Rivet, Gotland
* 2 May 2017, Svensksundsviken, Östergötland
* 6-7 May 2017, Hjälstaviken, Uppland

Only in few cases, birds show a courser, broader pattern of breast and flank (plate 98). The iris colour varies from dark yellow to orange-brown to dark-brown or sometimes even blackish – thus darker than in hybrid Northern Shoveler x Cinnamon Teal. The head is paler than in Northern but darker than in Blue-winged and with some greenish iridescence. At the rear flank, there is a clean white unmarked patch. The uppertail-coverts and undertail-coverts are black, and the outer tail-feathers are white, similar to Northern. The forewing is blue, with a white border to the speculum, and the speculum is green as in both parent species. The scapulars and tertials are similar to Northern in pattern and coloration. The hybrids are generally slightly smaller than Northern but larger than Cinnamon or Blue-winged. The black bill is shoveler-like but smaller and less pronounced than in Northern, which readily separates these hybrids from Northern or from hybrids involving two shoveler species (eg, Red x Northern Shoveler, see below). The legs are generally yellowish orange, yellower than those of Northern (Kemp 2000; plate 100).

Northern Shoveler x Cinnamon Teal
Examples of this hybrid have been described in the literature (Harrison & Harrison 1965, Gillham & Gillham 1996, Reeber 2015). A museum specimen with known parents at Tring, England, is shown in figure 1. Additionally, birds have been observed in the wild in North America (plate 95, Reeber 2015, www.ebird.org, www.azfo.org/gallery/noshXcite.html) and several countries in Europe, where we know of 12 observations (table 2; note that the many records in Spain may be explained by multiple observations of the same individuals). The iris colour of this hybrid is bright yellow, orange or red. The head is dark, in most cases with green iridescence as in Northern Shoveler but occasionally slightly paler and greyer with less iridescence. The facial crescent is variable in width:

FIGURE 1 Hybrid Northern Shoveler x Cinnamon Teal / hybride Slobeend x Kaneeltaling *Anas clypeata x cyanoptera*, male, National History Museum, Tring, Hertfordshire, England, 2 September 2011 *(Hein van Grouw)*. Bird of captive origin, died in April 1967. Note entirely cinnamon underparts, including breast, and absence of fine dark markings on flank.

in several birds rather broad, in others narrow. Moreover, the facial crescent is usually white but sometimes partly or wholly cinnamon coloured. The breast and flank are rusty reddish, similar in darkness to the rusty red colour of Cinnamon Teal body and Northern flank. In some cases, the breast is slightly paler rusty red than the flank but never (creamy) white. Breast and flank are uniformly coloured and unpatterned in most birds. In some individuals, some spotting can be seen on the breast and sometimes these hybrids show a hint of dark stripes on the upper flank. A creamy to pale reddish brown, unmarked patch is present on the rear flank. Rarely, this patch may appear pure white. The mantle has a paler ground colour than the flank, with a scaly and partly spotted dark pattern. From the mantle downwards to the breast, a diffuse spur of feathers with this scaly pattern and paler ground colour often occurs. The uppertail-coverts and undertail-coverts are black, while the outer tail-feathers are white. The forewing is blue, with a white border to the speculum and the speculum is green, as in both parent species. The hybrids are generally slightly smaller than Northern but larger than Cinnamon. The bill is typically smaller and less spatulate than that of Northern.

TABLE 2 Records of hybrid Northern Shoveler x Cinnamon Teal *Anas clypeata x cyanoptera* in the WP that have been published and substantiated by photographs on the internet or in birding journals; all records refer to males (* not accepted or considered by regional or national rarities committee)

Spain (8)
* 12 January 2006, Los Palacios y Villafranca, Sevilla
* 10 April 2010, Laguna de la Nava, Toledo
* 24 April 2010, Fuente de Piedra, Andalucia
* 15-21 March 2013, Laguna del Pueblo, Pedro Muñoz, Ciudad Real
* 17 March 2013, Río Guadalhorce, Málaga
* 17 April 2014, Paraje Natural de la Desembocadora del Guadalhorce, Málaga
* 28 February 2016, Laguna del Pueblo, Pedro Muñoz, Ciudad Real
* 15 March 2016, Reserva de la Biosfera Mancha Húmeda, Ciudad Real

Netherlands (1)
* 3-18 April 2012, Breda, Noord-Brabant

Germany (1)
* 15 April 2008, Giessen, Hesse

Denmark (1)
* 11 May 2009, Gammel Hviding, Ribe, Sudjylland

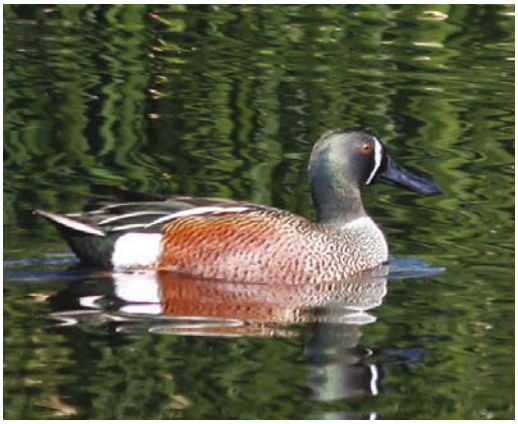
Finland (1)
15 May 2011, Pori Kuuminainen, Länsi-Suomen lääni

Australasian x Northern Shoveler
Only one specimen is known that possibly refers to this type of hybrid (plate 94). The identification as a putative hybrid Australasian x Northern Shoveler is based solely on the unique appearance of this bird intermediate between the two species. This bird from a waterfowl collection resembles a hybrid Northern Shoveler x Blue-winged Teal in having reddish flanks with some barring at the upper border of the flank, a white breast with some black spotting and scaling and a thin white facial crescent. However, the white breast is pure white without a creamy colour hue as in Northern Shoveler x Blue-winged Teal. The flank is as dark as in Northern and sharply demarcated from the white breast. The bird is similar to Northern in size and heavy-billed appearance and in showing a bright yellow iris. Additionally, the head coloration is paler and more blue-grey than in Northern. This adds up to a plumage intermediate between Australasian and Northern. The bird had been purchased as Northern egg, together with others that developed into phenotypically pure Northern (Liz Barrett pers comm). According to Kolbe (1999), accidental hybridisation of shoveler species in captivity is likely due to the similar appearance of the females. It should be noted that the identification as this hybrid type is not absolutely certain and a backcross of a hybrid shoveler to Northern cannot be fully excluded, particularly with respect to the backcross described below (Harrison & Harrison 1963).

Red x Northern Shoveler
Three male hybrids were bred in captivity from a male Red Shoveler and a female Northern Shoveler (Harrison & Harrison 1963, colour photograph in Gillham & Gillham 1996). One of these three birds (all rather similar to each other) was mounted, and the description refers to that specimen. It shows a large white facial crescent extending onto the throat and some weak spotting present within the crescent. It has a blue-grey head with slight greenish iridescence seemingly consisting of small merging dark spots. The breast is whitish with black speckles and the flank reddish with black spots. The rear flank shows a white patch as in both parents. The scapulars and tertials are similar to Northern. Additionally, the bird appears heavy headed due to the large bill similar to both Red and Northern. The irides were described as dull yellow and the leg as ochreous yellow. A surprising feature of this hybrid is the presence of a white neck ring, which is not present in either parent.

Backcrosses of hybrids with Northern Shoveler as parent species
Backcrosses, if they do occur under natural conditions, may be quite tricky to identify. One such bird from captivity, a backcross of a male hybrid (male Northern Shoveler x female Cinnamon Teal) with a female Northern has a green head with white crescent, a black-speckled and cream-coloured breast, and mainly unspeckled rusty flank similar to that of Northern, as well as a clean white patch on the rear flank (Harrison & Harrison 1963, colour photograph in Gillham & Gillham 1996). Therefore, this bird appears phenotypically much closer to a Northern Shoveler x Blue-winged Teal than to a Northern Shoveler x Cinnamon Teal hybrid. A surprise in this bird is a pure white neck ring, similar to that mentioned for the combination Red x Northern Shoveler.

Australasian Shoveler
Australasian Shoveler has a yellow iris and a blue-



98 Hybrid Northern Shoveler x Blue-winged Teal / hybride Slobeend x Blauwvleugeltaling *Anas clypeata x discors*, male, Schwabhausen gravel pits, Gotha, Thüringen, Germany, 25 March 2014 *(Mario Hofmann)*. Individual showing rather bold markings on breast and flank. Still, breast markings forming marbled pattern rather than scalloped pattern of Australasian Shoveler *A rhynchotis*. Note dark eye, cream-white ground colour to breast, fairly slender spatulate bill and well-defined white facial crescent. **99** Hybrid Northern Shoveler x Blue-winged Teal / hybride Slobeend x Blauwvleugeltaling *Anas clypeata x discors*, male, Sweetwater Wetlands, Tucson, Arizona, USA, 22 February 2012 *(Andrew Core)*

grey head with only very slight green iridescence in some light conditions. The facial crescent is pure white and thin but well defined and extends (almost) onto the chin. Northern Shoveler showing this crescent in the early stages of moult back to breeding plumage do often look more untidy with the crescent less clearly defined and also with some dark spotting. Also, the scaling on flank and breast appears more irregular than in Australasian. In late moult, very few Northern show a thin white crescent while already having a white breast and dark unmarked reddish flank. An important character to distinguish this species from the hybrids discussed above are the bold dark spots and scaling on the breast and at least the upper flank (cf Madge & Burn 1988). In most cases, the lower flank in Australasian is distinctly spotted. The white patch at the rear flank is generally similar to Northern but in some individuals a few dark markings occur in the white patch. Moreover, Australasian has a fairly straight transition between the culmen and forehead, giving a remarkably heavy-headed appearance. The legs are slightly more yellowish orange than in Northern, which has deeper orange legs. Scapulars and tertials are similar to those of Northern.

Conclusions

The sample sizes on which the above hybrid descriptions are based are small and given the variability of many hybrid waterfowl we might not yet know the full variation in all these crosses. However, there are several constant differences between hybrids Northern Shoveler x Blue-winged Teal and Northern Shoveler x Cinnamon Teal that we believe permits robust identification. The former shows a white to pale cream-coloured breast, strong spotted/marbled pattern on breast, dark markings on flank and clean white patch on rear flank, and the iris colour is typically darker. Hybrids involving two shoveler species (Red x Northern Shoveler, Australasian x Northern Shoveler) are also different from Northern Shoveler x Blue-winged Teal, in particular as they are heavy-headed birds with bill and body size similar to Northern.

Records in the WP

Considering that Blue-winged Teals are often seen associating with Northern Shovelers in North America and Europe and the high propensity of Anatidae to hybridize (cf McCarthy 2006), the existence of hybrids between these two species is no surprise. In fact, probable hybrids Northern Shoveler x Blue-winged Teal have been reported repeatedly in the literature with examples found on both the western and eastern side of the Atlantic (Gillham & Gillham 1996, McCarthy 2006). In North America, where both parental species are common and widespread breeders, hybrids Northern Shoveler x Blue-winged Teal are recorded in small numbers. On www.ebird.org (accessed 10

100 Hybrid Northern Shoveler x Blue-winged Teal / hybride Slobeend x Blauwvleugeltaling *Anas clypeata x discors*, male, Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge, New York, USA, 9 May 2011 *(Chris Wood)*. Individual showing rather dense patterning on breast and thin, pale neck-ring. Note also orange leg.

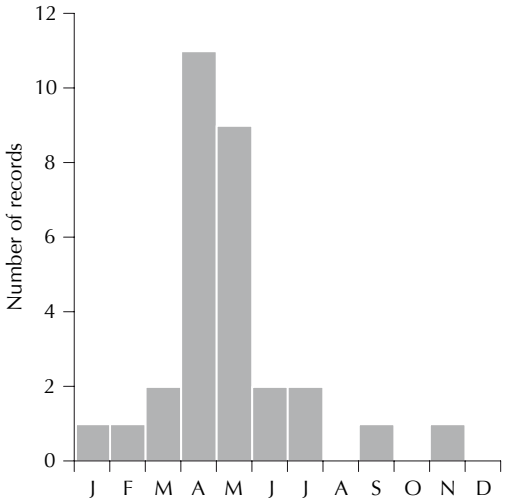
January 2018), there are 39 records of this hybrid type (compared with 17 of Northern Shoveler x Cinnamon Teal and well over 300 of Cinnamon x Blue-winged Teal); many of these have been photographically documented. Five of the North American Northern Shoveler x Blue-winged Teal records are from August-November and 28 are from March-May.

In the WP, where Blue-winged Teal is an annual vagrant, several records of Northern Shoveler x Blue-winged Teal have been accepted by rarity committees or have been published (table 1). However, it is hard to get a good overview of their occurrence as not all rarities committees review reports of hybrids. Moreover, it is conceivable that many records get lost (eg, because they are dismissed as escapes or as Australasian Shoveler) or are not valued by twitchers, as hybrids do not add to any sort of species list.

Table 1 presents a preliminary list of 30 records of Northern Shoveler x Blue-winged Teal from western Europe that have been published and substantiated by photographs on the internet or in birding journals. The majority (21 out of 30) are from March-May (figure 2). Records from the south (eg, Spain) come from late autumn into early spring, whereas records from higher latitudes are mainly from spring and summer, with only few from late summer to early autumn (figure 3). This suggests migratory behaviour along a south-west to north-east axis, similar to, eg, Northern Shoveler (eg, Kirkby & Mitchell 1993, Bijlsma et al 2001, Bauer et al 2005), although the near-absence of autumn records from central European countries is puzzling in this respect. A possible exception is the report without photographs of an individual at Schwabhausen gravel pits, Gotha, Thüringen, Germany, on 23 October and 25 November 2014 by M Hofmann (pers comm to Jörn Lehmhus) and the occurrence of a bird in December 2014 at Rheininsel Burkheim (Stauwehr Marckolsheim), Baden-Württemberg, Germany (www.ornitho.de). These may be the same birds as the ones photographed at the same locations in spring the same year. A plausible reason for the near-absence of autumn records is that individuals in eclipse plumage are being overlooked.

The general timing of the records is comparable with records of Blue-winged Teal in most western European countries. For example, most Blue-winged records from the Iberian peninsula are in December-April (de Juana & Garcia 2015), from the Netherlands in April-May (www.dutchavifauna.nl) and from Norway and Sweden in May, with some birds staying well into summer (http://birdlife.se/rk/raritetskatalogen, www.birdlife.no/organisasjonen/nskf). The 21 records of Blue-winged from Germany in 1988-2008 (www.limicola.de/jahresberichte.html) also show a marked peak in spring and only a few birds in autumn. In contrast, in Britain and Ireland, most records are from August-October with a second peak in April-June (Dymond et al 1989, www.bbrc.org.uk/resources). The strong autumn peak only in the British Isles may reflect transatlantic arrivals as opposed to spring records that pertain to birds heading north after spending the winter at more southern latitudes.

An interesting question is whether hybrids Northern Shoveler x Blue-winged Teal in Europe have a Palearctic or Nearctic origin. Given the overall population size of Blue-winged, hybrids are rare in North America. Therefore, the probability of European hybrids originating from North America is low. Conceivably, a Blue-winged may be more prone to hybridize when lonely as a vagrant in the WP. This is already indicated by the relative scarcity of hybrids Northern Shoveler x Blue-winged Teal in North America, where Blue-winged is common compared with the number of hybrid records in Europe where the number of Blue-winged is low. Furthermore, the timing and placing of hybrid records is mainly in countries east of Britain, with the majority of observations in spring, similar to Blue-winged observations in these countries. However, there are only few hybrids recorded in Britain, and none in autumn,



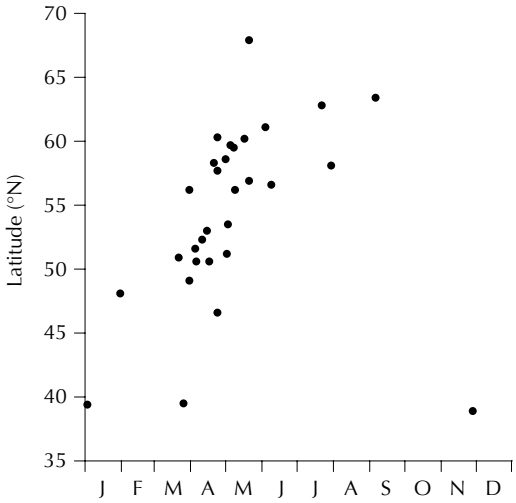


FIGURE 2 Seasonal pattern of records per month of hybrid Northern Shoveler x Blue-winged Teal *Anas clypeata x discors* in Europe FIGURE 3 First date of each record related to latitude of records of hybrid Northern Shoveler x Blue-winged Teal *Anas clypeata x discors* in Europe (n = 30). Southern records (Spain) are in late autumn or winter (November, January, March), whereas more northern records are mostly later in spring, in summer and in early autumn.

contrary to Blue-winged observations (see above). In other words, there are no records that fit the timing and location usually associated with fresh Nearctic arrivals. Therefore, a WP origin of hybrids Northern Shoveler x Blue-winged Teal seems more likely. Another option would be that hybrids with a Nearctic origin have an unusual migration pattern bringing them in the WP due to mixed migration genes from the parents. This appears very unlikely as the migration paths of the two parent species are similar.

The odds of recording any mixed breeding attempts are obviously small, in particular in the vast and remote parts of Russia and Scandinavia. Nevertheless we found three reports of successful breeding attempts: ***1*** allegedly, the Blue-winged Teal accepted for June 1943 at Amstelmeer, Noord-Holland, the Netherlands, was present already a year earlier, in May-June 1942, being paired with a female Northern Shoveler and raising young (Zomerdijk et al 1971, van den Berg & Bosman 1999, 2001); ***2*** a female Blue-winged and a male Northern raised three hybrid young in Britain (Newton 2010); and ***3*** a female Blue-winged rearing five hybrid ducklings with a male Northern in Finland (Lehikoinen et al 2014). We know of no descriptions of these young nor whether they survived until fledging or older. Hence, there is no way of verifying the hybrid identification of these ducklings.

Status in the Netherlands

The Schiermonnikoog bird was accepted by CDNA as the first hybrid Northern Shoveler x Blue-winged Teal for the Netherlands (Haas et al 2015). Its origin as a wild bird was supported by the lack of rings (photographically documented) or signs of unusual wear, although the wings were not seen open.

Acknowledgements

We are indebted to Dave Appleton, Liz Barrett, Andrew Core, Robert Fowler, Thijs Glastra, Hein van Grouw and the National History Museum at Tring, Mario Hofmann, Aleksi Lehikoinen, Maud Mommers, Thorsten Seibel and Chris Wood for supplied information and/or the permission to use their photographs.

Samenvatting

Hybride Slobeend x Blauwvleugeltaling op Schiermonnikoog, Nederland, in mei 2014, en determinatie en voorkomen in de WP Op 4 mei 2014 ontdekten Niels van Houtum en Martijn Renders op de Westerplas, Schiermonnikoog, Friesland, een eend met een duidelijke witte sikkel tussen oog en snavel, herinnerend aan Blauwvleugeltaling *Anas discors*. Later die dag bezochten Rob van Bemmelen en Swen Rijnbeek de vogel en kwamen tot de conclusie dat het waarschijnlijk een hybride Slobeend *A clypeata* x Blauwvleugeltaling was. Deze waarneming is als zodanig aanvaard door de CDNA en betreft het eerste geval voor Nederland van deze hybride. De vogel vertoonde geen tekenen van gevangenschap,

zoals ringen of gekortwiekte vleugels (hoewel de vleugels niet geopend werden waargenomen), en werd na 4 mei niet meer gemeld.

Hybriden Slobeend x Blauwvleugeltaling kunnen worden verward met Australische Slobeend *A rhynchotis* en een aantal hybriden waarbij één of beide oudersoorten ook een slobeend-soort betreft: Slobeend x Kaneeltaling *A cyanoptera* en Rode Slobeend *A platalea* x Slobeend. De belangrijkste kenmerken van hybride Slobeend x Blauwvleugeltaling zijn: ***1*** witte sikkel tussen oog en snavel, die als een dunne lijn boven het oog doorloopt; ***2*** wit of wittige borst met fijne spikkels of bandjes; ***3*** roodachtige kleur op de flank met vooral op het bovenste en achterste deel fijne bandering; lager op de flank is de hoeveelheid donkere bandering en/of spikkels variabel tussen individuen en kan ook afwezig zijn; ***4*** structuur van de snavel intermediair tussen de twee oudersoorten. Bij hybride Slobeend x Kaneeltaling is de grondkleur van de borst doorgaans kastanjebruin en missen de borst en flank doorgaans donkere tekening. Een specimen van een hybride Rode Slobeend x Slobeend vertoont veel gelijkenis met hybride Blauwvleugeltaling x Slobeend maar de witte sikkel in het gezicht loopt tot op de kin door en de vogel heeft een zware snavel, zoals de beide oudersoorten. Australische heeft altijd een zware snavel, robuust kopprofiel en sterk getekende borst en flank.

