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Dutch Birding is een tweemaandelijks tijdschrift. Het publiceert originele artikelen en mededelingen over morfologie, systematiek, voorkomen en verspreiding van vogels in de Benelux, Europa en elders in het Palearctische gebied. Het publiceert tevens bijdragen over vogels in het Aziatisch-Pacifische gebied en andere gebieden.

De volgorde van vogels in Dutch Birding volgt in eerste instantie een klassieke 'Wetmore-indeling'. Binnen dit raamwerk worden voor taxonomie en naamgeving de volgende overzichten aangehouden: *Zeldzame vogels van Nederland* door A B van den Berg & C A W Bosman (1999, Haarlem) (taxonomie en wetenschappelijke, Nederlandse en Engelse namen van Nederlandse vogels); *Palearctic birds* door M Beaman (1994, Stonyhurst) (Engelse namen van overige Palearctische vogels); *Vogels van de wereld – complete checklist* door M Walters (1997, Baarn) (Nederlandse namen van overige vogels van de wereld); en *Birds of the world* door C G Sibley (1996, Version 2.0, Cincinnati) (taxonomie en wetenschappelijke en Engelse namen van overige vogels van de wereld). Afwijkingen van en aanvullingen op bovenstaande overzichten zijn gebaseerd op beslissingen van de CSNA (cf Dutch Birding 19: 21-28, 1997; 20: 22-32, 1998).

Een lijst met tarieven voor de vergoeding van auteurs, fotografen en tekenaars is verkrijgbaar bij de redactie.

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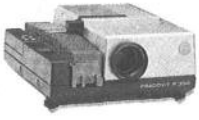

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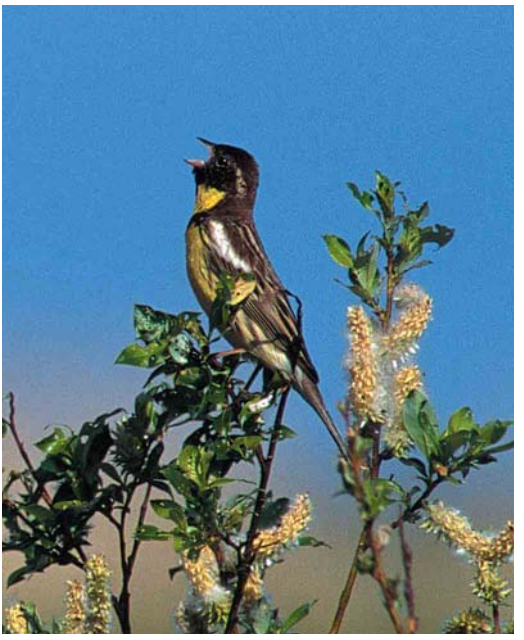
Identification and ageing of Yellow-breasted Bunting and separation from Chestnut Bunting

Jari Peltomäki & Jukka Jantunen

Yellow-breasted *Emberiza aureola* and Chestnut Buntings *E rutila* are two species of which the breeding and wintering areas are predominantly situated in the Eastern Palearctic. The breeding areas of Yellow-breasted Bunting, however, extend well into the Western Palearctic, covering large parts of Russia and reaching into Finland, whereas Chestnut Bunting's breeding areas extend just west of Lake Baikal in Russia. Yellow-breasted and Chestnut Buntings are long-distance migrants and winter in south-eastern Asia and both species occur as vagrants in (western) Europe. Yellow-breasted Bunting is a regular vagrant in Europe outside its breeding area with annual records in Britain (mainly on the northern isles of Scotland) and records in Belgium (2), Channel Islands (1), Czech Republic, Denmark (1+), Estonia (3), France (3), Germany (c 10), Greece, Iceland (1), Ireland, Italy (c 20), Latvia (1), Malta (5), the Netherlands (10), Norway (21), Poland (5), Spain (1) and Sweden (24+). Chestnut Bunting is a much rarer vagrant in Europe and its occurrence is clouded by the possibility of escaped birds. The adult male being a colourful bird, Chestnut Bunting is a popular cagebird and, therefore, most records from Europe are generally thought to concern escapes. There are, however, a few records of immature birds 'at the right time and the right place'. These autumn occurrences of first-winter birds, suggestive of genuine vagrancy, have been in the Netherlands (5 November 1937), Norway (13-15 October 1974), Malta (November 1983) and former Yugoslavia (10 October 1987). Although Vinicombe & Cottridge (1996) list Chestnut Bunting as an Eastern Palearctic species likely to occur as a genuine vagrant in Britain and Ireland, the six British records (Shetland, Scotland, 9-13 June 1974; Fife, Scotland, 11 June 1985; Shetland, 15-16 June 1986; Gwynedd, Wales, 18-19 June 1986;



164 Yellow-breasted Bunting / Wilgengors *Emberiza aureola aureola*, adult male on singing post, Liminka, Finland, June 1997 *(Juha Ollila)*. Mantle, scapulars, nape, inner greater wing-coverts and tertials have deep chestnut coloration. Note pure white median and some lesser wing-coverts as well as jet-black ear-coverts and throat **165** Yellow-breasted Bunting / Wilgengors *Emberiza aureola aureola*, second-summer male, Liminka, Finland, June 1997 *(Juha Ollila)*. Second-summer males are not as brightly coloured as older males. Note weak supercilium behind eye, 'dirty-white' median wing-coverts and pale braces on mantle **166** Yellow-breasted Bunting / Wilgengors *Emberiza aureola aureola*, first-summer male, Liminka, Finland, June 1996 *(Jari Peltomäki)*. First-summer males can easily be misidentified as females in the field. However, note obvious chestnut patch on sides of breast and some black feathers on throat as well as blackish ear-coverts, typical of young males

167 Yellow-breasted Bunting / Wilgengors *Emberiza aureola aureola*, second-summer male, Liminka, Finland, June 1996 *(Jari Peltomäki)*. Second-summer males often have pale supercilium behind eye, black ear-coverts mixed with some brown feathers, some white feathers on black throat, buff fringes to mantle-feathers and trace of pale median crown-stripe **168** Yellow-breasted Bunting / Wilgengors *Emberiza aureola aureola*, first-summer male, Liminka, Finland, June 1995 *(Jari Peltomäki)*. First-summer males can be superficially similar in plumage to adult females. Note however chestnut colour on rump, crown, nape and sides of breast and also blackish feathers on throat and ear-coverts, typical of males. Heavily worn rectrices and remiges, especially tertials, typical of first-summer birds

169 Yellow-breasted Bunting / Wilgengors *Emberiza aureola aureola*, adult female, Liminka, Finland, June 1993 *(Jari Peltomäki)*. Adult females can be quite brightly coloured. There is some chestnut colour on rump and sides of breast and median wing-coverts show prominent white tips. Note relatively fresh remiges, especially tertials. Short primary projection typical of Yellow-breasted Bunting **170** Chestnut Bunting / Rosse Gors *Emberiza rutila*, adult male, Happy Island, Beidaihe, Hebei, China, May 1993 *(David Tipling/Windrush)*. Males on spring migration are unmistakable

171 Yellow-breasted Bunting / Wilgengors *Emberiza aureola aureola*, first-summer female, Liminka, Finland, June 1994 *(Jari Peltomäki)*. Younger females can be dull in colours. Median-covert pattern with dark-pointed centres shown here similar to that of juvenile and quite different from that of adult female. There is hardly any chestnut colour in this plumage and remiges, especially tertials, are heavily worn **172** Chestnut Bunting / Rosse Gors *Emberiza rutila*, male, Mai Po, Hong Kong, China, November 1992 *(Jari Peltomäki)*. Deep chestnut colour of head just visible under pale feather-edges. Rump, median and inner greater wing-coverts showing obvious deep chestnut colour

Shetland, 2-5 September 1994; and Norfolk, England, 30 May to 1 June 1998) are currently all placed in category D of the British list. The most recent British record concerned a singing first-summer male 'of unknown origin' in Tyneside, England, on 17-20 May 2000. In Belgium, the species is placed in category D; there are two incompletely documented records involving three birds in 1910-11, an adult male was collected on 28 or 29 October 1928 in Liège and a female was ringed on 15 April 1974 in West-Vlaanderen (Lewington et al 1991, Evans 1994, Osborn & Harvey 1994, Byers et al 1995, Macdonald & Wessels 1998, van den Berg & Bosman 1999, Gunter De Smet in litt; Birding World 13: 182-183, 2000, Br Birds 93: 355, plate 208, 2000).

Adult males of both species are easily separated but in other plumages difficulties may arise. Most of the Yellow-breasted Bunting records in Europe concern juveniles in autumn and these are perhaps most likely to be confused with Chestnut Bunting. This article treats the identification and ageing of Yellow-breasted Bunting and compares this species with Chestnut Bunting as well as some other possible confusion species. It is based on studies of Yellow-breasted Bunting on the breeding grounds in Finland during 1990-97. Both Yellow-breasted and Chestnut Buntings were studied on migration in China. In addition, skins were examined at the British Natural History Museum at Tring, England. The different plumages of Yellow-breasted and Chestnut Buntings, especially those of adult males, are not described in great detail here since they have been well treated in recent years in several handbooks and identification guides (including Lewington et al 1991, Cramp & Perrins 1994, Byers et al 1995, Beaman & Madge 1998, Snow & Perrins 1998, Svensson et al 1999). In addition, Harrop (1993) discussed the identification of juvenile and female Yellow-breasted Buntings and Votier & Bradshaw (1996) treated the identification of Chestnut Bunting and its separation from Yellow-breasted Bunting. The main focus in this article is to illustrate the different plumages of Yellow-breasted and Chestnut Buntings by photographs.

While Chestnut Bunting is a monotypic species, Yellow-breasted Bunting occurs in two subspecies: western *E a aureola* and eastern *E a ornata*. This article concentrates on *E a aureola* but *E a ornata* is briefly discussed below and is illustrated with a number of photographs.

Size and structure

Yellow-breasted Bunting is a medium-sized bunting, roughly the size of Common Reed Bunting *E schoeniclus*. Yellow-breasted Bunting usually appears noticeably stocky built and rather big headed. The powerful bill is longer than that of most other buntings, with a rather straight culmen (and a pink lower mandible, instead of greyish as in many other buntings). For an *Emberiza* bunting, its primary projection is short. Being on average c 20% of the longest tertial, the primary projection of Yellow-breasted Bunting is shorter, regularly distinctly so, than that of most other *Emberiza* buntings.

Plumages and ageing

Tail pattern

In all plumages, the outer two rectrices (t5-6) show a considerable amount of white on the inner webs although in younger birds and females the amount of white may be reduced and more difficult to see, especially on the second-outermost rectrices (t5). Figure 1 illustrates the variation.

Adult male (plate 164)

Adult males are very distinctive and do not pose an identification problem. They have a complete post-breeding (or summer) moult from late August to early October, which does not take place until birds have arrived at the migration stopover sites, and a partial pre-breeding (or winter) moult. In summer, the colours of the plumage are strong and bright and also the plumage is fairly fresh. There are two well-defined white wing-bars. The upper one consists of a large white patch formed by the median and lower lesser wing-coverts. The lower wing-bar is formed by well-defined white tips to the greater wing-coverts; the edges to the greater wing-coverts are rich chestnut. The white wing-bars are so conspicuous that in flight Yellow-breasted Bunting can give the impression of a Common Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*.

Second-summer male (plates 165 and 167)

Second-summer males are largely similar to adult males but the plumage is less bright and colourful. There is less white in the lesser and median wing-coverts and there is often a trace of a pale supercilium behind the eye. Also, the mantle is often more prominently streaked with dark and pale streaks. The uppertail-coverts are brown instead of rufous-brown.

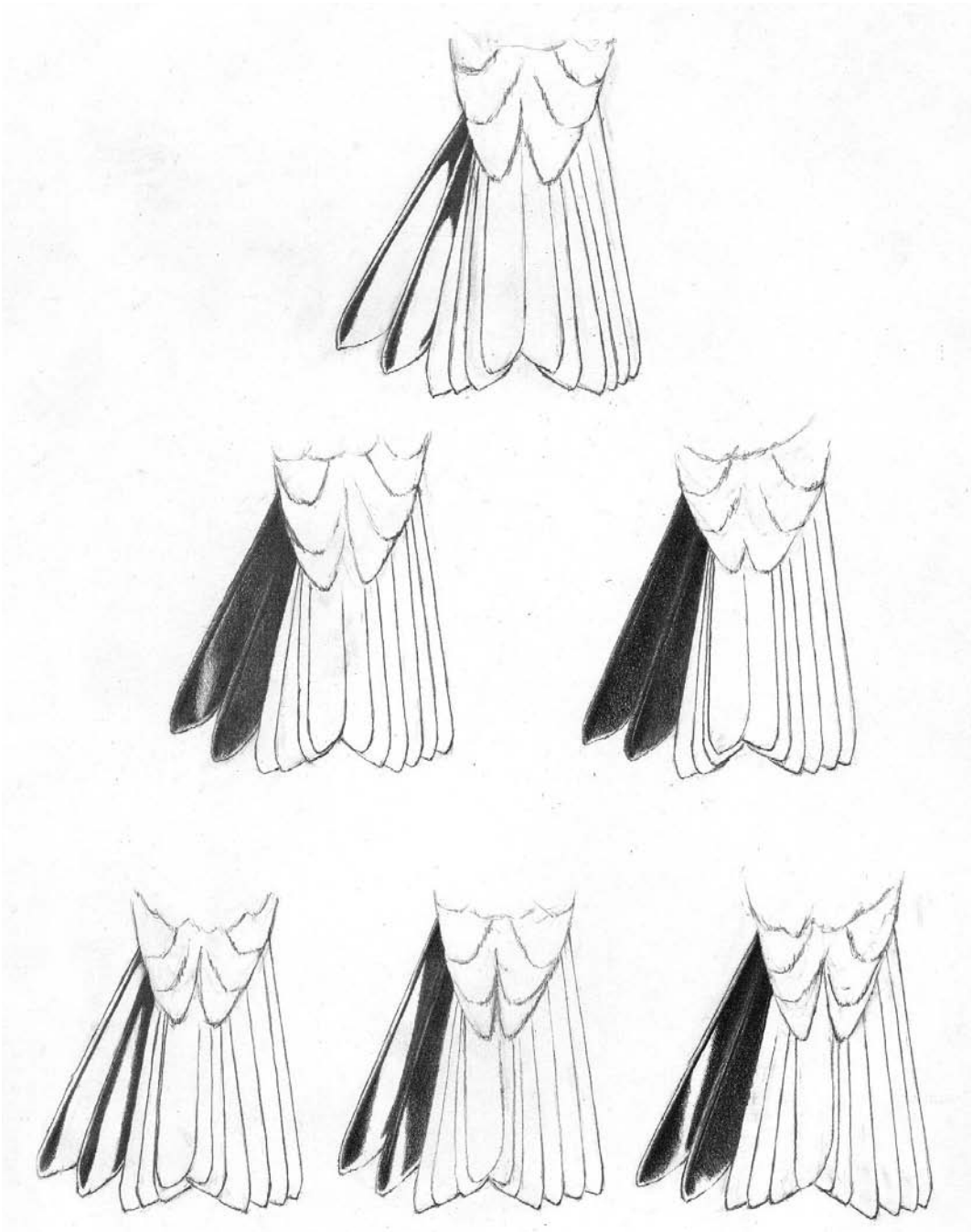


FIGURE 1 Undertail patterns of Yellowhammer / Geelgors *Emberiza citrinella* (upper), Chestnut Bunting / Rosse Gors *E rutila* (centre) and Yellow-breasted Bunting / Wilgengors *E aureola* (lower), showing extremes in coloration of Yellow-breasted and Chestnut Buntings *(Pekka Saikko)*. Note almost complete absence of white in outer tail of Chestnut Bunting

173 Yellow-breasted Bunting / Wilgengors *Emberiza aureola aureola*, juvenile, Liminka, Finland, July 1993 *(Jari Peltomäki)*. Strongly marked individual with obvious dark framing on ear-coverts and lot of white on median wing-coverts. Strong unstreaked supercilium and yellow area on sides of neck below ear-coverts typical of Yellow-breasted Bunting **174** Chestnut Bunting / Rosse Gors *Emberiza rutila*, female, Mai Po, Hong Kong, China, November 1992 *(Jari Peltomäki)*. Note really plain looking face with pale eye-ring standing out obviously. Wing-bars indistinct and unstreaked rump showing obvious deep chestnut colour

176 Yellow-breasted Bunting / Wilgengors *Emberiza aureola aureola*, juvenile, Liminka, Finland, July 1993 *(Jari Peltomäki)*. Poorly marked individual with dark eye-stripe just behind eye and no moustachial stripe, giving plain-faced look to ear-covert area. Differs from adult female primarily by fresh plumage (adult female has worn plumage at this time of year) and by pointed dark centre of median wing-coverts **176** Chestnut Bunting / Rosse Gors *Emberiza rutila*, juvenile, Beidaihe, Hebei, China, September 1992 *(Jari Peltomäki)*. Ear-coverts without dark framing and supercilium and sides of neck streaked. Wing-bars brownish, less obvious than in Yellow-breasted Bunting *E aureola*. Note also some chestnut colour on crown and ear-coverts

177 Yellow-breasted Bunting / Wilgengors *Emberiza aureola aureola,* juvenile, Liminka, Finland, July 1993 *(Jari Peltomäki).* Pale median crown-stripe and pale braces on mantle typical of Yellow-breasted Bunting. Rump streaked and with only little brown coloration. Note short primary projection **178** Chestnut Bunting / Rosse Gors *Emberiza rutila,* juvenile, Beidaihe, Hebei, China, September 1992 *(Jari Peltomäki).* Different individual from bird in plate 176. Rump slightly streaked and obviously reddish-brown. Buffish-brown colour on tips to median and greater wing-coverts making wing-bars indistinct. No white present in outer rectrices

179 Yellow-breasted Bunting / Wilgengors *Emberiza aureola aureola*, juvenile, Liminka, Finland, July 1993 *(Jari Peltomäki)*. Sometimes presence of buffish colour on tip to median and greater wing-coverts making wing-bars less distinctive. Note white outer rectrices **180** Chestnut Bunting / Rosse Gors *Emberiza rutila*, juvenile, Beidaihe, Hebei, China, September 1992 *(Jari Peltomäki)*. Compare with juvenile Yellowhammer *E citrinella* in plate 184

First-summer male (plates 166 and 168)
First-summer males are never as bright as adult males. Even when birds are at their most colourful, they have some white in the black face and throat and an obvious pale supercilium. The upperparts are typically strongly streaked like those of females. Often, they can be surprisingly similar to adult females, even the pattern of the wing-coverts can be almost identical. Typically, however, there is more pure chestnut on the rump and crown on first-summer males than in adult females. The easiest way to sex these female-like first-summer males in the field is by wear; the remiges and rectrices of the young males are heavily worn by spring and summer whereas those of adult females are relatively fresh.

First-winter male
This plumage is almost identical with juvenile plumage and in autumn first-year males can not be sexed until late autumn after the partial post-juvenile moult.

Adult female (plates 169 and 181)
Adult females are pale but fairly strongly patterned buntings with yellowish underparts. The wing-bars are of variable conspicuousness but are usually obvious. The most eye-catching part of the head is the supercilium which is strong, wide and almost white behind the eye. The pale median crown-stripe is wide and sometimes there is some chestnut on the sides of the crown. The dark eye-stripe is narrow but contrasts clearly with both supercilium and pale ear-coverts. The underparts of adult females are yellowish although variable; sometimes they are only very slightly yellowish as in most first-summer females. The yellowish colour of the throat extends behind the ear-coverts and the malar stripe is very weak or absent. There are very few dark streaks on the chest and sometimes even the sides of the breast are lightly streaked with dark. Many adult females show a suggestion of a chestnut breast-band on the breast-sides. There is a fairly strong contrast between the dark and pale streaks on the mantle. The rump and uppertail-coverts are often rufous and lightly streaked. In adult females, the greater and median wing-coverts, and sometimes also some lesser wing-coverts, are broadly tipped with white. The colour of the wing-coverts changes through the years because the amount of white in the greater and median coverts increases with age. Second-summer females are usually inseparable from adult females.

First-summer female (plate 171)
Compared with adult females, many first-summer females have stronger streaking on the breast. The underparts are often only very slightly yellow, much paler than in most adult females. In first-summer females, the white in the wing-coverts can be almost lacking. As first-summer males, first-summer females can be aged by their heavily worn remiges and rectrices.

Juvenile (plates 173, 175, 177, 179 and 182)
Unlike most other first-year buntings which complete their post-juvenile moult before migration, Yellow-breasted Buntings of the subspecies *E a aureola* start their first autumn migration in juvenile plumage and do not start the post-juvenile moult until at traditional stopover sites in central China. Therefore, most of the records in western Europe are of birds still in juvenile plumage. Since adults do not moult until at the migration stopover sites either and thus start their autumn migration in worn plumage, juveniles are fairly easy to tell apart from adults by their fresh plumage. Juveniles are rather similar to adult females but the underparts are often more brownish-yellow and the breast and flanks are more heavily streaked than in adult females. Also, the pattern of the median and greater wing-coverts is somewhat different; the dark centres are more pointed and the white tips are broader and whiter. The head pattern is less pronounced than in females: the supercilium is less white and the pattern of the ear-coverts is more diffuse but the dark malar stripe can be more obvious than in adult females. The rump is more heavily streaked and lacks the rufous coloration. On the mantle, there are obvious pale braces ('tramlines') like in Red-throated Pipit *Anthus cervinus*.

E a ornata (plates 185-187)
E a ornata breeds in Japan, Sakhalin (Russia), Manchuria (China) and southern parts of Russian Far East; *E a aureola* breeds in northern Fenno-Scandia eastwards to Kamchatka (Russia). As far as known, *E a ornata* has never been recorded in the Western Palearctic and can be considered an unlikely vagrant because of its extreme easterly breeding range. However, *E a ornata* could turn up as an escape in Europe since Yellow-breasted Buntings in captivity are likely to originate from the Far East.

E a ornata has a different moult strategy compared with *E a aureola*, with birds moulting before autumn migration (as is common in buntings), whereas in *E a aureola* birds postpone their

181 Yellow-breasted Bunting / Wilgengors *Emberiza aureola aureola*, adult female, Kajaani, Finland, June 1980 *(René Pop)*. Note obvious pale supercilium, pale lateral crown-stripe, yellow 'half moon' below ear-coverts and absence of malar stripe. Lot of white on median wing-coverts suggesting adult female **182** Yellow-breasted Bunting / Wilgengors *Emberiza aureola aureola*, juvenile, Liminka, Finland, July 1993 *(Jari Peltomäki)*. Note strong unstreaked supercilium, unstreaked sides of neck, yellow area below ear-coverts, unstreaked lower throat and weak malar stripe **183** Chestnut Bunting / Rosse Gors *Emberiza rutila*, juvenile, Beidaihe, Hebei, China, September 1992 *(Jari Peltomäki)*. Note streaked supercilium and sides of neck. Malar stripe obvious and lower throat conspicuously streaked

184 Yellowhammer / Geelgors *Emberiza citrinella*, juvenile, Liminka, Finland, August 1993 *(Jari Peltomäki)*. Note bluish-grey lower mandible, absence of supercilium, yellow edges to primaries and long tail with lot of white on outer rectrices

moult until halfway on autumn migration at stop-over sites in China (for details, see Byers al 1995). *E a ornata* strongly resembles *E a aureola* in plumage but shows some subtle differences, mainly in adult male plumage. In adult male *E a ornata*, the black of the head covers the forehead and extends to above the eye, the upperparts are darker and the sides of the breast are streaked blackish rather than brownish; the underparts are, on average, brighter yellow. In female *E a ornata*, the plumage is brighter and the sides of the breast tend to be more heavily streaked in comparison with *E a aureola* (Cramp & Perrins 1994, Byers et al 1995).