In het West-Palearctische gebied (WP) worden hybriden Slobeend x Blauwvleugeltaling met enige regelmaat vastgesteld. In totaal hebben de auteurs 30 fotografisch gedocumenteerde gevallen gevonden. Deze laten een sterk seizoens- en geografisch patroon zien, waarbij vogels in de winter opduiken in zuidelijke landen, in het voorjaar in Midden- en West-Europa, en in de zomer in Scandinavië. Er zijn nauwelijks gedocumenteerde gevallen bekend uit het najaar. Mogelijk komt dit doordat vogels in eclipskleed moeilijker te detecteren zijn. De meest waarschijnlijk oorsprong van hybriden Slobeend x Blauwvleugeltaling is de WP, onder meer omdat dit type hybride zeldzaam is in Noord-Amerika (waar Blauwvleugeltaling talrijk is) terwijl er verhoudingsgewijs veel gevallen zijn in de WP (waar Blauwvleugeltaling een jaarlijkse dwaalgast is). Ook zijn er geen waarnemingen die passen in het beeld van verse aankomst vanuit Noord-Amerika: er zijn wel veel najaarswaarnemingen van Blauwvleugeltaling aan de westzijde van Brittannië maar niet van hybriden.

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Breeding behaviour of Desert Owl in Egypt

Mohamed I Habib, Mary Megally & Torsten Pröhl

Recent research on vocalizations, plumage and genetics has shown that the owl formerly known as 'Hume's Owl' are actually two species: Omani Owl *Strix butleri* from eastern Oman, north-eastern United Arab Emirates, southern Pakistan and north-eastern Iran (Robb et al 2013, 2016, Kirwan et al 2015, Robb & The Sound Approach 2015) and Desert Owl *S hadorami*. The range of the latter encompasses eastern and southern Israel, Palestinian Territories, Jordan, through Sinai, to eastern Egypt, and much of the Arabian Peninsula (Mendelssohn et al 1975, Leshem 1981, Shirihai 1996, Jennings 2010, Ben Dov et al 2017). In Egypt, it was previously described as a rare and local breeding resident in a few wadis and oases of southern Sinai (Goodman & Meininger 1989). Since then, surveys by Baha el Din & Baha el Din (2001) have found a more extensive distribution within Egypt. Desert Owl appears to be fairly widespread in the mountains of south Sinai, from fairly low to higher attitudes with pairs located in favourable habitats such as those with (palm) trees (White et al 2008). Most occur around the Monastery of St Katherine, where there are possibly several pairs. In the Eastern Desert, a total of 10 Desert Owls was observed at six locations during four consecutive breeding seasons from 1997-2000 (Baha el Din & Baha el Din 2001). In this paper, we present results of a survey of breeding Desert Owls in all formerly known locations in the Sinai and the Eastern Desert, as well as in other seemingly suitable wadis in the Red Sea and South Sinai governorates, especially in sites not surveyed during previous studies. Unfortunately, some sites known to have been previously occupied were not allowed to visit, especially in the Sinai.

101 Desert Owl / Palestijnse Bosuil *Strix hadorami*, Wadi el Gemal, Egypt, 10 February 2017 *(Mohamed I Habib)*

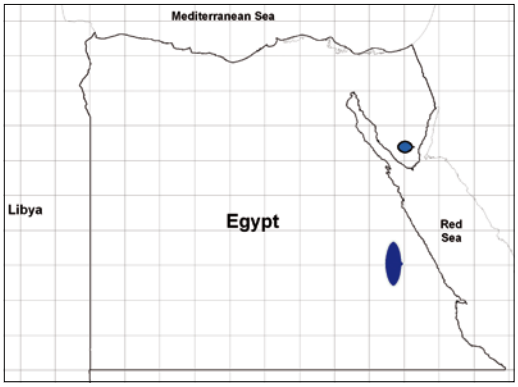


FIGURE 1 Global location of survey areas in Sinai (upper blue area) and Red Sea governorates (lower blue area)

Methods

Although Desert Owl responds to tape playback during day and night, we surveyed owls using playback only at night following a strict protocol. This method is the most efficient method to locate owls because it approximately doubles the chance to detect owls at night compared with passive listening alone. We surveyed 13 wadis in the Red Sea and South Sinai governorates in winter 2017 (table 1). At each wadi we stopped 10 times at 1 km intervals, giving a total route length of 10 km (adapted from Bosakowski 1987). At each stop, we first had a silent listening period of at least 2 min before using playback. Then, we used playback for 1 min after which we listened for 1 min without further playback. If there was no response, this was repeated up to five times. After the last playback session, we had a final silent listening period of at least 5 min. As soon as an owl responded, we immediately stopped using playback to allow the owl to resume its normal activities. We maximally spent 170 min at each wadi (17 min x 10 stops). During the day and dusk, we searched for the exact locations of roosts or nests where we documented nesting, courtship, hunting and feeding behaviour. We also collected pellets to determine their contents.

Results

Habitat and status in researched wadis

In 2017, Desert Owl was only found in four wadis in the Eastern Desert of the Red Sea governorate (table 1). Two of the wadis, Wadi Sukit and Wadi el Gemal, had two territories each. In these wadis, Desert Owl especially occupied rocky and stony desert wadis with steep cliffs, even those that have had no rain for over five years. Occupied wadis were narrow with some vegetation and trees and a fresh water source used for drinking and bathing, but also ensuring year-round availability of food.

In Egypt, all wadis occupied by Desert Owl are generally secure because they are regularly patrolled by national park rangers, guarded by local Bedouin and secured by military coast guard. Examples of these include Wadi el Gemal National Park, Elba protected area and St Katherine protected area.

Nesting and courtship behaviour

The breeding season starts from the first week of February. Desert Owl is sedentary on a year-round territory and attacks any intruders aggressively. It advertises its territory by a hooting call *hoooo huhu, huhu*, sometimes also by a single, coarse, terrifying call *hoooo*. We found that a peak in nest defence is evident during February and March, in which females also take an active role as can be deduced from female responding to playback. Females, however, never attack the sound source like the males aggressively do. Exact timing of breeding in a year varies, even in individual birds, and depends on the location (availability of food and only in seasons with rain). In owls, successful establishment of breeding territories may be linked to the availability of and competition for resources like nest sites and potential mates (Toms 2014).

The only active nest we found in February 2017 was located at Wadi el Gemal. It was a 2 m long

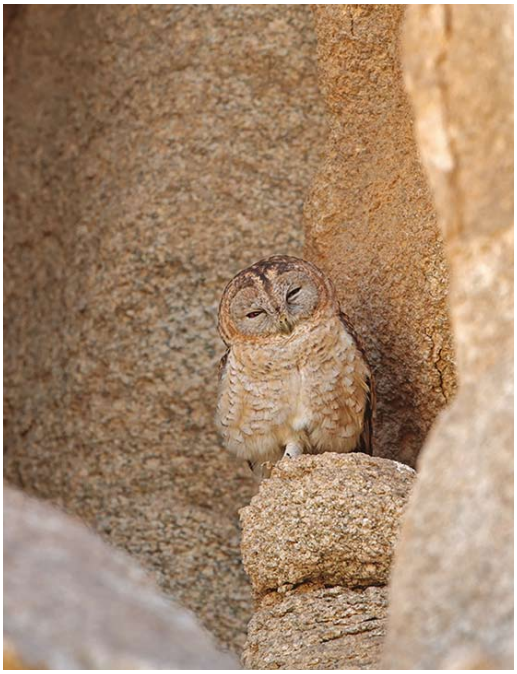
TABLE 1 Details of surveyed wadis in Egypt in 2017 during this study

Site	Name	Number of territories	Presence
Locations in South Sinai Governorate			
1	Ain Hodra	0	No
2	Wadi Rum	0	No
3	Wadi Gharaba	0	No
4	Monastery of 7 nuns	0	No
5	Wadi Mukatab	0	No
6	St Katherine City	0	No
7	Wadi Feiran	0	No
8	Feiran oasis	0	No
Locations in Red Sea Governorate			
9	Wadi el Raada	1	Yes (seen & heard)
10	Wadi Sukit	2	Yes (seen & heard)
11	Wadi el Gemal	2	Yes (seen & heard)
12	Wadi el Gemal well	1	Yes (seen & heard)
13	Wadi Sartoot	0	No (only old feathers)

102-103 Desert Owl / Palestijnse Bosuil *Strix hadorami*, Wadi el Gemal, Egypt, 10 February 2017 *(Mohamed I Habib)*. During calling, throat badge of conspiciously pale feathers appears.

104 Desert Owl / Palestijnse Bosuil *Strix hadorami*, Wadi el Gemal, Egypt, 8 February 2017 *(Torsten Pröhl)*. Wedding gift presented by male.

105 Desert Owls / Palestijnse Bosuilen *Strix hadorami*, Wadi el Gemal, Egypt, 10 February 2017 *(Torsten Pröhl)*. Mating during night time.



106 Desert Owl / Palestijnse Bosuil *Strix hadorami*, Wadi el Gemal, Egypt, 9 February 2017 *(Torsten Pröhl)*. Female guarding nest.

narrow, funnel-like hole with a 75 cm opening and ending at a 20 cm long sandy scrape where the female had laid eggs directly on the sand. It was in the shade all day (plate 106). The same nest is probably used for many years, as we found old pellets from previous years.

We observed courtship feeding at Wadi el Gemal in February 2017 when a male, after hunting for Yellow Fan-fingered Geckos *Ptyodactylus hasselquistii hasselquistii* at dusk (about one hour after sunset), called to the female loudly. Once the female accepted the prey, she gave a special call: a rapid hooting *hu hu hu hu hu hu* and bending her head forward which was the sign for the male to copulate. They copulated three times during a 15 min period for two successive nights. After that, eggs were laid at the nest site.

We found no Desert Owls in the South Sinai governorate during our survey, only some old pellets.

Hunting and feeding behaviour

The Desert Owls were most active at dusk and dawn, especially around full moon. Hunting took place from 50 min after sunset to 30 min before sunrise. They were feeding mainly on insects (grasshoppers), reptiles (geckos), passerines and mammals. They caught small mammals from a perch, jumped after geckos over rocky substrate and caught grasshoppers on the wing. For the latter, they used a unique technique by disturbing and flushing them out, making them jump into the air where they were easier to catch. Hunting areas were close to their daytime roosts. The owls visited fresh water frequently to drink and bath. We found several old feathers around water springs we visited.

Pellets size and contents

We found pellets mainly under roosting cliffs and at the entrance of the nest. They are pale beige, and are compressed, irregular in shape and tapering to one end. They are medium sized with a bumpy surface. Pellets from chicks always contain parts of preys, no complete skeletons. Pellets from chicks range between 19.30 and 24.46 mm in length and between 11.80 and 16.38 mm in width. Pellets from adults are larger: length ranges between 30.94 and 38.60 mm, width between 12.73 and 19.70 mm. Apart from the size difference,

107 Pellet of Desert Owl / Palestijnse Bosuil *Strix hadorami (Mohamed I Habib)*

TABLE 2 Contents of 13 pellets of Desert Owl *Strix hadorami*. Identified by Mohamed Habib.

insects – Insecta
unidentified grasshopper Orthoptera
unidentified insect (beetle – Coleoptera?)
mammals – Mammalia
unidentified vole
South Sinai Hedgehog *Paraechinus dorsalis*
arachnids – Arachnida
unidentified scorpion
reptiles – Reptilia
Sinai Fan-fingered Gecko *Ptyodactylus guttatus*
birds – Aves
unidentified passerine

108-109 Prey remains in pellets of Desert Owl / Palestijnse Bosuil *Strix hadorami (Mohamed I Habib)*

110 Desert Owl / Palestijnse Bosuil *Strix hadorami*, Wadi el Gemal, Egypt, 10 February 2017 *(Mohamed I Habib)*. Roosting in acacia.

chick pellets only contain parts of voles and scorpions that often protrude through the surface. Adult pellets consist mainly of vole remains with some invertebrate and bird material (table 2).

Discussion

White et al (2008) found that Desert Owl was fairly widespread in the mountains of the South Sinai, from the low to the higher attitudes with several pairs located in more favourable habitats such as areas with palms and trees. That we did not find them there may suggest a kind of movement during the wintering season. Further study on the potential of seasonal or elevational movements is needed. Alternatively, the number of breeding pairs may vary between years or perhaps pairs may not breed at all in 'bad years'.

From our survey of the wadis in a cross section from the Nile valley to the Red Sea (the Eastern Desert), the occurrence limit of Desert Owl seems to be set by Pharaoh Eagle-Owl *Bubo ascalaphus*. The latter occupies cliffs close to human settlements in the Nile valley and close to touristic resorts along the Red Sea. It is at least remarkable to note that Desert Owl does not overlap with Pharaoh Eagle-Owl.

From the five wadis we visited in the Eastern Desert, breeding only occurred in the wadi where at least some rain had fallen during the last three months. Food was thus available (especially many grasshoppers, geckos and small mammals).

Most nocturnal species are active around sunset and sunrise (Martin 1990). It is difficult to imagine that birds would use visible cues in their communication at that time of day. Yet against dark backgrounds, variability in the total amount of light reflected by a white throat badge may be exploited as a high-contrast signal (Endler 1993). For instance, Eurasian Eagle-Owls *B bubo* use visual signalling in intraspecific communication: their white throat badge is repeatedly exposed at each call and only visible during vocal displays (Penteriani et al 2006). Desert Owl also has a throat badge consisting of very pale feathers and erected few back feathers with whitish bars that is visible during vocal displays (plate 103), when the throat is repeatedly inflated and deflated. As the display activity of Desert Owl peaks at c 2 hours after sunset and at c 2 hours before sunrise, Desert Owl may also communicate by visual signals, just like Eurasian Eagle-Owl does during display (Penteriani et al 2006).

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Magnificent Frigatebirds chasing a butterfly: foraging or playing?

The Cagarras archipelago is located 5 km off Ipanema beach in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (23°02'S, 43°12'W), and hosts an internationally significant breeding population of Magnificent Frigatebird *Fregata magnificens* (Antas 1991). These birds are constantly present in the Carioca skies, sometimes seen picking food from the water in Guanabara bay and along the beaches, but most often soaring at considerable height over the city and gliding between the coast and the islands.

On 5 May 2014, I was in a small boat anchored by the eastern tip of Comprida island. The sky had been clear all morning, there was no perceptible wind and the sea was quiet. At noon, I noticed a compact group of five Magnificent Frigatebirds, two females and three subadults, apparently attempting to pick something from the water c 150 m from the island. Looking through binoculars, I noticed that the object of their attention was a yellow butterfly. The butterfly was flying towards the island, with the frigatebirds approaching it from behind, rotating as each of them made unsuccessful attempts to catch it with the bill. The party advanced at the pace of the butterfly and the birds visibly struggled to follow without engulfing it. When the butterfly reached the island, the birds disbanded. During this process a soft nasal, pig-like *aagk* was emitted a few times by at least two birds. This was the only time I heard frigatebirds calling during my visit.

Were these birds trying to eat the butterfly? Although kleptoparisitism in Magnificent Frigatebirds has received much attention, comparatively less has been published about its diet, especially during the non-breeding season (Diamond & Schreiber 2002) and about aspects relating to its opportunistic feeding habits (Nelson 2005). Studies in different parts of its distribution range show that its diet can vary considerably but predominant food items are flying fish and squid (Eisenmann 1962, Diamond 1973), and as an opportunistic feeder it also takes small turtles, other birds' chicks and eggs (Cramp & Simmons 1977, Nelson 2005), and even steals from fishermen (Orta et al 2015). Discarded fish from trawlers may be taken opportunistically (Calixto-Albarrán & Osorno 2000) and in some colonies in south-eastern Brazil these constitute the main part of its diet (Branco et al 2007, Barbieri 2010). After a lengthy review of published research I did not find evidence of butterflies in Magnificent's diet and, more generally, insects also seem absent from the diet of other frigatebird species. Only Christmas Frigatebird *F andrewsi* has occasionally been recorded eating grasshoppers (Nelson 2005). If butterflies are sporadically taken by Magnificent, this behaviour is being overlooked or not reported.

It is interesting to note, however, that unlike other occasions in which food was in dispute, no aggressive behaviour was observed amongst these five birds. Magnificent Frigatebirds often cooperate in pirate raids when chasing other seabirds (Osorno et al 1992), but they also engage frequently in intraspecific aggressive behaviour, not only when disputing stolen food or food items found by other conspecifics but also when not carrying prey (Gibbs & Gibbs 1987). In light of this, could the observed behaviour have been an episode of play? In his recent review of literature on avian drop-catch play, Hewitt (2013) does not mention playing with butterflies nor does he cite any records of playful behaviour in Magnificent Frigatebirds. However, Diamond & Schreiber (2002) note that fledglings play with sticks: 'One picks up stick, flies up into air, another chases it in a 'dog fight' until first drops it. Chaser swoops down trying to catch stick before it hits the ground and chase continues. Two or several may play. Probably an important part of learning to catch fish on their own; behaviour most often occurs in fledglings still being fed by parents.' A video available online seems to show a fragment of such behaviour (https://tinyurl.com/y9tf6n7u).

It is not possible to ascertain whether the observed birds in Rio de Janeiro were playing or foraging but in either case the observed behaviour does not seem to have been recorded before.

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Kuifaalscholver van West-Mediterrane fylogroep in Nederland in november-december 2007

Van 17 november tot en met 18 december 2007 (32 dagen) verbleef een gekleurringde vierde-kalenderjaar Kuifaalscholver *Phalacrocorax aristotelis* (met aan de rechterpoot twee ringen: een metalen ring en een rode pvc-ring met de witte inscriptie HL) in winterkleed te Huisduinen, Den Helder, Noord-Holland. De vogel bleek te zijn geringd als pullus op 26 april 2004 te Tapia de Casariego, Asturias, Spanje (afstand 1415 km); de ring was afgelezen door C J de Graaf (voor meer informatie over dit ringgeval zij verwezen naar Álvarez 2009).

Uit recent onderzoek aan Kuifaalscholvers (Thanou & Fraguedakis-Tsolis 2013, Thanou et al 2015, 2017) blijkt dat de huidige taxonomische onderverdeling (in de ondersoorten *P a aristotelis*, *P a desmarestii* en *P a riggenbachi*) conflicteert met de gevonden fylogeografische onderverdeling. E Thanou en haar collega's concludeerden dat er drie fylogroepen ('phylogroups') kunnen worden onderscheiden, een Noord-Atlantische, een West-Mediterrane en een Oost-Mediterrane. De Noord-Atlantische groep enerzijds en de twee Mediterrane groepen anderzijds zijn genetisch duidelijk van elkaar gescheiden. Interessant is dat de Noord-Iberische populatie tot de Westmediterrane fylogroep blijkt te behoren (Thanou & Fraguedakis-Tsolis 2013, Thanou et al 2015, 2017). Hierbij kan worden aangetekend dat Yésou et al (2005) zich reeds afvroegen tot welke ondersoort de Noord-Iberische populatie behoort. De ondersoort *P a riggenbachi*, een broedvogel van de Atlantische kust van Marokko, is niet onderzocht en daarmee blijft diens fylogeografische verwantschap onduidelijk.

Jonge Kuifaalscholvers met Mediterrane kenmerken, zoals witachtige onderdelen en lichte poten, zijn vastgesteld in West-Frankrijk (Bretagne) en Zuidwest-Engeland (Flumm 1993, Brown 2004, Yésou et al 2005). Dit voorkomen zou kunnen wijzen op dispersie van jonge vogels van de Noord-Iberische populatie naar West-Frankrijk en Zuidwest-Engeland maar het zou ook kunnen samenhangen met intergradatie tussen de Noord-Iberische populatie enerzijds en de West-Franse en Zuidwest-Engelse populaties anderzijds (cf Barlow et al 2011). Voor een morfometrische studie van centrale (Britse) en perifere (Noord-Iberische) populaties van Kuifaalscholver zij verwezen naar Martínez-Abraín et al (2006).

Het ringgeval te Den Helder in november-december 2007 vormt de eerste bevestiging van het voorkomen van de West-Mediterrane fylogroep in Nederland (en tevens het meest noordelijke geval in Noordwest-Europa). Wellicht komen vogels afkomstig van deze fylogroep vaker in Nederland of Noordwest-Europa voor. De leeftijd van de te Den Helder verblijvende vogel toont aan dat niet alleen jonge maar ook oudere vogels dispersief gedrag kunnen vertonen.

Of het geval te Den Helder betrekking heeft op een nieuw taxon voor de Nederlandse avifauna, kan pas worden beoordeeld na een taxonomische revisie van het Kuifaalscholver-complex.

Summary

Shag of western Mediterranean phylogroup in the Netherlands in November-December 2007 From 17 November to 8 December 2007, a colour-ringed fourth calendar-year European Shag *Phalacrocorax aristotelis* (wearing a red pvc ring with the white inscription HL on the right leg) in winter plumage stayed at Huisduinen, Den Helder, Noord-Holland, the Netherlands. The bird had been ringed as pullus on 26 April 2004 at Tapia de Casariego, Asturias, Spain (distance 1415 km). The shag complex can, as indicated by recent phylogeographic

research, be subdivided into three phylogroups, a North Atlantic group on the one hand and two Mediterranean groups (a western and an eastern group) on the other hand. It should be noted that this subdivision conflicts with the present taxonomic subdivision (with the subspecies *P a aristotelis*, *P a desmarestii* and *P a riggenbachi*; the latter subspecies from the Atlantic coast of Morocco has not been included in the above phylogeographic research). The northern Iberian shag population appears to belong to the western Mediterranean group. Hence, the ringing record at Den Helder in November-December 2007 constitutes the first confirmation of the occurrence of this phylogroup in the Netherlands (and in northwestern Europe).

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Black-capped Petrel off Agadir, Morocco, in March 2013

Andrew Williams works as a marine environmental consultant, specializing in seabird, cetacean and fisheries monitoring programmes. In March 2013, he was undertaking marine survey work west of Agadir, Morocco. A storm tracked east across the North Atlantic with wind speeds of 9-10 Bft (severe gale/storm force) and swell with heights of 9+ m (high to very high). The ship sheltered for two days then returned to the survey area c 30 km due west of Agadir. On 23 March, the wind was 4 Bft south-south-west and the swell c 5-6 m. Visibility was good, although impaired by intense sunlight and surface glare. AW was logging seabirds when at c 14:10 he momentarily saw an unfamiliar bird 700-750 m away as it appeared above the swell and then vanished into a trough. Shortly after, it reappeared c 350 m abeam of the ship on the margins of the sun and surface glare and was on view for c 15 s. The bird sheared to its right, headed slightly away, glided down the face of the swell, into the trough and out of sight. A single 'record shot' was hastily taken (plate 111) as the bird flew toward the surface glare where it was finally lost to view.

Description and identification

At first sight, AW noted a dark cap, white nape, brown mantle and upperwings, and white in the 'rump'. Initial thoughts were Great Shearwater *Puffinus gravis*. However, on second view, AW noted a very heavy dark bill, eye-catching white nape, and extensive white 'rump patch'. A brief glimpse of the underwings suggested a white mid-wing panel with dark leading and trailing edges. The bird was mainly gliding though made several strong, stiff and shallow wing beats. AW gained the impression of a powerful bird, with a large head, front-heavy body, and tapering rear end. He realized that it was probably a *Pterodroma* petrel. AW reviewed the single photograph alongside the literature (Flood & Fisher 2013) and suspected that it was a Black-capped Petrel *P hasitata*. He was hesitant because of his lack of experience with the species and its very rare status in the north-eastern Atlantic. So, he sent the photograph to Robert Flood

TABLE 1 Records of Black-capped Petrel *Pterodroma hasitata* in the Western Palearctic; BF = black-faced, WF = white-faced, I = intermediate (Newton 1852, Howell 2002, Haas 2012, 2017, Flood & Fisher 2013; Daniel López-Velasco in litt 2018, Dutch Birding 40: 113, 117, plate 147, 2018; this paper)

Azores (3)
26 May 2007, at sea, 16 km south-east of Graciosa, WF
22 May 2009, at sea, 9-11 km south of Pico, WF/I
7 September 2011, at sea, c 16 km west of Faial, WF

Britain (2)
March/April 1850, Southacre, Swaffham, Norfolk, England, found exhausted, then collected
16 December 1984, Barmston, East Yorkshire, England, juvenile female, found dead

Cape Verde Islands (3)
6 February 2016, Santo Antão, captured, WF
11 March 2017, at sea, El Barril headland, São Nicolau, WF/I
13 February 2018, Santo Antão, captured, BF

Madeira (1)
8 May 2010, at sea, c 425 km north-east of Madeira (35°50'N, 14°46'W), WF/I

Morocco (1)
23 March 2013, at sea, c 30 km west of Agadir, WF/I

Spain (1)
30 April 2002, at sea, c 320 km north-west of Cabo Finisterre (45°01'N, 12°16'W), WF

for an opinion, and RF confirmed it as a Black-capped.

Identification of a seabird from a 'record shot' – in this case a small image in sun glare – requires careful thought and analysis. White parts of a bird can be exaggerated by adjacent 'white spots' in the sea surface glare, and structure such as robustness of the bill can be exaggerated by adjacent 'dark spots' in the sea surface glare. In plate 111, the white nape may be exaggerated by a white spot but the robust bill and extensive wedge-shaped white 'rump patch' are genuine. This is a robust bird with a deep bill, typically dipped downward, large head, thick neck, heavy body, and mid-length tail tapering to a (blunt) point. The cap is black, although the expected white forehead presumably is lost to a photographic aberration. The upperwings and upper body are dark greyish-brown, while other visible areas are white. The extent of the cap cannot be determined exactly but probably is in the range b-c-d as shown in the range of head and neck patterns in Flood & Fisher (2013); in other words, a white-faced/intermediate morph.

111 Black-capped Petrel / Zwartkapstormvogel *Pterodroma hasitata*, c 30 km west of Agadir, Morocco, 23 March 2013 *(Andrew C Williams)*. Compare with plate 112.

Black-capped Petrel is a large robust *Pterodroma* petrel with a wingspan between that of Great Shearwater and Sooty Shearwater *P griseus*. White-faced types on average are the largest of three morphs of Black-capped. Black-capped shares the classic *Pterodroma* flight behaviour, fast and aerodynamic, wheeling and arcing in the wind. Key plumage features are a contrasting dark cap, dark greyish-brown upperside, and white uppertail-coverts forming a large wedge-shaped white 'rump patch'. The underwings played a small part in the identification of the Agadir bird. However, they are characterized by a striking dark and white pattern, being largely white with a dark leading edge to the arm, a dark trailing edge, and a dark ulnar bar extending to the axillaries (thickest on dark morphs). Great Shearwater is superficially like Black-capped but has a less squarish head, a more slender bill, a slimmer body, and a much less extensive white 'rump patch'. Compare the similarity of the Agadir Black-capped (plate 111) to the Black-capped off Hatteras, USA (plate 112). Also compare the Great Shearwater (plate 113) with the two Black-capped (plate 111-112).

In glaring light, when details of the plumage aspect are lost, Bermuda Petrel *P cahow* is separated from Black-capped Petrel by its smaller size, less robust build (smaller bill, slimmer body, longer attenuated tail), and narrow white 'rump band'. Similarly, Fea's Petrel *P feae* and Desertas Petrel

Black-capped Petrel off Agadir, Morocco, in March 2013

112 Black-capped Petrel / Zwartkapstormvogel *Pterodroma hasitata*, off Hatteras, USA, 21 May 2008
(Chris Sloan)

113 Great Shearwater / Grote Pijlstormvogel *Puffinus gravis*, Malpica, A Coruña, Spain, 29 August 2011
(Juan Sagardia)

P deserta are smaller, less bulky (though male Desertas is heavily built), and have narrower longer-looking wings. Zino's Petrel *P madeira* is even smaller and slimmer.

Taxonomy

Black-capped Petrel is currently treated as a monotypic species. The white-faced and black-faced morphs differ in morphology, timing of records at sea, and genetics. They may represent two taxa, possibly subspecies (Howell & Patteson 2008, Flood & Fisher 2013, Manly et al 2013; cf Dutch Birding 30: 260, 2008).

Distribution and movements

Black-capped Petrel is classed as 'endangered' by IUCN and the population estimate currently is 5000 mature individuals (Flood & Fisher 2013). The species breeds on Hispaniola, Dominican Republic, and possibly in south-eastern Cuba. In November 2011, more than 30 territories were discovered in south-easternmost Haiti and, in 2015, 968 were found breeding on Dominica (Dutch Birding 34: 178, 2012, 37: 342, 2015). It formerly bred commonly on Guadeloupe, where it is now believed to be extinct, and may have nested on Martinique. It disperses over tropical and subtropical waters of the Caribbean Sea and Atlantic Ocean, ranging from north-eastern Brazil to north-eastern USA (Flood & Fisher 2013). It has been recorded as far north as Nova Scotia, Canada, with a number of inland records following hurricanes (eg, in 10 USA states; Brinkley & Patteson 1998, Flood & Fisher 2013, Carboneras et al 2017). The species' range within the Caribbean Sea is poorly known. Three birds breeding on Hispaniola were satellite tracked: maximum ranges during the breeding season were from 500 to 1500 km; northward dispersal during the post-breeding period involved maximum distances of 2000-2200 km (Jodice et al 2015).

WP records

The record off Agadir has been submitted to the Moroccan rarities committee; if accepted, it becomes the first for Morocco and Africa. Black-capped Petrel is an extremely rare petrel in the north-eastern Atlantic, with just 11 (10 live) individuals recorded in the Western Palearctic region (table 1). Nine of them occurred in February-May, one in September, with one found long dead in December. Two different individuals were trapped on Santo Antão, Cape Verde Islands, in February. All birds except one have been of the white-faced or intermediate morph (Flood & Fisher 2013; table 1). In addition, one observed for four hours c 96 km south-west of Rockall, Scotland, on 26 February 1980 (Dannenberg 1983) was considered not proven by the British Birds Rarities Committee (BBRC). Also, a bird reportedly collected in Pas-de-Calais, France, in the 19th century, was not accepted because the specimen is missing (Haas 2012).

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Chumming on multi-day sailing trip in Bay of Biscay

The popularisation of pelagic birding trips over the last decades has contributed to the increase of our knowledge of seabirds worldwide. Within the Western Palearctic, pelagic trips are still expanding the limits of what can be targeted for a life list, with species such as Swinhoe's Storm Petrel *Hydrobates monorhis*, South Polar Skua *Stercorarius maccormicki* and even Black-bellied Storm Petrel *Fregetta tropica* now on the radar of birders visiting the Macaronesian islands. But beyond islands, what does the pelagic zone has to offer? Surely multi-day trips are needed to fully explore the birding potential of the very open ocean.

Key to any pelagic trip is chumming, the action of mixing popcorn, cod or shark liver oil, ground heads of sea bass, rotten sardines and other delicacies, and jettisoning everything to attract the nearby birds. Various recipes have been used here and there (for a review, see www.scillypelagics.com), yet all are made from seafood, either fresh or frozen. However, storing fresh or frozen seafood is highly problematic on multi-day pelagic trips because ambient air should remain breathable on the vessel deck, while the volume of preparations largely exceeds the capacity of most on-board fridges. Here, we report a chumming strategy we used during a 10-day pelagic trip in the Bay of Biscay, off France, in August 2017.

The vessel was a 37-feet long sailboat hosting six birders including the skipper from Skravik Expedition. We casted off from Saint-Gilles-Croix-de-Vie, Vendée, on 2 August 2017, and headed west to reach the continental slope that we prospected between Gouf de Capbreton (43.6331°N, 1.7269°W) southward and La Rochelle canyon (45.7492°N, 3.7513°W) northward. Our goal was to chum three times per day (one session lasting c 2 hours). However, due to heavy swell, we most frequently chummed only twice a day, at sunrise and three hours before sunset. The chum was made exclusively with non-perishable items, ie, liquids and dry food that can be stored weeks or months at ambient air. Food items were mixed just prior to each session. One bucket of chum included: 0.5 l of cod liver oil, 0.5 l of sardine oil, 4 l of dry, fish-based dog and cat food, 300 g of squid hydrolysate, a few drops of dimethyl sulfide (DMS) and 4 l of floating pond pellets. Also known as 'Koi sticks' in pet stores, these pellets are made from fish, cereals, animal and vegetable fats, and algae. Because the number of birds recorded varied greatly between sessions using this full recipe, we did not test different recipes and thus we are not able to quantitatively assess the relative importance of each of these ingredients. In the following, we nevertheless give our impression about the efficacy of this preparation.

The chum (one bucket per session), delivered in one batch, successfully attracted seabirds at all sessions. Depending on the wind speed, birds began to appear after a few minutes, but a peak of arrivals was usually observed after c 30 min. New individuals were frequently recorded up to two hours after the beginning of a session. No obvious difference in term of species number and composition was observed between morning and evening sessions. However, the ocean floor topography seemed to strongly influence the success of sessions with pinnacles (eg, Plateau de Rochebonne, 46.1665°N, 2.3750°W) and canyons (particularly Fer à Cheval zone, 44.9017°N, 2.4651°W, and La Rochelle canyon) being the most rewarding spots. The most numerous birds were British Storm Petrels *H pelagicus* and Wilson's Storm Petrels *Oceanites oceanicus*, followed by Cory's Shearwaters *Calonectris borealis* and Great Shearwaters *Puffinus gravis*. Northern Fulmars *Fulmarus glacialis*, Parasitic Jaegers *S parasiticus,* Great Skuas *S skua* and Sabine's Gulls *Xema sabini* were commonly recorded, too. Although we failed to attract any mega rare species, on 7 August 2017 at 19:30, our farthest session in La Rochelle canyon (c 220 km from the shore) brought us a minimum of 29 Wilson's Storm Petrels, which more or less doubled the overall number of accepted records for that species for France within 30 min.

Regarding the ingredients, our main finding was the very positive effect of floating pond pellets on birds. In a typical fresh chum, pieces of fish provide food to the birds and thus keep them around (Flood & Thomas 2007). In our non-perishable chum, the floating pellets fulfilled this role: storm petrels, shearwaters and fulmars were all seen actively feeding on the pellets. Pellets fed these tubenoses even when not soaked in cod liver or sardine oil, meaning that they were ingested for themselves and were not deceiving the birds. Besides, while in a typical chum fishes are ground with popcorn to increase flotation and to facilitate the visual tracking of the slick, pellets naturally and perpetually stay on the water surface and are easily spotted at a distance. In addition to pellets, oils were certainly critical to attract the birds. Sardine oil was added to cod liver oil because it is less expensive but it is also said to be less effective (note that shark liver is said to perform even better

114 Wilson's Storm Petrel / Wilsons Stormvogeltje *Oceanites oceanicus* with floating pond pellet in its bill, Bay of Biscay, 80 km off Arcachon, Gironde, France, 6 August 2017 *(Frédéric Veyrunes)*

115 Wilson's Storm Petrel / Wilsons Stormvogeltje *Oceanites oceanicus* inspecting 'chum pool', Bay of Biscay, c 220 km off Saint-Gilles-Croix-de-Vie, Vendée, France, 7 August 2017 *(Julien Renoult)*

than cod liver). The third most important ingredient was probably DMS. This chemical compound is naturally produced by phytoplankton and is used by tubenoses as an olfactory clue to locate small animals feeding on the phytoplankton (Nevitt & Bonadonna 2005). DMS is both extremely smelly and volatile, and thus probably contributed to the long-range attraction of seabirds. Beware that DMS is highly flammable and irritating to eyes and skin and harmful when swallowed (and has an unpleasant odor at even extremely low concentrations).

In contrast, we have mixed feelings about the benefits of dog and cat dry food and of squid hydrolysate. In the shore area, pet food is occasionally used to bring gulls close to the boat, the gull flock then attracting other, more interesting birds. Yet in the open ocean, gulls are virtually absent and we did not observe any bird feeding on the dry pet food. As for the hydrolysate, a colleague working on olfaction in marine vertebrates told us that both whales and sea turtles responded positively and at distance during controlled experiments. And indeed, the powder may have helped bringing up a juvenile Blue Shark *Prionace glauca*, a school of very large Atlantic Bluefin Tunas *Thunnus thynnus* and one unidentified, 5 m long cetacean that briefly surfaced very close to the slick a couple of times. Yet squid hydrolysate sinks very quickly, even when not admixed to the chum, and its effect on seabirds (if any) is therefore still unclear to us.

Besides the preservation issue, chumming from a sailboat offers another major challenge: not losing sight of the slick. Our answer to the problem was … the 'chum pool'! We used a 3 m diameter swimming pool with an inflatable ring, from which we cut the bottom out. The 0.5 m high edge was ballasted to stay underwater despite the swell. We inflated and launched the pool just prior to each session, poured the chum within the pool and allowed everything drifting for a couple of hours. Drifting was necessary because the inevitable difference in drift speed between the boat and the pool made it impossible to keep the pool roped to the boat. The pool was nevertheless visible from a very long range, making it impossible to lose sight of our chum. The birds did not appear frightened by the pool and regularly inspected it (plate 115), although none of them were seen feeding in it. Yet due to swell, some of the chum was constantly leaking out of the pool, thereby dispensing food to the birds. The pool was brought back onto the deck at the end of each session.

To sum up, our multiday pelagic trip to the Biscay bay allowed us testing an efficient and non-perishable chum, with cod liver oil, floating pond pellets and DMS being the necessary yet (possibly) sufficient ingredients. Moreover, we found the use of a 'chum pool' very useful to limit manoeuvres and to follow the oil slick with a sailboat. We hope that this experience will entice other seabird lovers to engage into the open ocean.

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Two Dwarf Bitterns on Fuerteventura, Canary Islands, in winter of 2017/18

The Canary Islands are hotspots for rarities in the Western Palearctic (WP). There have been four species new to the WP list (African Crake *Crex egregia*, Dwarf Bittern *Ixobrychus sturmii*, Glaucous-winged Gull *Larus glaucescens* and Swallow-tailed Kite *Elanoides forficatus*), and c 30 new ones to the Spanish list (García-del-Rey & García-Vargas 2013, García-del-Rey 2015). One extremely rare species in the WP is Dwarf Bittern, almost all records of which come from the Canary Islands (Haas 2012, 2017). This note describes observations of two Dwarf Bitterns on Fuerteventura, Canary Islands, turning up in November and December 2017, with one staying at least into March 2018. For the first time in the WP, two individuals of this species were recorded in a single year, in fact during the same week.

116 Dwarf Bittern / Afrikaanse Woudaap *Ixobrychus sturmii*, juvenile, Corralejo, Fuerteventura, Canary Islands, 25 November 2017 *(Vernon Lundy)*

Corralejo, 25 November 2017

In November 2017, Teresa Lundy and Vernon Lundy were taking a winter break on Fuerteventura. It was not a birding holiday but VL had vague hopes of 'nailing' the two endemics, Houbara Bustard *Chlamydotis undulata fuertaventurae* and Canary Islands Stonechat *Saxicola dacotiae*. Unfortunately he did not succeed. However, during the week they were able to note some good birds, including Black-bellied Sandgrouse *Pterocles orientalis*, Trumpeter Finch *Bucanetes githagineus* and Yellow-browed Warbler *Phylloscopus inornatus*. On 25 November, on the eve of their departure, as TL was making the most of the final sunshine, she called VL's attention to a pigeon-sized bird perched on a decorative lava rock at 25-30 m from their apartment near the Oasis Dunas hotel. It was obviously a heron and VL tentatively identified it as a Green Heron *Butorides virescens*, having seen it in the Americas, but he was puzzled by its very small

117 Dwarf Bittern / Afrikaanse Woudaap *Ixobrychus sturmii*, first-winter, Barranco de Río Cabras, Fuerteventura, Canary Islands, 3 December 2017 *(Arne Torkler)*

118 Dwarf Bittern / Afrikaanse Woudaap *Ixobrychus sturmii*, first-winter, Barranco de Río Cabras, Fuerteventura, Canary Islands, 18 December 2017 *(Martin Gottschling)*

size and the small buff patch on the bend of the folded wing. He was able to take just one photograph before it flew off (plate 116). Unable to refind the bird, and only having the Collins bird guide (Svensson et al 2009) at hand, VL decided to check the identification later at home. Back home, VL browsed his African bird guides. Unlikely as it seemed, only a Dwarf Bittern ticked all the boxes. VL sent the photograph to his friend Chris Bradshaw, who confirmed his suspicions. Elated and excited, VL published the photograph on Facebook and was pleased to receive an acknowledgement from Eduardo García-del-Rey. VL had not been able to see this species on any of his 11 visits to Africa, so it became a life-tick for him.