Separation from Chestnut Bunting (plates 172, 174, 176, 178, 180 and 183)
Chestnut Bunting is slightly smaller than Yellow-breasted Bunting, with a proportionately smaller head, smaller bill and longer primary projection. Typically, Chestnut Bunting has a strongly rufous unstreaked rump (Yellow-breasted Bunting usually shows less rufous and more streaking on the rump) and no white or only very little white in the tail (figure 1). This tail pattern without any white is very distinctive, especially when a bird is flushed and flies away from the observer; it is shared with only a few other buntings (for instance, Black-headed *E melanocephala* and Red-headed Buntings *E bruniceps)*. The combination of a rufous-toned rump and lack of white in the outer tail most easily separates this species from Yellow-breasted Bunting in all plumages.

The head-markings of female and immature Yellow-breasted Buntings are stronger, except for the malar stripe which is weaker than in Chestnut Bunting. In Yellow-breasted Bunting, the yellow of the throat extends behind the ear-coverts, often forming a small yellow 'half moon' on the sides of the neck. The streaking on the underparts is less clear and pronounced in Chestnut Bunting. A good 'rule of thumb' is that in Chestnut Bunting the vent is yellow and the throat is white whereas in Yellow-breasted Bunting the vent is buffish white (with the proximal part of the undertail-coverts sometimes tinged with yellow) and the throat is yellow. The wing-bars are much more indistinct than those of Yellow-breasted Bunting.

Chestnut and Yellow-breasted Buntings are most difficult to tell apart in their juvenile plumages. There is little in the literature about the

185 Yellow-breasted Bunting / Wilgengors *Emberiza aureola*, presumably of subspecies *E a ornata*, male, Mai Po, Hong Kong, China, 5 April 1988 *(Ray Tipper)*. Black sides of breast suggesting *E a ornata*. Ageing difficult because of peculiar combination of adult-looking wing with lot of white and restricted black on face and chin more typical of immature **186** Yellow-breasted Bunting / Wilgengors *Emberiza aureola*, presumably of subspecies *E a ornata*, male, Tsim Bei Tsui, Hong Kong, China, 10 May 1986 *(Ray Tipper)*. Note extensive black forehead, dark upperparts and blackish sides of breast and streaks on flanks, indicating *E a ornata*. Wing-bars fully covered by flank-feathers **187** Yellow-breasted Bunting / Wilgengors *Emberiza aureola*, presumably of subspecies *E a ornata*, female, Tsim Bei Tsui, Hong Kong, China, 10 May 1986 *(Ray Tipper)*. Female *E a ornata* hardly separable *from E a aureola* but underparts slightly brighter coloured in *E a ornata*

identification of both species in this plumage, except for Votier & Bradshaw (1996), even though one of the Chestnut Buntings recorded in Europe, in Norway in October 1974, was a bird still in juvenile plumage. The most useful differences are found in the head pattern and the coloration of the rump and tail. Furthermore, the supercilium of Chestnut Bunting is streaked and poorly defined, the colour of the ear-coverts is more uniform and there is no yellow on the sides of

the neck as in Yellow-breasted Bunting. The pattern and colour of the wing-coverts and rump are different already in juvenile plumage. The rump of Yellow-breasted Bunting is almost concolorous with the mantle whereas in Chestnut Bunting there is an obvious contrast.

Other possible confusion species

Yellowhammer (plate 184)
Of the familiar European species, Yellowhammer *E citrinella* most resembles Yellow-breasted Bunting but it is noticeably larger and has a longer tail which has a similar amount of white on the outer two rectrices (figure 1). Furthermore, female and first-winter Yellowhammers have less contrasting head-markings. Especially, the supercilium and median crown-stripe are much weaker. The bill coloration also differs; the lower mandible is bluish in Yellowhammer and pink in Yellow-breasted Bunting. Yellowhammer always has a strongly rufous rump and more markedly streaked underparts. The undertail-coverts of Yellowhammer are streaked whereas those of Yellow-breasted Bunting are not. The wing-bars of Yellowhammer are much more indistinct than those of Yellow-breasted Bunting and they are never white.

Black-faced Bunting
Black-faced Bunting *E spodocephala* is an Asiatic species with only a few records in Europe (England, Finland, Germany and the Netherlands). Female and first-winter Black-faced Buntings are 'the Garden Warblers *Sylvia borin* of the buntings', ie, they are easiest to recognize by the lack of obvious field marks! Dull (first-summer) female Yellow-breasted Buntings can be confused with Black-faced Bunting, especially with the subspecies *E s sordida* (central China) and *E s personata* (Japan). However, in Yellow-breasted Bunting, the median crown-stripe, supercilium and dark border around the ear-coverts are always more pronounced than in Black-faced Bunting. The malar stripe is clearly weaker in Yellow-breasted Bunting and does not form an obvious dark triangle on the sides of the throat. The rump of Yellow-breasted Bunting is streaked and it often has a rufous tinge; in Black-faced Bunting, the rump is unstreaked and brownish-grey.

Common Reed Bunting
Common Reed Bunting is one of the most common European buntings and females may cause confusion with Yellow-breasted Bunting under some circumstances because of the pale braces on the mantle and some similarities in facial pattern. The lack of yellow tones, stronger malar stripe and more rufous tones in the wing of Common Reed Bunting should separate both species on closer inspection.

Bobolink
Bobolink *Dolichonyx oryzivorus* is a common breeding bird of eastern North America, which occurs as a rare but regular autumn vagrant in western Europe, mostly in Britain and Ireland. These autumn birds are superficially similar to female-plumaged Yellow-breasted Buntings but have a much longer primary projection (nearly equalling the exposed length of the tertials) and a more distinct head pattern with strong and well-defined median and lateral crown-stripes as well as supercilium and eye-stripe. Bobolink lacks the dark surrounding of the ear-coverts, the white in the outer rectrices and the typical *Emberiza* tertial pattern of Yellow-breasted Bunting. Also, the rectrices are sharply pointed. The median wing-coverts of Bobolink have a large pointed dark centre with fairly narrow pale edge and the breast is basically unstreaked.

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Samenvatting
HERKENNING EN LEEFTIJDSBEPALING VAN WILGENGORS EN ONDERSCHEID VAN ROSSE GORS In dit artikel wordt ingegaan op de herkenning en leeftijds- en geslachtsbepaling van Wilgengors *Emberiza aureola* en het onderscheid van Rosse Gors *E rutila*. De nadruk ligt op de westelijke ondersoort van Wilgengors *(E a aureola)* die in Noord-Europa en grote delen van Noord-Azië broedt en in Zuidoost-Azië overwintert. Deze ondersoort is een jaarlijkse dwaalgast in Europa buiten de broedgebieden, met name in de vroege herfst. Aan de hand van foto's van de verschillende kleden worden de kenmerken toegelicht en verduidelijkt. Voor het bepalen van geslacht en leeftijd is het vooral van belang te letten op de vorm en kleur van de vleugelstrepen en de diepte van de kleuren van het verenkleed. Sleet en rui kunnen

behulpzaam zijn bij het bepalen van de leeftijd. Wilgengors onderscheidt zich van andere gorzen door de korte handpenprojectie. De ondersoort *E a aureola* is de enige gors die de rui pas aanvangt nadat de najaartrek is begonnen. Hierdoor trekken eerstejaars vogels gewoonlijk in het juveniele kleed zodat de meeste Wilgengorzen die in de herfst in West-Europa worden gezien nog in dit kleed zijn. De oostelijke ondersoort *E a ornata* is, voorzover bekend, nooit in Europa vastgesteld en is een onwaarschijnlijke dwaalgast. Wel moet rekening gehouden worden met de mogelijkheid van een ontsnapte kooivogel van deze ondersoort. Enkele foto's tonen de verschillen met *E a aureola*. Mannetjes *E a ornata* vertonen in vergelijking met *E a aureola* meer zwart op de bovenkop, donkerdere bovendelen en zwartachtige in plaats van bruine streping op de flanken; de gele onderdelen zijn vaak dieper gekleurd. Vrouwtjes vertonen vaak een wat dieper en contrastrijker gekleurd verenkleed en hebben duidelijke streping op de zijborst; bij (adulte) vrouwtjes *E a aureola* is deze streping meestal iets zwakker.

Rosse Gors broedt oostelijker dan *E a aureola* en overwintert eveneens in Zuidoost-Azië. Deze soort is veel zeldzamer als dwaalgast in Europa dan Wilgengors, met slechts vier aanvaarde gevallen en in totaal nauwelijks meer dan 10 waarnemingen (in veel gevallen wordt getwijfeld aan een wilde herkomst). Rosse Gors vertoont in onvolwassen kleed veel overeenkomsten met Wilgengors maar is iets kleiner en heeft niet of nauwelijks wit in de buitenste staartpennen, in tegenstelling tot Wilgengors. De stuit vertoont bij Rosse Gors altijd een warme rossige tint en is bij Wilgengors meer bruinachtig. De onderstaartdekveren zijn bij Rosse Gors vaak geelachtig en de keel is vaak witachtig; bij Wilgengors is dit precies andersom. De koptekening is bij Rosse Gors veel minder contrastrijk dan bij Wilgengors. Deze en andere meer subtiele verschillen worden aan de hand van de foto's geïllustreerd.

Ten slotte wordt kort aandacht besteed aan andere soorten waarmee Wilgengors verward kan worden zoals Geelgors *E citrinella*, Maskergors *E spodocephala*, Rietgors *E schoeniclus* en Bobolink *Dolichonyx oryzivorus*.

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Birding in South Korea

Nick Lethaby, Nial Moores & Jin-Young Park

In recent years, increasing numbers of European birders have visited north-eastern Asia, especially the popular hotspot Beidaihe in China. However, because of the logistic difficulties of visiting many parts of China or Russia, most birders are forced to use organized tours. Japan, on the other hand, offers good tourist infrastructure also for individual travellers but is extremely expensive and a time-consuming country to travel. Hong Kong, easily accessible for birders and a popular destination for decades, offers very good birding especially for wader enthusiasts but is much further south and therefore misses some of the more northerly specialities and lacks nearly all 'Japanese' species. It seems that few birders realize that South Korea offers the opportunity to see many interesting species and, unlike other countries in the region, offers a modern tourist infrastructure at a reasonable cost. Moreover, with regular concentrations of such sought-after species as Baikal Teal *Anas formosa* and Spoon-billed Sandpiper *Eurynorhynchus pygmeus*, South Korea surely deserves more attention.

General information

South Korea is a relatively small country, c 400 km from north to south and 250 km from east to west. There are 100s of islands off the south and west coasts, many of which are inhabited. The country is very mountainous although the highest peaks are less than 2000 m in altitude. As a result, South Korea's 44 million people are concentrated in the limited areas of lowlands, especially the large cities. As in the rest of Asia, there is little natural habitat left in the lowlands; several fine areas of forest are preserved in the national parks but these are almost all mountain areas.

South Korea's climate is somewhat extreme, especially away from the south coast. Summers are hot and humid but most rain is confined to

188 Baikal Teals / Siberische Talingen *Anas formosa* with Northern Pintails / Pijlstaarten *A acuta*, Ch'ŏn-su (Lake A), South Korea, 26 February 2000 *(Hyun-Tae Kim)*

[*Dutch Birding 22: 204-219, 2000*]

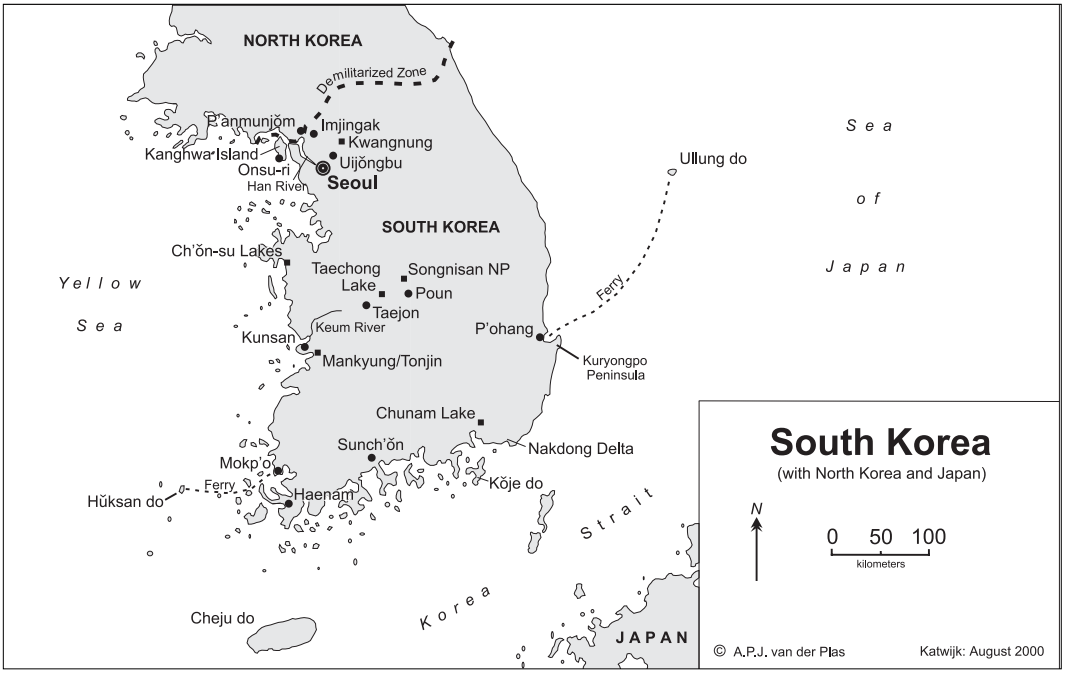


FIGURE 1 Birding sites in South Korea

the rainy season that occurs in July and August. Mosquitoes can sometimes be a problem and there is a very slight risk of non-fatal malaria. Winters are very cold and dry, so snow is not usually a problem. However, be prepared for sub-zero temperatures from December to February.

Because of the omnipresent threat of military aggression from neighbouring North Korea, there is a considerable military presence along the border and along the northern part of the coast. In more sensitive areas, soldiers might ask you to move on, and do not hang around military facilities with binoculars, telescopes and cameras in hand. Hopefully, the recent breakthrough in political relationships between both countries preludes a period of détente that will reduce the need for such a strong military presence.

South Korea has become an increasingly important business destination and many airlines provide service to the capital, Seoul (Sŏul), while there are also direct flights from Japan to Cheju Island. There is no requirement to obtain a visa, unless you plan on a long stay, and you are free to travel around the entire country. Generally speaking, you should not expect to encounter any English speakers, even in the major cities.

Transportation

The great advantage of South Korea over other north-eastern Asian locations is that you can simply rent a car at the airport and easily cover the whole country. This massively simplifies logistics compared with Japan where you are constantly switching between trains, planes, ferries and rental cars. In addition, using a rental car provides a great deal of flexibility, enabling to spend as long as you need at a particular site without having to conform to a preset schedule. You can rent cars at a number of locations but it is probably best to obtain one at Seoul Airport. Rental cars cost USD 50-60 per day. You can book these in advance through Hertz, National and Thrifty.

To navigate, you should purchase an English language map before you reach the country. In South Korea, you should also purchase a Korean language road atlas. They can be found, for instance, in the book/magazine store on the departure level at the airport and at bookstores in Seoul. South Korea's road system has an excellent system of English language road signs, but please take care as many such place names are spelt in more than one way, because the spelling system is being revised (so, for example, Cheju

and Jyeju, and Pusan and Busan are the same). This article uses the most widespread spellings in 2000. Getting around is fairly easy all the same. The major exception to this is in cities where there are often only signs for local destinations. Combined with the heavy traffic often present, the best policy is to avoid cities or large towns as much as possible. In addition to the cities, very bad congestion can occur in rural areas on weekends and national holidays when the entire population of Seoul pours out into the countryside. You should avoid driving towards Seoul on Saturday or Sunday afternoons. For example, the 80 km from southern Kanghwa Island to Seoul can take 4-5 h at this time. There are also two holidays that cause horrendous congestion on all roads: the Korean New Year and Korean Thanksgiving. At this time, it can take more than 24 h to drive the 420 km from Seoul to Pusan! The Korean New Year is held at the same time as the Chinese New Year, typically in the first half of February. Korean Thanksgiving typically occurs in September. Both holidays coincide with the full moon.

Accommodation and food

There are plenty of hotels and you will not have trouble finding somewhere to stay. Many 'Love' hotels away from cities have a neon sign with 'motel' or 'hotel' in the title. These are usually cleaner and much cheaper than the 'tourist hotels' you will see in the cities. Korean hotels that have rooms with showers have a prominent steaming bath sign that allows you to easily identify them without needing to learn Korean characters – but beware that this sign (indicating 'hot water') does not always refer to a hotel. The typical cost for a room is USD 25-30. 'Western style' rooms are designed to cater for couples and usually only have one double bed. If you need to share rooms, request a Korean style room, which comes with a supply of mattresses and blankets.

Eating out typically starts at USD 3-4 per person though meat dishes and seafood cost more. Seafood is especially dear. Do not expect there to be any English menus. You should bring a travel guide with you so you have some idea of the names of common food.

Avifauna

The number of bird species recorded in South Korea now unofficially comes close to 450. None of these is endemic but South Korea's avifauna shares many affinities with that of Japan and many 'Japanese' specialities occur either as resident or migrant. These include Temminck's Cormorant *Phalacrocorax capillatus*, Long-billed Plover *Charadrius placidus*, Japanese Wood Pigeon *Columba janthina*, Japanese Pygmy Woodpecker *Dendrocopos kizuki*, Japanese Wagtail *Motacilla grandis*, Brown-eared Bulbul *Hypsipetes amaurotis*, Japanese *Turdus cardis* and Brown-headed Thrushes *T chrysolaus*, Styan's Grasshopper Warbler *Locustella pleskei*, Narcissus *Ficedula narcissina* and Japanese Paradise Flycatchers *Terpsiphone atrocaudata*, Varied Tit *Parus varius* and Japanese Yellow Bunting *Emberiza sulphurata*. Of these, only Japanese Pygmy Woodpecker and Varied Tit are common residents; the other species are local and you may need to visit key sites to see them.

The Korean peninsula is situated on a major migration route for mainland Asian migrants. Although the selection is not as good as at Beidaihe, Korea is much better for many species than the Japanese mainland. For example, Pechora *Anthus gustavi* and Richard's Pipits *A richardi*, Yellow-browed Warbler *Phylloscopus inornatus*, and Pallas's Reed *E pallasi*, Tristram's *E tristrami* and Chestnut Buntings *E rutila* are all fairly easy to see in South Korea but difficult in Japan away from the islands in the Japanese Sea such as Tsushima (situated between Kyushu and Korea) and the tiny island of Hegura-jima (the 'Fair Isle of Japan').

Shorebird migration is especially impressive. The high tidal range on the west coast of the country exposes vast mudflats that support massive numbers of shorebirds, including significant numbers of Spoon-billed Sandpipers and Nordmann's Greenshanks *Tringa guttifer*. In addition to shorebirds, the mudflats from April-September hold most of the world's endangered Black-faced Spoonbills *Platalea minor* and Chinese Egrets *Egretta eulophotes*. Tragically, there are plans to reclaim many areas of major mudflats within the next decade or less, threatening to severely reduce such species' populations. The national government announced it would make no new major reclamations in 1999, cancelling several projects thanks to efforts of non-governmental organizations but some local governments are still trying to push ahead. With an estimated world population of only c 600 birds, Black-faced Spoonbill is especially vulnerable as is Nordmann's Greenshank; the latter species has already shown a significant decline and of their two most important sites, one has been nearly completely reclaimed and already half of the other has been lost. Up to 1999, the only known

189 Baikal Teals / Siberische Talingen *Anas formosa*, Ch'ŏn-su (Lake B), South Korea, 16 December 1999
(Hyun-Tae Kim)

190 Baikal Teals / Siberische Talingen *Anas formosa*, Ch'ŏn-su (Lake A), South Korea, 25 November 1998
(Tae-Hun Park)

breeding sites of Black-faced Spoonbill were the small islands off the coast of the Korean peninsula but in that year Chinese researchers discovered a few nests on islands in the Yellow Sea off the coast of northern China.

Although South Korea now possesses few natural freshwater wetlands of any significant size, the man-made reservoirs and reclaimed land along the coast attract large numbers of wintering wildfowl, including virtually the entire world population of Baikal Teal. Winter also provides an excellent selection of gulls, including both Saunders's *Larus saundersi* and Relict Gulls *L relictus*.

Baikal Teal

Baikal Teal has declined dramatically in recent decades in both China and Japan where it was formerly abundant. By the mid-1980s, only a few 1000 birds were known from these countries. In February 1984, however, 5000 birds were discovered in south-eastern Korea at Chunam (or Joonam) Lake. By 1988, this population had increased to 20 000. In the early 1990s, a second large concentration was found along the west coast. By the winter of 1996/97, the total population in Korea was 100 000 birds and by the winter of 1998/99, this figure had risen to 200 000. Baikal Teals feed almost exclusively on spilt rice. They are nocturnal feeders and roost in huge flocks on lakes near their feeding grounds. Probably, the increased numbers in recent years have benefited from the extensive mudflat reclamation projects which typically create extensive open fields and lakes for rice production: excellent habitat for Baikal Teal. The species is highly gregarious and the wintering population tends to switch among a number of different sites, exhausting the local food supplies and making a search for this species something of a gamble. Haenam, however, appears to be a relatively reliable area, with birds usually present from November to March. At dusk, the entire flock present at a roosting site takes off in a huge swarm to fly to feed in the rice fields at night, showing fabulous aerial displays, in much the same manner as pre-roosting Common Starlings *Sturnus vulgaris* do.

When to visit

The best time to visit depends on exactly which species you wish to see. As with most Holarctic destinations, late April to mid-May is best for passerine and shorebird migration. For concentrations of Baikal Teal and other wildfowl and interesting gulls, mid-winter is best (December-January). Many wintering birds begin to depart in late February. Autumn migration, from mid-September to November, is also quite good, especially in September if Spoon-billed Sandpiper is a top priority.

For spring and autumn visits, it is very important to have your visit coincide with very high tides that completely cover the huge mudflats. The highest tides are associated with the full moon and days leading up to it. 'Normal' high tides often leave a few kilometres of mud exposed, necessitating a tiring slog through the mud to get close to the birds.

Birding sites

If you have not birded in north-eastern Asia before, you may find bird densities rather low although South Korea has many more birds than much of China. As one would expect in a country of harsh winters, birds are particularly scarce on the ground in winter. This makes it very important to focus your birding time at the best sites. Do not expect to chance upon good birds.

There are a number of widespread species we will not mention in the site accounts. Residents include Spot-billed Duck *A poecilorhyncha*, Oriental Turtle Dove *Streptopelia orientalis*, Daurian Redstart *Phoenicurus auroreus*, Bull-headed Shrike *Lanius bucephalus*, Vinous-throated Parrotbill *Paradoxornis webbianus* and Yellow-throated Bunting *E elegans*. In summer, egrets, Amur Wagtail *Motacilla leucopsis*, Black-naped Oriole *Oriolus chinensis* and White-cheeked Starling *S cineraceus* are common. In winter, Naumann's *T naumanni naumanni* (mostly in the north) and Dusky Thrushes *T n eunomus* (throughout the country) and Rustic Bunting *E rustica* are common.

We will give more details on locations relatively close to the capital, Seoul, because this is an increasingly popular destination for business travellers. However, we will also briefly touch on other attractive areas. If you do not have time to leave Seoul, you can visit the Han River at Youido (served by a subway station) for wintering ducks and raptors or the gardens of the Chongmyo Royal Shrine for woodland species.

Kanghwa Island

Kanghwa Island is a popular tourist area and easily accessible by car from Kimpo Airport (the international airport close to Seoul), without having to experience the hassle of driving through Seoul. Simply head north-west on Highway 48 from the airport and you will eventually come to

the bridge that crosses to the island. Once on the island, turn south on Highway 301 to Onsu-ri.