Description

The description is based on the single photograph and the features observed for 3-4 min when the bird was in shade and poor light, when the evening sun faded.

SIZE Slightly bulkier than feral Rock Dove *Columba livia*.

HEAD Crown and malar stripe slate-blue. Face and throat white to buff-yellow. Neck and nape paler slate than crown. Throat and breast buff-yellow with dark vertical stripes.

UPPERPARTS & WINGS Pale slate, with pale buff chevrons on mantle and pale buff fringes on scapulars and wing-coverts. Bend of folded wing with buff-rusty patch.

BARE PARTS Iris yellow. Upper mandible slate-coloured, lower mandible all yellow. Leg all yellow.

Barranco de Río Cabras, from 1 December 2017 onwards

Since 2015, Daniel Kratzer has been regularly spending his family holidays on Fuerteventura. This was also the case in 2017, when he spent here one week from the end of November. Usually DK does not have much time to go birding, so he mostly watched birds near the hotel. Just before the trip, his friend Arne Torkler told him that there were rumours concerning an Allen's Gallinule *Porphyrio alleni* on Fuerteventura. Unfortunately,

TABLE 1 Records of Dwarf Bittern *Ixobrychus sturmii* in the 'greater' Western Palearctic (Haas 2012, 2017, Eriksen & Victor 2017; this paper)

Canary Islands (5)
October 1886, La Laguna, Tenerife, adult male, collected
21-30 January 2000, Aldea Blanca ponds, Gran Canaria, first-winter
23 August 2002 to 10 May 2003, Erjos ponds, Tenerife, adult male
25 November 2017, Corralejo, Fuerteventura, juvenile
1 December 2017 into at least March 2018, Barranco de Río Cabras, Fuerteventura, first-winter

Cape Verde Islands (1)
12 June and 17 July 2011, Barragem de Poilão, Santiago

Oman (1)
1 November 2013, Raysut, first-winter

nothing was known either about the finder or the observation site. On the morning of 1 December, AT informed DK that the Allen's Gallinule was probably somewhere at Barranco de Río Cabras, south-west of Tesjuate. So DK decided to go there at 10:30 that day. In rainy weather, he started at the lower end of the barranco and walked westwards, hoping to relocate the bird. After more than one hour's hiking and watching numerous Canary Islands Stonechats, DK came across a small pond below a dam. From the edge of the barranco, he scanned the pond carefully but only found five Common Moorhens *Gallinula chloropus*. Then he searched the adjacent shallow water to the west of it and suddenly saw a small, dark bittern, which was standing by the edge of the water. DK's first thought was a Dwarf Bittern, which was confirmed by a brief search on the internet. After DK took the first record shots, he sent a short WhatsApp message to AT. DK: 'Dwarf Bittern'. AT: 'You're kidding! Photos? You are the winner! I will be there tomorrow!'. After watching the bird for half an hour, DK returned to the car. He was soaked from standing in the heavy rain but very happy! The bird remained at this site through December and into March 2018, and was twitched by many birders, including AT (plate 117-118; cf Dutch Birding 40: 49, plate 46, 2018).

Description

IMPRESSION & SIZE At first glance resembling dark Little Bittern *I minutus*, being very similar in size and shape.

HEAD & UPPERPARTS Head, neck and mantle uniformly slate-grey to bluish, depending on light. Three pale brown feathers visible on shoulder. Wing and wing-coverts darker and slightly brownish. Primary coverts with white tips.

UNDERPARTS Neck, breast and underside white with strong black stripes.

BARE PARTS Iris reddish-brown. Upper mandible slate-colored, lower mandible all yellow. Leg bright orange.

WEAR Wing-coverts worn.

Identification

Dwarf Bittern is smaller and darker than Little Bittern and lacks the latter's pale wing-covert patches. It is distinguished from Striated Heron *B striata* by its smaller size, the pale and heavily streaked underparts, and uniform (not barred) upperwings. The first bird was identified as a fresh juvenile based on the upperparts with pale buff fringes on mantle feathers, scapulars and wing-coverts. The second bird was a first-winter based on its dark slate-grey upperparts and the white-tipped primary coverts. In addition, the coverts were worn – this would normally point to a first-year bird. The body and upperpart feathers had already moulted (cf Velmala et al 2002, van Duivendijk 2011; Nils van Duivendijk in litt). This species breeds during all months of the year in different countries of Africa (Martínez-Vilalta et al 2017); thus it is very likely that these two birds differed a year in age.

Distribution

Dwarf Bittern breeds in sub-Saharan Africa from Senegal to Ethiopia as far south as South Africa. Scarce to rare throughout its range, it is a migratory species within Africa, particularly in the north and south; equatorial populations are probably sedentary. Movements are related to changes in water levels as a result of seasonal rains. It is apparently present in the extreme north of its range only or mainly during rains (Martínez-Vilalta et al 2017).

Vagrancy

Dwarf Bittern is extremely rare outside its usual range. In the WP sensu BWP there are six records: five from the Canary Islands (Tenerife, Gran Canaria and Fuerteventura) and one from the Cape Verde Islands (table 1). Additionally, in the 'greater' WP, an individual was photographed in Oman – the only record for the Arabian peninsula and the easternmost ever (Eriksen & Victor 2017; table 1). An extraordinary record concerned a subadult photographed at Jamestown, St Helena, in the southern Atlantic, some 1900 km from the western coast of Africa, on 9 October 2011. It was picked up with a broken wing and extremely emaciated on 6 January 2012 (Hillman & Clingham 2012). An adult reportedly shot at Wied ix-Xoqqa, Birżebbuġa, Malta, on 16 November 2010 (Fenech & Sammut 2011; cf Dutch Birding 33: 334, plate 425, 2011) was not accepted by the Maltese rarities committee because it was not certain whether it had been collected in Malta (Raymond Galea in litt). Also, a report of two individuals shot near Bayonne, Pyrénées-Atlantiques, France, in the mid-19th century was not accepted because the specimens could not be traced (CAF 2006, Haas 2012). Most extralimital records are from islands in the Atlantic in the northern hemisphere autumn-winter period. One individual remained on Tenerife for as long as 9.5 months (Velmala et al 2002; table 1).

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Unusual plumages of Mediterranean Gull in Spain

The Iberian Mediterranean coast is an important winter quarter for Mediterranean Gulls *Larus melanocephalus*, especially the Sant Jordi gulf, Tarragona (Olsen & Larsson 2004, Cama et al 2011). The huge concentrations of 1000s of Mediterranean in the area have enhanced the detection and observation of individuals with unusual plumages. In this note, we document two such unusual plumages with photographs: a possibly leucistic (or 'progressive grey') and a dark-winged individual.

There are few unusual plumages of Mediterranean Gull published in the literature. To our knowledge, a completely leucistic plumage has not been described before, and there has been only one previous dark-winged individual at Le Portel, Pas-de-Calais, France, in February 1995 (Edgeller 1996). Unfortunately, the record shots of the Le Portel individual do not allow a detailed study of the plumage.

From 28 November to 4 December 2014, a possibly leucistic (or 'progressive grey'; Hein van

119 Mediterranean Gulls / Zwartkopmeeuwen *Larus melanocephalus*, with Lesser Black-backed Gulls / Kleine Mantelmeeuwen *L fuscus* and Yellow-legged Gull / Geelpootmeeuw *L michahellis*, Cambrils, Tarragona, Spain, 4 December 2014 *(Pere Josa)*. Possibly leucistic (or 'progressive grey') Mediterranean Gull (same bird as plate 120) in mixed gull flock.

Grouw in litt) adult Mediterranean Gull was observed at Cambrils harbour (plate 119-120). The complete plumage was clean white, including the feathers around the eye, with the only exception being faint dark shading on the ear-coverts and upper hindneck area. The wings were white without contrast with the body, apart from a single lesser wing-covert with the typical grey coloration. The bill and legs were coral-red, paler and more vivid than in normally plumaged Mediterranean of the same age. Other Mediterranean with a mixture of typical grey-coloured and white feathers on scapulars and lesser and median wing-coverts have been observed on different occasions in the Sant Jordi gulf.

On 28 January 2015, we detected a first-winter Mediterranean Gull with dark wings at l'Ametlla de Mar harbour, which was seen until 17 February 2015 (plate 121-126). The primaries, secondaries and tertials were mainly dark brown. The inner primaries, secondaries and all wing-coverts (also dark brown) had fine pale tips, forming pale lines over the wing (plate 125). In normal first-winter Mediterranean, these feathers have a different pattern: the lesser coverts are a mixture of brown and grey feathers, the median coverts have a variable extent of brown and grey, and the greater coverts are generally plain grey (with only the inner ones being browner), creating a conspicuous pattern with a pale midwing-panel; the inner primaries are grey and the secondaries have a broader pale trailing edge. The tail had the typical pattern of Mediterranean but the subterminal band was broader and a dark margin extended through the shaft towards the base of the feathers. One of the central tail-feathers was already a plain adult-like second-generation feather. The mantle, scapulars and head showed the normal coloration for a first-winter but the rump was brown. The bill and legs also had the normal coloration of a first-winter Mediterranean.

Several mixed pairs or cases of hybridization have been described for Mediterranean Gull, most often with Black-headed Gull *Chroicocephalus ridibundus* (Poprach et al 2006, Borghesi & Costa 2008). On the internet, photographs can be found of different hybrid individuals, in most cases adults, but also of a first-summer (second calendar-year) (http://tinyurl.com/y7gr4sun). The latter individual exhibited intermediate traits such as the shape of the hood and the wing pattern, with other traits more characteristic of either of the two species. For instance, the jet black head and contrasting white eye-crescents recalled Mediterranean but the fine bill resembled that of Black-headed more.

120 Mediterranean Gulls / Zwartkopmeeuwen *Larus melanocephalus*, Cambrils, Tarragona, Spain, 28 November 2014 *(Joan Ferrer-Obiol)*. Possibly leucistic (or 'progressive grey') individual with normally coloured adults.

121-123 Mediterranean Gull / Zwartkopmeeuw *Larus melanocephalus*, first-winter, L'Ametlla de Mar, Tarragona, Spain, 28 January 2015 *(Pere Josa)* **124** Mediterranean Gull / Zwartkopmeeuw *Larus melanocephalus*, first-winter, L'Ametlla de Mar, Tarragona, Spain, 6 February 2015 *(Pere Josa)* **125** Mediterranean Gull / Zwartkopmeeuw *Larus melanocephalus*, first-winter, L'Ametlla de Mar, Tarragona, Spain, 17 February 2015 *(Pere Josa)* **126** Mediterranean Gulls / Zwartkopmeeuwen *Larus melanocephalus*, first-winter, L'Ametlla de Mar, Tarragona, Spain, 17 February 2015 *(Pere Josa)*. Individual with atypical dark upperwings (below) and normal individual. Plate 121-126 all depict the same individual with atypical dark upperwings.

Hybrids between Audouin's Gull *L audouinii* and Mediterranean Gull have also been reported. One such hybrid was seen at Moltona, Mallorca (González et al 2009), while a mixed pair was observed at Llobregat delta, Catalunya (López & Cabau 2015). Unfortunately, no photographs of hybrids with Audouin's have been published. Furthermore, few cases of hybridization with Common Gull *L canus* have been documented (Balten et al 1993, Pullan & Martin 2004). One hybrid at Boddington Reservoir, Northamptonshire, Britain, on 17 March 2001, was initially identified as Franklin's Gull *L pipixcan* (Pullan & Martin 2004). A first-winter at Groningen, Groningen, the Netherlands, in January 1991 was possibly a hybrid Common x Mediterranean but the wings of that individual were not dark (Balten et al 1993).

None of the documented cases of hybridization between Mediterranean Gull and Black-headed and Common Gull resulted in first-winter plumages with dark wings. Interestingly, the wing pattern of the first-winter described here recalls that of a first-winter Audouin's Gull. Nevertheless, we expect the latter hybrid to be somewhat larger and to have an intermediate structure but this individual had the typical structure of a Mediterranean.

Individuals such as the first-winter described here are important to keep in mind when identifying small gulls in Europe, especially in flight and with poor light conditions, to avoid potential identification pitfalls with American species such as Laughing Gull *L atricilla* and Franklin's Gull.

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Western Palearctic list updates: Abyssinian Roller

Abyssinian Roller *Coracias abyssinicus* is a species recorded rarely in the Western Palearctic (WP; sensu Cramp & Simmons 1977). Snow & Perrins (1998) mention a few records from Egypt, Libya and Mauritania. This paper documents all known records of this species within the WP and discusses its status in the region.

Distribution and movements

In Africa, Abyssinian Roller breeds in the Sahel zone southwards to the equatorial rain forest and winters in the south of its main range. It is widespread and frequent to common throughout its range, locally even abundant. During the wet season, it occurs north of c 15°N, eg, as far as 16°N in Chad (Ennedi), 18°N in Niger (Teouar) and 18°N in Mauritania (Tagant) (Fry et al 1992, Fry & Kirwan 2017). In the 'greater' WP (eg, including the Arabian Peninsula and Iran), the species is a resident breeding bird in a limited area along the Red Sea coast in south-western Saudi Arabia and western Yemen. This population has been estimated at c 2500 pairs, most of them in Yemen. The Arabian population is strictly sedentary and there are no records from other countries in the Middle East. The report of a single individual on board a ship in the Red Sea sailing from Port Sudan to Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, on 3 May 1989, indicates that there may be some movement of these birds

127 Abyssinian Roller / Sahelscharrelaar *Coracias abyssinicus*, adult, Barranco de la Torre, Antigua, Fuerteventura, Canary Islands, 13 June 2014 *(Francisco Javier García Vargas)*

between Africa and the Arabian Peninsula (Jennings 2010).

WP records
By the end of 2017 there were 11 records in the WP (sensu BWP), all in northern Africa. The status of this species is presented below (cf table 1).

Canary Islands
There is one record of an adult on Fuerteventura on 9-13 June and again 27 October 2014. The bird was in perfect condition, with no signs of previous captivity and no apparent damage to the feathers, and its behaviour (eg, capturing insects) was normal for a wild bird. It was accepted as the first for the Canary Islands and Macaronesia (García Vargas 2015, Gil-Velasco et al 2017; plate 127-128).

Egypt
There are four records. The first for Egypt and the WP was collected at an unknown location in 1874. The skin is deposited in the Field Museum of Natural History in Chicago, USA (Goodman &

TABLE 1 Records of Abyssinian Roller *Coracias abyssinicus* in the WP (sensu BWP)

Canary Islands (1)
9-13 June and 27 October 2014, Barranco de la Torre, Antigua, Fuerteventura

Egypt (4)
1874, no location, collected (FMNH 40783)
22 November 1968, Karkur Ibrahim, Gebel Uweinat, wing and tail found
29 September 1995, Abu Simbel
4-5 May 1997, Abu Simbel

Libya (1)
1-5 April 1968, Kufra oasis, Al Kufrah

northern Mauritania (4)
29 December 1978, Nouadhibou
13 January to 6 March 1980, Nouadhibou
16-20 December 2007, Baie de l'Etoile, Nouadhibou
31 October 2017 to at least March 2018, Nouadhibou

Morocco (1)
29 March 2005, Sidi Kaouki, Chiadma

128 Abyssinian Roller / Sahelscharrelaar *Coracias abyssinicus*, adult, Barranco de la Torre, Antigua, Fuerteventura, Canary Islands, 13 June 2014 *(Francisco Javier García Vargas)* **129** Abyssinian Roller / Sahelscharrelaar *Coracias abyssinicus*, Abu Simbel, Egypt, 29 September 1995 *(Stefan Pfützke/green-lens.de)* **130** Abyssinian Roller / Sahelscharrelaar *Coracias abyssinicus*, adult (collected at unknown location, Egypt, 1874), Field Museum of Natural History, Chicago, USA *(© Field Museum of Natural History)*

Meininger 1989; plate 130). On 22 November 1968, Misonne (1974) found a wing and a tail of this species at Karkur Ibrahim, Gebel Uweinat, near the border with Libya (Goodman & Meininger 1989). Other individuals were photographed at Abu Simbel on 29 September 1995 and on 4-5 May 1997 (Pfützke & Halley 1995; plate 129, 131-132). We have omitted a bird allegedly collected at Abu Simbel on 14 February 1928 by Richard Meinertzhagen (Meinertzhagen 1930, Goodman & Meininger 1989). Since it became known that Meinertzhagen altered the labels of many specimens in museums to make it appear that he had collected them (cf Knox 1993), this record should be considered invalid.

Libya

There is one record, of a bird staying at Kufra oasis, Al Kufrah, on 1-5 April 1968 (Cramp & Conder 1970). Note that the year ('early April 1969') of this record mentioned in Isenmann et al (2016) is incorrect (Paul Isenmann in litt).

Mauritania

There are four records within the WP ('sensu BWP') boundaries (cf table 1). Interestingly, all four are from Nouadhibou near the border with Western Sahara, Morocco (Isenmann et al 2010; Wim van Zwieten in litt; plate 133, 135).

Morocco

There is one record, of an adult photographed at

131 Abyssinian Roller / Sahelscharrelaar *Coracias abyssinicus*, Abu Simbel, Egypt, 29 September 1995 *(Axel Halley)* **132** Abyssinian Roller / Sahelscharrelaar *Coracias abyssinicus*, adult, Abu Simbel, Egypt, 4 May 1997 *(Seppo Haavisto)* **133** Abyssinian Roller / Sahelscharrelaar *Coracias abyssinicus*, adult, Baie de l'Etoile, Nouadhibou, Mauritania, 16 December 2007 *(Guy Jarry)* **134** Abyssinian Roller / Sahelscharrelaar *Coracias abyssinicus*, adult, Sidi Kaouki, Chiadma, Morocco, 29 March 2005 *(Ulrich Berger)*

Sidi Kaouki, near Essaouira, on 29 March 2005 (Bergier et al 2011; plate 134). It is the northernmost record ever.

Conclusion

Most WP records are between September and March, which fits the species' northward movements from its main breeding range in the wet season, usually from autumn to spring (Fry et al 1992). Formerly, some authors (eg, Etchécopar & Hüe 1967, Fry et al 1988) assumed that the species might even breed in the Nile valley in southern Egypt but there is no evidence for this statement. During the last 35 years, there have only been six records in the WP, despite regular visits of birders to most of the countries of northern Africa (eg, Egypt, southern Morocco). This shows that the species occurs extremely rarely in WP. It has been found most often along the southern boundaries of the WP, ie, at Nouadhibou in northern Mauritania (four records), and at Abu Simbel in southern Egypt (two records).

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135 Abyssinian Roller / Sahelscharrelaar *Coracias abyssinicus*, adult, Nouadhibou, Mauritania, 31 October 2017 *(Wim van Zwieten)*

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Daurian Shrike on Tenerife, Canary Islands, in November 2017

In the afternoon of 21 November 2017, I was inspecting one of my 'local patches' at the manure heap at El Espaldar, Montaña de Taco, Buenavista del Norte, in the north-western part of Tenerife, Canary Islands, where concentrations of insects attract birds to feed (Rodríguez et al 2014). I enjoyed views of several migratory birds such as Common Chiffchaffs *Phylloscopus collybita*, two Black Redstarts *Phoenicurus ochruros*, a Northern Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe*, and c 25 White Wagtails *Motacilla alba*. As the light was getting poorer, I decided to go back home. Giving the site a last look, I was surprised to discover an unusual bird with a very obvious reddish tail and very pale plumage catching an insect on the ground and returning to the top of a little bush. At first glance it reminded me of a wheatear with a red tail, due to its size and sandy pale coloration but, when using my binoculars, I realized that it was a shrike *Lanius*. Within two minutes, I obtained several record shots but with difficulty, due to the long distance and poor light conditions. These confirmed that it was a first-winter 'isabelline shrike' *L phoenicuroides/isabellinus*. The following morning, I returned and was thrilled to find that the bird was still present, and I got close range shots with better light. The presence of many fresh droppings and pellets under a branch suggested that it had been using it for several days. After some phone calls, several birders and I visited the place during the next few days but, unfortunately, there was no more sign of the bird.

Despite the controversial taxonomic status, today it is well recognized that the former subspecies of 'isabelline shrike' are best split into two separate species, Red-tailed Shrike *L phoenicuroides* and Daurian Shrike *L isabellinus* (Gill & Donsker 2018, Yosef & International Shrike Working Group 2017), both occurring as vagrants in Europe and northern Africa (van der Laan 2008, Slack 2009).

Based on the photographs, the Tenerife bird concerned a first-year Daurian Shrike (cf Kiat & Perlman 2016). The general appearance was nearly uniform pale sandy-brown, almost lacking contrast between the grey-brown mantle and buff-white underparts (colder grey-brown upperparts and whiter underparts in *phoenicuroides*). The supercilium was not distinctive and uniformly buff-white (whiter and more contrasting in *phoe-*

136 Daurian Shrike / Daurische Klauwier *Lanius isabellinus*, first-winter, Montaña de Taco, Buenavista del Norte, Tenerife, Canary Islands, 22 November 2017 *(Beneharo Rodríguez)*

137 Daurian Shrike / Daurische Klauwier *Lanius isabellinus*, first-winter, Montaña de Taco, Buenavista del Norte, Tenerife, Canary Islands, 22 November 2017 *(Beneharo Rodríguez)*

nicuroides) and the ear-covert patches were pale brown (darker grey-brown in *phoenicuroides*). On the photographs, fine barring on the flanks is clearly visible, and being less prominent on the breast-sides. There are no photographs showing open wings but I did not notice a white or pale primary patch. The rump and the tail were completely rufous, with the central tail-feathers probably being a little darker. The bill was pale pinkish-brown and only the bill-tip was darker; the eyes were apparently all-black. The bird did not utter any sound.

Although there appears to be a small isolated wintering area in West Africa (Worfolk 2000) and the species is recorded almost annually in western Europe (van der Laan 2008, Gil-Velasco et al 2017, Mitchell 2017), only one record is known from Morocco (November 2004; Bergier et al 2006). Disregarding an old report on Fuerteventura in July 1989 (no description and no photographs; see Martín & Lorenzo 2001, Clarke 2006, García-del-Rey & García-Vargas 2013), there are no previous records from the Canary Islands or from the other Macaronesian archipelagos (Hazevoet 1995, 2014, Romano et al 2010, Correia-Fagundes et al 2013, García-del-Rey 2015, 2016). Therefore, as far as I know, this is the first record of this species (or any 'isabelline shrike') for Macaronesia (including Cape Verde Islands) and probably the westernmost observation for the entire Western Palearctic region.

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Corrigenda

In 'Occurrence of frigatebirds in the Western Palearctic' (Dutch Birding 40: 1-16, 2018), it was stated that the breeding range of Magnificent Frigatebird extends '... from California, USA, south to Peru'. However, the species does not breed in California (where it is merely a vagrant, mainly in summer/autumn) although it breeds from the Gulf of California, Mexico, south to northern Peru.

In the same paper, the year of the Swedish record of an unidentifed frigatebird (table 3) should read 1983 (not 1973); it possibly refers to the same individual as in the first Norwegian record. EDITORS

WP reports

This review lists rare and interesting Western Palearctic birds reported mainly from **February to mid-March 2018**. The reports are largely unchecked and their publication here does not imply future acceptance by a rarities committee. Observers are requested to submit their records to each country's rarities committee. Corrections are welcome and will be published.

GEESE TO DUCKS Jones et al (2017) calculated that in the Qostanay and North Kazakhstan provinces of Kazakhstan, c 700 **Lesser White-fronted Geese** *Anser erythropus* are illegally killed each year by hunters, because of a lack of knowledge of species protection (https://tinyurl.com/y9hjcbul). In France, a family of two adults and five juveniles at Lac du Der, Haute-Marne, from 28 December 2017 remained into March. The first for Jordan, at Aqaba on 21 February, was the same adult as at Eilat, Israel, from 3 January onwards. The 17th **King Eider** *Somateria spectabilis* for the Netherlands and the first adult male staying for more than two days since 2000 was only seen from boats at Wadden Sea off Harlingen, Friesland, from 21 January into March. In Germany, a first-winter male was photographed inland at Schatteburger Sieltief, Landkreis Leer, Niedersachsen, on 27 January. Two females at Gdańsk bay, Pomerania, from 4 March were the first for Poland since 2011 (one was exhausted and taken into care). A male **Pacific Eider** *S mollissima v-nigrum* photographed at Varanger, Finnmark, Norway, on 16 March was the second for the WP; the previous one was also at Varanger in February-April 2014 (cf Dutch Birding 36: 199, plate 245, 2014). The long-staying female **Steller's Eider** *Polysticta stelleri* at Sumba, Suðuroy, Faeroes, from October 2015 was still present in February. A male **Surf Scoter** *Melanitta perspicillata* at Oostduinkerke, West-Vlaanderen, from 19 January was the first for Belgium since 2006. The adult male **American White-winged Scoter** *M deglandi deglandi* at Keflavík, Iceland, from 19 November 2017 remained into March; a first-winter male was seen at Þorlákshöfn, Iceland, on 25-26 February. An adult male **Asian White-winged Scoter** *M d stejnegeri* at Eskebjerg, Sjælland, on 7-17 February was the second for Denmark. The second for Poland was an adult

138 Grey-headed Lapwing / Grijskopkievit *Vanellus cinereus*, Kızılırmak delta, Turkey, 11 March 2018 *(Emin Yoğurtcuoğlu)*

139 Red-wattled Lapwing / Indische Kievit *Vanellus indicus*, Kfar Blum, Hula valley, Israel, 15 November 2017 *(Shai Agmon/Birding, Nature, Environment)* cf Dutch Birding 39: 398, 2017

male at Gdańsk Stogi, Pomerania, from 26 February onwards; the first was in 2007. The second for Sweden was photographed at Skummelövsstrand, Halland, on 10 March; the first was the returning male at Utlängan, Blekinge, in 2012 and 2014-15. The males **Black Scoter** *M americana* off Rossbeigh, Kerry, Ireland, from 24 October 2017 and at Goswick, Northumberland, England, from 7 January remained at least into February. The second for Germany was a male at Schönberger Strand, Schleswig-Holstein, on 3-16 February; the first was in the winter of 2007/08. The three single males from December in Denmark were still present in February. The first **Redhead** *Aythya americana* for the Azores on Terceira from 1 September 2017 displayed to a female Ring-necked Duck *A collaris* on 17 February and remained into at least March. A male **Cinnamon Teal** *Anas cyanoptera* photographed at Oualidia on 8 October 2016 has been accepted by the Moroccan rarities committee as the first for Morocco (Go-South Bull 15: 25-44, 2018); all previous WP reports of this species (at least 45 in Europe since the 1980s) have been treated as presumed escapes. If accepted, an immature **Cape Teal** *A capensis* photographed at Simar nature reserve on 28 January will be the first for Malta; previous WP records were in Libya in 1961 (two) and 1968 and in Israel in 1978, 1982 and 1984. Solokha & Gorokhovsky (2017) estimated that the average annual number of waterbirds shot in Russia in 2013-16 was 3.7 million individuals, including 290 000 geese, 3.1 million ducks, 190 000 coots *Fulica* and 201 000 crakes and waders, with a quarter of these totals in spring (Suomen Riista 63: 43-52, 2017).

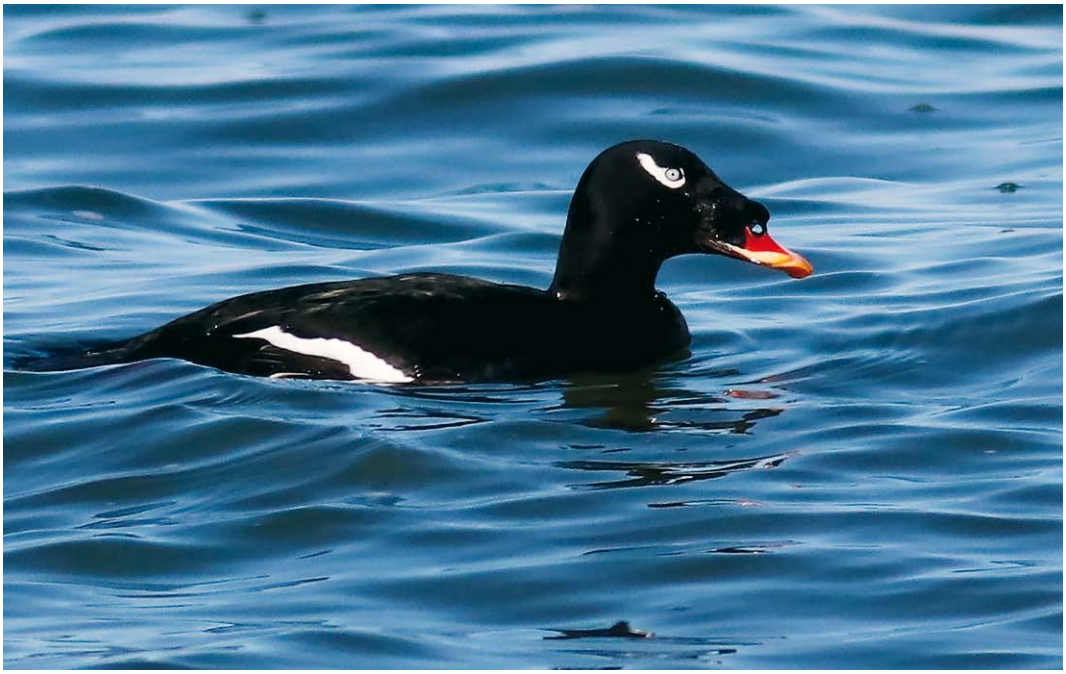
FLAMINGOS TO GREBES A **Lesser Flamingo** *Phoenicopterus minor* at K20, Eilat, from 4 March was the third for Israel. The **Pied-billed Grebe** *Podilymbus podiceps* at Loch of Spiggie, Shetland, Scotland, from 4 November 2017 remained into March. Putative **Holboell's Red-necked Grebes** *Podiceps grisegena holbollii* were photographed on Barra, Outer Hebrides, Scotland, from 20 January to 17 February and at Keflavík, Suðurnes, Iceland, on 31 January. In the WP, this taxon has been recorded in France, Iceland (at least five), Norway (one shot at Træna, Nordland, on 28 January 1948), Scotland (one shot at Gruinard Bay, Highland, in September 1925), Spain (two in Galicia in January-February 1984 and in January 1987; both are likely to be reviewed by the Spanish rarities committee) and Sweden (one shot at Kullen, Skåne, on 7 January 1835).

DOVES TO SWIFTS A **Rufous Turtle Dove** *Streptopelia orientalis meena* was seen at Haukilahti, Lappeenranta, Finland, on 3 February. In Morocco, a fresh flight-feather of **Golden Nightjar** *Caprimulgus eximius* was found at Oued Jenna, Western Sahara, on 19 January, and one or two individuals were irregularly reported here from 26 February onwards (cf Dutch Birding 38: 80-86, 2016, 39: 387-392, 2017). If accepted, a **Pacific Swift** *Apus pacificus* over Eilat on 2 March will be the first for Israel. Part of the population of **Plain Swift** *A unicolor* disappears from the Canary Islands and Madeira in winter but until recently its migratory behaviour was unknown. A geolocator study on Tenerife, Canary Islands, in 2013 revealed the migration of two individuals which left the island in mid-October and on 22 November, respectively (Norton et al 2018). One flew east to Western Sahara and Mauritania (18/19 October) and then south to spend most of the winter in the forests of eastern Liberia from 23 October onwards. The second flew south over the ocean and then east to eastern Liberia. In winter, the two wandered about in western Africa and their geolocators documented the species' first records for six African countries: from west to east Senegal, The Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, Guinea, Sierra Leone and Ivory Coast. From March to early May 2014, the two returned to Tenerife overland through western Africa (https://tinyurl.com/ydhs8hzz).

RAILS TO BUSTARDS A first-winter **Allen's Gallinule** *Porphyrio alleni* found exhausted at La Carihuela, Torremolinos, Málaga, on 25 January was taken into care. On 20 February, the second for Brazil and South America was photographed on Fernando de Noronha, c 350 km offshore from the Brazilian coast; the first was found on a boat at c 240 km from the Amazon river mouth in January 2017. The first **Eurasian Coot** *F atra* for Sulawesi was reported at Tambun Tower Swamp on 20 February. In the Azores, the **American Coot** *F americana* on Terceira from 15 October 2017 remained into February. The last surviving **Siberian Crane** *Grus leucogeranus* of the western population (adult male 'Omid') left its wintering grounds at Fereydunkenar, Mazandaran, Iran, on 3 March. A flock of 20 **Little Bustards** *Tetrax tetrax* photographed near Histria on 16 March was the largest since over 100 years for Romania.

LOONS TO SHEARWATERS The first-winter **Pacific Loon** *Gavia pacifica* at an inland reservoir at Caspe, Aragon, Spain, from 10 January was last seen on 28 January. The returning adult in Cornwall, England, from 4 November remained into March. One on Tawin Island, Galway, Ireland, was back on 7 February. Two **Black-capped Petrels** *Pterodroma hasitata* captured on Santo Antão on 6 February 2016 and 13 February 2018 concerned the first and third for the Cape Verde Islands; the second was reported on 11 March 2017 (cf Dutch Birding 39: 123-124, 2017). If accepted, an **Atlantic Petrel** *P incerta* seen close to shore on São Nicolau on 14 March will be the first for the Cape Verde Islands. Genetic research (on mitochondrial cytochrome b) revealed that **Bannerman's Shearwater** *Puffinus bannermani* from Ogasawara Islands, Japan, is not genetically related to Tropical Shearwater *P bailloni*, of which it has often been treated as a subspecies, but forms a clade with the three taxa of the Townsend's Shearwater group (Townsend's *P auricularis*, Newell's *P newelli* and Rapa Shearwater *P myrtae*); however, it has diverged substantially from the latter three, genetically and morphologically, and has to be considered a distinct species (Kawakami et al in Ornithol Science 17: 11-18, 2018).

STORKS TO CORMORANTS If accepted, an adult **Marabou Stork** *Leptoptilos crumenifer* photographed at Hurghada



140 Asian White-winged Scoter / Aziatische Grote Zee-eend *Melanitta deglandi stejnegeri*, adult male, Gdańsk Stogi, Pomerania, Poland, 26 February 2018 *(Ryszarda Sobolewska)*

141 Pacific Loon / Pacifische Parelduiker *Gavia pacifica*, first-winter, Caspe, Aragon, Spain, 12 January 2018 *(Ricardo Rodríguez)*

142 Greater Yellowlegs / Grote Geelpootruiter *Tringa melanoleuca*, first-winter, Björkäng, Halland, Sweden, 10 February 2018 *(Tommy Holmgren)*

143 Redhead / Amerikaanse Tafeleend *Aythya americana*, male, with Ring-necked Ducks / Ringsnaveleenden *A collaris*, male and female, Terceira, Azores, 17 February 2018 *(Josh Jones)*

144 Presumed American Herring Gull / vermoedelijke Amerikaanse Zilvermeeuw *Larus smithsonianus*, first-winter, Puławy, Lubelskie, Poland, 25 January 2018 *(Łukasz Bednarz)*

145 Ross's Gull / Ross' Meeuw *Rhodostethia rosea*, adult, Radipole Lake, Dorset, England, 25 February 2018 *(Tim White)*

146 Cape Gull / Kelpmeeuw *Larus dominicanus vetula*, third-winter, Bouqueval, Val-d'Oise, France, 22 February 2018 *(Thibaut Chansac)*

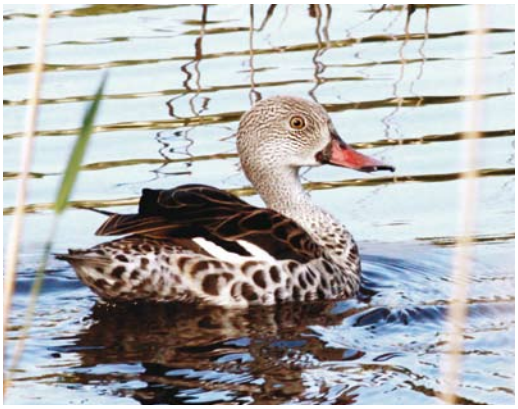
147 Black-capped Petrel / Zwartkapstormvogel *Pterodroma hasitata*, Santo Antão, Cape Verde Islands, 13 February 2018 *(Teresa Militão)*

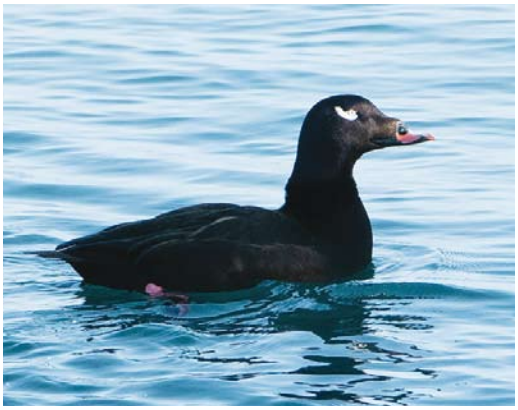
on 21 July 2017 will be the first for Egypt. The adult **Dwarf Bittern** *Ixobrychus sturmii* reportedly shot at Wied ix-Xoqqa, Birżebbuġa, Malta, on 16 November 2010 (cf Dutch Birding 33: 334, plate 425, 2011) has not been accepted by the Maltese rarities committee due to doubts about its provenance (Il-Merill 33: 40-47, 2017). The first-winter at Barranco de Río Cabras, Fuerteventura, Canary Islands, from 1 December 2017 remained until at least mid-March. The **Green Heron** *Butorides virescens* on Pico, Azores, from 8 November 2017 was still present on at least 27 February. A **Mauritanian Heron** *Ardea monicae* was photographed at La Sagra, Dakhla, Western Sahara, on 23 February. A **Snowy Egret** *Egretta thula* at Lagoa do Junco, Terceira, on 23 February was presumed to be the same individual as the one from December 2017. A **Western Reef Heron** *E gularis gularis* was photographed at Dakhla, Western Sahara, on 17 March. The first **Reed Cormorant** *Phalacrocorax africanus* for the Cape Verde Islands at Pedra Badejo, Santiago, from 17 November 2017 was present until at least mid-March. In Belgium, the first-winter **Pygmy Cormorant** *P pygmeus* at Auderghem, Bruxelles, from 12 January remained to at least mid-March. In France, a first-winter stayed along the Rhône river, Drôme, from 14 January into March. Several were seen in Germany as well.

WADERS In the Azores, the **Killdeer** *Charadrius vociferus* on Terceira from 17 January was still present on 3 March. The **Semipalmated Plover** *C semipalmatus* on Tenerife, Canary Islands, from 5 January remained until at least 20 February. On Achill Island, Mayo, Ireland, an adult first seen on 2 October 2016 and then on 15 October 2017 was again present on 16-24 February. Geolocators applied to **Common Ringed Plovers** *C hiaticula tundrae* from the easternmost breeding population in Chukotka, Russia, revealed that they cross the entire length of Asia, from the Bering Sea to the Arabian Peninsula and north-eastern Africa, covering distances of 18 400-25 000 km. The wintering grounds of five males were scattered from the Persian Gulf to the Nile delta and south to Somalia. During the winter period, three individuals made only local movements, whereas two others moved 1100 and 3200 km northward in the second half of March, before embarking on pre-breeding migration one month later (Wader Study 124: 175-184, 2018). An adult **Spur-winged Lapwing** *Vanellus spinosus* was found at Armash, Armenia, on 27 February. The first **Grey-headed Lapwing** *V cinereus* for Turkey and the WP sensu BWP was photographed at Kızılırmak delta on the Black Sea coast on 11 March; in the 'greater' WP, one was recorded at Salalah, Oman, on 3 January 2012. The fourth **Red-wattled Lapwing** *V indicus* for Israel at Afikim from 12 January stayed until at least 16 February. In Cyprus, a female **Caspian Plover** *Anarhynchus asiaticus* was seen at Akrotiri lake on 7 March, and a male at Mandria, Paphos, from 10 March. The long-staying **Hudsonian Whimbrel** *Numenius hudsonicus* at Santoña, Cantabria, Spain, from 29 January 2017 remained into March. The one last reported on Terceira on 21 December 2017 was seen again on 13 February. The first **Sharp-tailed Sandpiper** *Calidris acuminata* for Mozambique and mainland Africa was photographed at Macaneta, Maputo, on 4 and 18 February; remarkable, two individuals together were seen here on 2-3 March. In England, the long-staying **Stilt Sandpiper** *C himantopus* in Dorset from September 2017 was still present in March. If accepted, a **Long-toed Stint** *C subminuta* at Eilat on 25 February will be the third for Israel. On 4 February, the second **Pectoral Sandpiper** *C melanotos* for Mozambique was found at Macaneta and, amazingly, two were seen here from 3 March with the two Sharp-tailed Sandpipers. The sixth **Spotted Sandpiper** *Actitis macularius* for Portugal was photographed at Olhão, Algarve, on 12 March. The fourth **Greater Yellowlegs** *Tringa melanoleuca* for Sweden from 22 December 2017 remained at Björkäng, Halland, into at least March. The first **Lesser Yellowlegs** *T flavipes* for Malta at Riviera Martinique on 22 May 2015 (Dutch Birding 37: 333, plate 520, 2015) has not been accepted by the Maltese rarities committee (Il-Merill 33: 40-47, 2017). The second for Slovenia was found at Medvedce on 3 November 2016 (Acrocephalus 37: 21-30, 2017).