Southern Kanghwa Island has extensive mudflats that are not yet undergoing reclamation. The mudflats are backed by rice paddies and wooded hillsides. The variety of habitat supports a wide range of species, making it one of the best areas in the country for visiting birders. Southern Kanghwa is also an excellent site for several sought-after rarities, including Chinese Egret, Black-faced Spoonbill, Red-crowned Crane *Grus japonensis*, Nordmann's Greenshank and Spoon-billed Sandpiper.

Chinese Egrets breed nearby and are easy to see on the mudflats from early May to at least late September, with more than 80 a day possible. Black-faced Spoonbills also occur during the same period although they tend to be more common from August to October. In late August 2000, c 170 were present; the closest area to see them is in fishponds c 5 km north-west of Sonduri, visible from the road, on the left-hand side as you drive north. The small rocky islets off Sonduri where they roost at high tide, however, is the most reliable spot but views at this location are very distant. From April to October, there are plenty of other herons, including Striated Heron *Butorides striatus*, Intermediate Egrets *E intermedia*, and, if you are lucky, both Schrenck's *Ixobrychus eurhythmus* (now rare) and Yellow Bitterns *I sinensis*. These last two species are best looked for in late May or June by systematically covering the reed-filled ditches between the paddies. You should also find Ruddy-breasted Crake *Porzana fusca* this way.

In the winter, check the paddies and mudflats for Red-crowned Cranes. There are c 15 in the general area, with six to eight at Kanghwa, in the far south-east of the island. To find them, simply 'scope' the tidal flats patiently; they are often in the creeks in strong wind but tend to roost in the rice fields. At this season, good numbers of Tundra Bean Geese *Anser serrirostris* occur, along with some Ruddy Shelducks *Tadorna ferruginea*.

During migration, the mudflats attract very large numbers of shorebirds. The peak periods are from mid-April to mid-May and from early August to October. These concentrations are best viewed at Yocha-ri or Sondu-ri or by driving along the south-west coast of the island – scanning for birds or trying out small farm roads to

191 Black-faced Spoonbills / Kleine Lepelaars *Platalea minor* with Eurasian Spoonbill / Lepelaar *P leucorodia*, Jeju Island, South Korea, March 1997 *(Jin-Young Park)*

the flats. Nordmann's Greenshanks (up to eight) may be seen on both passages but Spoon-billed Sandpipers (up to six) are more likely in the autumn. Although not the best location to see these species, Kanghwa is the most convenient in its position close to the capital. Other shorebirds present on the mudflats during migration include the common *Tringa*'s, Lesser Sand Plover *C mongolus*, Great Knot *Calidris tenuirostris*, Red-necked Stint *C ruficollis*, Broad-billed *Limicola falcinellus* and Terek Sandpipers *Xenus cinereus*, both Black-tailed *Limosa limosa* and Bar-tailed Godwits *L lapponica* and Eurasian *Numenius arquata* (subspecies *N a orientalis*) and Far Eastern Curlews *N madagascariensis*. During spring, it is usually possible to find suitable shorebird habitat in the rice paddies. This attracts species such as Sharp-tailed Sandpiper *C acuminata*, Long-toed Stint *C subminuta* and four species of snipe *Gallinago*.

Black-tailed Gulls *L crassirostris* are abundant except in mid-winter. 'Large white-headed gulls' occur throughout much of the year (though not in mid-summer), here as elsewhere along the coast, including Vega Gull *L vegae*, Mongolian Gull *L cachinnans mongolicus* and Heuglin's Gull *L heuglini taimyrensis*. Saunders's Gulls are seen regularly here, too, but are not guaranteed.

During the summer, the wooded hillsides hold a good collection of breeding birds. Resident Japanese Pygmy Woodpeckers and Varied Tits are joined by Japanese Sparrowhawk *Accipiter gularis*, Chinese Goshawk *A soloenis*, Dollarbird *Eurystomus orientalis*, Forest Wagtail *Dendronanthus indicus* (rare), Grey-backed *T hortulorum* and White's Thrushes *Zoothera aurea*, Asian Stubtail Warbler *Urosphena squameiceps* and the stunning Blue-and-white Flycatcher *Cyanoptila cyanomelana*. Common *Cuculus canorus*, Oriental *C saturatus*, Indian *C micropterus*, Lesser *C poliocephalus* and Hodgson's Hawk Cuckoos *Hierococcyx fugax* are all possible although they are much easier to hear than see. In the evenings, you can hear both Grey Nightjar *Caprimulgus indicus* and Oriental Scops Owl *Otus sunia*. On migration, many additional species including Crested Honey Buzzard *Pernis ptilorhyncus*, White-throated Needletail *Hirundapus caudacutus* and Ashy Minivet *Pericrocotus divaricatus* are possible, with Dark-sided Flycatcher *Muscicapa sibirica* and Yellow-browed Warbler often common in autumn.

In the rice paddies and ditches, look for Black-capped Kingfisher *Halcyon pileata* and Oriental Reed Warblers *Acrocephalus orientalis* and Zitting Cisticolas *Cisticola juncidis* during the breeding season. The latter (subspecies *C j brunniceps*) has a very different song compared with Zitting Cisticolas in Europe, with faster tit *Parus*-like *zeep* notes and lower smacking tones in the end. Other Asian subspecies also sing quite differently from their European cousins and it is likely that they represent a complex of species, rather than a single one.

In winter, southern Kanghwa is one of the best places to see a good variety of passerines. Small numbers of Japanese Reed Bunting *E yessoensis* can be found in reeds and the grassy banks of ditches, especially at Sondu-ri, while Pallas's Reed Buntings are common in areas of reeds along with a few of the pale eastern subspecies of Common Reed Bunting *E schoeniclus pyrrhulina* for comparison. In areas of weedy brush, especially those near trees, look for Siberian Accentor *Prunella montanella*, both Pallas's *Carpodacus roseus* (irruptive) and Long-tailed Rosefinches *Uragus sibiricus*, and buntings.

Kwangnung

The mature woodland around these royal tombs, north-east of Uijŏngbu, is excellent for birds although the magnificent White-bellied Woodpecker *Dryocopus javensis* no longer occurs. Black *D martius*, White-backed *D leucotos*, Grey-headed *Picus canus* and Japanese Pygmy Woodpeckers are all resident here, in addition to common woodland species such as Varied Tit. Hazel Grouse *Bonasa bonasia* is resident but difficult to see.

Brown Dippers *Cinclus pallasii* are resident on the stream and can be joined by one or two Solitary Snipes *Gallinago solitaria* in winter, a very difficult species to see elsewhere. Walk along the stream for c 0.8 km upstream of the entrance bridge to the arboretum to find both these species. In the summer, Kwangnung attracts a selection of migrant breeders similar to southern Kanghwa, with the addition of Ruddy Kingfisher *H coromanda* and Yellow-rumped Flycatcher *F zanthopygia*.

One of the drawbacks to birding at Kwangnung is that much of the woodland is fenced off from public access. After 10:00, both the tombs and the arboretum open and it is possible to check some of the woodlands. You can also see good birds from the road but traffic can often make birding impossible.

Imjingak and Han-Imjin River Highway

Imjingak is situated on the south end of the bridge to P'anmunjŏm in the Demilitarized Zone

192 Black-faced Spoonbills / Kleine Lepelaars *Platalea minor*, Kanghwa Island, Kyunggi Province, South Korea, September 1998 *(Jeong-Hwa Seo)* **193** Oriental Storks / Zwartsnavelooievaars *Ciconia boyciana*, Ch'ŏn-su Bay, South Chungcheong Province, South Korea, December 1995 *(Jeong-Hwa Seo)* **194** Nordmann's Greenshanks / Nordmanns Groenpootruiters *Tringa guttifer*, Yongjong Island, Kyunggi Province, South Korea, September 1994 *(Jin-Young Park)* **195** Chinese Egret / Chinese Zilverreiger *Egretta eulophotes*, Yeonpyung Island, Kyunggi Province, South Korea, May 2000 *(Jeong-Hwa Seo)* **196** Swan Geese / Zwaanganzen *Anser cygnoides*, Imjin River, Kyunggi Province, South Korea, November 1995 *(Jin-Young Park)*

197 Saunders's Gull / Saunders' Meeuw *Larus saundersi*, immature, Keum Estuary, North Cholla Province, South Korea, January 1999 *(Jeong-Hwa Seo)* **198** Relict Gull / Relictmeeuw *Larus relictus*, Nakdong Estuary, South Kyungsang Province, South Korea, February 1993 *(Jin-Young Park)* **199** Mongolian Gull / Mongoolse Meeuw *Larus cachinnans mongolicus*, adult, Naksan Beach near Sokcho, Kangwon Province, South Korea, December 1998 *(Jin-Young Park)* **200** Black-tailed Gull / Japanse Meeuw *Larus crassirostris*, Ch'ŏn-su, South Korea, late September 1996 *(Nick Lethaby)*

(DMZ). There is a large souvenir store and restaurant here, with an open rooftop where you can scan for birds – a telescope is essential. Since the DMZ has few inhabitants, it attracts many wintering raptors and wildfowl, along with small numbers of cranes. Imjingak and the freeway that runs south-west from here along the south side of the Imjin River and then the north bank of the Han River are good places to look for these species. Birding around here is a bit 'hit or miss' but there are usually some good birds to see on each visit.

One good way to spend a day is to start at Kwangnung and then head to Imjingak in the late morning, stopping en route to check areas of weedy brush for rosefinches. After an hour or two at Imjingak, you can then drive down the riverside freeway, stopping to look for birds. As elsewhere, it is illegal to stop on the shoulder. If you do stop, do not park right by the sentry posts because the soldiers will wave you on. A particularly good vantage point is the end of the overpass at the exit for Ilsan New Town.

Birds you can see at Imjingak include Ruddy Shelduck, White-tailed Eagle *Haliaeetus albicilla*, Eurasian Black Vulture *Aegypius monachus* and White-naped Crane *G vipio*. White-naped Cranes are getting more difficult to see as the areas of rice paddies are converted to residential or industrial buildings. You can see some of these

species along the riverside freeway, with the addition of the globally rare Swan Goose *A cygnoides*.

Ch'ŏn-su (or Sŏsan) Lakes
These lakes were formed over a decade ago when the upper arms of Ch'ŏn-su Bay were reclaimed. They are private property and you need permission to enter. The best policy is either to go to the entrance gates and show your binoculars and a bird book, or to contact Wetlands and Birds Korea, who will try to help you arrange access (see the e-mail address below).

There are two lakes, simply called Lake A and Lake B, each surrounded by wide expanses of rice fields. You should allow at least one full day to explore this area. The best season is winter, especially early winter, when up 300 000 ducks, geese and swans occur. However, both spring and autumn migrations can be good too. When unfrozen, often c 200 000 birds can be present, including Tundra Bean Goose and Swan Goose (rare), all three swans *Cygnus* (although Mute Swan *C olor*, which is very rare in eastern Asia, has not been recorded here in recent winters), Baikal Teal, Falcated Duck *Mareca falcata*, Ruddy and Common Shelducks *T tadorna* and Smew *Mergellus albellus*. The highlight is usually the huge flock of 60 000-100 000 Baikal Teals. With such vast numbers, there are inevitably wildfowl everywhere but certain spots are better than others. The head of Lake A tends to be good for roosting geese and Eurasian Spoonbills *P leucorodia* (with more than 50 in 1999/2000) and for Ruddy Shelduck. Check the small sand spit or island in the south-east of Lake A from the barrage; this is the best area for raptors (including Steller's Sea Eagle *H pelagicus* in the past two winters and the more regular White-tailed Eagle) as well as being the best place for Oriental Stork *Ciconia boyciana*. The magnificent Steller's Sea Eagle is not as easy to see in South Korea as on Hokkaido, Japan, but there still is a fair chance to encounter one or more on a mid-winter trip. In winter, check the paddy fields around Lake A for Oriental Stork, Hooded Crane *G monacha* (November to mid-December, now perhaps overwintering in very small numbers), and raptors. Up to nine raptor species have been seen in a single day, and recent records include Greater Spotted *Aquila pomarina* and Steppe Eagles *A nipalensis*, as well as Chinese Grey Shrike *L sphenocercus*. Lake B is the best place for swans and Falcated Duck.

During migration, Ch'ŏn-su can attract large numbers of shorebirds, especially those that prefer freshwater habitat, including Sharp-tailed (most common in spring), Marsh *T stagnatilis*, Wood *T glareola*, Broad-billed and Curlew Sandpipers *C ferruginea* and Long-toed, Temminck's *C temminckii* and Red-necked Stints; the tidal flats outside of the lake lining the shore to the south-east can also be really excellent, with large numbers of shorebirds (especially in spring), Chinese Egrets in August and September and up to 100 Saunders's Gulls in winter. Other interesting migrants include Black-faced Spoonbill, Garganey *A querquedula* and Whiskered *Chlidonias hybridus* (rare) and White-winged Terns *C leucopterus*.

Passerines can also be very exciting here – with the major focus on larks (several vagrant species have been recorded), wagtails and pipits, including three different taxa of yellow wagtail, and Red-throated *A cervinus*, Richard's and Pechora Pipits. In winter, Lapland Longspurs *Calcarius lapponicus* can be numerous and check the reeds for reed buntings and possibly Chinese Penduline Tit *Remiz (pendulinus) consobrinus*. The latter is, however, more likely to be found further south in mid-winter.

Taechong lake
Located north-east of Taejon, this lake is a good location for Mandarin Ducks *Aix galericulata* (up to 500). However, the biggest attraction is the chance of encountering the beautiful and rarely seen Scaly-sided Merganser *Mergus squamatus*. A pair has occurred here in at least two recent winters and it is possible they are regular here because coverage at this site has been minimal. The mergansers have been seen on both the lake and the river downstream of the dam, usually associated with Goosanders *M merganser*. Make sure you check the river carefully for several kilometres. You can get superb views if they are on the river. Another site for Scaly-sided Merganser – possibly the only regular site – is the Chorlwon area (near the DMZ) but only in November-December; after that time the area freezes over. This much-wanted species is a very rare visitor to Japan, with no more than a handful wintering each year and the only (other) area in the world where the species is more or less guaranteed is Ussuriland in Russia.

Songnisan NP
Songnisan has excellent areas of mature woodland and holds similar species to Kwangnung, including five species of woodpecker and Ruddy Kingfisher in summer, without the access prob-

lems you can experience at the former site. It is best visited on weekdays to avoid the crowds. You should enter into the southern part of the park from Highway 37, near Poun.

Keum River
The Keum River enters the Yellow Sea at the port of Kunsan and is an excellent area for wildfowl, shorebirds and gulls. You can begin by checking the small area of mudflats on the north side of the river immediately downstream of the barrage. During migration, a variety of shorebirds occur here. In winter, the same area is excellent for gulls, including up to 600 Saunders's Gulls and Slaty-backed *L schistisagus*, Vega, Mongolian and Heuglin's Gulls.

The mudflats become huge at the mouth and are best birded during the two hours after high tide. They can be reached by driving west along the northern side of the river, then north-west through a tunnel and passing the gas tower. During autumn migration, Chinese Egrets are common, while in spring, shorebirds include up to 20 000 Great Knots and 1000 Far Eastern Curlews. During migration, it is worth checking the bushes and trees at the mouth for migrant passerines such as Yellow-browed Warbler and buntings. In winter, large populations of Common Shelduck and up to 3000 Eurasian Oystercatchers *Haematopus ostralegus* (of the probably endangered and distinct eastern subspecies *H o osculans*) occur. At this time of year, many birds can be seen from the barrage itself but it is best to drive slowly 5 km or more upstream along the south side of the river. A particularly good area is where the new expressway crosses the river. Check the edges of reed-fringed islands and rice fields for Whooper Swans *C cygnus*, geese and ducks. Up to 40 000 Baikal Teal may be present in winter and up to 100 Swan Geese are regular among the more numerous Tundra Bean and White-fronted Geese *A albifrons*. Snow *A caerulescens* and Lesser White-fronted Geese *A erythropus* have also been recorded in recent winters.

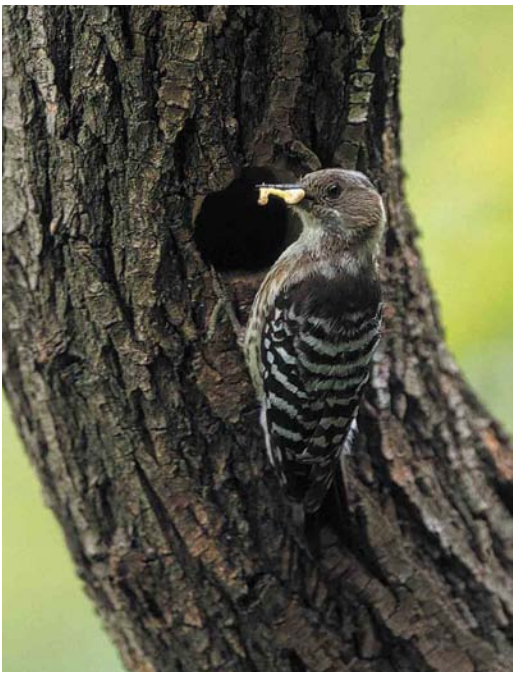
Mankyung/Tonjin
This large estuarine complex lies c 15 km south of Kunsan and is subject to an on-going reclamation project. Recent survey work has revealed huge concentrations of migrant shorebirds, including 40 000 Great Knot, 500 Broad-billed and more than 180 Spoon-billed Sandpipers. On very high tides, the salt ponds immediately east of Okku act as a high tide roost, attracting many birds, including both Nordmann's Greenshanks and Spoon-billed Sandpipers. At other periods, you can try to find birds by working the mudflats upstream of the salt ponds. A particularly excellent area is the Tonjin River where it enters the estuary proper (heading south, take a small farm road off right just before the Tonjin road sercvice station). The area is good for migrants including regular Pechora Pipits and vagrants such as Long-tailed Shrike *L schach* and Amur Falcon *Falco amurensis*.

Haenam
Haenam is in the far south-west of South Korea. A combination of extensive reclamation lakes surrounded by open land and tidal flats holds the largest concentration of waterfowl in the country. The world's largest gathering of Baikal Teal winters in the region – often at Kochonnam, a 300-ha reed-fringed lake only 20 min out of Haenam town, or on the neighbouring lakes. This concentration reached 168 000 birds in January 1999. They arrive in November and depart in March but can be difficult to find and disappear if disturbed.

It is also worth checking the tidal flats that run north for 5-10 km from the Kochonnam seawall. During migration, shorebirds can include Nordmann's Greenshank. In winter, the flats hold several 1000s Common Shelducks and sometimes more than 10 Saunders's Gulls. You should also check the 12 000-ha lake of Yongam, which has many rough areas on its southern flank. In addition to the commoner wildfowl and raptor species, birds seen here recently have included up to eight White-naped Cranes, up to 21 Oriental Storks, two to three Imperial Eagles *A heliaca*, Steller's Sea Eagle, up to 19 Eurasian Black Vultures, Snow Goose and two Crested Larks *Galerida cristata* (subspecies *G c coreensis*), now rare in Korea – and showing a similar decline as in north-western Europe, on the other side of the Palearctic region. A short birding tour in February 2000 resulted in, among others, Saker Falcon *F cherrug* (increasingly recorded in South Korea recently), Azure Tit *P cyanus* (new to Korea if accepted) and Chinese Grey Shrike.

Sunch'ŏn Bay
Sunch'ŏn is located halfway along the south coast. You need to visit the main bay, located several kilometres south of Sunch'ŏn City, which has a mix of tidal flats, salt-marsh, reedbeds and rice fields.

In winter, a flock of c 80 Hooded Crane is the



201 Chinese Penduline Tit / Chinese Buidelmees *Remiz (pendulinus) consobrinus*, Keum Estuary, North Cholla Province, South Korea, March 1994 *(Jin-Young Park)* **202** Japanese Pygmy Woodpecker / Kizukispecht *Dendrocopos kizuki*, Toechon, Kyunggi Province, South Korea, May 1995 *(Jeong-Hwa Seo)* **203** Varied Tit / Bonte Mees *Parus varius*, Kwangnung Forest, Kyunggi Province, South Korea, February 1994 *(Jeong-Hwa Seo)*

204 Yellow-rumped Flycatcher / Driekleurenvliegenvanger *Ficedula zanthopygia*, male, Chilbal Island, South Cholla Province, South Korea, May 2000 *(Jeong-Hwa Seo)* **205** Yellow-rumped Flycatcher / Driekleurenvliegenvanger *Ficedula zanthopygia*, female, Baekryong Island, Kyunggi Province, South Korea, May 1992 *(Jin-Young Park)* **206** Mugimaki Flycatcher / Mugimakivliegenvanger *Ficedula mugimaki*, female, Chilbal Island, South Cholla Province, South Korea, May 1999 *(Jeong-Hwa Seo)* **207** Dark-sided Flycatcher / Roetvliegenvanger *Muscicapa sibirica*, Kanghwa Island, South Korea, late September 1996 *(Nick Lethaby)*

star attraction. This flock feeds just after dawn in the rice fields but typically spends much of the day in the salt-marsh or on the tidal flats. The mudflats hold over 1000 Saunders's Gulls and 15 000 Common Shelducks. The reedbeds and rice fields hold Chinese Penduline Tits and numerous buntings including Pallas's Reed, Common Reed, Yellow-throated, Little *E pusilla*, Rustic, Black-faced *E spodocephala* and Chestnut-eared Buntings *E fucata*.

In spring and autumn shorebirds add to the excitement, with more than 1000 Terek Sandpipers recorded in May and more than 20 Nordmann's Greenshanks in September-October. The coast road c 5-8 km west of the main bay is possibly the best place in the world to see Nordmann's Greenshank really well, with feeding birds often no more than 30 m away. Relict Gulls wintered here in 1999/2000 and could be found at low tide on sandbanks in the main channel near where it enters the sea – try looking from the restaurant on the hill at the south-western corner of the bay.

Nakdong Delta

Formerly, the best wetland site in north-eastern Asia, this area has been significantly damaged by reclamation. Large numbers of swans, geese and ducks still winter, along with Saunders's Gulls and an isolated population of Relict Gulls (at

least six were present in 1998/99). These can be seen from the road which runs along the eastern flank of the estuary, from near the incinerator tower. Grey Buntings *E variabilis* have been recorded in winter in the dense coastal scrub along the south-eastern edge of the estuary.

Chunam (or Joonam) Lake
Increasing disturbance has reduced the attractiveness of this site although it is well worth a visit if you are in the area. Up to 5000 Baikal Teals can appear in winter, along with regular Whooper and Bewick's Swans *C bewickii*, Tundra Bean Goose, Falcated Duck and Smew. Check these thoroughly for Swan Goose and Baer's Pochard *Aythya baeri*. There are sometimes one or two individuals of each around. A few Eurasian Spoonbills and White-naped Cranes typically winter. Be sure to check the smaller Tong-pan reservoir immediately to the south of Chunam as this often has the best birds.

P'ohang
The gravelly river between P'ohang and Kyŏngju is worth checking for Japanese Wagtails that appear to be resident. In winter, Long-billed Plover and a variety of ducks also occur here. At this time of year, it is worth exploring the beachfront from Songdo Beach in the centre of P'ohang south to the base of the Kuryongpo Peninsula that juts out north into the Sea of Japan. You can see a good variety of eastern Asian gulls, along with some loons *Gavia*, grebes and seaducks. It is well worth then taking route 912 that hugs the edge of the Kuryongpo Peninsula. Driving around the whole peninsula, while making regular stops to scan off shore or through gull flocks along the beaches, will take several hours. Nick Lethaby saw Pacific Loon *G pacifica*, Pelagic Cormorant *Stictocarbo pelagicus*, Harlequin Duck *Histrionicus histrionicus*, Ancient Murrelet *Synthliboramphus antiquus*, Long-billed Murrelet *Brachyramphus perdix* (rare) and Rhinoceros Auklet *Cerorhinca monocerata* from this road and there is at least one record of Russet Sparrow *Passer rutilans*.