AUKS TO GULLS A **Thick-billed Murre** *Uria lomvia* found dead on Ameland, Friesland, on 4 March was the 10th for the Netherlands and first since 2012. The second **Brown/South Polar Skua** *Stercorarius antarcticus/maccormicki* for the United Arab Emirates (UAE) was reported off Mirbah on 22 January; the first was on 8 January 2000. The first **Slender-billed Gull** *Chroicocephalus genei* for Ghana at Accra on 31 January wore a Spanish ring. On 4 March, the adult **Grey-headed Gull** *C cirrocephalus* returned to Bisceglie, Puglia, Italy, where it had not been seen since August 2016. The first-winter **Ross's Gull** *Rhodostethia rosea* at Vlissingen harbour, Zeeland, the Netherlands, from 24 January remained to at least mid-March. In England, an adult stayed at Radipole lake, Dorset, from 21 February; it was probably the same individual as the one in Northumberland in October and December 2017 (cf Dutch Birding 40: 51, 2018). In Germany, an adult **Ring-billed Gull** *Larus delawarensis* returned for its sixth consecutive winter at Hitdorfer Haven, Leverkusen, Nordrhein-Westfalen, on 23 January. A third-winter **Cape Gull** *L dominicanus vetula* north of Paris at Le Mesnil-Aubry, Val d'Oise, on 21-22 February was the second for France; the first was also at Paris in January 1995 (cf Dutch Birding 25: 327, 2003). If accepted, a presumed first-winter **American Herring Gull** *L smithsonianus* photographed at Puławy, Lubelskie, on 16-28 January will be the first for Poland. On 9 March, the adult **Thayer's Gull** *L thayeri* ('Cipriana') returned for its 11th year at San Cibrao, Lugo, Spain.

TERNS A **Sooty Tern** *Onychoprion fuscatus* was seen off Les Tellines, Hérault, France, on 10 March. In 2017, a record 924 breeding pairs of **Whiskered Tern** *Chlidonias hybrida* in 12 colonies were counted at Biebrza valley, Poland (Ornis Pol 58: 289-296, 2017). An **Arctic Tern** *Sterna paradisaea* at Ormoško lake on 22 June 2016 was the first for Slovenia (Acrocephalus 37: 21-30, 2017). In Ireland, the adult **Forster's Tern** *S forsteri* was reported off Kinvarra, Galway, on 4 February. The **American Royal Tern** *S maxima* ringed in North Carolina, USA, on 5 July





148 Cape Teal / Kaapse Taling *Anas capensis*, immature, Simar nature reserve, Malta, 28 January 2018 *(Raymond Galea)* **149** Yellow-billed Loon / Geelsnavelduiker *Gavia adamsii*, first-winter, Olt, Ulmi, Romania, 19 January 2018 *(József Szabó)* cf Dutch Birding 40: 48, 2018 **150** American White-winged Scoter / Amerikaanse Grote Zee-eend *Melanitta deglandi deglandi*, adult male, Kelfavík, Iceland, 20 February 2018 *(Marcin Sołowiej)* **151** Asian White-winged Scoter / Aziatische Grote Zee-eend *Melanitta deglandi stejnegeri*, adult male, Vesterlyng, Sjælland, Denmark, 10 February 2018 *(Rasmus Strack)* **152** Black Scoter / Amerikaanse Zee-eend *Melanitta americana*, male, Schönberger Strand, Schleswig-Holstein, Germany, 5 February 2018 *(Ole Krome)* **153** American White-winged Scoter / Amerikaanse Grote Zee-eend *Melanitta deglandi deglandi*, first-winter male, Þorlákshöfn, Iceland, 25 February 2018 *(Alex Máni)*

154 Long-toed Stint / Taigastrandloper *Calidris subminuta*, Eilat, Israel, 25 February 2018 *(Anton Libermann)* **155** Northern Harrier / Amerikaanse Blauwe Kiekendief *Circus hudsonius*, second-winter male, Murtosa, Aveiro, Portugal, 5 February 2018 *(Carlos André)* **156** Mesopotamian Crow / Mesopotamische Kraai *Corvus capellanus*, adult, Sulaibiya, Kuwait, 17 February 2018 *(Mike Pope)* **157** Oriental White-eye / Indische Brilvogel *Zosterops palpebrosa*, adult, Mahawt Island, Filim, Al Wusta, Oman, 25 January 2018 *(Zbigniew Kajzer)* **158** Oriental Skylark / Kleine Veldleeuwerik *Alauda gulgula*, Milleyha, Hatay, Turkey, 11 March 2018 *(Ali Atahan)* **159** Naumann's Thrush / Naumanns Lijster *Turdus naumanni*, first-winter, Savka, Peipsiääre, Estonia, 15 February 2018 *(Andrus Salu)*

2016 and first seen on Guernsey, Channel Islands, on 5 February 2017 (and in the meantime also along the northern coast of France) was seen at Cherbourg, Manche, France, on 2 January and then again on Guernsey until at least late February.

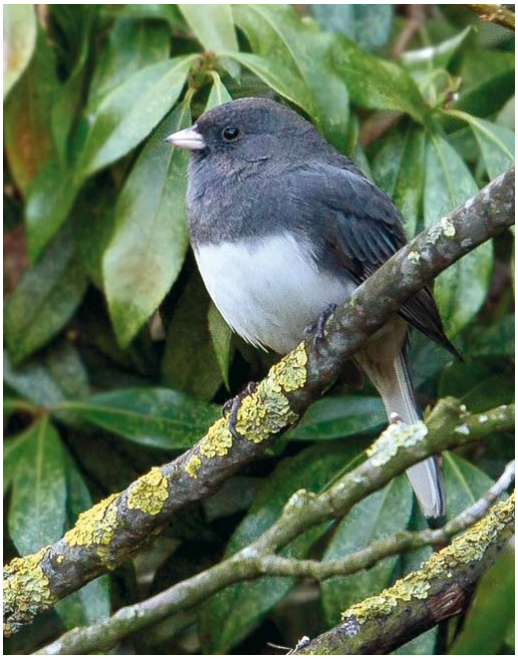
RAPTORS The first **Black-winged Kite** *Elanus caeruleus* in winter for the Netherlands stayed at Kollumerpomp, Friesland, from 14 October 2017 to 8 February. In Iran, a total of 18 **Crested Honey Buzzards** *Pernis ptilorhynchus* at more than seven sites was reported on 19-21 January alone. On 13 February, an immature **Bateleur** *Terathopius ecaudatus* flew over Eilat mountains before heading back to Sinai, Egypt. Another (or the same) individual was observed at Eilat on 12 March and flew to Jordan on 13 March. The immature **Eastern Imperial Eagle** *Aquila heliaca* wearing a metal ring at Varnæs, Ornum, Denmark, on 13-14 February was possibly the same individual as the one ringed as a chick in Hungary in June 2014 and photographed in Toscana, Italy, in January 2017 and then in the Netherlands in September-October 2017 (cf Dutch Birding 39: 401, 2017). In 2017, the Hungarian population numbered an estimated 230 pairs and 218 active nests were found producing 299 fledglings, of which 201 were ringed; also 22 dead or injured individuals were picked up, of which three could be treated and released back to the wild. A **Verreaux's Eagle** *A verreauxii* was photographed at Gebel Elba, Egypt, on 23 November 2017. One flew over Eilat mountains in the direction of Sinai on 5 February. A **Northern Harrier** *Circus hudsonius* was reported on Heimaey, Iceland, on 31 January. The adult male returned to North Ronaldsay, Orkney, Scotland, on 2 February. If accepted, a second-winter male photographed at Murtosa, Aveiro, on 5 February will be the first for Portugal and continental Europe. The numbers of verified breeding females **Montagu's Harrier** *C pygargus* in Germany fluctuated between 289 and 450 in 2004-14; c 90% of the nests were in arable crops and on average c 10% of nests with chicks were destroyed by agricultural harvesting (Vogelwelt 137: 305-317, 2017).

OWLS TO FALCONS In Poland, a **Northern Hawk-Owl** *Surnia ulula* was found at Biebrza marshes on 20 February. Two were seen in Belarus in January-February. In England, first-winter females **Snowy Owl** *Bubo scandiacus* stayed on Tresco, Scilly, into February, and at Snettisham, Norfolk, from 11 March. The adult **Abyssinian Roller** *Coracias abyssinicus* at Nouadhibou, Mauritania, from 31 October 2017 remained until at least early March. In 1985-2015, the population of **Grey-headed Woodpecker** *Picus canus* at Arnsberger Wald, Nordrhein-Westfalen, Germany, decreased for unknown reasons by 30-35%, from up to 60 to up to 40 pairs (Charadrius 53: 28-32, 2017). In 2008-17, the population in eastern Belgium, declined in numbers and range as well (Aves 54: 161-178, 2017). If accepted, a female or first-winter **Taiga Merlin** *Falco columbarius columbarius* photographed at Thurso, Highland, Scotland, on 3 and 18 February will be the first for Britain; in the WP, this taxon has been recorded in western Iceland on 23 October 1989, on Cape Clear Island, Cork, Ireland, on 29 September 2000 and on Flores, Azores, on 30 October 2007 (cf Birding World 15: 468-480, 2002, 21: 114-116, 2008).

PITTAS TO CROWS A **Fairy Pitta** *Pitta nympha* on Bolshoy Pelis island, Primorsky region, on 21 May 2015 was the first for Russia. The third **Desert Grey Shrike** *Lanius elegans* for the Cape Verde Islands was photographed at Santa Maria, Sal, on 28 January. A **Steppe Grey Shrike** *L lahtora pallidirostris* at Serra de Daró, Baix Empordà, Girona, from 28 February to at least 18 March was the third for Spain. The fourth **Levant Grey Shrike** *L l aucheri* for Cyprus was reported at Alaminos-Agios Theodoros on 10-12 February. The third **Mesopotamian Crow** *Corvus capellanus* for Kuwait was found at Sulaibiya on 17 February; the previous ones were in 2012 and 2013. The **Pied Crow** *C albus* at M'Hamid, Morocco, from November 2015 remained to at least 25 February. In northern Mauritania, one was seen at Baie d'Etoile near Nouadhibou on 3 February.

TITS TO SWALLOWS A **Eurasian Blue Tit** *Cyanistes caeruleus* trapped at Simar on 15 January was (only) the fourth for Malta. The third **Bar-tailed Lark** *Ammomanes cinctura* for Italy was photographed at Triscina di Selinunte, Sicily, on 11 March. In Kazakhstan, a huge concentration of c 30 000 **White-winged Larks** *Alauda leucoptera* was counted at Arys on 16 January. If accepted, an **Oriental Skylark** *A gulgula* at Milleyha, Hatay, on 11 March will be the first for Turkey. An **American Horned Lark** *Eremophila alpestris* at Staines reservoir, Surrey, England, from 19 November 2017 remained into March. In Spain, surveys of 14 **Dupont's Lark** *Chersophilus duponti* populations in 2008-16 showed a decline which was considerably worse in five populations where wind farms were present (5.8% versus 21% average annual decline) (Gómez-Catasús et al in J Appl Ecol 55, 2018; https://tinyurl.com/ycorrjoz). In Israel, an **Arabian Dunn's Lark** *Eremalauda dunni eremodites* was seen at Uvda valley on 10 February. Schweizer et al (2018) found that there is not much genetic diversification between Holarctic subspecies of **Sand Martin** *Riparia riparia*, even when morphologically distinct populations in the Middle East and Egypt are taken into account. Surprisingly, however, the subspecies of the genetically distinct **Pale Martin** *R diluta* from Central and East Asia showed a different pattern as nominate *R d diluta* from Central Asia, *R d indica* from the north-western Indian subcontinent, *R d tibetana* from the Tibetan plateau, and *R d fokhienensis* from south-western China appeared quite distinct from each other genetically. Because no differences in plumages or biometrics were found between these Pale Martin subspecies, Schweizer et al refrained from proposing splits despite their marked genetic differentiation (Mol Phylogenet Evol 119; https://tinyurl.com/y97rxfp4).

LEAF WARBLERS TO REED WARBLERS The first **Hume's Leaf Warbler** *Phylloscopus humei* for Bulgaria was found at Plovdiv on 31 January. The third for Hungary was present at Katymár on 4-9 February. If accepted, a **Siberian Chiffchaff** *P tristis* photographed at Santa Maria, Sal, on



160 Greater Spotted Eagle / Bastaardarend *Aquila clanga 'fulvescens'*, immature, Kerkini lake, Greece, 5 February 2018 *(Marc Guyt/Agami)* **161** Dark-eyed Junco / Grijze Junco *Junco hyemalis*, Doornzele, Oost-Vlaanderen, Belgium, 20 March 2018 *(Kris De Rouck)* **162** Siberian Crane / Siberische Witte Kraanvogel *Grus leucogeranus*, adult male ('Omid'), Fereydunkenar, Mazandaran, Iran, 1 February 2018 *(Ehsan Talebi)* **163** Taiga Merlin / Amerikaans Smelleken *Falco columbarius columbarius*, female or first-winter, Thurso, Highland, Scotland, 3 February 2018 *(Nina O'Hanlon)*

8 February will be the first for the Cape Verde Islands. In the Canary Islands, up to three **Tristram's Warblers** *Sylvia deserticola* were present on Fuerteventura between mid-January and mid-March (two males at Barranco de la Torre from 28 January and one male at Itsmo de la Pared on 26 January); there was one previous record on Fuerteventura on 30 October 1995. A **Savi's Warbler** *Locustella luscinioides* at Saih al Salam on 3-4 January was the first in winter for the UAE. The first for The Gambia was trapped at Kartong Bird Observatory on 25 January. The first **Booted Warbler** *Iduna caligata* for Thailand was photographed at Khlong Tamru, Chon Buri province, on 13-20 January.

HYPOCOLIUS TO WHITE-EYES In Egypt, a **Grey Hypocolius** *Hypocolius ampelinus* was found at Wadi el Gemal in December 2017, and a male and female were photographed at Elba national park in February. In Ornithos 24: 323-334, 2017, Seguin et al reported that numbers and range of **Corsican Nuthatch** *Sitta whiteheadi* declined due to forest fires in 2001 and 2003 and due to deforestation; the total area inhabited by this Corsican endemic is now less than 185 km^2, with just 1557-2201 territories. Five **Oriental White-eyes** *Zosterops palpebrosa* were seen on Mahawt island, Filim, Oman, on 25 January; in the 'greater WP', this species occurs not only in Oman (discovered in 1999) but also at at least four sites in Hormozgan province in southern Iran (cf Sandgrouse 23: 130-133, 2001, Dutch Birding 31: 230-231, 2009, 40: 56, 2018, Podoces 6: 1-48, 2011).

THRUSHES TO STONECHATS The third **Eyebrowed Thrush** *Turdus obscurus* for Spain stayed at Cádiz, Andalucía, from 22 February to 11 March; the previous ones were shot in January and November 2016. The second **Naumann's Thrush** *T naumanni* for Estonia was a first-winter photographed at Savka, Peipsiääre, on 15 February; the first was in 2012. The adult male **Black-throated Thrush** *T atrogularis* at Scheemda, Groningen, Netherlands, from 24 January remained through mid-March (not a first-winter; contra Dutch Birding 40: 56, 58, 2018). A **Song Thrush** *T philomelos* photographed at Pine Wood Villa, Mount Victoria, on 3 February was the first for Myanmar. A **Black Scrub Robin** *Cercotrichas podobe* at Eilat beach from 28 February to 2 March fits the seasonal arrival pattern known for Israel (Dutch Birding 38: 219-227, 2016). The first-winter **Red-flanked Bluetail** *Tarsiger cyanurus* on Helgoland, Schleswig-Holstein, Germany, from 20 November 2017 stayed until 7 February. The eighth for Belgium at Montzen, Liège, from 5 January remained into February. A first-winter male **Eastern Black Redstart** *Phoenicurus ochruros phoenicuroides* at Nieuwe Statenzijl, Groningen, from 7 February to at least mid-March was the 11th for the Netherlands; others this winter had been seen from November 2017 to early January in Finland (one) and the Netherlands (two). A **Pied Bush Chat** *Saxicola caprata* was photographed at Salalah in southern Oman on 28 February.

WHEATEARS TO ACCENTORS In Belgium, the female **Desert Wheatear** *Oenanthe deserti* at De Panne, West-Vlaanderen, from 21 November 2017 stayed to at least mid-March. The first for Romania at Techirghiol, Constanţa, from 6 December 2017 remained to 24 February. In Israel, the female **Red-rumped Wheatear** *O moesta* and three **Basalt Wheatears** *O lugens warriae* were still present around Eilat through February. A **Red-tailed Wheatear** *O chrysopygia* at Mt Amsa, Negev, from 10 March was the first for Israel (a previous one was reported but not documented in 1990). The first **Black-throated Accentor** *Prunella atrogularis* for Hungary was photographed at a bird feeder at Kisújszállás, Karcag, on 19 March. Koivula et al (2017) and Stoddart (2018) analysed the unprecedented influx of c 230 **Siberian Accentors** *P montanella* in Europe in autumn 2016 (cf Dutch Birding 38: 465, 2016, 39: 60, 129, 211, 323-326, 2017) and suggested that the influx was linked to easterly winds in northern Russia in September and a cold burst from the north-east to east in early October (Tringa 44: 80-91, 2017, Br Birds 111: 69-83, 2018).

SPARROWS TO PIPITS A record flock of up to 100 **Sudan Golden Sparrows** *Passer luteus* stayed at Oued Jenna, Western Sahara, from 20 January to at least 2 March. A **Moroccan Wagtail** *Motacilla subpersonata* photographed at Palmones, Cádiz, on 11 March was the fifth for Spain (cf Dutch Birding 39: 414, 2017). In France, c 30 **Richard's Pipits** *Anthus richardi* were present in January-February. Four **Olive-backed Pipits** *A hodgsoni* at Costa Calma, Fuerteventura, from 11 December 2017 were still present on at least 4 March. In Morocco, one was found at the Marjane near Bou Regreg, Rabat, on 28 January. On 5-22 November 2017, at least four had been staying at two urban parks at Rabat where two were again seen on 6-7 March. A **Tree Pipit** *A trivialis* near Midleton, Cork, from 7 November 2017 to at least 19 February was the first in winter for Ireland. A **Siberian Buff-bellied Pipit** *A rubescens japonicus* photographed at Tabas, South Khorasan, on 7 December 2017 was the third for Iran.

FINCHES TO BUNTINGS Photographs of the alleged first **European Greenfinch** *Chloris chloris* for India at Thukjey, Ladakh, have been reidentified as a Common Rosefinch *Erythrina erythrina* (José Luis Copete in litt; Indian Birds 13: 162-163, 2017, cf Dutch Birding 40: 59, 2018). An influx of c 23 **Lesser Redpolls** *Acanthis cabaret* in Spain in January-February included a flock of 15 at Ciudadela de Pamplona, Navarra, with one wearing a ring from Cinderford, Gloucestershire, England, on 14 October 2017. If accepted, a **Mealy Redpoll** *A flammea* in this flock from 20 January will be the first for Spain. A Mealy trapped at Skagen, Denmark, on 24 December 2017 had been ringed at Tangwanghe, Heilongjiang province, China, on 3 November 2016, at a distance of 6953 km. A **Coues's Redpoll** *A hornemanni exilipes* at Hagenbrunn, Niederösterreich, on 28 January was the fourth for Austria; the three previous ones occurred in December 2017 (cf Dutch Birding 40: 59, 2018). The second **Hornemann's Redpoll** *A h hornemanni* for the Faeroes turned up on 3 February. A **Dark-eyed Junco** *Junco hyemalis* frequented a bird feeder at Doornzele, Oost-Vlaanderen,

164 Eyebrowed Thrush / Vale Lijster *Turdus obscurus*, first-winter male, Cádiz, Andalusia, Spain, 24 February 2018 *(Helen Commandeur)*

165 Tristram's Warbler / Atlasgrasmus *Sylvia deserticola*, male, Barranco de la Torre, Fuerteventura, Canary Islands, 4 February 2018 *(Gary Thoburn)*

166 Red-flanked Bluetail / Blauwstaart *Tarsiger cyanurus*, first-winter, Montzen, Liège, Belgium, 7 January 2018 *(Vincent Legrand)*

167 American Horned Lark / Amerikaanse Strandleeuwerik *Eremophila alpestris*, first-year, Staines Reservoir, Surrey, England, 29 January 2018 *(James Lowen/jameslowen.com)*

168 Black Scrub Robin / Zwarte Waaierstaart *Cercotrichas podobe*, first-winter, Eilat, Israel, 2 March 2018 *(Felix Timmermann)*

Belgium, from at least 15 March. From January to mid-March, at least 13 **Pine Buntings** *Emberiza leucocephalos* were reported, including three in Germany, two in Greece and two in the Netherlands. A **Common Reed Bunting** *E schoeniclus* at Los Abrigos, Tenerife, on 28 January was (only) the fourth for the Canary Islands. Four **Little Buntings** *E pusilla* remained at Costa Calma, Fuerteventura, into March. A **Rustic Bunting** *E rustica* photographed at Sagres, Vila do Bispo, on 7 February was the third for Portugal.

For a number of reports Birdwatch, British Birds, Go-South Bulletin, Sovon-nieuws, www.birdguides.com, www.dutchavifauna.nl, www.hbw.com, www.netfugl.dk, www.rarebirdalert.co.uk, www.tarsiger.com and www.waarneming.nl were consulted. We wish to thank Gary Allport, Mohamed Amezian, Carlos André, Ali Atahan, Łukasz Bednarz, Daniel Benders, Patrick Bergier, Paul Bradbeer, Thibaut Chansac, Álex Colorado, José Luis Copete, Magnus Corell, Andrea Corso, Philippe Dubois, Nils van Duivendijk, Enno Ebels, Arjan van Egmond, Raymond Galea, Eduardo Garcia-del-Rey, Ricard Gutiérrez, Mohamed Habib, Axel Halley, Richard Hearn, Jens Hering, Tommy Holmgren, Bart van Hoogstraten, Harry Hussey, Josh Jones, Zbigniew Kajzer, Leander Khil, Bence Kókay, Ole Krome, Richard Kvetko, Vincent Legrand, Anton Libermann, André van Loon, James Lowen, Benoît Maire, Alex Máni, Lionel Maumary, Teresa Militão, Geir Mobakken, Gilda Monteiro, Killian Mullarney, Jim Nicolson, Nina O'Hanlon, Silas Olofson, Klaus Malling Olsen, Gert Ottens, Gerard Ouweneel, Yoav Perlman, René Pop, Mike Pope, Nikos Probonas, Colin Richardson, Magnus Robb, Ricardo Rodríguez, Andrus Salu, Roy Slaterus, Ryszarda Sobolewska, Marcin Sołowiej, Vincent van der Spek, Rasmus Strack, József Szabó, Ehsan Talebi, Gary Thoburn, Felix Timmermann, Hugo Touzé, Magnus Ullman, Roland van der Vliet, Tim White, Steven Wytema and Emin Yoğurtcuoğlu for their help in compiling this review.

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Recente meldingen

Dit overzicht van recente meldingen van zeldzame en interessante vogels in Nederland beslaat voornamelijk de periode **januari-februari 2018**. De vermelde gevallen zijn merendeels niet geverifieerd en het overzicht is niet volledig. Alle vogelaars die de moeite namen om hun waarnemingen aan ons door te geven worden hartelijk bedankt. Waarnemers van soorten in Nederland die worden beoordeeld door de Commissie Dwaalgasten Nederlandse Avifauna (CDNA) wordt verzocht hun waarnemingen zo spoedig mogelijk in te dienen via www.dutchavifauna.nl.

EENDEN In totaal negen **Witbuikrotganzen** *Branta hrota* trokken langs zeetrektelposten. Op c 20 plaatsen in met name het Waddengebied (inclusief alle vijf de grote eilanden) en de Delta waren exemplaren aanwezig. Meest opvallend was het groepje van 12 bij onder meer Westkapelle, Breskens en Cadzand-Bad in Zeeland. **Zwarte Rotganzen** *B nigricans* werden in 33 uurhokken aangetroffen op de bekende plaatsen in het Waddengebied en de Delta. Het maximum op één locatie betrof drie op Texel, Noord-Holland (in november-december ging het om vier vogels op Texel). Het was een uitstekende winter voor **Roodhalsganzen** *B ruficollis*. Zelden kwamen van zoveel verschillende plaatsen (84 uurhokken) waarnemingen; in alle provincies werden exemplaren gevonden! De grootste groep telde zes exemplaren en bevond zich op Ameland, Friesland. Een ongeringde **Ross' Gans** *Anser rossii* verbleef van 7 tot 12 januari en opnieuw op 13 februari bij Reeuwijk, Zuid-Holland. De vogel die van 22 januari tot 5 februari aan weerzijden van de Lek in de omgeving van Houten, Utrecht, en Culemborg, Gelderland, werd gezien, was vermoedelijk dezelfde. Hij leek gepaard met een Grauwe Gans *A anser*; eind december verbleef dit exemplaar bij Elburg, Gelderland. Het bleef akelig stil rondom **Taigarietganzen** *A fabalis* – het is zelfs de vraag of de soort überhaupt werd vastgesteld deze winter. Opnieuw verbleven de meeste **Dwergganzen** *A erythropus*, namelijk 32, in het Oudeland van Strijen, Zuid-Holland. Ook een andere traditionele plek, de polders bij Camperduin, Noord-Holland, werd bezocht door maximaal 23 exemplaren. Een nieuwe, kortstondig gebruikte, pleisterplaats was de Klaverpolder bij Moerdijk, Noord-Brabant; hier verbleven van 26 tot 28 februari 28 vogels, waaronder verschillende met kleurringen. Verder werden op c 10 locaties solitaire exemplaren gezien. Er werden zeven **IJseenden** *Clangula hyemalis* gemeld vanaf zeetrektelposten. Waarnemingen van pleisterende vogels kwamen, zoals gebruikelijk bij deze soort, uit het het gehele kustgebied. De 'long-stayers' bij Opheusden, Gelderland, en op de Haarrijnse Plas bij Vleuten, Utrecht, waren ook nog steeds present. Een nieuw binnenlands exemplaar diende zich aan bij Itteren, Limburg. Op 21 januari beleefde een vogelaar enkele opwindende seconden op een veerboot vlakbij Harlingen, Friesland, toen hij opeens een mannetje **Koningseider** *Somateria spectabilis* zag zwemmen (daarna volgde frustratie, want de boot voer gewoon door…). Gelukkig liet de vogel zich tussen 9 februari en 1 maart aan veel meer vogelaars zien, steeds enkele kilometers uit de kust langs de Pollendam bij Harlingen en uitsluitend vanaf de veerboot of een watertaxi. De bekende adulte mannetjes **Buffelkopeend** *Bucephala albeola* nabij Den Oever, Noord-Holland, en Barendrecht, Zuid-Holland, bleven de gehele periode. Het aantal plaatsen waar **Witoogeenden** *Aythya nyroca* vertoefden, groeide van zes in de vorige periode naar 17 in januari-februari. Hieronder bevonden zich nog steeds de langdurig pleisterende vogels bij Borgharen, Limburg, bij Lochem, Overijssel (met een ring van een Duits herintroductieproject) en op het Dwingelderveld, Drenthe. Van ten minste 7 tot 23 januari verbleef een mannetje **Ringsnaveleend** *A collaris* bij Appingedam, Groningen; deze werd hier vorige winter ook al aangetroffen. Een mannetje **Siberische Taling** *Anas formosa* dat op 20 februari werd ontdekt bij Heerenveen, Friesland, droeg helaas een gele kwekersring. Een mannetje **Amerikaanse Smient** *A americana* verbleef van 8 tot 10 februari en opnieuw vanaf 28 februari tussen Smienten *A penelope* in de polders tussen Katwijk en Wassenaar, Zuid-Holland. Op 10 februari werd hij ook overvliegend gezien op de nabijgelegen telpost Berkheide in het gelijknamige duingebied. Een mannetje **Amerikaanse Wintertaling** *A carolinensis* bevond zich van 2 tot 7 januari in de Ezumakeeg, Friesland.

DUIVEN TOT STORMVOGELS De overwinterende **Zomertortel** *Streptopelia turtur* in Krimpen aan den IJssel, Zuid-Holland, bleef tot ten minste 23 februari. Een ander exemplaar bevond zich van 25 januari tot 3 maart in Oud-Beijerland, Zuid-Holland. Op telposten werden 347 **Kraanvogels** *Grus grus* geteld, waaronder 207 op 8 januari zuidwaarts over telpost De Groote Peel, Noord-Brabant. Zeetrektellers noteerden in totaal 44 langstrekkende **Parelduikers** *Gavia arctica*. Ver in het binnenland zwom een exemplaar tot 14 januari bij Panheel, Limburg. Vanaf zeetrektelposten werden negen langstrekkende **IJsduikers** *G immer* waargenomen, waaronder drie op 3 januari langs Ouddorp, Zuid-Holland. Dat betrof een evenaring van het Nederlandse trektelrecord; er zijn nu acht dagen met drie langstrekkende exemplaren. Langs de Brouwersdam, Zeeland/Zuid-Holland, en op het Volkerakmeer, Zeeland, verbleven er maximaal vier. Verder zijn de waarnemingen ver in het binnenland vermeldenswaard: tot 4 januari bij Helmond, Noord-Brabant; tot 7 januari bij Woudrichem, Noord-Brabant; tot 22 januari bij Maurik, Gelderland; en van 5 januari tot 19 februari bij Heel, Limburg. Er werden 10 **Noordse Stormvogels** *Fulmarus glacialis* geteld vanaf zeetrektelposten, waarvan de helft langs Camperduin. Een exemplaar dat op 5 december dood werd gevonden op Schiermonnikoog, Friesland, bleek op 10 augustus 1977 te zijn geringd op Fair Isle, Schotland. Met 40 jaar, drie maanden en 25 dagen was dit één van de oudste Noordse Stormvogels

169 Ross' Meeuw / Ross's Gull *Rhodostethia rosea*, eerste-winter, Vlissingen, Zeeland, 28 januari 2018 *(René van Rossum)* **170-171** Ross' Meeuw / Ross's Gull *Rhodostethia rosea*, eerste-winter, Vlissingen, Zeeland, 5 februari 2018 *(Vincent Legrand)*

172 Ross' Meeuw / Ross's Gull *Rhodostethia rosea*, eerste-winter, Vlissingen, Zeeland, 30 januari 2018
(Mattias Hofstede)

173 Kleine Burgemeester / Iceland Gull *Larus glaucoides*, eerste-winter, Zwolle, Overijssel, 23 januari 2018
(Edwin Winkel)

174 Amerikaanse Smient / American Wigeon *Anas americana*, adult mannetje, met Smienten / Eurasian Wigeons *A penelope* en Krakeenden / Gadwalls *A strepera*, Ruijgelaanse- en Zonneveldspolder, Wassenaar, Zuid-Holland, 1 maart 2018 *(René van Rossum)* **175** Koningseider / King Eider *Somateria spectabilis*, adult mannetje, Pollendam, Harlingen, Friesland, 14 februari 2018 *(Wim van Zwieten)*

176 Bastaardarend / Greater Spotted Eagle *Aquila clanga*, eerstejaars, Bergambacht, Zuid-Holland, 20 februari 2018 *(John van der Graaf)* **177** Bastaardarend / Greater Spotted Eagle *Aquila clanga*, eerstejaars, Polsbroekerdam, Utrecht, 18 februari 2018 *(Kees de Leeuw)* **178** Bastaardarend / Greater Spotted Eagle *Aquila clanga*, eerstejaars, Bergambacht, Zuid-Holland, 21 februari 2018 *(Wim van Zwieten)*

ooit. Het Europese record staat op 43 jaar en 11 maanden. Vrijwel iedere winter worden enkele **Grauwe Pijlstormvogels** *Puffinus griseus* langs de kust opgemerkt en ook in deze periode waren er vier, alle vanaf de telposten Camperduin en Castricum aan Zee, Noord-Holland. De enige **Noordse Pijlstormvogel** *P puffinus* passeerde op 19 januari eerst Egmond aan Zee, Noord-Holland, en daarna Camperduin.

OOIEVAARS TOT STRANDLOPERS Een overwinterende **Zwarte Ooievaar** *Ciconia nigra* werd van 6 januari tot 18 februari gezien in de wijde omgeving van Wijnjewoude en Nijeberkoop, Friesland. Op 14 januari vloog een exemplaar over Leerdam, Zuid-Holland. Het enige eerdere januari-geval betrof een overwinteraar bij Schiphol, Noord-Holland, in 2015. **Koereigers** *Bubulcus ibis* werden voornamelijk uit de westelijke helft van het land gemeld, vooral uit Zuid-Holland, met een maximum van drie bij Gouderak en Strijen. **Zwarte Ibissen** *Plegadis falcinellus* bleven trouw aan hun vaste stekken: Koedijk, Noord-Holland (maximaal vier), Berkel en Rodenrijs, Zuid-Holland (twee), en Vogelplas Starrevaart bij Leidschendam, Zuid-Holland (één). Verder waren er waarnemingen op 7 januari bij Akmarijp, Friesland, op 7 februari over Twisk, Noord-Holland, en op 9 februari bij Sneek, Friesland. Op twee plekken hielden **Steltkluten** *Himantopus himantopus* lang stand, totdat de winter eind februari zich alsnog deed gelden; de vogel op Tiengemeten, Zuid-Holland, werd voor het laatst gemeld op 10 februari en het exemplaar bij Borssele, Zeeland, bleef tot 24 februari. Een **Amerikaanse Goudplevier** *Pluvialis dominica* verbleef op 14 januari in het Zandvoortseweggebied bij Grijpskerke, Zeeland. Dit kan goed het exemplaar zijn geweest dat in augustus, september en november 2017 steeds gedurende één dag op verschillende plekken op Walcheren is gezien. Op 21 januari en 24-26 februari liep er een **Morinelplevier** *Charadrius morinellus* in de Ezumakeeg. Op 6 februari vloog een **Rosse Franjepoot** *Phalaropus fulicarius* langs Camperduin. Pleisteraars verbleven van 1 tot 5 januari bij Ritthem, Zeeland, en van 22 januari tot 5 februari op verschillende plekken op Texel. Een **Kleine Geelpootruiter** *Tringa flavipes* verbleef van 15 tot 24 februari bij Ouderkerk aan den IJssel, Zuid-Holland.

ALKEN TOT MEEUWEN **Papegaaiduikers** *Fratercula arctica* werden gemeld op 27 januari bij de Noordpier te Velsen, Noord-Holland, en op 18 februari vanaf Terschelling, Friesland. Daarnaast werden er 13 genoteerd door zeetrektellers, verreweg de meeste langs Camperduin. Ruim 60% van de 716 in de database van trektellen.nl sinds 2000 is afkomstig van deze telpost. De adulte **Zwarte Zeekoet** *Cepphus grylle* van de Brouwersdam bleef tot in ieder geval 24 februari. Een eerste-winter hield zich vanaf 9 januari op rond de pieren van IJmuiden, Noord-Holland. Het aantal van 13 856 **Alk/Zeekoeten** *Alca torda/Uria aalge* op 8 januari langs Camperduin zorgde voor de tweede dag ooit. Het record met 14 739 op 28 november 2012 is ook in handen van deze telpost. Op 14 en 15 januari zwom een **Kleine Alk** *Alle alle* langs

179 Morinelplevier / Eurasian Dotterel *Charadrius morinellus*, eerste-winter, Ezumakeeg, Friesland, 26 februari 2018 *(Gerhard Kornelis)*

180 Oosterse Zwarte Roodstaart / Eastern Black Redstart *Phoenicurus ochruros phoenicuroides*, eerste-winter mannetje, Nieuwe Statenzijl, Groningen, 6 maart 2018 *(Arnoud B van den Berg/The Sound Approach)* **181** Beflijster / Ring Ouzel *Turdus torquatus*, mannetje, Houten, Utrecht, 1 januari 2018 *(Herman Bouman)* **182** Ringsnaveleend / Ring-necked Duck *Aythya collaris*, adult mannetje, Appingedam, Groningen, 7 januari 2018 *(Marnix Jonker)* **183** Amerikaanse Smient / American Wigeon *Anas americana*, adult mannetje, met Smienten / Eurasian Wigeons *A penelope* en Krakeenden / Gadwalls *A strepera*, Ruijgelaanse- en Zonneveldspolder, Wassenaar, Zuid-Holland, 5 maart 2018 *(John van der Graaf)*

de Oosterscheldekering, Zeeland. Daarnaast werden vier langstrekkende vanaf zeetrektelposten gezien. Mede door het soms stormachtige weer werden aardige aantallen jagers gezien op de zeetrektelposten: 44 **Kleine** *Stercorarius parasiticus*, 13 **Middelste** *S pomarinus* en 59 **Grote Jagers** *S skua*. Bijzonder was de eerste-winter **Vorkstaartmeeuw** *Xema sabini* op 2 februari vliegend langs telpost Lauwersoog, Groningen. Dit is pas de derde februari-waarneming in de database van trektellen.nl. Een prachtige eerste-winter **Ross' Meeuw** *Rhodostethia rosea*, met gemak dé soort van de winter, werd op 24 januari ontdekt in de haven van Vlissingen, Zeeland. Daar bleef de vogel – soms met een onderbreking van enkele dagen – tot in maart. Hij liet zich vaak prachtig zien en, heel bijzonder, ook horen. Het was niet alleen de eerste twitchbare sinds het voorjaar van 2011, maar ook pas de eerste twitchbare in dit kleed – en vermoedelijk het eerste brood etende exemplaar ooit in Nederland... Op 1 januari trokken 32 **Pontische Meeuwen** *Larus cachinnans* langs telpost Kamperhoek, Flevoland. Dit betreft het op twee na hoogste aantal voor een telpost ooit. Het landelijke record staat met 63 op 29 oktober 2017 op naam van telpost Flevocentrale bij Lelystad, Flevoland. Beide posten zijn verantwoordelijk voor meer dan de helft van alle waarnemingen van trekkende Pontische Meeuwen. Er waren beduidend minder **Kleine Burgemeesters** *L glaucoides* dan tijdens de vorige winter. Populair waren de bekende subadulte in Amsterdam, Noord-Holland (de vogel werd hier op 14 januari gevangen en geringd) en de exemplaren van 15 januari tot 16 februari in Julianadorp, Noord-Holland; van 17 januari tot 7 februari in Zwolle, Overijssel; en vanaf 18 febru-

184 Bladkoning / Yellow-browed Warbler *Phylloscopus inornatus*, Leidsche Rijn, Utrecht, Utrecht, 5 januari 2018 *(Toy Janssen)*

185 Oosterse Zwarte Roodstaart / Eastern Black Redstart *Phoenicurus ochruros phoenicuroides*, eerste-winter mannetje, Nieuwe Statenzijl, Groningen, 10 maart 2018 *(Marnix Jonker)*

186 Zwartkeellijster / Black-throated Thrush *Turdus atrogularis*, adult mannetje, Scheemda, Groningen, 30 januari 2018 *(John van der Graaf)*

187 Zwartbuikwaterspreeuw / Black-bellied Dipper *Cinclus cinclus cinclus*, eerste-winter, Papendrecht, Zuid-Holland, 23 januari 2018 *(Co van der Wardt)*

188 Grote Kruisbek / Parrot Crossbill *Loxia pytyopsittacus*, onvolwassen mannetje, Heidestein, Zeist, Utrecht, 27 februari 2018 *(John van der Graaf)*

189 Grote Kruisbek / Parrot Crossbill *Loxia pytyopsittacus*, vrouwtje, Heidestein, Zeist, Utrecht, 24 februari 2018 *(Michel Kars)*

190 Witstuitbarmsijs / Coues's Redpoll *Acanthis hornemanni exilipes*, adult mannetje, Arnhem, Gelderland, 16 februari 2018 *(Peter Soer)*

191 Witkopgors / Pine Bunting *Emberiza leucocephalos*, mannetje, Havenhoofd, Zuid-Holland, 28 februari 2018 *(Enno B Ebels)*

ari eerst in Hoograven en daarna in Lombok in Utrecht, Utrecht. Verder waren er nog c vijf die slechts één of enkele dagen aanwezig waren. **Grote Burgemeesters** *L hyperboreus* werden gemeld uit in totaal 35 uurhokken, alle in de kustprovincies. Een eerste-winter in Amsterdam liet zich op 14 januari vangen en ringen.