Ullung do
The beautiful island of Ullung do can be reached by ferry (better for birding) or hydrofoil from Pohang. On the boat-crossing, you should see Streaked Shearwaters *Calonectris leucomelas*. On the island, Japanese Wood Pigeons, Styan's Grasshopper Warbler and Russet Sparrows are all common breeders. Common, Oriental and Little Cuckoos, Fork-tailed Swift *Apus pacificus* and Blue-and-white Flycatcher also breed. A few immature Temminck's Cormorants may summer and can be seen on the sightseeing boat that circles the island.

Kŏje do
This large island is connected to the mainland by a road bridge. The area around Haktong is excellent for breeding forest birds, notably the beautiful Fairy Pitta *Pitta nympha*. This species has declined considerably over the last decade but can still be found by searching the wooded hills north of the village. Other breeding species in the area include Crested Honey Buzzard, Grey-faced Buzzard *Butastur indicus*, cuckoos, Eastern Crowned Warbler *P coronatus*, Asian Stubtail Warbler, Japanese Paradise Flycatcher and Tiger Shrike *L tigrinus*.

Cheju do
Cheju do is an island offering some excellent birding opportunities. In winter, the fishponds at Songsanpo at the east end of the island support up to 15 Black-faced Spoonbills. This location is probably excellent during migration as well. Birders at the south-western corner of the island have found many interesting migrants, including Japanese species such as Brown-headed and Japanese Thrushes, Narcissus and Japanese Paradise Flycatchers, Middendorff's Grasshopper Warbler *L ochotensis* and Japanese Yellow Bunting. Standout 'Siberian' species include Pechora Pipit, Mugimaki Flycatcher *F mugimaki*, Siberian Thrush *Z sibirica* and Yellow-browed Bunting *E chrysophrys*. The best locations are around the town of Molsupo and the offshore island of Kapa do which has a daily ferry service.

Hŭksan do
The islands of Hŭksan do lie south-west of the Korean mainland and 400 km east of China. A recent visit to these islands (which have rarely been visited by birders in the last 10 years) resulted in observations of at least 192 species between 27 April and 27 May 2000, including c 15 species either previously unrecorded in South Korea or generally considered to be vagrants to the country. Several 'Japanese species' were recorded, including Japanese and Brown-headed Thrushes, singing Sakhalin Leaf Warblers *P borealoides*, Japanese Yellow Buntings on more than 10 dates, at least seven Chestnut-cheeked Starlings *S philippensis* and breeding Japanese Wood Pigeon and Varied Tit. Other highlights included the first live record for South Korea of Black Bittern *Dupetor*

208 Pallas's Rosefinch / Pallas' Roodmus *Carpodacus roseus*, between Kwangnung and Imjingak, South Korea, January 1997 *(Nick Lethaby)* **209** Pallas's Rosefinch / Pallas' Roodmus *Carpodacus roseus*, male, between Kwangnung and Imjingak, South Korea, January 1997 *(Nick Lethaby)* **210** Amur Wagtail / Amoerkwikstaart *Motacilla leucopsis*, Gapyung, Kyunggi Province, South Korea, May 1998 *(Jeong-Hwa Seo)* **211** Daurian Redstart / Spiegelroodstaart *Phoenicurus auroreus*, male, Kanghwa Island, South Korea, late September 1996 *(Nick Lethaby)*

flavicollis, a Japanese Night Heron *Gorsachius goisagi*, seven Chinese Egrets, a Saker Falcon flying over Korea's first Northern Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe*, several Blyth's Pipits *A godlewskii* (maximum of five together), a Rosy Pipit *A roseatus* (first recent record) and maximum day totals of c 50 Pale-legged Leaf Warblers *P tenellipes* and at least 150 Tristram's Buntings.

The islands are easily accessible; there are daily boats to Tae Hŭksan do or once-every-two-day hydrofoils to the westernmost island of Kago do from the city of Mokp'o (Southern Ferry Terminal) at 80 USD return and, though accommodation is a little rough, it is reasonably cheap and clean (20 USD per night with free meals at the Kacchi guesthouse on the quayside).

Additional sources of information

To visit some of the sites mentioned in this account, you will require additional information. There are a few birding websites for South Korea in general (http://www.camacdonald.com/birding/asiakorea and http://soback.kornet.nm.kr/~pintail/index); the latter site already includes an annotated checklist of bird species recorded in South Korea, and will also have regular updates for birders in English (from October/November 2000 onwards). The homepage of the Korean National Tourist Organisation (http://www.knto.or.kr/birdwatching) offers very useful information but check if it has been updated recently. For Haenam, there is a separate web site with recent records, photographs, maps and other useful

information (http://bird.haenam.org). Another useful, but possibly dated, source of information is *Birding South Korea in winter* by Dave Diskin. This is available from: Dave Diskin, PO Box 952, Shatin Central Post Office, New Territories, Hong Kong, China. The account in Wheatley's *Where to watch birds in Asia* is largely drawn from Diskin's publication which contains much more information. Please note the Hooded Crane site at Hwawon is no longer used. Birders who are planning a visit to South Korea are welcome to contact Nick Lethaby directly (see address below). Alternatively, Nial Moores is happy to receive requests or to guide when his schedule allows; he can be contacted by telephone (+82 11 9020 7964) or e-mail (spoonbill@hotmail.com).

Field guides
Field guides that are most useful are *A field guide to the birds of Japan* (1982), published by the Wild Bird Society of Japan, Tokyo, and *A field guide to the birds of Korea* by Pyong-Oh Won (1996).

Trip reports
The following trip reports can be of interest for birders planning a trip to South Korea; they can all be viewed at *Bird links to the world* (http://www.ntic.qc.ca/~nellus/links.html).
Korea, December 29, 1993-January 6, 1994, by Steven Feldstein
Seoul, South Korea, July 24-30, 1994, by Urs Geiser
South Korea, September 1996, by Jim Turner & Kate Trainer
Korea 1998, by Erik Toorman & Duncan James

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Possible ringing recoveries of Relict Gull in Bulgaria and Turkey

Relict Gull *Larus relictus* was first collected on 24 April 1929 along the Jo Shui (Edsin Gol), a river running through Kansu Province and Nei Monggol Zizhiou (Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region), in China. For a long time, it was considered to be a subspecies of Mediterranean Gull *L melanocephalus*, an aberrantly plumaged Brown-headed Gull *L brunnicephalus* or a hybrid between Brown-headed and Pallas's Gulls *L ichthyaetus*. However, after the discovery of a colony at Lake Alakol', Kazakhstan, in 1968, it was granted species status, *Larus relictus* Lönnberg (Auèzov 1970, 1971). Subsequently, it has been found to nest at Lake Balkhash, Kazakhstan (Auèzov 1986), in the Transbaikal region of Russia (Potapov 1971, Larionov & Chel'tsov-Bebutov 1972), in Mongolia (Stubbe & Bolod 1971) and in China (Duff et al 1991, Zhang Yinsun et al 1991, 1992, Zhang Yin-sun & He Fen-qi 1993). It changes breeding sites, depending on the state of water reservoirs (Auèzov et al 1981). The total population of Relict Gull is probably less than 2000 pairs (Enticott & Tipling 1997).

Of 193 pulli of Relict Gull ringed at Lake Alakol' during 1968-71, three rings were recovered (Auèzov 1974), two from Kazakhstan and one from Viet Nam (table 1: numbers 1 and 3, and 2, respectively). During 1972-91, more pulli (3066 in total) were ringed at Lake Alakol', resulting in only six additional recoveries, including three from China, one in winter and two during spring migration (table 1: numbers 5-7), and one from Kazakhstan (table 1: number 8). These ringing recoveries are in accordance with the view that this central Asian species winters in eastern Asia (Bakewell et al 1989, Moores et al 1998).

On 25 March 1978, 'a small gull' with a Moscow ring (M 264016) was found near Burgas, Bulgaria**.** The bird had been ringed as Relict Gull at Lake Alakol' on 21 June 1975 (table 1: number 4). Unfortunately, the ring had not been enclosed in the letter of the informant and, as this letter was lost in the Moscow Ringing Centre, it was impossible to verify the reliability of the information (Nankinov 1989). At first, we assumed that the recovery was due to confusion with Black-headed Gull *L ridibundus*, despite the fact that the bird

TABLE 1 (Possible) recoveries of Relict Gulls / Relictmeeuwen *Larus relictus* ringed in Kazakhstan during 1968-91 (all recoveries refer to birds ringed as pullus)

Ringing recovery	Ringing date and site	Recovery date and site	Number of days, distance and direction
1 (ring M 67252)	26 June 1968 Sredny Island, Lake Alakol' Kazakhstan 46:05 N, 81:44 E	25 September1968 Koktuma, Lake Alakol' Kazakhstan 46:55 N, 81:36 E	92 days, 21 km, 209°
2 (ring M 155133)	3 June1971 Sredny Island, Lake Alakol' Kazakhstan 46:05 N, 81:44 E	30 September 1971 Lake Bai-ty-Long Kuangnin Province Viet Nam 17:39 N, 106:20 E	119 days, 3886 km, 144°
3 (ring M 155136)	3 June 1971 Sredny Island, Lake Alakol' Kazakhstan 46:05 N, 81:44 E	29 August 1971 Abaevsky District Semipalatinsk Province Kazakhstan 49:00 N, 79:14 E	87 days, 374 km, 330°
4 (ring M 264016)	21 June 1975 Chubar-Tyubek Island, Lake Alakol' Kazakhstan 46:16 N, 81:36 E	25 March 1978 Burgas Bulgaria 42:29 N, 27:27 E	1008 days, 4237 km, 264°
5 (ring M 264059)	21 June 1975 Chubar-Tyubek Island, Lake Alakol' Kazakhstan 46:16 N, 81:36 E	12 February 1977 Huimin, Shandong China 37:30 N, 117:30 E	602 days, 3095 km, 108°
6 (ring M 264289)	21 June 1975 Chubar-Tyubek Island, Lake Alakol' Kazakhstan 46:16 N, 81:36 E	16-19 April 1977 Shangdu Province Nei Monggol Zizhiou (Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region) China 41:30 N, 113:42 E	664 days, 2606 km, 102°
7 (ring M 264325)	21 June 1975 Chubar-Tyubek Island, Lake Alakol' Kazakhstan 46:16 N, 81:36 E	14 April 1979 Xinghe County Nei Monggol Zizhiou (Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region) China 40:54 N, 113:54 E	1393 days, 2648 km, 103°
8 (ring M 264404)	21 June 1975 Chubar-Tyubek Island, Lake Alakol' Kazakhstan 46:16 N, 81:36 E	30 August 1975 Chernaya Kosa, Lake Alakol' Kazakhstan 46:02 N, 81:31 E	70 days, 27 km, 194°
9 (ring M 503856)	22 June 1979 Chubar-Tyubek Island, Lake Alakol' Kazakhstan 46:16 N, 81:36 E	30 March 1990 Innaplikuyukuyuk, Adana Turkey 37:00 N, 35:19 E	3934 days, 3919 km, 255°

had been ringed on Chubar-Tyubek Island where Black-headed Gull does not nest. Also, it is practically impossible to confuse the pulli of these two species because they differ in plumage colour significantly. Surprisingly, in 1990, a similar recovery was reported from Turkey where, on 30 March, the leg of a 'Relict Gull' with a Moscow ring (M 503856) was found near Adana. The bird had been ringed at Lake Alakol' on 22 June 1979 (table 1: number 9). Unluckily, the ring was not sent in either. Although these two insufficiently documented ringing recoveries of Relict Gull should be considered as unauthenticated, they point to the possibility of this species wintering in the Black and (eastern) Mediterranean Sea areas. Both are, in terms of travelled distance, comparable to the ringing recovery of a Relict Gull in Viet Nam in September 1971 (table 1: number 2). M 503856 is a longevity record of a Relict Gull ringed in Kazakhstan (3934 days).

Lake Alakol' can be considered as the westernmost regular breeding place of Relict Gull. Although in some years colonies have been absent from Lake Alakol' (Auèzov et al 1981),

FIGURE 1 Ringing site in Kazakhstan (dot) and (possible) recovery sites in Bulgaria and Turkey (squares) of Relict Gulls / Relictmeeuwen *Larus relictus*

Relict Gull has been present here for a long time. E F Rodionov, when studying the egg collection of A A Sludsky, discovered two eggs of this species (labelled as '*Larus melanocephalus*') which had been collected on 21 May 1931 at Lake Alakol' near Rybal'noye (now Rybach'ye). Their measurements were 61.8 x 45.2 and 59.6 x 42.7 mm, respectively. In 1931, M D Zverev reportedly ringed four pulli of Mew Gull *L canus* at Lake Alakol', a species which has, however, never nested here (Dolgushin 1962). Presumably, these were pulli of Relict Gull.

It is likely that only continued ringing of Relict Gull will establish whether this unique species winters in the Western Palearctic. The use of engraved colour rings will probably considerably increase the chance for Relict Gulls to be reported.

We thank Geert Groot Koerkamp for translating the Russian text into English and Arend Wassink for stimulating us to write this note.

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Brieven

Identification of Chestnut-flanked and Japanese White-eyes

The identification of Chestnut-flanked *Zosterops erythropleurus* and Japanese White-eyes *Z japonicus* was discussed by Lethaby (1998). In that paper, he highlighted the lack of understanding of the variation shown by Chestnut-flanked and discussed the fact that some individuals do not show the supposedly diagnostic chestnut flanks. He suggested some features useful in separating Japanese from those Chestnut-flanked not showing chestnut flanks. However, many of his suggestions are at variance with my own experience in southern China of many 1000s of Japanese White-eye of the subspecies *Z j simplex* (hereafter *simplex*), and in south-eastern, northern and south-western China of several 100s of Chestnut-flanked. There is also an additional identification feature, which I would like to highlight. As I have no experience with the subspecies *Z j japonicus* (hereafter *japonicus*) (although many Japanese White-eyes observed in South Korea in winter were quite different from *simplex*, and appeared closer to descriptions of *japonicus*), I restrict my comments to *simplex*.

Size & structure

Lethaby (1998) stated that Japanese White-eye is a little larger than Chestnut-flanked (hereafter *erythropleurus*). This is in marked contrast to my experience, particularly of trapped birds. Biometrics of 28 *erythropleurus* from mid-winter were compared with a mid-winter sample of almost 3000 *simplex* from Hong Kong, China. As shown in table 1, *simplex* in Hong Kong averaged 5 mm shorter winged, 1.4 mm shorter tailed, and 1.4 g lighter than *erythropleurus*. There is also considerable overlap in biometrics but it must be stressed that very few *simplex* have wing lengths that fall within the range of *erythropleurus*. Of the 2930 *simplex* in table 1, only 56 (1.9%) had a wing length of 60-62 mm. Naturally, these biometrics are of limited use in the field unless both species are present. However, given that some of the European records of white-eyes have involved trapped individuals, a misconception about the relative size could lead to the misidentification of trapped birds.

An additional structural feature not mentioned in Lethaby (1998) is the primary projection. As one might expect of a longer-distance migrant, *erythropleurus* has a longer primary projection than *simplex*. The primary projection of *simplex* is c 50% of the exposed tertials while that of *erythropleurus* is c 75-100%. While this is often extremely difficult to note in the field, it is of use for trapped or well-photographed individuals.

The bill of *simplex* is marginally longer, as noted by Lethaby (1998), and it is also slightly narrower based.

Underpart coloration

Lethaby (1998) suggested that it is possible that those *erythropleurus* which do not exhibit chestnut flanks may in fact show a trace of chestnut given exceptional views. This is not the case as some *erythropleurus* do lack chestnut flanks and while such individuals have a diffuse brownish flank patch, this is so high up on the flank that it is completely covered by the closed wing. Therefore, even if chestnut flanks are not visible following exceptional views of a white-eye, *erythropleurus* can still not be eliminated. Both *erythropleurus* and *simplex* can show medium-dark grey patches on the sides of the breast. Although this feature is typically more pronounced in *erythropleurus*, there is considerable overlap. It is also my experience that the flanks of *simplex* can be rather paler than suggested by Lethaby (1998), often with pinkish rather than brownish tones.

TABLE 1 Wing length (maximum chord, mm), tail length (mm) and weight (g) of Japanese White-eye / Japanse Brilvogel *Zosterops japonicus simplex* and Chestnut-flanked White-eye / Roodflankbrilvogel *Z erythropleurus* trapped in winter in Hong Kong, China (WWF-HK Ringing Group). Details given are mean, standard deviation, number of observations and range, respectively

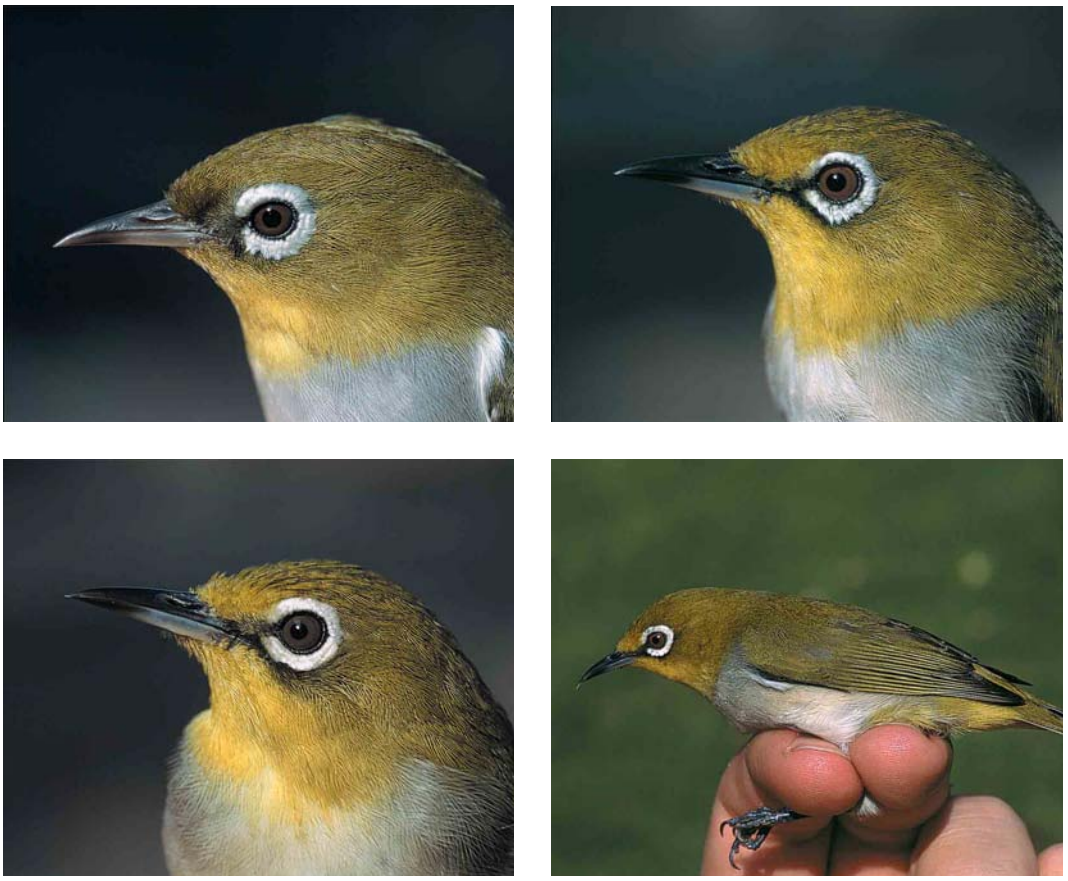
	Z j simplex			*Z erythropleurus*		
wing	57.1	(1.23; 2930)	49-62	62.1	(1.38; 28)	60-64
tail	39.2	(1.49; 130)	36-43	40.6	(1.29; 7)	39-43
weight	9.3	(0.65; 2930)	6.5-12.0	10.7	(1.18; 27)	8.6-13.1

212 Chestnut-flanked White-eye / Roodflankbrilvogel *Zosterops erythropleurus*, Kadoorie Farm and Botanic Garden, Hong Kong, China, November 1999 *(Paul J Leader)*. Note long primary projection and diffuse contrast between yellow throat and green side of head

213 Japanese White-eye / Japanse Brilvogel *Zosterops japonicus simplex*, Mai Po, Hong Kong, China, 11 September 1999 *(Paul J Leader)*. Note short primary projection and pronounced contrast between yellow throat and green side of head

214 Chestnut-flanked White-eye / Roodflankbrilvogel *Zosterops erythropleurus*, Kadoorie Agricultural Research Centre, Hong Kong, China, 2 December 1989 *(Paul J Leader)*. Note diffuse brownish, not chestnut, flank patch

215 Chestnut-flanked White-eye / Roodflankbrilvogel *Zosterops erythropleurus*, Kadoorie Agricultural Research Centre, Hong Kong, China, 2 December 1989 *(Paul J Leader)*. Same individual as plate 214; note that brownish flank patch is covered by wing



216 Chestnut-flanked White-eye / Roodflankbrilvogel *Zosterops erythropleurus*, Kadoorie Farm and Botanic Garden, Hong Kong, China, November 1999 *(Paul J Leader)*. Note pale pinkish base to lower mandible, rather broad eye-ring, diffusely dark lores and relatively small throat patch **217** Japanese White-eye / Japanse Brilvogel *Zosterops japonicus simplex*, Mai Po, Hong Kong, China, 11 September 1999 *(Paul J Leader)*. Note greyish-blue base to lower mandible, relatively bright iris, solid-black lores and relatively large throat patch **218** Japanese White-eye / Japanse Brilvogel *Zosterops japonicus simplex*, Kadoorie Farm and Botanic Garden, Hong Kong, China, 14 November 1999 *(Paul J Leader)*. Note dull greyish-brown iris **219** Japanese White-eye / Japanse Brilvogel *Zosterops japonicus simplex*, Mai Po, Hong Kong, China, 11 September 1999 *(Paul J Leader)*. Note distinctly grey side of breast, and relatively pale flank

Head and throat pattern

Lethaby (1998) suggested a number of differences in head and throat pattern between *erythropleurus* and *japonicus* but noted that not all of these features are present on all individuals. I would broadly agree with this statement. The smaller throat patch contrasting with the cleaner underparts is a good feature of *erythropleurus*. However, the contrast between the yellow on the throat and the green on the sides of the neck is rather more variable than Lethaby (1998) suggested. Some *erythropleurus* show an extremely diffuse contrast while some *simplex* exhibit a sharper contrast. The loral colour of both forms is also variable and although Lethaby (1998) noted that *erythropleurus* may show darker lores than *simplex*, this is too variable in the latter to be useful. As noted by Lethaby (1998), compared with *simplex*, the eye-ring of *erythropleurus* always appears broader and in the hand often looks deeper (ie, the depth of the eye-ring away from the head; when looking down the side of the bill

and the head, the eye-ring protrudes further out from the side of the head), and that of *japonicus* is closer to *erythropleurus* in this respect. However, *simplex* can also show such an eye-ring and as such this is only a supporting identification feature.

Eye coloration
Lethaby (1998) stated that iris colour is a feature useful for separating *simplex* from *japonicus*, the former having a much more reddish iris than the latter. However, there is considerable variation in iris colour in *simplex*, ranging from dull greyish-brown to deep red. This variation is to an extent age-related, but there is also a degree of seasonal variation within individuals. Given the variation in *simplex*, and without extensive experience of both forms, it is unlikely that *japonicus* can be identified on this feature. Iris colour variation in *erythropleurus* appears to be similar to that in *simplex* and, therefore, it is unlikely that iris colour would be of use when dealing with the separation of *japonicus* or *simplex* from *erythropleurus*.

Conclusion
In summary, of the features put forward by Lethaby (1998) for identification of those *erythropleurus* lacking chestnut flanks, many are supportive at best. The most useful in the separation of *erythropleurus* from *japonicus* are the distinct pale pinkish base to the bill, the smaller throat patch contrasting with the whiter upper breast, and the longer primary projection of *erythropleurus*.

I would like to thank Peter Kennerley and Geoff Carey for commenting on a draft of this article, and both WWF Hong Kong and Kadoorie Farm and Botanic Garden for permission to trap birds on their land.