ROOFVOGELS De **Grijze Wouw** *Elanus caeruleus* van de Kollumerpomp in het Lauwersmeergebied, Friesland, werd op 8 februari voor het laatst gezien. Een tweedekalenderjaar **Bastaardarend** *Aquila clanga* werd op 18 februari gefotografeerd boven Polsbroekerdam, Utrecht. Later die middag werd de vogel teruggevonden in de polder tussen Lekkerkerk en Bergambacht, Zuid-Holand, waar hij in een broekbosje ging slapen. Veruit de meeste mensen die de volgende ochtend wachtten tot de vogel het bosje uit zou vliegen, kwamen van een koude kermis thuis. Gelukkig werkte de vogel op 20 en 21 februari veel beter mee, toen hij zich dikwijls prima liet zien, waarmee dit de eerste goed twitchbare was sinds 2002. Op de telposten werden bescheiden aantallen roofvogels geregistreerd: acht **Blauwe Kiekendieven** *Circus cyaneus*, 12 **Zeearenden** *Haliaeetus albicilla*, drie **Rode Wouwen** *Milvus milvus*, twee **Ruigpootbuizerds** *Buteo lagopus*, een **Velduil** *Asio flammeus* en vier **Smellekens** *Falco columbarius*. Het bekende mannetje **Steppekiekendief** *C macrourus* van De Onlanden, Drenthe, bleef tot ten minste 20 januari.

HOPPEN TOT GRASMUSSEN De **Hop** *Upupa epops* die vanaf 9 december onregelmatig werd gezien in en rond Tilburg, Noord-Brabant, werd voor het laatst gemeld op 4 januari. In Kinderdijk, Zuid-Holland, verbleef een exemplaar op 29 en 30 januari. Op drie locaties verbleven **Buidelmezen** *Remiz pendulinus*, namelijk op 1 januari in Waterland, Noord-Holland, van 6 tot 13 januari bij Ridderkerk, Zuid-Holland, en vanaf 4 februari bij Berkel en Rodenrijs. Op 18 februari werd een zingende **Pallas' Boszanger** *Phylloscopus proregulus* kortstondig waargenomen op de grens met Duitsland bij Bourtange, Groningen. Van een 10-tal locaties in het noorden en westen kwamen meldingen van **Siberische Tjiftjaffen** *P tristis*. Een exemplaar vanaf 22 februari bij Berkel en Rodenrijs werd door aardig wat vogelaars bewonderd. Een **Tuinfluiter** *Sylvia borin* van 11 tot 30 januari in Wageningen, Gelderland, mag gezien de tijd van het jaar gerust uitzonderlijk genoemd worden. Een vermoedelijke **Humes Braamsluiper** *S althaea* werd op 4 maart gefotografeerd in Zwartewaal, Zuid-Holland; naar verluidt verbleef hij hier al sinds december. Een weinig coöperatieve **Provençaalse Grasmus** *S undata* werd op 7 januari ontdekt in de zeereep bij Oostkapelle, Zeeland. Het betrof het 12e geval voor Nederland en het vierde voor Walcheren.

PESTVOGELS TOT VLIEGENVANGERS Hoewel het zeker geen invasiejaar was, werden er toch in 68 uurhokken **Pestvogels** *Bombycilla garrulus* waargenomen, met name in de noordelijke helft van het land. Nergens werden meer dan 25 exemplaren bijeen gezien. Het goede najaar voor **Zwartbuikwaterspreeuwen** *Cinclus cinclus cinclus* zette door met pleisteraars op niet minder dan zeven locaties, namelijk de gehele periode bij Roden, Drenthe; bij Nijmegen, Gelderland; in de Staatsbossen op Texel; en in de Amsterdamse Waterleidingduinen, Noord-Holland; tot 1 februari in Papendrecht, Zuid-Holland; vanaf 30 januari bij Vaassen, Gelderland; en vanaf 28 februari in Jubbega, Friesland. Zeer opmerkelijk was het voorkomen van **Beflijsters** *Turdus torquatus* op negen locaties; in de meeste winters ontbreekt het (nagenoeg) aan meldingen. Spectaculair was de ontdekking van een adult mannetje **Zwartkeellijster** *T atrogularis* op 24 januari in een woonwijk in Scheemda, Groningen. De vogel werd tot in maart door veel vogelaars bezocht. Vriendelijke buurtbewoners hielpen geregeld met het lokaliseren van de vogel of kwamen zelfs met koffie en trapjes (om over de schutting te kijken) aanzetten! Er dook wederom een eerste-winter mannetje **Oosterse Zwarte Roodstaart** *Phoenicurus ochruros phoenicuroides* op. Op basis van het uiterlijk betrof het met zekerheid een andere vogel dan de twee in het najaar van 2017. Hij werd op 7 februari ontdekt langs de Dollard bij Nieuwe Statenzijl, Groningen, en bleef tot in maart, waarmee dit taxon voor het eerst in februari en maart werd vastgesteld. Het was alweer het zevende geval in anderhalf jaar, waarmee dit taxon in zeer korte tijd verwerd van grote zeldzaamheid tot min of meer reguliere dwaalgast (nu 11 gevallen). Een eerste-winter mannetje **Woestijntapuit** *Oenanthe deserti* bevond zich op 26 januari bij Den Oever (eerste januari-geval).

KWIKSTAARTEN TOT GORZEN Ten minste één **Grote Pieper** *Anthus richardi* werd tussen 1 januari en 20 februari onregelmatig gezien op verschillende plekken tussen Oost en De Cocksdorp op Texel. De **Siberische Boompieper** *A hodgsoni* die op 21 december bij Wageningen werd ontdekt, bleef tot 1 januari. Zeven **Fraters** *Linaria flavirostris* van 21 januari tot 6 februari bij Itteren waren de eerste twitchbare voor Limburg sinds 1997. De invasie **Grote Barmsijzen** *Acanthis flammea* zette onverminderd door. Op 7 januari was het voor het eerst in weken rustig weer en prompt vlogen er 909 langs de Kamperhoek ('voorjaarsrecord'), en 293 langs De Vulkaan bij Den Haag, Zuid-Holland (op één na hoogste voorjaarsaantal). Deze dag werden er tevens 87 geringd in Meijendel, Zuid-Holland. De hoogste aantallen waren net als in de voorgaande periode echter voorbehouden aan het noordoosten van het land. In een tuin in Surhuisterveen, Friesland, werden in de eerste twee maanden van het jaar ruim 700 geringd; de 104 op 17 februari mogen gerust uitzonderlijk worden genoemd. De determinatie van **Witstuitbarmsijzen** *A hornemanni exilipes* hield de gemoederen bezig bij een twitchbaar mannetje bij Oirsbeek, Limburg, van 21 januari tot 9 februari, en bij een, bij vogelfotografen razend populair, mannetje in Arnhem, Gelderland, van 22 januari tot 21 februari (en ook weer in maart). Er waren ringvangsten op 7 januari in Meijendel (adult mannetje), op 28 januari bij Overdinkel, Overijssel (adult mannetje), en op 5 februari in Surhuisterveen (adult vrouwtje). Verder waren er diverse claims, waarbij geen of onvoldoende (overtuigend) fotomateriaal beschikbaar was. **Grote Kruisbekken** *Loxia pytyopsittacus* bleven goed vertegenwoordigd, met meldingen uit 41

uurhokken. Het hoogste aantal bijeen van 34 werd gemeld op 6 januari op de Hoge Veluwe, Gelderland. Op enkele locaties waren er zelfs aanwijzingen voor mogelijke broedgevallen, zoals op Heidestein bij Zeist, Utrecht. Er werden slechts c 10 **Europese Kanaries** *Serinus serinus* gemeld, waaronder een groepje van vier van 22 tot 30 januari in Doetinchem, Gelderland. Bij Doenrade, Limburg, werden nog c 25 **Grauwe Gorzen** *Emberiza calandra* waargenomen en ook een groepje van maximaal vier bij Oudeschans, Groningen, trok veel bekijks. Daarnaast was er een handvol meldingen elders in Oost-Groningen en Zuid-Limburg. We zijn de laatste jaren verwend met **Witkopgorzen** *E leucocephalos*. Toch was een solitair mannetje bij Havenhoofd op Goeree-Overflakkee vanaf 25 februari pas de eerste voor Zuid-Holland sinds 1996. Een **Dwerggors** *E pusilla* verbleef van 5 tot 13 januari bij Barneveld, Gelderland.

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DB Actueel

New bird species described in 2017 In 2017, seven new bird species have been formally described.

Blue-winged Amazon / Tekaxamazone *Amazona gomezgarzai* (Silva, T, Guzmán, A, Urantówka, A D & Mackiewicz, P 2017. A new parrot taxon from the Yucatán Peninsula, Mexico – its position within genus *Amazona* based on morphology and molecular phylogeny. PeerJ 5: e3475). In 2014, during a visit to a remote part of the Yucatán peninsula in southern Mexico, Miguel Gómez Garza came across parrots with a completely different colour pattern from other known species. Based on its distinctive shape, colour pattern, call and behaviour it was described as a new species – Blue-winged Amazon *Amazona gomezgarzai*. The analysis of mitochondrial DNA genes indicates that the species has emerged c 120 000 years ago, from within the White-fronted Amazon *A albifrons* population. During this time, the taxon differentiated sufficiently to be clearly recognizable as a new species. It is named in honour of Miguel Angel Gómez Garza, a veterinarian and expert of the parrots of Mexico. The species is found in tropical caducifolius and subcaducifolius forest of the Yucatán peninsula in southern Mexico; to date, its presence is confined to an area of roughly 100 km^2. The holotype (male) and paratype (female) are still alive in captivity. After their death they will be 're-united' with the tail-feathers of the holotype and paratype that were used for the DNA study and are now preserved in the Laboratorio de Ornitología, Facultad de Ciencias Biológicas, Universidad Autonóma de Nuevo León, Mexico. The pdf of the paper can be found at https://peerj.com/articles/3475.pdf.

Dry-forest Sabrewing / Droogbossabelvleugel *Campylopterus calcirupicola* (Lopes, L E, de Vasconcelos, M F & Gonzaga, L P 2017. A cryptic new species of hummingbird of the *Campylopterus largipennis* complex (Aves: Trochilidae). Zootaxa 4268: 1-33). A taxonomic revision of *Campylopterus* sabrewing based on more than 1000 museum specimens revealed a cryptic new species of hummingbird – Dry-forest Sabrewing *Campylopterus calcirupicola*. Its holotype is an adult female collected at Sítio Duboca, Montes Claros, Brazil, in June 2007. The new species is very similar to the parapatric Grey-breasted Sabrewing *C diamantinensis* differing from it by, eg, its smaller size and longer light tail tips. Dry-forest Sabrewing is endemic to south-eastern Brazil from the north-eastern state of Goiás and the south-western state of Bahia to the northern state of Minas Gerais. The species is a resident of dry forests on limestone rocky outcrops or on limestone-derived soils at 460-880 m asl. It is named after its habitat and composed by 'calx', calcis, limestone; 'rupes', steep rocks; and 'cola', dwelling. The authors propose to qualify the species as 'vulnerable' according to IUCN criteria, given the several threats faced of its habitat. The paper is available at https://tinyurl.com/y84f4mp9.

Painted Manakin / Eckelberry's Manakin *Machaeropterus eckelberryi* (Lane, D F, Kratter, A W & O'Neill, J P 2017. A new species of manakin (Aves: Pipridae; *Machaeropterus*) from Peru with a taxonomic reassessment of the Striped Manakin (*M. regulus*) complex. Zootaxa 4320: 379-390). In 1996, a group of researchers discovered a previously unknown manakin species in the Cordillera Azul, an isolated mountain ridge in Peru, nearly identical to the subspecies of Striped Manakin *Machaeropterus regulus aureopectus*. New studies showed that it differs strongly from that and all other members of the *M regulus* complex in voice (and also some morphological characters) and represents a new species – Painted Manakin *M eckelberryi*. It is named after the American bird artist Donald R Eckelberry. The species is restricted to a fairly small region in northern Peru in the departments of San Martín and Loreto. Despite the fairly limited distribution, its presence within one of Peru's largest national parks and its preference for poor-soil environments suggests that the species is probably not in any serious conservation danger. The pdf of the paper can be found at https://tinyurl.com/y8cvr7ld.

Santa Marta Screech Owl / Santa-Martaschreeuwuil *Megascops gilesi* (Krabbe, N 2017. A new species of *Megascops* (Strigidae) from the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta, Colombia, with notes on voices of New World screech owls. Ornitol Colomb 16: eA08). In 1919, Melbourne Armstrong Carriker Jr collected a screech owl *Megascops* in the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta in a mountain massif in northern Colombia that he believed to be a new species. However, due to lack of material to verify it as new, it was at that time identified as '*M choliba* subsp' (Todd, W E & Carriker, M A 1922. The birds of the Sant Marta region of Colombia: a study in altitudinal distribution. Ann Carnegie Mus 14). In the mid-1990s, Peter Boesman and Paul Coopmans were the first to document the voice of a *Megascops* in the Sierra de Santa Marta. In 2007, Niels Krabbe independently found and recognized this population as an undescribed species and set about to describe it. Meanwhile, the owl had been observed by many birders visiting the mountain range, and was included in the Dantas et al (2016) phylogeny of *Megascops* (Mol Phylogenet Evol 94: 626-634, 2016). Given its novel phylogenetic position, voice, and morphology, Krabbe described the Santa Marta bird as a new species – Santa Marta Screech Owl *M gilesi*. It is named after Robert Giles, who funded and took an active part in establishing a bird reserve near the type locality. The species is so far only known from humid forest between 1800 and 2500 m asl on the San Lorenzo ridge in the north-western part of the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta (where it was found to be fairly common in February 2007). The paper is available at https://tinyurl.com/ycnd7esm.

Rote Myzomela / Rotedwerghoningeter *Myzomela irianawidodoae* (Prawiradilaga, D M, Baveja, P, Suparno, Ashari, H, Ng, N S R, Gwee, C Y, Verbelen, P & Rheindt, F E 2017. A colourful new species of *Myzomela* Honeyeater from Rote Island in eastern Indonesia. Treubia 44: 77-100). The first observation of a *Myzomela* species on Rote island in the Lesser Sundas in eastern Indonesia by Ron Johnstone in October 1990 has been referred to Sumba Myzomela *M dammermani* (resident on Sumba island, c 230 km to the west) given its superficially similar appearance. Considering the fact that Sumba and Rote have a distinct biogeographical history, the researchers suspected that it would appear unlikely that the Rote bird would be the same species as on Sumba. Based on extensive morphological inspection and bioacoustic analysis, they discovered that the population belongs to a new species – Rote Myzomela *M irianawidodoae*. Apart from previously overlooked plumage distinctions, the new species bioacoustically differs from Sumba Myzomela in the presence or absence of several unique call types. It is named in honour of Iriana Widodo, the current First Lady of the Republic of Indonesia, to acknowledge her keen interest in Indonesia's birdlife. The species essentially occurs in mangroves and adjacent woodlands and is widespread across the island. Given continued habitat conversion across its small range, authors propose to qualify the species as 'vulnerable' according to IUCN criteria. The pdf of the paper can be found at https://tinyurl.com/ya3ezy36.

Tatamá Tapaculo / Tatamátapaculo *Scytalopus alvarezlopezi* (Stiles, F G, Laverde-R, O & Cadena, C D 2017. A new species of tapaculo (Rhinocryptidae: *Scytalopus*) from the Western Andes of Colombia. Auk 134: 377-392). First collected in 1992, at a site known as Alto de Pisones in the western Andes in Colombia, the bird was known for many years to birders as 'Alto Pisones Tapaculo'. However, the specimen did not match any *Scytalopus* specimen in the collections and DNA analysis confirmed that it probably represented an undescribed species (cf Bull Br Ornithol Club 123: 7-24, 2003). More than 20 years of unsuccessful efforts to trap another specimen followed but, in April 2015, the researchers succeeded in collecting a second bird and finally could describe this new species – Tatamá Tapaculo *S alvarezlopezi*. The new species is easily diagnosable from its near *Scytalopus* relatives from the Central and Eastern Andes by its distinctive, frog-like song and mitochondrial DNA; differences in plumage exist but are more subtle. It inhabits dense understorey vegetation on the floors and lower slopes of ravines in cloud forest at elevations of 1300 to 2100 m on the Pacific slope of the Western Andes of Colombia, from western Antioquia south to south-western Valle del Cauca. The species' name honours Humberto Álvarez-López, an influential Colombian ornithologist. This endemic species is not threatened at present but could be potentially vulnerable due to its restricted distribution. The paper is available at https://tinyurl.com/y8guyohn.

Ashambu Sholakili / Ashambusholakili *Sholicola ashambuensis* (Robin, V V, Vishnudas, C K, Gupta, P, Rheindt, F E, Hooper, D M, Ramakrishnan, U & Reddy, S 2017. Two new genera of songbirds represent endemic radiations from the Shola Sky Islands of the Western Ghats, India. BMC Evol Biol 17: 31). Based on genetic, morphometric, song and plumage data, Robin et al showed that two songbird lineages endemic to the Western Ghats montane forest in India each have diversified into multiple distinct species. They designated two new genera, the Western Ghats shortwings as *Sholicola* and the laughingthrushes as *Montecincla*, and evaluated species-limits to reflect distinct units by revising six previously named taxa and describing one new shortwing species, Ashambu Sholakili *S ashambuensis* (the holotype was collected in the Chemunji hills, Travencure, in 1903). The new species is endemic to the Ashambu hills south of Shenkottah gap, mostly above 1200 m elevation, and is named after its geographical locality. Its main threats are considered to be habitat destruction, because over 50% of forests have been lost since 1850. The paper is available at: https://tinyurl.com/ybjr2rje.

López-Lanús (2017) in a privately published bird guide described a putative new species – Ventania Yellow Finch *Sicalis holmbergi* – on the basis of a single specimen and photographs of sound-recorded individuals. This taxon has been not accepted by the South American Classification Committee for reasons explained at https://tinyurl.com/ydxdeukt. Łukasz Ławicki & André J van Loon

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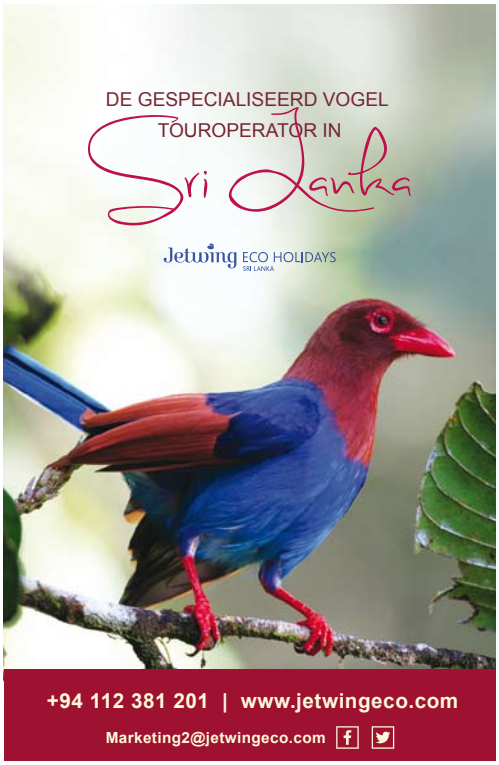
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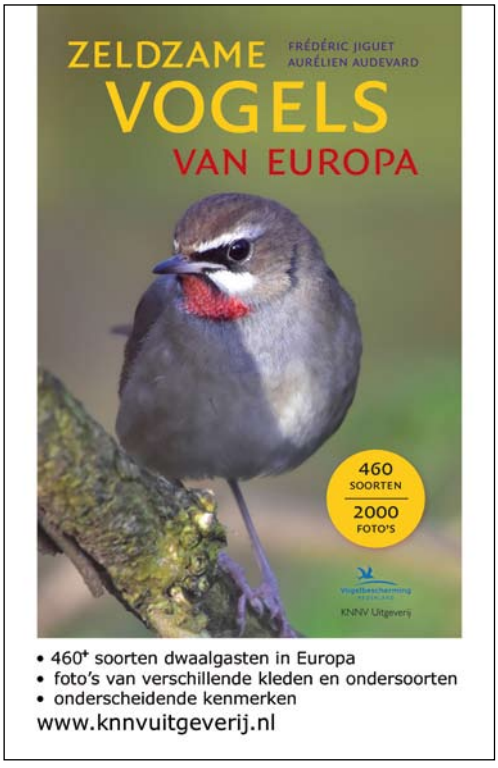
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