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Nick Lethaby has commented has follows: 'Paul Leader is to be commended for providing detailed new data for *simplex* that corrects or clarifies some of the statements in the original text. The great majority of my field and specimen experience of Japanese White-eye is with birds of the race *japonicus*. I would question whether all his data is really 'at variance' with the points in the original text. For example, it should be clear from the article that I believe that Chestnut-flanked White-eyes do indeed sometimes show no chestnut on the flanks. It is good that Paul Leader has been able to prove that Chestnut-flanked White-eyes can show no chestnut. At the time though, I felt that objectivity required that I included data from Peter Kennerley, one of the leading authorities on East Asian birds, that suggested that this might not be the case. I also feel that it is important to include supportive identification features, since features easily evaluated in the hand may be much harder to see in the field. Certainly in the case of *japonicus*, the flank coloration is a strongly supportive if not diagnostic difference from Chestnut-flanked White-eyes that is much easier to see in the field than the color of the bill base or any of the head pattern differences listed in the article. I would agree that flank coloration is probably much less useful for separation of *simplex* and it may be that an observer requires very good views to reliably differentiate *simplex* from some Chestnut-flanked White-eyes.' EDITORS

Masters of Mystery

SWAROVSKI
OPTIK

Solutions of third round 2000

The solutions of mystery photographs V and VI of the third round of the 2000 competition (Dutch Birding 22: 159, 2000) appear below.

V The rather uniform pale sandy-brown coloration of the upperparts and short, stubby bill of this wader point in the direction of a *Charadrius* plover. The bird can be aged as a juvenile by the pale fringe and dark subterminal line on the feathers of the upperparts. The bird shows large dark breast-patches and a prominent pale supercilium; these features limit the possibilities to Common Ringed *C hiaticula*, Semipalmated *C semipalmatus*, Lesser Sand *C mongolus* and Greater Sand Plover *C leschenaultii*. Unfortunately, the presence or absence of a white neck-collar can not be determined in this posture, which would have presented an easy to use character for separation of the first two species from the latter two. Looking for other features, the breast-patches appear to be connected on the centre of the breast and the ear-coverts are contrastingly dark, almost blackish. These two features do not fit juvenile Lesser Sand and Greater Sand, both of which would also show a more buffish supercilium.

This leaves us with Common Ringed and Semipalmated Plover. The mystery bird can be identified as a juvenile Common Ringed since the loral area near the bill base is brownish. In juvenile Semipalmated, the lore shows less dark, since the white of the side of the throat normally extends to above the corner of the gape, whereas in the mystery bird the white does not reach above the corner of the gape. The bill of the mystery bird also seems too long for Semipalmated, which has a shorter and stouter bill than Common Ringed. Furthermore, juvenile Semipalmated would be expected to show a narrow yellowish orbital ring and smaller breast-patches forming a narrow and more even breast-band.

This juvenile Common Ringed Plover was photographed at the Maasvlakte, Zuid-Holland, the Netherlands, on 28 August 1999 by Diederik Kok. Another photograph of the same individual appears as plate 220. 69% of the entrants identified it correctly, with incorrect entries mentioning Lesser Sand (14%), Greater Sand (11%), Little Ringed *C dubius* (3%) and Semipalmated Plover (2%).

XI The black mask, long tail and heavy bill exclude all genera except for the shrikes *Lanius*. Naturally, all entrants managed to recognize this bird as such. The complete black mask and absence of barring on the underparts indicate an adult male or (in species with reduced sexual dimorphism) possibly an adult female.

The seeming lack of white in the tail looks wrong for a number of species, including those of the grey shrike group, which all show more or less white on the base, side or tip of the tail. The mystery bird's rather uniform rich buffish underparts and sandy-grey (rather than more blue-grey) upperparts do not indicate the grey shrike group either. Of the grey shrike group, Southern Grey Shrike *L meridionalis* of the nominate subspecies resembles the mystery bird most but differs furthermore by a white throat standing out against the dirty pinkish underparts and a more clear-cut whitish supercilium between bill and eye. Adult male Red-backed Shrike *L collurio* usually lacks the mystery bird's white primary patch and also differs from the mystery bird by an only very faint pinkish cast to the underparts and a pure grey crown that is usually well demarcated from a dark brown mantle. This leaves us with Brown Shrike *L cristatus*, the isabelline shrikes and Long-tailed Shrike *L schach*.

Adult Long-tailed Shrike shows rufous underparts but these are largely confined to the under-tail-coverts, vent and flanks; the centre of the belly, breast and throat is in all races obviously whitish, which is not the case in the mystery bird. Furthermore, in adult Long-tailed, the black mask often continues clearly across the forehead in a broad band. Brown Shrike would show a broader and more contrasting supercilium, less evenly coloured underparts with a white throat and no pale primary-patch. Hence, the mystery bird must be an isabelline shrike, even though there is no rufous visible on the undertail due to the light conditions. Identifying the mystery bird as an isabelline shrike is, however, not the final step in solving this mystery bird since the CSNA has split 'isabelline shrike' into three species: Chinese *L isabellinus*, Turkestan *L phoenicuroides* and Daurian Shrike *L speculigerus* (see Dutch Birding 20: 22-32, 1998). The separation of these three species is as yet one of the biggest identification challenges. Regarding the mystery bird, we are

220 Common Ringed Plover / Bontbekplevier *Charadrius hiaticula*, juvenile, Maasvlakte, Zuid-Holland, Netherlands, 28 August 1999 *(Diederik Kok)*

221 Daurian Shrike / Daurische Klauwier *Lanius speculigerus*, adult male, Dubai, United Arab Emirates, 25 February 1999 *(Nils van Duivendijk)*

fortunately dealing with an adult male, since birds in adult male plumage are less difficult to separate than birds in other plumages.

The rather pallid appearance of the mystery bird with weak contrast between upperparts and underparts resembles Chinese Shrike, but even in adult male plumage this species lacks a complete black mask. The mask of Chinese is normally just connected to the bill by a dark spot on the lore, whereas in the mystery bird the black mask runs evenly broad to the bill.

The most reliable features to separate adult male Turkestan and Daurian Shrike are the colour of the underparts and upperparts. The upperparts are only partially visible in the mystery bird but the drab sandy-grey colour of crown and neck is more typical for Daurian; in Turkestan, there often is a rufous crown that contrasts with the grey-brown upperparts. Furthermore, the supercilium of the mystery bird is faint and short. This is normal for Daurian, while Turkestan often has a much more obvious supercilium that runs along the upper side of the entire mask and continues across the forehead. The mystery bird's almost entirely deep buffish-cinnamon underparts are probably the best feature to identify this bird as a Daurian. Turkestan has less dark underparts with often a more pinkish colour that is largely confined to the flank and breast, leaving the throat and belly whitish; regularly, the underparts of Turkestan are completely whitish.

This adult male Daurian Shrike was photographed at Dubai, United Arab Emirates, on 25 February 1999 by Nils van Duivendijk. Another photograph of the same bird appears as plate 221. It was identified correctly by 17% of the entrants. Incorrect entries consisted of Southern Grey Shrike (18%), Turkestan Shrike (13%), Chinese Shrike (including 'isabelline shrike') (12%), Long-tailed Shrike (11%), Red-backed Shrike (8%), Lesser Grey Shrike *L minor* (7%), Great Grey Shrike (6%), Steppe Grey Shrike *L pallidirostris* (5%) and Brown Shrike (3%). This mystery bird proved to be rather tricky to identify, probably largely because most birders are not yet familiar with the identification of the different isabelline shrike taxa. An identification article covering both the isabelline shrike and Brown Shrike complexes will be published in Dutch Birding shortly.

Because mystery photograph XI proved to be quite a killer, only 13 of the 103 received entries were fully correct. From these 13 entries, Dick Groenendijk was drawn as the winner of a copy of *Birds of the Indian Subcontinent* by Richard Grimmett, Carol Inskipp and Tim Inskipp, donated by A & C Black (Publishers) Ltd.

After three rounds and six mystery birds, only Miguel Demeulemeester (Belgium) and Mark Gal (Netherlands) still maintain a 100% score. They are closely followed by 11 entrants with five and 16 entrants with four correct identifications. The names of these 29 entrants can be viewed at http://www.dutchbirding.nl.

VII

Fourth round 2000

Photographs VII and VIII represent the mystery photographs of the fourth round. Please study the rules (Dutch Birding 22: 37-38, 2000) carefully and identify the birds in the photographs. Solutions can be sent in three different ways:

- by *postcard* to Dutch Birding Association, Postbus 75611, 1070 AP Amsterdam, Netherlands
- by e-mail to masters@dutchbirding.nl
- from the Internet site of the Dutch Birding Association at http://www.dutchbirding.nl

Entries for the fourth round have to arrive by **25 October 2000**. From those entrants having identified both mystery birds correctly, three persons will be drawn who will receive a copy of *Nightjars* by Nigel Cleere and Dave Nurney, donated by GMB Uitgeverij. Swarovski Benelux will award a pair of the Swarovski SLC 10x42 WB binoculars to the overall winner after six rounds.

VIII

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Recensies

SHERIF M BAHA EL DIN 1999. *Directory of important bird areas in Egypt*. The Palm Press, 34 El Mansour Muhammad Street, Zamalek, Cairo, Egypt, e-mail palmprss@ritsec1.com.eg. Also available from OSME, c/o The Lodge, Sandy, Bedfordshire SG19 2DL, UK. 113 pp. ISBN 977-5089-25-5. GBP 10.00 (post free to Europe, including Turkey and Cyprus), GBP 13.00 (air-mail outside Europe).

The *Directory of important bird areas in Egypt* is part of a BirdLife intitiative to document the most important locations for birds ('IBAs') around the globe. Previously published volumes include those covering Europe and the Middle East (excluding Egypt), while one covering the African continent (again excluding Egypt) is in advanced stage of preparation. Egypt apparently deserved a book of its own!

Included are informative chapters on the methods used to select IBA's, avian habitats, nature conservation and an agenda for bird conservation. The larger part of the book deals with a detailed description of the 34 sites that fulfill the IBA criteria. For each site are included: location, size, governorate, protection status, description of geographical and ecological features, importance for birds, importance for other species and significant conservation issues. Egypt's IBAs comprise a wide range of critical habitats: wetlands, high altitude mountains, desert wadis, coastal plains and marine islands. The irreversible degradation of IBAs that has already taken place and the numerous threats mentioned (reclamation, touristic development, urbanisation, hunting, etc) results in depressing reading. The information on wetlands (eg, all Nile delta lakes) is generally based on the results of the extensive censuses carried out in winter 1989/90 (P L Meininger & G A M Atta (eds) 1994, *Ornithological studies in Egyptian wetlands 1989/1990*, WIWO Report 40, Zeist). Considering the large scale habitat destruction in these wetlands since then (continuous reclamation and pollution, road construction, etc), many quantitative data on wintering birds may now be out-dated. The text contains several new distributional data, resulting from the author's extensive fieldwork during the preparation stage of the book. An example is the breeding of Long-billed Pipit *Anthus similis* in the Gebel Elba region. Hopefully, this type of new information will be properly documented in articles.

This document is definitely a valuable reference. Although not a 'guide to birding in ...', birders visiting Egypt will find useful information in the book (but be aware of the fact that many areas are not – easily – accessible to tourists). Its main value is that it provides practical information for setting conservation priorities, devising management programmes and conducting environmental impact assessments. The content should be available to all relevant national, regional and local authorities in Egypt. To achieve this, however, a widely distributed arabic translation would be essential. PETER L MEININGER

JAMES A KUSHLAN & HEINZ HAFNER (EDITORS) 2000. *Heron conservation.* Academic Press, Harcourt Place, 32 Jamestown Road, London NW1 7BY, UK. 480 pp. ISBN 0-12-430130-4. GBP 35.00.

Kushlan and Hafner, both well-known heron researchers, edited the contributions of 19 heron experts from six continents. The status and conservation needs of herons are first presented on a regional basis, in a series of chapters set at a continental or subcontinental scale. These chapters (about half of the book) provide the most up-to-date and detailed picture of heron populations currently available. Chapters discussing several critical issues in heron conservation follow, eg, on nest sites, feeding habitats, wintering and migratory habitats, environmental contaminants, aquaculture, and herons as indicators. Many heron populations are migratory and depend upon conservation of both summer and wintering wetland habitats often located on different continents.

This solid book, which is nicely produced with a hard cover, attractive lay-out, numerous black-and-white photographs, an extensive bibliography and a clear index, is definitely good value for money. PETER L MEININGER

Corrigendum

Bij de plaat van de Vale Gier *Gyps fulvus* (Dutch Birding 22: 172, plaat 140, 2000) werd helaas niet de juiste fotograaf vermeld. De foto werd gemaakt door Harry J Lehto. REDACTIE

In the caption of the plate of Eurasian Griffon Vulture *Gyps fulvus* (Dutch Birding 22: 172, plate 140, 2000) unfortunately the wrong photographer was mentioned. The photograph was taken by Harry J Lehto. EDITORS

Total birding

by Anthony McGeehan

What if ?

It's hard to describe The Brain except to say that he is one of the few people whose real life appearance is worse than their passport mugshot. Indeed, to look at him you would never suspect that the guy is something of a one-man ornithological think tank. He is very methodical and thinks slowly so he doesn't have to go back and think things over again. In fact, slowness could be cited as one of his main field characters. If he was a bird he'd move at the speed of an incubating Fulmar's egg. He drives at less than the pace of dinosaur evolution and pedestrians refuse lifts from him if they are in a hurry to walk somewhere. Nevertheless, he has original ideas, even though they have so far lacked a practical dimension. Perhaps his thoughts apply only in the fifth dimension. His latest mind-boggling notion is a chum rocket. A fantastic concept. The plan is to attach a small payload of fish oil to a large firework and launch it from a headland at the start of a seawatch. A chum slick is thereby established immediately offshore that attracts and concentrates passing seabirds, especially small petrels that are normally notoriously difficult to see well. Birders who still need to see Wilson's Storm-petrel but are unable to add the species to their life lists due to incapacitating seasickness on pelagic trips could be the first to benefit from the invention. Apparently, field trials are about to start which, as Crab McNabb pointed out, could undermine the entire Northern Ireland peace process if The Brain starts messing about with explosives inside UK national boundaries.

These thoughts were uppermost in my mind when Stuarty and I called to pick up The Brain at midnight recently. We were leaving for County Mayo out in the far west of Ireland and planned to drive through the night so we could begin seawatching at dawn. Consequently, when The Brain emerged from his house into the blackness clutching what looked like a small parachute, my curiosity was quickly aroused. In total contrast Stuarty stirred little in the passenger seat except to remark philosophically, 'Whatever it is, I don't want to look. Not even Nostradamus could predict what The Brain is going to dream up next.' The bundle turned out to be nothing more sinister or novel

222 'Grab the scopes and run boys, this looks like the big one.' *(Anthony McGeehan)*

[*Dutch Birding 22: 230-231, 2000*]

than an armload of plastic bubble-wrap; a material he was experimenting with for potential use as waterproof seating on cold wet rocks. But that's another story.

As a nation the Irish are great at sleeping. This is good news for nocturnal travellers who, until the sun begins to peep above the horizon and the last of the stars vanish, have the roads and bucolic countryside to themselves. Traffic is nonexistent. After Belfast, lit up like a shower of frozen fireworks, it was pitch dark for the next 200 miles until we sighted the white rollers of the Atlantic thundering in at Kilcummin Head. Breathtaking. The Brain summed it up with an apocryphal comment, 'Just witnessing the power of the ocean makes you feel lucky to be alive.' He was right. At Kilcummin you get the Full Monty. Not only do you experience the sight and sound of waves and wind, but because the cliff has been undercut by the pounding of countless storms you also feel the ground shudder when a Big Bertha implodes beneath you. What a photo opportunity.

Premature extermination

Even when you are standing at the edge of a vertical drop with a 50 mph wind trying to knock you off your feet, it is important to observe a few basic rules to improve picture-taking. For instance, hold the camera steady, think about the foreground and squeeze the shutter release gently to eliminate shake. I remember rehearsing the action through the viewfinder. I pick a wave, follow it in, wait for the crest to break and then, *wham*, watch it dash itself to smithereens. That would be the moment to capture. Have you ever seen newsreel footage of a war situation shot by a cameraman who was so intent on looking through the lens that he finished up filming someone firing a rifle at him? People have been killed that way. Well, I can empathise. I was oblivious to what was hurtling toward me when I pressed the shutter. Everything happened so fast that I didn't have time to say a prayer, let alone turn religious.

There was a terrific whoosh and my world turned white. The force clamped the camera against my face like a piece of Velcro and there was a roar in my ears as of a huge mill-dam. Instinctively my knees buckled and I clung blindly to the rocky ground. My mind was confounded and chaotic thoughts flew through my brain – despair, the horror of remorse at my own stupidity, and the realization that this was Game Over and I was about to cash in my chips. The impact had numbed my senses but now I felt no pain; a sure sign that I was entering another world. I expected to see my whole birding career flash before me and maybe seize the opportunity to clear up a few things. For example, that day in 1983 when I saw a dark-rumped petrel off Cape Clear and naively thought it was just an odd Leach's. Or, only last autumn, when I blew what I fervently believed was a Yellow-breasted Bunting at Glencolmcille in Donegal. I hoped to view these moments again, but no. This fact made me suspicious. Perhaps I wasn't quite dead yet? I still couldn't see and, bit by bit, I felt around to check if I was intact. I was, complete with the surprise addition of a fully waterproof bandana thanks to The Brain's loose roll of bubble-wrap that had been whipped into the air by the gale and had impaled itself against the first obstacle in its path – my head. I was dry as a bone and physically none the worse.

What if I had kicked the bucket? On the face of it, the timing seemed perfect – in full birding mode on a seawatch with my mates. In addition, I'd already be in the Atlantic rather than having to be fished out of it, dried out, dressed up to look presentable in the coffin, driven home for the wake and then, after the funeral, brought all the way back to Kilcummin to have my ashes sprinkled in exactly the same spot. However, the prospect of dying in mid-seawatch is worrying. On the day in question I would have missed 22 Sabines's Gulls, nine Long-tailed Skuas and more Great Shearwaters than there are in Heaven. Furthermore, searching for my tangled body would have ruined the day for the others. Or would they have stuck with the seawatch and forgot about me? I guess so. If the tables were turned I'd have done the same (especially in the case of The Brain). An autumn death would be an absolute killer. Imagine missing the Siberian season in October including the joy of a late rush of Pallas's Leaf Warblers at Halloween; a final highlight before the dark days of winter.

When we do peg out, how should we be remembered? Does this matter? I was of the opinion that things such as personal reputation didn't matter in the slightest until Stuarty and I realised that neither of us had seen or heard from Stringer McKenna for weeks, if not months. Was he okay? The more we thought about it, the more it seemed like he'd disappeared from the face of the earth. He certainly wouldn't have stopped birding, would he? We grew pretty concerned but The Brain was able to reassure us. He said, 'Didn't you two listen to the tape last night? A Great Auk was seen flying west at Portrush yesterday morning. I take it that means Stringer McKenna is alive and well.'

WP reports

This review lists rare and interesting birds reported in the Western Palearctic mainly in **July-August 2000** and focuses on north-western Europe. The reports are largely unchecked and their publication here does not imply future acceptance by the rarities committee of the relevant country. Observers are requested to submit records to each country's rarities committee. Corrections are welcome and will be published.

DUCKS TO CORMORANTS This summer, for the first time in Denmark for 20 years, **Red-crested Pochards** *Netta rufina* bred successfully at Tryggelev Nor, Langeland, Fyn. A female **Lesser Scaup** *Aythya affinis* was reported from Östergötland, Sweden, on 6-7 July. On Texel, Noord-Holland, the Netherlands, two eclipse male **King Eiders** *Somateria spectabilis* were present from 28 and 30 August onwards. The long-staying male **Black Ducks** *Anas rubripes* at Stithians Reservoir, Cornwall, England, and at Barrow, Kerry, Ireland, remained the whole period. In Finland, a record 260 **Common Quails** *Coturnix coturnix* were counted this summer. From 7 May into August, a **Pied-billed Grebe** *Podilymbus podiceps* stayed at Herøysund, Nordland, Norway. The one at Saint-Denis-d'Orques, Sarthe, France, from 24 June into September was singing and built a nest. On 11 June, a subadult **Black-browed Albatross** *Diomedea melanophris* was photographed behind a fishing boat 5 km west of Corbière Point, Jersey, Channel Islands (Birding World 13: 261, 2000). On 18 July, one was seen for two minutes from the Corsica ferry 4 km off La Spezia, Italy. On 18 August, a **Fea's Petrel** *Pterodroma feae* was seen 35 miles north-west of Aranmore Island, Donegal, Ireland. The first **Manx Shearwater** *Puffinus puffinus* for Michigan, USA (and possibly the first inland for North America), was found in a suburban yard at Armada, Macomb County, on 19 August and had been ringed in Ireland in 1991; it died on 24 August at Detroit Zoo where it had been taken into care. On 17 August, a **Little Shearwater** *P assimilis* was seen past Porthgwarra, Cornwall. On 25 August, this species was reported from three sites in Britain and Ireland. The first **Swinhoe's Storm-petrel** *Oceanodroma monorhis* for Ireland trapped on Great Skelling Island, Kerry, on 1 July was followed by two Norwegian birds trapped at Revekaia, Klepp, Rogaland, on 27 July and 16 August. The individual on 27 July

223 Black-winged Kite / Grijze Wouw *Elanus caeruleus*, Meerstalblok, Drenthe, Netherlands, 28 July 2000 (*Arian van Dam)*

224 Little Crake / Klein Waterhoen *Porzana parva*, Köyliö, Finland, 2 June 2000 *(Henry Lehto)*

225 White-tailed Lapwing / Witstaartkievit *Vanellus leucurus*, adult, Polder Maltha, Werkendam, Noord-Brabant, Netherlands, 10 August 2000 *(Hans Gebuis)*

had been ringed at the same site on 9 August 1997. A **Madeiran Storm-petrel** *O castro* was seen c 250 km west of Scilly, England, on 14 July. On 11 September, a **Pygmy Cormorant** *Microcarbo pygmeus* was discovered at Unterer Knappensee, Hessen, Germany.

HERONS TO SPOONBILLS If accepted, an adult **Chinese Pond Heron** *Ardeola bacchus* at Viragoskuti, Hortobágy, Hungary, from 13 August would be the second for Europe (the first was an adult in autumn 1973 at Hellesylt, Møre og Romsdal, Norway). The 12th **Squacco Heron** *A ralloides* for Sweden was at Korseberga, Småland, on 15-16 July. A dark-morph **Western Reef Egret** *Egretta gularis* was seen intermittently between 6 May and 1 August in the Camargue, Bouches-du-Rhône, France. In the Netherlands, four pairs of **Little Egret** *E garzetta* reportedly bred at Oostvaardersplassen, Flevoland; on Terschelling, Friesland, one nest with five eggs was found in early July and two young were ringed on 9 August. Several pairs were breeding in the south-west of the Netherlands (Braakman, Zeeland, and Quackjeswater, Zuid-Holland) and, on 15 August, a record 235 were reported from Grevelingenmeer, Zeeland/Zuid-Holland. In England, 18 pairs nested in six localities across five counties in 1998. There was also a report of 10 breeding pairs of **Great Egret** *Casmerodius albus* this summer in Flevoland. In Cyprus, an unprecedented passage of more than 6000 **White Storks** *Ciconia ciconia* took place on 19-22 August. The first successful breeding record of **Eurasian Spoonbill** *Platalea leucorodia* for Belgium occurred this summer at Het Zwin, Knokke-Heist, West-Vlaanderen.

RAPTORS For the third consecutive year, a **Turkey Vulture** *Cathartes aura* turned up in August near Tarifa, Cadíz, Spain. The third **Black-winged Kite** *Elanus caeruleus* for the Netherlands stayed from 4 June to 23 August at Meerstalblok, Bargerveen, Drenthe. In the Stelvio NP in north-eastern Italy, two young **Lammergeiers** *Gypaetus barbatus* fledged on 28 July. The sixth or seventh **Egyptian Vulture** *Neophron percnopterus* for Sweden travelled around the country during the whole summer. A **Eurasian Griffon Vulture** *Gyps fulvus* staying from 24 July to 12 August in western Latvia wore a white colour-ring with black inscription *OT* on its left leg. It had been ringed as young on its nest at Cévennes NP, France, in 1998 (for a similar case in June 1999 in the Netherlands, see Dutch Birding 22: 141-143, 2000). The individual staying from 30 April in Finland was seen intermittently until 26 August east of Korppoo. In the Netherlands, an individual was seen on 1-2 August in Noord-Holland flying over Den Helder, Texel, Oude Sluis and Schagen; there were several other reports of this species in July and August, possibly concerning the same individual. In the Channel Islands, one turned up on Sark on 22 August and on

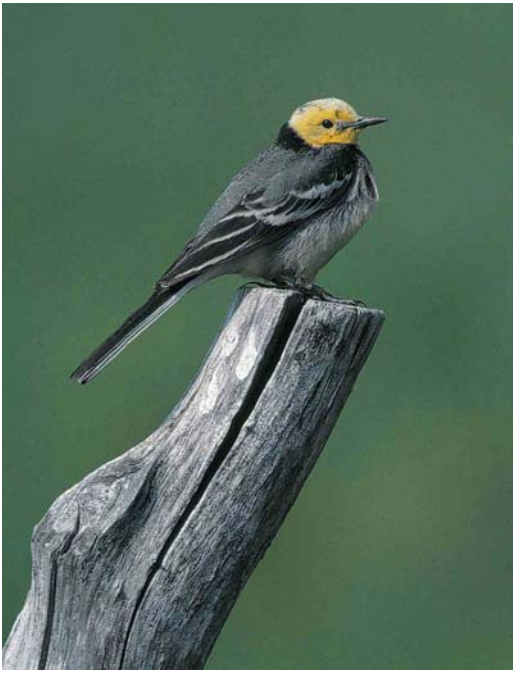
Guernsey on 24-25 August. The one flying high over Stockholm, Sweden, on 26 August may have been the Finnish bird. From 13 July to 18 August, an immature (and unringed) **Eurasian Black Vulture** *Aegypius monachus* travelled back and forth along the entire sea coast of Friesland, Noord-Holland and Zuid-Holland, also visiting the Wadden Sea islands Texel, Vlieland, Terschelling and Ameland (cf Dutch Birding 22: 185-186, 2000). If accepted, it would be the second for the Netherlands (the first was a bird shot in Gelderland in October 1948). Investigations about the moult pattern may cast light on its most probable origin. The second **Long-legged Buzzard** *Buteo rufinus* for the Netherlands was a juvenile on 5-10 September at Praamweg, Lelystad, Flevoland. For the second consecutive year, a pair of **Golden Eagles** *Aquila chrysaetos* bred at Aalborg, Nordjylland, Denmark, raising one young.

CRAKES TO WADERS In Finland, a record 5000 **Corn Crakes** *Crex crex* were counted this summer. An unringed **Demoiselle Crane** *Anthropoides virgo* stayed on 22-26 August at Enschede and Haaksbergen, Overijssel, the Netherlands. On 14 August, a **Stone-curlew** *Burhinus oedicnemus* was seen at Haugsvika, Lyngdal, Vest-Agder, Norway. The population in England increased further with up to 216 pairs in six counties fledging at least 165 young in 1998. If accepted, a **Greater Sand Plover** *Charadrius leschenaultii* at Atanasovska lake, Burgas, on 4 June will be the first for Bulgaria. The second for Denmark stayed at Margrethe Kog, Tønder, Sønderjylland, on 25-26 July before flying south to the German border. An alleged juvenile **American Golden Plover** *Pluvialis dominicus* was reported on 16-17 July at the mouth of the Odiaxere, Mexilhoeira Grande, Portugal. The adult **Sociable Lapwing** *Vanellus gregarius* staying from 29 June in Nordsjælland, Denmark, was last seen on 24 July. In the Netherlands, one stayed at Oosterwolde, Gelderland, on 5-12 August and (possibly the same) on 24-25 August at Harderbroek, Flevoland. After the c 15 **White-tailed Lapwings** *V leucurus* seen in north-western Europe from late April to June (cf Dutch Birding 22: 166, 2000), singles remained in Norway at Porsanger, Finnmark, from 23 June to 25 July and in Nordjylland, Denmark, at Vejlerne until 28 July and again at Thisted on 30 August. A new bird was seen in western Hungary on 20 July. In the United Arab Emirates, a record 19 were at Dubai Sewage pits on 20 July. The sixth for the Netherlands was present at Polder Maltha, Werkendam, Noord-Brabant, on 9-19 August. From May to September, up to 36 stayed in the Danube delta in Romania, with chicks seen at four sites (Vadu, Sulina, St Gheorghe and Chilia). The adult sandpiper at Spytkowice near Krakow from 30 April to 2 May was a **Semipalmated Sandpiper** *Calidris pusilla*, not a Least Sandpiper *C minutilla* (contra Dutch Birding 22: 166, 2000); on 20 July, an adult Semipalmated Sandpiper was trapped and photographed at the Vistula mouth at Swibno near Gdánsk. These were the species' first and second records for Poland. In England, singles were present at Rye Harbour, East Sussex, from 11 August onwards and at Blyth Estuary, Northumberland, on 27 August; in Ireland, one was seen at Akeragh Lough, Kerry, on 29 August. The first **Red-necked Stint** *C ruficollis* for Norway was at Tarevika, Karmøy, Rogaland, from 30 June to 2 July; another stayed at Pool of Virkie, Shetland, Scotland, on 18-21 July. In mainland Europe, **White-rumped Sandpipers** *C fuscicollis* included, for instance, four in Denmark in July-August; two in Schleswig-Holstein, Germany, between 24 July and 28 August; one on Ile de Ré, Charente-Maritime, France, from 29 July to 1 August; up to two at Zwarte Haan, Het Bildt, Friesland, on 8-29 August; one at Sagunto, Valencia, Spain, on 26-27 August; one in Hungary on 30 August; two on Texel (from 29 August to 2 September at Zeeburg and on 1-7 September at De Geul); and one along Houtribdijk, Flevoland, from 10 September. The third **Sharp-tailed Sandpiper** *C acuminata* for France was an adult at Desnes, Jura, on 11-14 July. The sixth for Sweden was an adult summer at Örtofta, 10 km north of Lund, Skåne, on 10-13 August, at exactly the same spot as one on 19-20 August 1999. In the Netherlands, one stayed briefly at Ezumakeeg, Friesland, on 16 August (two were seen at this very spot in August 1998). In Shetland, one turned up at Pool of Virkie on 27 August, and there was also one at Scatness on 1 September. A flock of 11 **Broad-billed Sandpipers** *Limicola falcinellus* at Dronninglund, Nordjylland, on 24-25 July may have been the largest flock ever for northern Denmark. The second **Stilt Sandpiper** *Micropalama himantopus* for the Netherlands was an adult at Camperduin and Callantsoog, Noord-Holland, on 22-24 July. On 13 August, an adult stayed at North Slob and Castle Bridge, Wexford, Ireland. On 2-4 September, a **Buff-breasted Sandpiper** *Tryngites subruficollis* was present at Rheindelta near Bregenz, Austria. During July and into September, the long-staying first-summer **Short-billed Dowitcher** *Limnodromus griseus* in Ireland was seen in the Swords Estuary, Dublin. In Norway, a **Little Curlew** *Numenius minutus* was reported from Vadsø, Finnmark, on 15 August. In France, a **Hudsonian Whimbrel** *N phaeopus hudsonicus* was seen on Ile de Ré on 14 August. This summer, the first breeding of **Marsh Sandpiper** *Tringa stagnatilis* for Sweden occurred at Roxen, north of Linköping, where three young fledged. In Sicily, Italy, c 100 were counted at Cuba, Siracusa, on 2 September. **Greater Yellowlegs** *T melanoleuca* were reported from Oise, France, on 14 July and from Finnmark, Norway, on 22-23 July. **Terek Sandpipers** *Xenus cinereus* were seen, for instance, at Dithmarscher Speicherkoog, Schleswig-Holstein, and at Ezumakeeg, Friesland, on 8 July; near København, Nordsjælland, in early August; on Anglesey, Wales, on 12-14 August; at Buda Island, Ebro delta, Catalunya, Spain, on 15 August; in the Camargue in August; and four or six in Italy between 28 August and 11 September. A **Spotted Sandpiper** *Actitis macularia* was reported at Longyearbyen, Svalbard, Norway, on 3 July; another occurred at Garxal, Ebro delta, on 14 August. In France, a **Wilson's Phalarope** *Phalaropus tricolor* stayed in the Camargue from 11 August onwards.

226 Oriental Turtle Dove / Oosterse Tortel *Streptopelia orientalis*, Bühr, Germany, 1 June 2000 *(Daniel Kratzer)* **227** Little Swift / Huisgierzwaluw *Apus affinis*, Bolonia, Andalucía, Spain, 29 July 2000 (*Diederik Kok*) **228** Semipalmated Sandpiper / Grijze Strandloper *Calidris pusilla*, Vistula mouth, Gdánsk, Poland, 20 July 2000 *(Piotr Zielinski)* **229** Stilt Sandpiper / Steltstrandloper *Micropalama himantopus*, adult, with Ruffs / Kemphanen *Philomachus pugnax*, 't Zand, Noord-Holland, Netherlands, 23 July 2000 *(Sietse Bernardus)*

SHEATHBILLS TO TERNS A **Pale-faced Sheathbill** *Chionis alba* in the south-western tip of South Africa at The Boulders, Simon's Town, Cape Province, during August was almost certainly ship-assisted (like the ones in Down, Northern Ireland, in December 1892 and in Devon, England, in September 1982). On the Hortobágy, Hungary, three **Parasitic Jaegers** *Stercorarius parasiticus* were seen during 1-3 August. An adult winter **Pallas's Gull** *Larus ichthyaetus* was on the Hortobágy from 23 August onwards. On 23 July, the third **Laughing Gull** *L atricilla* for the Netherlands was an adult reported at Rutbekerveld, Overijssel, and possibly the same bird was seen on 13-16 August along the Rhine at Arnhem, Gelderland. In France, one stayed from 28 August onwards on Ile de Ré. On the same island, a first-summer **Bonaparte's Gull** *L philadelphia* was present from at least 21 July to 23 August and an adult occurred at Saint-Brévin, Loire-Atlantique, France, on 21-22 July. An adult **Slender-billed Gull** *L genei* flew past Holme, Norfolk, England, on 10 August. On 28 July, a juvenile **Audouin's Gull** *L audouinii* was reported at Port-des-Champs, Vendée, France. On 6 September, an adult **Ring-billed Gull** *L delawarensis* had returned to the area near Goes, Zeeland, the Netherlands, for the fourth consecutive year. The first **Yellow-legged Gull** *L michahellis* for Finland was a juvenile at Tampere from 14 July to 9 August. The third for Iceland was trapped and colour-ringed at Hvaleyrarlón, Hafnarfjörður, on 25 August. An adult **Ross's Gull** *Rhodostethia rosea* occurred at Akureyri, Iceland, on 21 August. In Scilly, an elusive **Royal Tern** *Sterna maxima* was present from early July onwards. In June, eight adult **Chinese Crested Terns** *S bernsteini* were discovered in a breeding colony of Greater Crested Terns *S bergii* on an islet in the Taiwanese held Matsu group within 10 km from the Chinese mainland; four nests were found with a total of

230 Eurasian Black Vulture / Monniksgier *Aegypius monachus*, immature, Maasvlakte, Zuid-Holland, Netherlands, 15 August 2000 *(Marten van Dijl)* **231** Citrine Wagtail / Citroenkwikstaart *Motacilla citreola*, adult male, Kaarina, Finland, June 2000 *(Henry Lehto)* **232** Pale-faced Sheathbill / Zuidpoolkip *Chionis alba*, The Boulders, Simon's Town, Cape Province, South Africa, 13 August 2000 *(Arnoud B van den Berg)*



four young, which all fledged. Before this discovery, the species was often regarded as extinct. An **Elegant Tern** *S elegans* was reported at Pointe d'Arcay, Vendée, France, on 14 August. In Niedersachsen, Germany, a **Roseate Tern** *S dougallii* ringed at Rockabill, Dublin, in 1996 bred with a Common Tern *S hirundo*; one chick hatched but died. In France, a **Bridled Tern** *S anaethetus* was seen on 2 August on Ile aux Moutons, Finistère.

DOVES TO BUNTINGS In Germany, an **Oriental Turtle Dove** *Streptopelia orientalis* was photographed at Bühr on 1 June. A **Dark Barn Owl** *Tyto alba guttata* ringed at Halvinkhuizen, Putten, Gelderland, on 26 June 1997 and turning up at Broadheath, Hereford & Worcester, on 10 November 1997 may have been the first ring recovery of a Dutch individual in England (cf Dutch Birding 21: 290, 1999). A **Chimney Swift** *Chaetura pelagica* flew north out to sea over Spurn, East Yorkshire, in early August. At least five **Little Swifts** *Apus affinis* were seen at Bolonia, Andalucía, Spain, on 29 July (the species has been present here since 1996). In France, a **Blue-cheeked Bee-eater** *Merops persicus* stayed at Ligagneau, Camargue, from 26 July. In Denmark, **European Bee-eaters** *M apiaster* bred for the third consecutive year at Kalundborg, Vestsjælland, where a record 31 adults and juveniles were seen on 24 August. In Britain, a **European Roller** *Coracias garrulus* stayed in fields between East Boldon, Tyne-and-Wear, and the northern edge of Sunderland from 13 July onwards. The only individual for Finland this year was at Vehkalahti, Salmenkylä, on 28-31 July. The fourth **Calandra Lark** *Melanocorypha calandra* for Sweden stayed at Sandby, Öland, Sweden, on 1-3 August. From 22 August, another was present at Onsala, Halland, Sweden. The first **Bimaculated Lark** *M bimaculata* for Norway stayed on Ona, Sandøy, Møre og Romsdal, on 1-26 August. A male **Citrine Wagtail** *Motacilla citreola* ringed in 1998 as young on the nest at Mietoinen, Finland, was found in June to be paired with a female Grey-headed Wagtail *M thunbergi* at Kaarina, 35 km to the south-east. Also in Finland, at least 22 territories of **Red-flanked Bluetail** *Tarsiger cyanurus* were found this summer. At Nabben, Falsterbo, Sweden, the first **Zitting Cisticola** *Cisticola juncidis* for Scandinavia was singing from 11 August onwards. During June-July, a record 21 **Lanceolated Warblers** *Locustella lanceolata* were singing in Finland. On 19-20 July, the fourth for Sweden was heard at Luleå, Norrbotten. In Shetland, Scotland, singles were seen on Fair Isle on 4, 11 and 12 September. Two nests with six and five young of **Booted Warbler** *Acrocephalus caligatus* were found at Värtsilä, Finland. Singles occurred on 26-27 August at Spurn, East Yorkshire, England; on 1 September, at Zeebrugge, West-Vlaanderen, Belgium; on 4 September at Barra, Western Isles, Scotland; on 5 September on Terschelling; and on 10 September on Helgoland, Schleswig-Holstein, Germany, and at Kingsdown, Kent, England. The species was also present on Fair Isle on 1-2 and 10 September. The first **Sykes's Warbler** *A rama* for England trapped at Portland Bill, Dorset, on 1 July was not seen the next days. A **Paddyfield Warbler** *A agricola* was singing at Mustasaari, Valassaaret, Finland, from 28 June to 16 July. In Belgium, a juvenile was discovered at Zeebrugge on 10 September. In the Netherlands, six **Greenish Warblers** *Phylloscopus trochiloides* were seen during the first 10 days of September; an even higher number was found in Britain during that period. A juvenile **Woodchat Shrike** *Lanius senator* ringed at Castricum, Noord-Holland, on 20 August was probably the same as the one at Heist, West-Vlaanderen, on 27 August. In Bulgaria, 3100 nests of **Rose-coloured Starling** *Sturnus roseus* were counted in two colonies at Burgas on 10-11 June. The 19th **Trumpeter Finch** *Bucanetes githagineus* for Sicily was observed at Capo Murro di Porco, Siracusa, on 31 August. The long-staying **Long-tailed Rosefinch** *Uragus sibiricus* at Isle of Man, Britain, remained until 16 July; singles were at Saint-Georges-de-Reneins, Rhône, France, on 15 July and at Køge, Sydsjælland, Denmark, from 25 August into September. A **Dark-eyed Junco** *Junco hyemalis* was reported at Ballygannon, Wicklow, Ireland, on 10 August. In England, the population of **Cirl Buntings** *Emberiza cirlus* showed a 10% increase in 1994-98 to 455 pairs. The decline of **Yellow-breasted Bunting** *E aureola* in Finland continued with only five records this summer. On 27 August, one turned up on Noss, Shetland; on 2 September, one was at Durigarth, Shetland; and a first-year stayed on 5 September on Helgoland. The first twitchable **Black-headed Bunting** *E melanocephala* for Finland was a male at Korsnäs, Harrström, on 1-20 August.

For a number of reports, publications in Birding World, Birdwatch, Bird Watching, British Birds, Ringing & Migration, Sandgrouse, Winging It and World Birdwatch were consulted. News from Britain was kindly supplied by Birdline (0891-700-222), Rare Bird News (0881-888-111) and Oriental Bird Club. I wish to thank Morten Bentzon Hansen, Chris Bradshaw, Andreas Buchheim, Agris Celmins, Alain Chappuis, Allen Chartier, Liang Chieh-teh, Rolf Christensen, Tony Clarke (Canarian Nature Tours), Andrea Corso, Mike Crewe, Ian Davidson, Jochen Dierschke, Hugues Dufourny, Enno Ebels, Annika Forsten, Alain Fossé, Peter Fraser (UK), Rob Fray, Jeff Gordon, Gerard Gorman (Hungary), Marcello Grussu, Morten Günther, Ricard Gutiérrez, Klaas Haas, Cornelis Hazevoet, Felix Heintzenberg, Martin Helin, Erik Hirschfeld, Remco Hofland, Justin Jansen, Erling Jirle, Adrian Jordi (Switzerland), Yves Kayser, Jan Kelchtermans (Corsica), Guy Kirwan, Yann Kolbeinsson, Diederik Kok, Paul Lehman, Pawet Malczyk, Pierre Le Maréchal (France), Paul Marshall, Anthony McGeehan, Richard Millington, Geir Mobakken, Colm C Moore, Mika Ohtonen, Arie Ouwerkerk, Karl Overman, Colin Richardson (UAE), Luciano Ruggieri, Willem Scheres (Portugal), Holger Schritt, Bob Scott, Tadeusz Stawarczyk, Kókay Szabolcs, C H Tonino, Mike Turnbull, Pierre Unge, Luc Verroken (Belgium), Ruud Vlek and Piotr Zielinski for their help in compiling this review.

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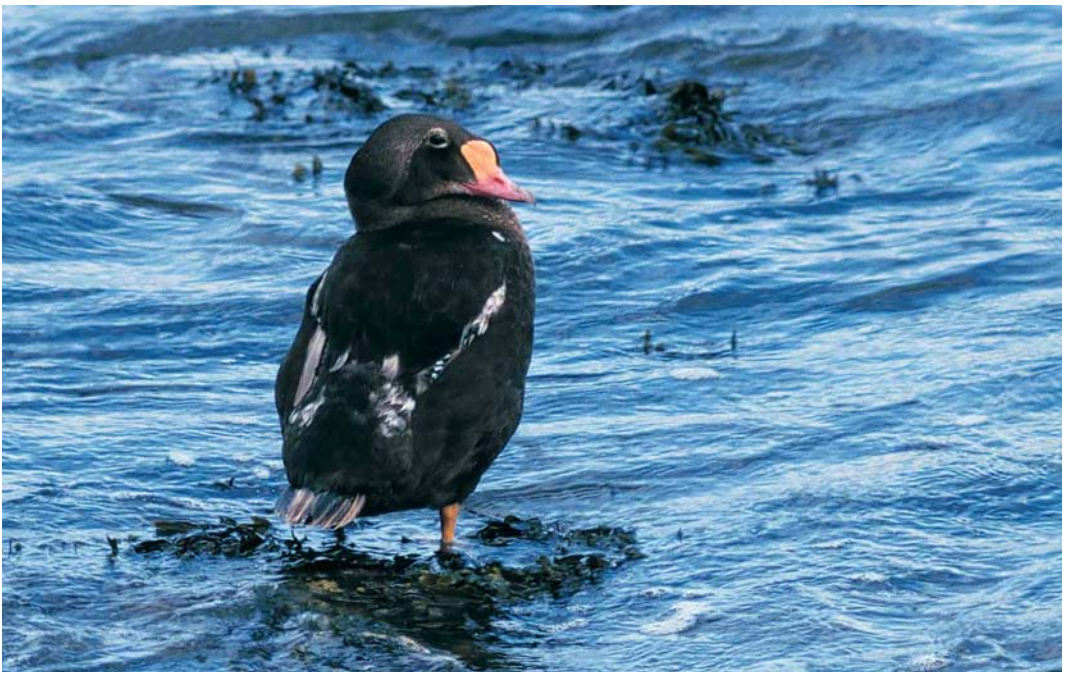
Recente meldingen

Dit overzicht van recente meldingen van zeldzame en interessante vogels in Nederland en België beslaat voornamelijk de periode **juli-augustus 2000**. 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 wordt verzocht hun waarnemingen zo spoedig mogelijk toe te zenden aan: CDNA, Postbus 45, 2080 AA Santpoort-Zuid, Nederland, e-mail cdna@dutchbirding.nl. Hiertoe gelieve men gebruik te maken van CDNA-waarnemingsformulieren die eveneens verkrijgbaar zijn bij bovenstaand adres, of via de homepage van de DBA op http://www.dutchbirding.nl.

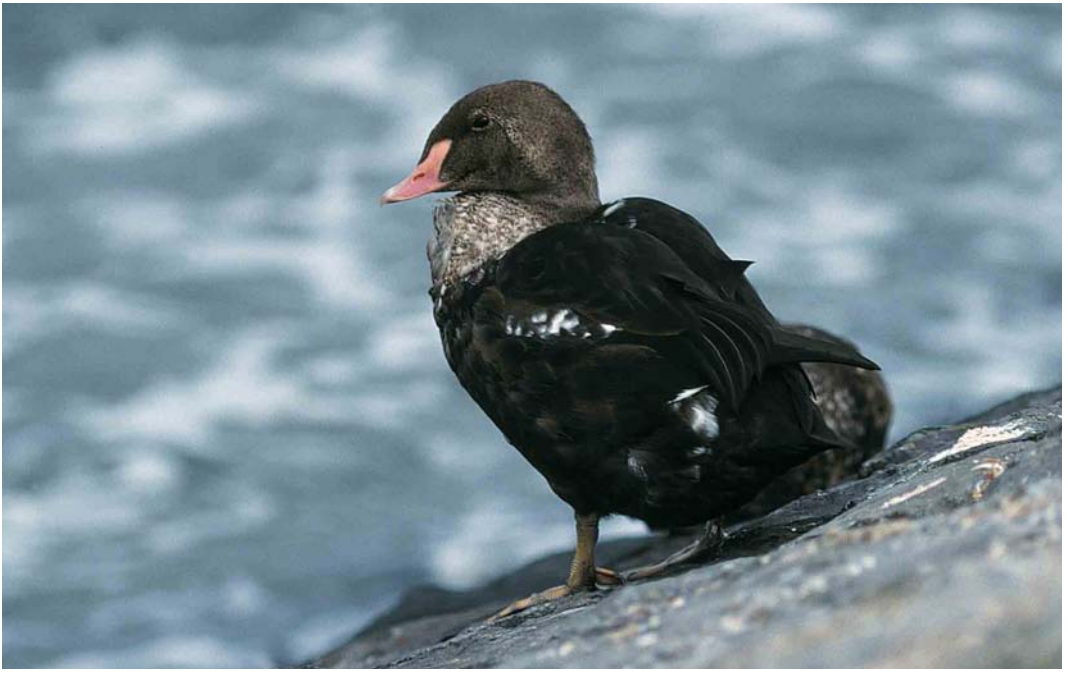
Nederland

EENDEN TOT VALKEN Een adult mannetje **Koningseider** *Somateria spectabilis* in eclipskleed werd op 28 augustus gezien aan de oostkant van het eiland Texel, Noord-Holland. Op 30 augustus werd aldaar ook een jong mannetje van deze soort ontdekt. Beide vogels bleven tot in september en werden af en toe ook samen gezien. In juli was er één dag met redelijke zeetrek: op 11 juli werden in totaal zes **Noordse Pijlstormvogels** *Puffinus puffinus* gemeld van drie locaties. **Vale Pijlstormvogels** *P mauretanicus* werden gezien op 11 juli bij Scheveningen, Zuid-Holland, op 23 juli, 3 en 13 augustus bij Camperduin, Noord-Holland, en op 13 augustus bij Noordwijk, Zuid-Holland. Een **Vaal Stormvogeltje** *Oceanodroma leucorhoa* vloog op deze dag langs Lauwersoog, Groningen. Een **Kleine Pelikaan** *Pelecanus rufescens* verbleef op 9 augustus in de Ooypolder, Gelderland, en mogelijk dezelfde werd op 29 augustus gemeld bij Epe, Gelderland. Op 23 juli was een **Kuifaalscholver** *Stictocarbo aristotelis* ter plaatse bij Camperduin en in augustus verbleef er langere tijd één in de binnenhaven van Scheveningen. Waarnemingen van **Woudapen** *Ixobrychus minutus* kwamen uit het Harderbroek, Flevoland, op 23 juli en op 31 juli en 1 augustus uit de AW-duinen, Noord-Holland. Er was een broedgeval in Canisvliet, Zeeuws-Vlaanderen, Zeeland. **Koereigers** *Bubulcus ibis* werden opgemerkt op 6 augustus bij Bergen op Zoom, Noord-Brabant, en op 12 augustus vliegend bij Camperduin. In en rond de Grevelingen, Zeeland/Zuid-Holland, werden op 18 juli 60 **Kleine Zilverreigers** *Egretta garzetta* geteld en op 15 augustus maar liefst 235. In de rest van Nederland werden alleen al in juli nog eens 20 vastgesteld. In de Oostvaardersplassen, Flevoland, zouden vier paren hebben gebroed en andere broedgevallen vonden op Terschelling, Friesland, en in het Deltagebied plaats. Buiten de Oostvaardersplassen, waar maar liefst 10 broedparen werden gemeld, werden **Grote Zilverreigers** *Casmerodius albus* vastgesteld op 16 juli bij de Zevenhuizerplas, Zuid-Holland, op 23 en 31 juli in de Lauwersmeer, Groningen, en vanaf 28 juli drie in polder Maltha bij Werkendam, Brabantse Biesbosch, Noord-Brabant. Vanaf half juli begonnen weer **Zwarte Ooievaars** *Ciconia nigra* Nederland binnen te druppelen, met in die maand 14 individuen. In augustus volgden nog flink wat meldingen, met als grootste groep 13 op Texel. **Zwarte Ibissen** *Plegadis falcinellus* verbleven op 10 en 19 juli bij de hut De Zeearend in de Oostvaardersplassen en van 31 juli tot 5 augustus in de omgeving van Julianadorp, Noord-Holland. Bovendien werd op 12 juli een exemplaar waargenomen bij De Hoef, Utrecht, en op 21 juli bij de Slufter op Texel. De **Grijze Wouw** *Elanus caeruleus* van het Bargerveen, Drenthe, werd daar nog tot 23 augustus gezien. Overvliegende **Zwarte Wouwen** *Milvus migrans* werden opgemerkt op 4 juli bij Amersfoort, Utrecht, op 24 juli bij Honswijk, Utrecht, op 25 juli in de Mariapeel, Limburg, en op 29 juli ten zuiden van Petten, Noord-Holland. Een **Rode Wouw** *M milvus* werd op 26 juli gezien ten oosten van Assen, Drenthe. Een **Vale Gier** *Gyps fulvus* werd op 6 juli gefotografeerd op een vuilstortterrein nabij Hengelo, Overijssel. Mogelijk een ander exemplaar vloog op 1 augustus in Noord-Holland achtereenvolgens boven Den Helder, Texel en Oudesluis. Deze vogel verbleef 's avonds en de volgende ochtend op een camping bij Schagen, Noord-Holland, en werd later gezien ten westen van Middenmeer, Noord-Holland. Een mogelijke Vale Gier werd op 3 augustus gezien bij Uitgeest, Noord-Holland. Op 9 augustus werd weer een exemplaar gezien vliegend over Den Helder. Verder werden nog mogelijke Vale Gieren gemeld op 8 augustus bij Leidschendam, Zuid-Holland, op 11 augustus bij Utrecht, Utrecht, en op 13 augustus ten oosten van Eemnes, Utrecht. Op 13 juli werd bekend dat op de Bildtpollen ten noordwesten van Ferwert, Friesland, een onvolwassen **Monniksgier** *Aegypius monachus* verbleef. De vogel was daar waarschijnlijk al enige tijd aanwezig en zwierf in deze omgeving rond tot 23 juli. Dit stelde vele vogelaars in de gelegenheid om deze tweede Monniksgier voor Nederland in levenden lijve te aanschouwen. Maar er kwam nog een ruim vervolg. Op 25 juli had de vogel via de Afsluitdijk, Friesland, Den Oever bereikt. Op 26 juli vloog hij over Wieringen en Wieringermeer, Noord-Holland, en later bij Camperduin. Op 29 juli werd de vogel opgemerkt boven IJmuiden, Noord-Holland, waarna hij zuidwaarts tot boven Bloemendaal aan Zee, Noord-Holland, vloog voordat hij uiteindelijk landde op het forteiland tussen de pieren van IJmuiden. Op 30 juli werd vastgesteld dat hij in staat was om levende jonge meeuwen te vangen, waarna hij vertrok en langs de kust in noordelijke richting doorvloog naar Texel waar hij tot 5 augustus bleef. Op 5 augustus vloog hij over Vlieland, Friesland, naar de Boschplaat op Terschelling; op 9 augustus van Terschelling naar Ameland; op 11 augustus terug van



233 Koningseider / King Eider *Somateria spectabilis*, adult mannetje eclips, Oudeschild, Texel, Noord-Holland, 28 augustus 2000 *(Ruud E Brouwer)*

234 Koningseider / King Eider *Somateria spectabilis*, tweedejaars mannetje, Oudeschild, Texel, Noord-Holland, 3 september 2000 *(Ruud E Brouwer)*



235 Vale Gier / Eurasian Griffon Vulture *Gyps fulvus*, Schagen, Noord-Holland, 2 augustus 2000 *(Ruud E Brouwer)*

de Boschplaat naar Vlieland; en op 12 augustus van Vlieland over Texel terug naar Noord-Holland, waar hij boven Het Zwanenwater en Petten werd gezien. Op 13 augustus kon hij langs de Zuid-Hollandse kust gevolgd worden via Katwijk, Meyendel, Den Haag, Monster en Hoek van Holland tot op de Maasvlakte, waar hij tot 18 augustus werd gezien. Daarna zijn er nog meldingen in Noord-Brabant op 20 augustus over Mariaheide en Hapert. Op 30 juli werd een **Schreeuwarend** *Aquila pomarina* gemeld boven de Ackerdijkse Plassen, Zuid-Holland. De **Dwergarend** *Hieraaetus pennatus* van Rhenen, Utrecht, bleef in deze omgeving tot 8 juli. Verder waren er meldingen van deze soort op 1 en 2 juli bij de Praamweg, Flevoland, en op 7 juli bij Paterswolde, Drenthe. Een **Roodpootvalk** *Falco vespertinus* werd gemeld op 31 juli bij Amsterdam, Noord-Holland.

RALLEN TOT ALKEN Het **Kleinste Waterhoen** *Porzana pusilla* van de Hilversumse Meent, Noord-Holland, werd daar gehoord tot 8 juli. Een ongedetermineerde **purperkoet** *Porphyrio* werd op 12 juli gemeld bij de Blauwe Kamer, Utrecht. Een ongeringde subadulte **Jufferkraanvogel** *Anthropoides virgo* verbleef van 22 tot 26 augustus bij Enschede en Haaksbergen, Overijssel (de vogel miste enkele pennen aan een van beide vleugels). **Steltkluten** *Himantopus himantopus* bleven in de Ezumakeeg, Friesland, met een maximum van 21 op 4 juli; verder verbleven er maximaal drie op het Rammegors, Zeeland, twee in de Hilversumse Meent, één op 23 juli bij de Zevenhuizerplas en drie op 28 juli in polder Maltha. **Grielen** *Burhinus oedicnemus* werden opgemerkt op 6 augustus bij Katwijk aan Zee, Zuid-Holland, en op 27 augustus in de Kennemerduinen, Noord-Holland. Een manke **Morinelplevier** *Charadrius morinellus* verbleef op 5 juli op de kwelders van Schiermonnikoog, Friesland. Vanaf eind augustus verbleef een achttal op de Maasvlakte. Naast een **Amerikaanse Goudplevier** *Pluvialis dominicus* op 16 juli in de Ezumakeeg, was er op die plek ook een melding van een **Aziatische Goudplevier** *P fulva*, en wel op 30 augustus. Een andere Aziatische werd op 7 augustus gemeld bij het Veerse Meer, Zeeland. Een **Steppekievit** *Vanellus gregarius* verbleef van 5 tot 12 augustus ten oosten van Oosterwolde, Gelderland, en op 24 en 25 augustus liep mogelijk dezelfde bij het Harderbroek. Een **Witstaartkievit** *V leucurus* was van 9 tot 19 augustus aanwezig bij Werkendam in polder Maltha. Adulte **Bonapartes Strandlopers** *Calidris fuscicollis* verschenen van 8 tot 29 augustus bij Zwarte Haan, Friesland (maximaal twee) en twee op Texel (van 30 augustus tot 2 september bij Zeeburg en van 1 tot 8 september bij De Geul). De inmiddels normale oogst aan **Gestreepte Strandlopers** *C melanotos* bestond dit jaar uit de volgende vogels: van 15 tot 22 juli in de Ezumakeeg, met op de laatste datum twee, van 15 tot 21 juli ten oosten van de Zevenhuizerplas, van 31 juli tot 1 augustus, op 11 augustus en op 19 augustus in de omgeving van Julianadorp mogelijk drie verschillende, op 3 augustus op Texel, van 7 tot 12 augustus aan de

236 Monniksgier / Eurasian Black Vulture *Aegypius monachus*, onvolwassen, Maasvlakte, Zuid-Holland, 16 augustus 2000 (*Norman D van Swelm*)

237 Monniksgier / Eurasian Black Vulture *Aegypius monachus*, onvolwassen, Den Oever, Noord-Holland, 26 juli 2000 *(René Pop)*

238 Bonapartes Strandloper / White-rumped Sandpiper *Calidris fuscicollis*, adult, met Bontbekplevier / Common Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*, Zwarte Haan, Friesland, 20 augustus 2000 (*Roef Mulder*)

239 Bonapartes Strandloper / White-rumped Sandpiper *Calidris fuscicollis*, adult, Zeeburg, Texel, Noord-Holland, 2 september 2000 *(Ruud E Brouwer)*

240 Ralreiger / Squacco Heron *Ardeola ralloides*, Egmond-Binnen, Noord-Holland, 8 juni 2000 *(Cees Baart)* cf Dutch Birding 22: 174, 2000 **241** Steppekievit / Sociable Lapwing *Vanellus gregarius*, Oosterwolde, Gelderland, 6 augustus 2000 *(Eric Koops)* **242-243** Steltstrandloper / Stilt Sandpiper *Micropalama himantopus*, adult, Sint Maartenszee, Noord-Holland, 23 juli 2000 *(Teus J C Luijendijk)* **244** Graszanger / Zitting Cisticola *Cisticola juncidis*, Ooltgensplaat, Zuid-Holland, 27 juni 2000 *(Marten van Dijl)* **245** Waterrietzanger / Aquatic Warbler *Acrocephalus paludicola*, Westplaat, Zuid-Holland, 8 augustus 2000 *(Marten van Dijl)*

zuidrand van de Oostvaardersplassen, en op 17 augustus bij Camperduin. Op 16 augustus werd alleen 's avonds een adulte **Siberische Strandloper** *C acuminata* gemeld in de Ezumakeeg. **Breedbekstrandlopers** *Limicola falcinellus* verschenen op locaties waar ze dit voorjaar ook al waren gezien: van 1 tot 14 augustus bij Holwerd, Friesland, en op 13 augustus bij Den Oever, Noord-Holland. Daarnaast waren er waarnemingen op 6 augustus bij Westhoek, Friesland, en op 20 augustus bij het Amstelmeer, Noord-Holland. De tweede **Steltstrandloper** *Micropalama himantopus* voor Nederland kwam onverwacht snel na de eerste. Op 22 juli werd hij ontdekt bij de Putten van Camperduin; op 23 juli werd hij herontdekt langs de Belkmerweg in de omgeving van Stolpen, Noord-Holland, waar hij ook in de vroege ochtend van 24 juli kortstondig aanwezig was. Op 31 juli was er nog een melding bij Julianadorp. In totaal werden in juli negen **Poelruiters** *Tringa stagnatilis* en zes **Grauwe Franjepoten** *Phalaropus lobatus* doorgegeven. Een **Kleine Geelpootruiter** *Tringa flavipes* werd op 8 augustus waargenomen bij het Markiezaatmeer, Noord-Brabant, en 11 augustus nogmaals gemeld. Op 7 juli werd een **Terekruiter** *Xenus cinereus* gezien in de Ezumakeeg. Op 24 juni vloog een **Kleine Jager** *Stercorarius parasiticus* langs de Lek eerst langs Honswijk en later langs Lopik, Utrecht. Wederom waren er binnenlandwaarnemingen van adulte **Lachmeeuwen** *Larus atricilla* en wel op 23 juli bij het Rutbekerveld ten zuidwesten van Enschede, Overijssel, en van 13 tot 16 augustus bij Arnhem, Gelderland. Juli-meldingen van **Lachsterns** *Gelochelidon nilotica* waren op 12 juli twee bij Sint-Maartensvlotbrug, Noord-Holland, op 22 juli op het Rutbekerveld, van 23 tot 29 juli maximaal vier bij 't Zand, Noord-Holland, op 23 juli twee achter de Putten van Camperduin, op 28 juli langs Den Haag, Zuid-Holland, en op 30 juli op het Balgzand, Noord-Holland. Vanaf 14 juli werden weer **Reuzensterns** *Sterna caspia* gezien in de Lauwersmeer, met eind juli reeds vier. Andere juli-waarnemingen waren op 18 juli op de Ventjagersplaten, op 24 en 26 juli bij Honswijk, op 24 en 25 juli bij het Zuidlaardermeer, Groningen, twee op 28 juli over Amsterdam en vanaf 28 juli alweer maximaal negen in de Workumerwaard, Friesland. In augustus bleven er veel gemeld worden. Op 13 augustus werd een oranjesnavelige stern, mogelijk een **Sierlijke Stern** *S elegans*, kort gezien bij Holwerd. Een **Witwangstern** *Chlidonias hybridus* zat op 12 en 18 juli bij de Hellegatsplaten, Zuid-Holland. Op 12 juli zouden daar zelfs vier exemplaren zijn gezien. **Witvleugelsterns** *C leucopterus* werden vanaf begin juli gezien bij Den Oever (maximaal twee), op 27 juli bij Wildervank, Groningen, en op 29 juli bij de Workumerwaard. Een onvolwassen **Zwarte Zeekoet** *Cepphus grylle* vloog op 16 juli op korte afstand langs Westkapelle, Zeeland.

GIERZWALUWEN TOT GORZEN De waarnemingen van **Alpengierzwaluw** *Apus melba* bleven binnenstromen. Nummer 12, 13 en 14 van dit jaar werden gezien op 3 juli bij Almere-Buiten, Flevoland, en bij Den Haag, en op 12 augustus enige tijd ter plaatse rondvliegend bij Vlissingen, Zeeland. **Bijeneters** *Merops apiaster* verbleven op 13 juli op Schiermonnikoog, op 20 juli bij Rinsumageest, Friesland, en op 29 juli over het grindgat van Meers, Limburg. De **Grijskopspecht** *Picus canus* van Oosterbeek, Gelderland, bleef daar tot ten minste in augustus. Een **Roodstuitzwaluw** *Hirundo daurica* vloog op 28 augustus boven de Hilversumse Meent. Vanaf 6 augustus werden ten minste zeven **Waterrietzangers** *Acrocephalus paludicola* gemeld. De **Cetti's Zanger** *Cettia cetti* verbleef tot 18 juli bij het Oostvoornse Meer, Zuid-Holland. De **Graszanger** *Cisticola juncidis* van de Hellegatsplaten bleef daar tot in augustus, terwijl op 29 en 30 juli een exemplaar verbleef bij Ellewoutsdijk, Zeeland. **Sperwergrasmussen** *Sylvia nisoria* waren onder andere aanwezig op 20 augustus op Vlieland, op 26 augustus bij Den Haag, en op 18 augustus (vangst) en 28 augustus op Schiermonnikoog. Een mannetje **Kleine Vliegenvanger** *Ficedula parva* werd op 21 augustus gemeld in de Mariapeel, Limburg. De **Orpheusspotvogel** *Hippolais polyglotta* van Heibloem, Limburg, bleef daar tot 2 juli. Een juveniele **Roodkopklauwier** *Lanius senator* werd gevangen op 20 augustus bij Castricum, Noord-Holland. De **Zwartkopgors** *Emberiza melanocephala* van Terschelling was daar tot 2 juli.

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België

EENDEN TOT LEPELAARS Op 4 augustus zwom een **Marmereend** *Marmaronetta angustirostris* op het Netekanaal te Viersel, Antwerpen. Naast een geslaagd broedgeval van een paar **Krooneenden** *Netta rufina* te Harchies, Hainaut, dat twee jongen grootbracht, waren er ook waarnemingen te Merelbeke, Oost-Vlaanderen, op 29 juli, te Viersel op 4 augustus en te Tienen, Vlaams-Brabant, op 27 augustus. Vermoedelijk steeds dezelfde juveniele **Witoogeend** *Aythya nyroca* vertoefde op 6 augustus te Harelbeke, West-Vlaanderen, op 13 en 14 augustus te Gullegem, West-Vlaanderen, en op 15 augustus te Heusden-Destelbergen, Oost-Vlaanderen. Tot ten minste 18 augustus verbleef het ontsnapte mannetje **Kaneeltaling** *Anas cyanoptera* in eclipskleed nog op de Werf van het Kluizendok te Gent, Oost-Vlaanderen. Op 15 augustus zwom een vermoedelijke hybride **Kaneel- x Blauwvleugeltaling** *A cyanoptera x discors* te Bredene, West-Vlaanderen. De eerste **Grauwe Pijlstormvogel** *Puffinus griseus* vloog op 27 augustus langs Oostende, West-Vlaanderen. Een

246 Bonte Tapuit / Pied Wheatear *Oenanthe pleschanka*, mannetje, Formerum, Terschelling, Friesland, 27 juni 2000 *(Arie Ouwerkerk)* cf Dutch Birding 22: 182, 2000

247 Cetti's Zanger / Cetti's Warbler *Cettia cetti*, Oostvoornse Meer, Zuid-Holland, 28 juni 2000 (*Norman D van Swelm*)

ontsnapte **Kleine Pelikaan** *Pelecanus rufescens* werd op 5 augustus waargenomen bij Nazareth, Oost-Vlaanderen. Te Harchies-Hensies kwamen dit jaar zeven paren **Woudaap** *Ixobrychus minutus* tot broeden en in Limburg ten minste negen. Ook het koppel van Harelbeke kende weer broedsucces met drie jongen. Verder waren er waarnemingen te Lier, Antwerpen, van 6 tot 12 augustus (juveniel), te Willebroek, Antwerpen, op 12 augustus en te Tienen op 23 augustus (juveniel). **Kwakken** *Nycticorax nycticorax* werden opgemerkt te Gent op 3 juli; te Tienen op 15 juli; te Willebroek (de gehele periode tot twee exemplaren); te Eine, Oost-Vlaanderen (mogelijk broedgeval) op 8 en 9 augustus; in de Uitkerkse Polders, West-Vlaanderen, op 10 augustus; te Wintam (Bornem), Antwerpen, op 13 augustus en te Gullegem (adult) vanaf 29 augustus. Maximaal 10 **Koereigers** *Bubulcus ibis* werden in één groep waargenomen te Ramskapelle, West-Vlaanderen, op 20 augustus. Deze behoren tot de populatie van Knokke, West-Vlaanderen, waarvan ook vogels werden gezien te Dudzele en Koolkerke, beide West-Vlaanderen. Verder waren 'nieuwe' exemplaren aanwezig te Gent op 30 juli (adult) en 1 augustus (juveniel) en te Oostende op 6 augustus. De vaste locaties van **Kleine Zilverreigers** *Egretta garzetta* leverden de volgende maxima op: drie te Harchies; zes in de Uitkerkse Polders; zes in de Voorhaven van Zeebrugge, West-Vlaanderen; 15 te Lissewege, West-Vlaanderen; 20 in de Achterhaven van Zeebrugge; en 33 in Het Zwin te Knokke. Overigens werden er verspreid over het land c 18 waargenomen, waarvan één te Latour, Luxembourg, op 14 augustus het vermelden waard is. De eerste **Grote Zilverreiger** *Casmerodius albus* vloog op 30 juli over Verrebroek, Oost-Vlaanderen, daarna volgden er waarnemingen te Brecht, Antwerpen, op 7 en 8 augustus; te Zonhoven, Limburg, op 16 en 29 augustus; te Zeebrugge op 18 augustus; en op Blokkersdijk, Antwerpen, op 24 augustus. Op 22 juli verbleef een **Purperreiger** *Ardea purpurea* te Willebroek. In augustus volgden er nog 24, waarvan 12 in een groep trekkend over Neerpelt. Vanaf 17 juli kwam de trek van **Zwarte Ooievaars** *Ciconia nigra* op gang: in juli werden er 17 waargenomen en in augustus volgden er nog eens 82. De grootste groepen telden vijf exemplaren te Heusden-Destelbergen op 31 juli; te Péronnes, Hainaut, op 1 augustus; te Hensies op 12 augustus; te Pamel-Roosdaal, Vlaams-Brabant, op 20 augustus; en te Harchies op 21 augustus; en zeven (alle eerste zomerkleed) te Kallo-Melsele, Oost-Vlaanderen, op 8 en 9 augustus. Op 21 juli sliepen vijf **Ooievaars** *C ciconia* te Zoersel, Antwerpen, en op 27 juli vlogen er drie over Leuven, Vlaams-Brabant. In augustus volgden er nog 324. De grootste groepen werden geteld te Berchem, Antwerpen (20); te Horrues, Hainaut (c 30); te Baarle-Hertog, Antwerpen (55); en te Torgny, Luxembourg (87). De ontsnapte **Puna-ibis** *Plegadis ridgwayi* bleef tot in september aanwezig bij Knokke. Na een niet geslaagd broedgeval van een paar **Lepelaars** *Platalea leucorodia* te Knokke vorig jaar, kende datzelfde paar dit jaar voor het eerst in België wel broedsucces.

WESPENDIEVEN TOT STERNS In de periode juli-augustus vlogen meer dan 615 **Wespendieven** *Pernis apivorus* over België, waarvan 374 over Torgny op 30 augustus. Op 18 juli trokken zeven **Zwarte Wouwen** *Milvus migrans* over Torgny en op 24 juli één over Haaltert, Oost-Vlaanderen. Overtrekkende **Rode Wouwen** *M milvus* werden gezien te Oud-Turnhout, Antwerpen, op 15 augustus; te Angre, Hainaut, op 18 augustus; te Bertem, Vlaams-Brabant, op 22 augustus; en te Eksaarde, Oost-Vlaanderen, op 28 augustus. Vanaf 20 augustus werden 10 overtrekkende **Grauwe Kiekendieven** *Circus pygargus* opgemerkt. Op 2 juli werd een adulte **Schreeuwarend** *Aquila pomarina* waargenomen bij Focant, Namur. Een onvolwassen **Steenarend** *A chrysaetos* vloog op 16 juli laag over Herenthout, Antwerpen. Een **Dwergarend** *Hieraaetus pennatus* werd op 21 augustus waargenomen boven Arquennes, Brabant-Wallon. Er werden in totaal 29 **Visarenden** *Pandion haliaetus* geteld. Op 30 juli vlogen vier **Roodpootvalken** *Falco vespertinus* over Wevelgem, West-Vlaanderen. Daarna volgden waarnemingen te Harchies op 1 augustus, te Bredene op 24 augustus en te Pamel-Roosdaal op 26 augustus. In augustus werden in totaal 26 **Porseleinhoenders** *Porzana porzana* gemeld. Op 4 augustus verbleef een mogelijk **Kleinst Waterhoen** *P pusilla* bij Willebroek. Vanaf 28 augustus liet een ruiende juveniele zich dagelijks bekijken in het Mechels Broek bij Mechelen, Antwerpen. Op 6 juli riep kortstondig een **Kwartelkoning** *Crex crex* bij Viersel. Een (wellicht) ontsnapte maar ongeringde **Jufferkraanvogel** *Anthropoides virgo* liep op 6 juli slechts kortstondig op de Werf van het Kluizendok bij Gent. Niemand liep er echt warm voor... De laatste **Steltkluten** *Himantopus himantopus* waren aanwezig te Zeebrugge op 23 juli en 12 augustus, te Kallo-Verrebroek (maximaal vier) tot 19 augustus en bij Gent vanaf 15 augustus. Op 9 augustus dook de ontsnapte **Krokodilwachter** *Pluvianus aegyptius* weer op, deze keer in een park te Wilrijk, Antwerpen. Vanaf half augustus werden 31 **Morinelplevieren** *Charadrius morinellus* opgemerkt: daarvan was er telkens één in het Zwin te Knokke en te Oostmalle, Antwerpen; twee te Wuustwezel-Nieuwmoer, Antwerpen; acht te Clermont-Donstiennes, Hainaut; en 19 te Angre. Er werden in totaal c 63 **Temmincks Strandlopers** *Calidris temminckii* gemeld. Een adulte **Gestreepte Strandloper** *C melanotos* pleisterde op 29 juli bij Verrebroek. Op 20 juli verbleef een **Poelruiter** *Tringa stagnatilis* in de Uitkerkse Polders; op 23 juli werd er één gezien te Bree, Limburg; van 11 tot 13 augustus was een adulte aanwezig in de Achterhaven van Zeebrugge, en op 23 augustus was er een melding te Merelbeke. Op 26 en 27 juli verbleef een adult vrouwtje **Grauwe Franjepoot** *Phalaropus lobatus* in de Uitkerkse Polders en op 29 augustus een juveniele bij Warcoing, Hainaut. De eerste **Middelste Jager** *Stercorarius pomarinus* voor dit najaar vloog op 4 augustus langs Oostende. Na de verrassende binnenlandwaarneming van twee adult-zomer **Kleinste Jagers** *S longicaudus* mèt verlengde staartpennen bij de Baraque Michel in de Hoge Venen op 8 juli, vloog er op 14 augustus één over Torgny. Wat doen die

248 Roodkopklauwier / Woodchat Shrike *Lanius senator*, juveniel, Heist, West-Vlaanderen, 25 augustus 2000 (*Erik van Bogaert*)

beesten daar...? De eerste **Pontische Meeuwen** *Larus cachinnans cachinnans* doken op te Hensies-Pommeroeul van 26 juli tot 24 augustus (adult) en te Zeebrugge van 20 tot 27 augustus (eerste-winter). Op 3 augustus vloog een adulte **Lachstern** *Gelochelidon nilotica* over Het Zwin te Knokke; daar werden er op 10 augustus twee gezien. Op 11 augustus foerageerde er één boven het Kempisch Kanaal te Schoten, Antwerpen. De enige twee **Reuzensterns** *Sterna caspia* voor de periode trokken op 21 augustus langs Zeebrugge. Op 2 juli werd nog een **Witwangstern** *Chlidonias hybridus* opgemerkt te Longchamps, Namur, en op 11 juli één te Schoten. Twee juveniele **Witvleugelsterns** *C leucopterus* verbleven op 27 augustus kortstondig bij Tienen.

BIJENETERS TOT GORZEN Op 6 juli vlogen twee **Bijeneters** *Merops apiaster* over de Uitkerkse Polders. Er was een broedpoging van maximaal vier vogels bij Boutersem, Lubbeek, Vlaams-Brabant, maar die bleek door het slechte weer in juli op een fiasco uit te lopen. Op 22 juli werd er één gezien te Ethe, Luxembourg, en op 13 augustus één over Bredene. **Hoppen** *Upupa epops* werden gezien te Gembes, Luxembourg, op 5 augustus; te Knokke van 13 tot 22 augustus; en te Zeebrugge (hetzelfde exemplaar) op 22 augustus. In augustus werden ten minste 79 **Draaihalzen** *Jynx torquilla* gezien en/of geringd. Daarvan werden er 30 geringd te Willebroek met maximaal 13 op één dag! Vanaf 11 augustus werden 51 overtrekkende **Duinpiepers** *Anthus campestris* opgemerkt, met maxima van acht over de Fagne de Malchamps, Liège, op 13 augustus en over Clermont-Donstiennes op 24 augustus. Midden augustus werd in Het Wik, Genk, Limburg, een **Noordse Nachtegaal** *Luscinia luscinia* gevangen en geringd. Een **Roodsterblauwborst** *L svecica svecica* werd op 13 augustus gemeld in de Achterhaven van Zeebrugge. Het aantal territoria van **Cetti's Zangers** *Cettia cetti* te Harchies liep op tot 14 à 15. In het havengebied van Zeebrugge waren in de loop van het voorjaar en de zomer ten minste 15 territoria van **Graszangers** *Cisticola juncidis* bezet. In augustus kwamen er op meerdere plaatsen zangposten bij en werden ten minste twee geslaagde broedgevallen opgetekend. De **Krekelzanger** *Locustella fluviatilis* van het Viersels Gebroekt bleef nog tot 1 juli aanwezig. Op 2 juli zong er één te Marche-en-Famenne, Luxembourg. Op 4 juli zong nog steeds een **Orpheusspotvogel** *H polyglotta* bij De Panne, West-Vlaanderen. Verder was er een ringvangst te Merksplas, Antwerpen, op 17 augustus; Op 6 augustus verbleven een adulte en een eerste-winter **Waterrietzanger** *Acrocephalus paludicola* in de Achterhaven van Zeebrugge. In augustus waren er ook c 20 ringvangsten bij Veurne, West-Vlaanderen. Een **Kleine Spotvogel** *A caligatus* werd op 22 en 24 augustus enkele malen gezien in de Achterhaven van Zeebrugge. Op 30 augustus was er een ringvangst van een eerste-winter te Elversele, Oost-Vlaanderen. Een **Sperwergrasmus** *Sylvia nisoria* werd gevangen te Berendrecht, Antwerpen, op 18 augustus. De enige (!) **Buidelmees** *Remiz pendulinus* werd op 6 augustus waargenomen bij Tienen. De soort lijkt wel weer zeldzamer te worden... In de tweede helft van augustus werden drie **Grauwe Klauwieren** *Lanius collurio* waargenomen. Een juveniele **Roodkopklauwier** *L senator* in rui naar eerste-winterkleed verbleef vanaf 25 augustus in de Baai van Heist, West-Vlaanderen, en deed zich daar te goed aan de talrijke hommels. De vogel droeg een Nederlandse ring, die ten minste gedeeltelijk afgelezen werd; vermoedelijk betreft het de vogel die op 20 augustus werd geringd bij Castricum, Noord-Holland, Nederland. Op 1 juli werd een eerstezomer mannetje **Roodmus** *Carpodacus erythrinus* geringd bij Tessenderlo, Limburg. In de tweede helft van augustus werden zes overvliegende **Ortolanen** *Emberiza hortulana* opgemerkt, daarvan vlogen er vier over Oostmalle.

Deze rubriek kwam tot stand met medewerking van Yves Baptiste (Harelbeke), Luk Bekaert (Oost-Vlaanderen), Peter Collaerts en Maarten Hens (Vlaams-Brabant), Frank De Scheemaeker (Mergus), Hugues Dufourny (Hainaut), Koen Leysen (Limburg), en Willy Verschueren (Groenlink). Ook de hulp van al diegenen die (hun) waarnemingen inspraken op de Wielewaalvogellijn (03-4880194) was hier onontbeerlijk.

Gerald Driessens, Pastoriestraat 16, 2500 Lier, België

DBA-nieuws

Afscheid van Remco Hofland als beheerder Dutch Birding-vogellijn Het zal de trouwe gebruikers van de Dutch Birding-vogellijn niet ontgaan zijn. Met ingang van september heeft Klaas Haas uit Groningen Remco Hofland uit Leiden opgevolgd als beheerder van de Dutch Birding-vogellijn. Remco heeft gedurende vijf jaar zijn taak als inspreker van de vogellijn (én wat daar allemaal nog meer bij komt kijken) met bijzonder veel overtuiging verricht. In die vijf jaar hebben de vogellijn, de piepergroep(en) en de bijhorende computerapparatuur zich stormachtig ontwikkeld. Dankzij zijn enthousiasme en daadkracht heeft Remco zich hiertussen staande weten te houden en heeft hij aan alle ontwikkelingen ook belangrijke bijdragen geleverd. Het is misschien goed nog eens te benadrukken dat het gaat om een in principe onbezoldigde vrijwilligersbaan, maar wel eentje waarbij men van 00:00 uur tot 24:00 uur paraat moet kunnen zijn. Omdat de vogellijn van groot belang is voor het kunnen voortbestaan in de huidige vorm van ons tijdschrift Dutch Birding, kunnen wij stellen dat Remco zich figuurlijk en letterlijk zeer verdienstelijk heeft gemaakt voor de Dutch Birding Association. Vanaf deze plaats wordt hij hiervoor alvast heel hartelijk bedankt, en wij wensen hem succes in zijn in september aangevangen betrekking. Bij gelegenheid zullen wij nog nader stilstaan bij het vertrek van Remco.

De vogellijn heeft zich ontwikkeld tot een onmisbaar onderdeel van het moderne twitchen maar zeker ook van de minder 'zware' vormen van het ontdekken, herkennen, genieten, doorgeven, 'tikken' en documenteren van zeldzame, schaarse en interessante vogelsoorten. Wij zijn dan ook bijzonder blij dat er al heel snel een capabele vervanger voor Remco Hofland is gevonden in de persoon van Klaas Haas. En ook dit zal de trouwe gebruiker van de vogellijn niet ontgaan zijn; Klaas is dit jaar al zeer regelmatig ingevallen voor Remco en heeft dus al de nodige ervaring opgedaan. Wij wensen Klaas veel succes toe. BESTUUR DBA

Avifauna van Nederland deel 2 De productie van deel 2 van de Avifauna van Nederland (schaarse en algemene vogels) heeft wederom vertraging opgelopen. Er wordt momenteel gewerkt aan de opmaak van dit door SOVON geproduceerde deel en naar verwachting zal het in februari 2001 beschikbaar zijn. Alle begunstigers van Dutch Birding die dit deel reeds betaald hebben, zullen het vervolgens automatisch toegestuurd krijgen. BESTUUR DBA

DB Actueel

Golden-spectacled warbler systematics continued In 1999, two papers on the systematics of Golden-spectacled Warbler *Seicercus burkii* sensu lato were published almost simultaneously by Per Alström & Urban Olsson (Ibis 141: 545-568, 1999; cf Dutch Birding 21: 303, 1999) and Jochen Martens et al (Zool Abhandl Staatl Mus Tierk Dresden 50: 281-327, 1999; cf Dutch Birding 22: 60, 2000). Both papers concluded that golden-spectacled warbler is in fact a species complex and in both papers a new species was formally described. There were, however, several differences in the application of names to the various populations in both papers and some different conclusions were reached (cf Dutch Birding 22: 60, 2000).

In a recent publication, Alström & Olsson try to highlight and clarify these differences in opinion and conclusions and compare nomenclature and taxonomy in both papers (Alström, P & Olsson, U 2000. Golden-spectacled Warbler systematics. Ibis 142: 495-500, 2000). This results in an annotated list of the 'Alström & Olsson taxa' with the matching 'Martens et al taxa'. The most important conclusion is that both newly described species (*S soror* by Alström & Olsson, *S omeiensis* by Martens et al) are valid, clearly referring to different populations. The golden-spectacled warbler complex, therefore, consists of six species: *S burkii*, *S whistleri* (with races *whistleri* and *nemoralis*), *S tephrocephalus*, *S omeiensis*, *S valentini* (with races *valentini* and *latouchei*) and *S soror*. Furthermore, an alleged as yet unidentified species of the complex mentioned by Martens et al (1999) appears to be identical with a race of another species, *S affinis intermedius*. ANDRÉ J VAN LOON

Chinese Crested Tern rediscovered In June 2000, at least eight adult Chinese Crested Terns *Sterna bernsteini* were discovered on Matsu, a small Taiwanese island situated less than 10 km off the coast of Fujian, China. The birds were first seen on 1 June by Taiwanese photographer Liang Chieh-Te while shooting a documentary on terns, but the news was not released until the identification was confirmed by Lucia Severinghaus, vice-chairman of Wild Bird Federation Taiwan. The Chinese Crested Terns were occupying four nests and four fledglings were found; probably, six pairs were present in the colonies of the numerous other terns breeding on the island (mainly Greater Crested Terns *S bergii*). Identification of the terns was straightforward; being slightly smaller than Sandwich Tern *S sandvicensis*, they are most easily distinguished from other 'large terns' by their yellow bill with extensive black tip (the mirror image of Sandwich Tern's bill), very pale grey upperparts and relatively long tail with deep fork.

Chinese Crested Tern was described with several other Chinese bird species in 1863 by the Dutch ornithologist Gustaaf Schlegel, then only 23 years old (1863, Muséum d'Histoire Naturelle des Pays-Bas, livre 6, Sternae, p 9 – Halmaheira); until recently, it was also known by the scientific name *S zimmermanni*. The species was last reliably observed in 1937 when 21 birds were collected off the coast of Shandong, China. The breeding areas were presumed to be along the coast of Shandong and the wintering areas were supposedly along the coasts of Thailand, the Philippines and the Moluccas. Although there have been reports from, for instance, southern Thailand in 1980 and Bali in 1986, there have been no substantiated records in the last 63 years and the species was feared extinct.

The island where the birds were rediscovered is a protected wildlife reserve but it is considered necessary that the terns receive extra protection because their total population may be not higher than a few 10s of individuals. JUDY YEN, ENNO B EBELS & DIEDERIK KOK

New species of bush-warbler A species of bush-warbler *Bradypterus* has been known to occur in the mountains of Taiwan for a long time. After its discovery in 1917, it was considered to belong to several Asian bush-warbler species by various authors, but only recently it was realized that the Taiwan population represents a separate species. It has now been formally described as Taiwan Bush-Warbler *B alishanensis* (Rasmussen, P C, Round, P D, Dickinson, E C & Rozendaal, F G 2000. A new bush-warbler (Sylviidae, *Bradypterus*) from Taiwan. Auk 117: 279-289). A colour painting by Ian Lewington of the new species and some of its congeners features on the cover of this issue of The Auk.

The new species differs from other bush-warblers especially by its distinct song, both sounding clearly different and showing a different structure in sonagrams. Furthermore, there are slight but consistent differences in bill structure, plumage coloration and wing formula. The name *alishanensis* is derived from the A-li Shan, the mountain where the first specimens were collected in 1917. Taiwan Bush-Warbler appears to be a relatively common breeding bird between 1200 and 3000 m, occurring in various, also disturbed, habitat types in at least two major mountain areas. It is, therefore, not considered threatened. The number of endemic bird species on Taiwan now stands at 15. ANDRÉ J VAN LOON

Grauwe Fitissen in veelvoud Grauwe Fitis *Phylloscopus trochiloides* is sinds de eerste waarneming in Nederland in september 1965 een steeds 'gewonere' dwaalgast geworden. Tot en met 1999 waren er 23 gevallen, waarvan zes in 1996 (twee in het voorjaar en vier in het najaar, tussen 15 augustus en 9 september). In 2000 leverde alleen de eerste decade van september al zes waarnemingen op, met als extra bijzonderheid dat op zowel 5 als 9 september tegelijkertijd ten minste vier Grauwe Fitissen in Nederland aanwezig waren.

Op 4 september ontdekte Enno Ebels een exemplaar in de Kobbeduinen op Schiermonnikoog, Friesland. De volgende ochtend werden al vroeg twee vogels ontdekt: één door Sander Bot op de westpunt van de Stuifdijk van de Maasvlakte, Zuid-Holland, en één door Roy Slaterus in de Kunstenaarsduintjes bij IJmuiden, Noord-Holland. Beide vogels riepen niet alleen maar zongen ook met enige regelmaat. Rond de middag bleek ook de vogel op Schiermonnikoog nog aanwezig te zijn. Later in de middag maakte Arie Ouwerkerk het kwartet voor die dag vol met de waarneming van een exemplaar bij Oosterend op Terschelling, Friesland. Deze laatste vogel was naar

249 Chinese Crested Tern / Chinese Kuifstern *Sterna bernsteini*, Matsu, Taiwan, summer 2000
(Chand Shou-Hwa / Wild Bird Federation Taiwan)

250-251 Arendbuizerd / Long-legged Buzzard *Buteo rufinus*, juveniel, Praamweg, Flevoland, 9 september 2000 *(Marc Plomp)*

verluidt al vanaf 1 september aanwezig. Overigens werd deze laatste in zeldzaamheid overtroefd door de eveneens die dag nabij Oosterend aanwezige Kleine Spotvogel *Acrocephalus caligatus*. De Grauwe Fitis van IJmuiden was op 10 september nog steeds aanwezig en die van Schiermonnikoog werd op 11 september – nadat er een aantral dagen niet op de plek gezocht was – opnieuw gemeld door Justin Jansen, ditmaal ook zingend.

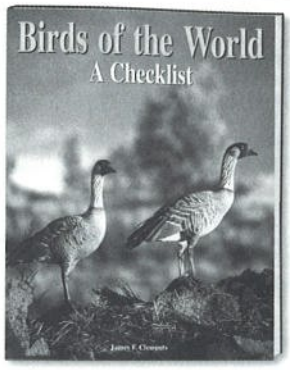
Op 7 september trof Han Zevenhuizen een Grauwe Fitis aan op het oostelijke deel van de Stuifdijk van de Maasvlakte, op c 1.5 km afstand van de plek van de eerdere melding. Later zou blijken dat het hier een tweede exemplaar betrof dat ook op 9 september nog aanwezig was. In de vroege ochtend van 9 september werd een frequent zingend exemplaar ontdekt door Jeroen de Bruyn, Diederik Kok en – opnieuw – HZ bij camping De Robbenjager op de noordpunt van Texel, Noord-Holland. Later op de ochtend konden Dick Groenendijk, Swen Rijnbeek en Marcel Scholte bevestigen dat zich op de Maasvlakte inderdaad twee vogels bevonden toen ze aan het begin van de Stuifdijk een exemplaar aantroffen (naar mag worden aangenomen de eerste vogel) terwijl andere vogelaars tegelijkertijd verderop langs de Stuifdijk de andere vogel in beeld hadden. Als wordt aangenomen dat de vogel van Schiermonnikoog ook op 9 september aanwezig was (en dus geen nieuwe vogel op exact dezelfde plek betrof), dan bevonden zich die dag dus zelfs vijf Grauwe Fitissen in Nederland. Enno B Ebels

Greenish Warblers Between 4 and 11 September 2000, six Greenish Warblers *Phylloscopus trochiloides* were seen in the Netherlands; four birds were observed simultaneously at different sites on both 5 and 9 September and, on the last date, presumably even five bird were present.

Arendbuizerd in Flevoland Op dinsdag 5 september ontdekte (de 74-jarige) C H Tonino samen met zijn 'vogelvriendin' mevrouw de Valk een afwijkend rossige buizerd *Buteo* in een veld langs de Praamweg, Flevoland. De volgende dag keerden zij terug om de vogel nogmaals te bekijken maar door de slechte weersomstandigheden werden geen nieuwe details waargenomen. Op donderdag 7 september waren de omstandigheden beter. De vogel werd uitvoerig bestudeerd en gedetermineerd als Arendbuizerd *B rufinus* en als zodanig ingesproken op de Dutch Birding-vogellijn. Het nieuws werd voorzichtig verspreid maar naarmate er meer details werden ingesproken en na telefonisch contact met de beheerder van de vogellijn, Klaas Haas, bleek in toenemende mate dat het om een uiterst serieuze melding ging van de deze lastig te determineren soort. Zoektochten op 8 september leverden ofwel niet de goede vogel ofwel waarnemingen onder te slechte omstandigheden op en pas in de ochtend van zaterdag 9 september vonden Wim Jansen, Aart Vink, Henny Vink en Wim Wiegant de vogel terug in hetzelfde veld en gaven direct door dat de mysterieuze buizerd nog ter plekke was. Naarmate de stroom vogelaars groeide en de vogel zich beter liet zien, sloeg de aanvankelijke voorzichtigheid om in enthousiasme en bleek de vogel alle kenmerken te vertonen die een (juveniele) Arendbuizerd zou moeten hebben. Toen hij rond de middag een aantal keren de lucht in ging om samen met de 10-tallen aanwezige Buizerds *B buteo* te gaan cirkelen bleek in directe vergelijking met de Buizerds het verschil in spanwijdte en lichaamsbouw en verdween het laatste restje twijfel. De vogel was op 10 september nog ter plekke aanwezig maar verdween aan het eind van de ochtend hoog schroevend uit het zicht.

Het betreft de tweede Arendbuizerd voor Nederland; de eerste werd op 12 december 1905 gevangen bij Buiksloot, Noord-Holland, en vervolgens tot aan zijn dood op 23 januari 1909 gehouden in dierentuin Artis in Amsterdam. De soort heeft zijn broedgebied de laatste jaren in Oost-Europa uitgebreid, zodat de kans dat er opnieuw een exemplaar naar Nederland zou afdwalen iets was toegenomen. Enno B Ebels & Klaas Haas

Long-legged Buzzard A juvenile Long-legged Buzzard *Buteo rufinus* was observed in Flevoland, the Netherlands, on 5-10 September 2000. This was the second record; the first was on 12 December 1905.



James F. Clements

Birds of the World - A Checklist

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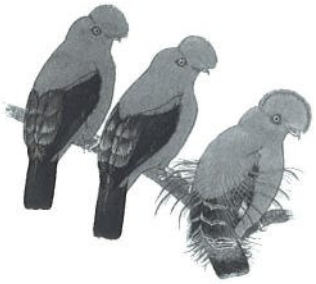

Gedurende de laatste decennia zijn er nogal wat veranderingen doorgevoerd in de taxonomie van de Zuid-Amerikaanse vogels, dankzij nieuwe DNA-technieken en geluidsopnamen. Hierdoor zijn er in de literatuur veel 'nieuwe' soorten opgedoken.
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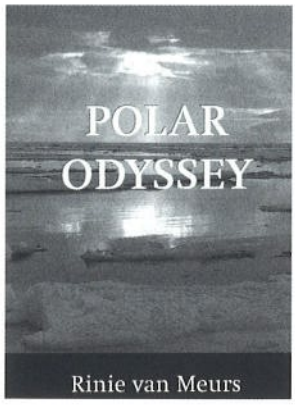

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