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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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Phenotypic variation and systematics of Mongolian Gull

Pierre Yésou

In memory of Vladimir Vladimirovich Leonovich (1924-98)

Since Peter Grant's pioneering work (cf Grant 1982, 1986), the knowledge of the identification and phenotypic variation of the gull taxa belonging to the *Larus argentatus-cachinnans-fuscus* complex has dramatically increased in Europe. Initially, this progress benefited from studies conducted on breeding grounds where mixed gull colonies allowed the comparison of different taxa (eg, Dubois & Yésou 1984). Then, the development of colour-ringing schemes gave multiple opportunities to study the appearance of birds of known origin, sometimes at a great distance of the ringing site. Particularly remarkable was the case of Pontic Gull *L (cachinnans) cachinnans* of which the field characters were first established from birds ringed in Black Sea colonies and subsequently observed in Germany during the winter season (Klein 1994, Gruber 1995). However, because only a small number of birds at the limit of the species' winter range had been studied, the phenotypic variation found was not representative for the species. Therefore, further studies of birds on the breeding grounds were needed to describe in detail the phenotypic variation of this taxon (Klein & Gruber 1997, Liebers & Dierschke 1997).

The identification of the other taxa breeding in the former USSR remains far less easy as most descriptions, based on birds seen on the breeding grounds, are anecdotal (eg, Pleske 1928, Dement'ev 1951) or even disputable. (Unfortunately, according to knowledgeable Russian ornithologists, the review by Judin & Firsova (1990) is far from giving a reliable account of the *argentatus-cachinnans-fuscus* complex and will not be considered here.) Also, although the skin collection in the Natural History Museum at Tring, England, has been a reference for decades, it now suffers from the doubtful validity of the Meinertzhagen collection (British Ornithologists' Union 1997) and the erroneous labelling of some skins (Lars Jonsson pers comm). The collections in Russian museums harbour rich reference material but have rarely been visited by western gull students. Moreover, very few western observers have experience with the Asian taxa on their breeding grounds (eg, Liebers & Dierschke 1997, Yésou & Hirschfeld 1997).

Further, the identification of the Asian taxa at migration stopovers and on wintering grounds still remains speculative in many cases. For instance, birds looking as dark mantled as Lesser Black-backed Gull *L graellsii* used to be identified as Mongolian Gulls *L (c) mongolicus* in Hong Kong (Kennerley 1987) but are now called Taimyr Gulls *L (heuglini) taimyrensis* there as well as in Japan (Kennerley et al 1995, Hoogendoorn et al 1996) although the only Asian taxon with such a dark mantle is the western Siberian Heuglin's Gull *L (h) heuglini* (Yésou & Hirschfeld 1997). Detailed descriptions based on birds studied on the breeding grounds are available for only two Asian taxa, ie, Armenian Gull *L armenicus* (eg, Buzun 1993, Filchagov 1993, Liebers & Helbig 1999) and Baraba Gull *L (c) barabensis* (Panov & Monzikov 2000, who suggested that this taxon is a subspecies of *heuglini*), and are therefore still needed for the other Asian taxa.

In this article, the phenotypic variation of adult *mongolicus* is described and its systematic implications are discussed. It is mainly based on studies of birds in colonies at Lake Baikal, Siberia, Russia, in the spring of 1992 (24 May-30 June) and of skins at the Moscow Zoological Museum, the Zoological Institute of St Petersburg and the field station of the University of Ulan Ude in the Selenga delta, Lake Baikal. Moreover, I benefited from the experience and guidance of Sergey Pyzhianov who has been studying colonies of *mongolicus* at Lake Baikal for years (and who has developed an efficient trapping technique for ringing *mongolicus*, by putting α-chloraline baits at the nest), allowing me to visit all main colonies, except those in marshes at the north end of the lake, and to handle more than 150 adult birds.

Distribution and numbers

Mongolicus has a patchy breeding distribution, ranging from south-eastern Altai to north-eastern

85 Part of Bolshoye Toïnik, Maloye More, north-western Lake Baikal, Siberia, Russia, May 1992 *(Pierre Yésou)*. This island holds main colony of Mongolian Gull / Mongoolse Meeuw *Larus (cachinnans) mongolicus* (c 1000 pairs). Egg laying starts on c 5 May when ice still covers large parts of Lake Baikal. Temperatures of below 0°C regularly occur at night up to mid-June. Water surface temperature is still below 10°C by late June, except in some sheltered coastal bays **86** Mongolian Gulls / Mongoolse Meeuwen *Larus (cachinnans) mongolicus*, Maloye More, north-western Lake Baikal, Siberia, Russia, June 1992 *(Pierre Yésou)*

Mongolia and the western part of north-eastern China (Dement'ev 1951). The isolated breeding population of 'Herring Gulls' at Lake Khanka, situated at the border of easternmost China and Far Eastern Russia, has also been claimed to belong to this taxon (Pyzhjanov & Tupitsyn 1994) but no systematic study of this population has been published so far.

According to Pyzhjanov & Tupitsyn (1994) and Pyzhianov (1996), only 750-1200 pairs are breeding in Altai, western Mongolia and Tuva (Tuvinskaya) Autonomous Region. There are c 3600 pairs at Lake Khubsugul in northern Mongolia and c 7200 pairs at Lake Baikal. The lakes of Transbaikalya (Toresiskie Lakes) and north-eastern Mongolia and Hukun Nor in nearby China harbour 7500-10 000 pairs. The total population of *mongolicus* is estimated to be only 19 000-22 000 pairs (excluding the population of 'Herring Gulls' at Lake Khanka), ie, less than 100 000 birds (including immature and non-breeding birds). *Mongolicus* is clearly a scarce gull.

Birds ringed at Lake Baikal have been recovered on the Pacific coast of Russia in autumn, suggesting an eastward overland migration route after the breeding season (Sergey Pyzhianov pers comm). The entire population probably winters in coastal south-eastern Asia. *Mongolicus* has indeed been positively recorded in Hong Kong, Japan and South Korea (Kennerley et al 1995, Hoogendoorn et al 1996, Lethaby et al 2000). It has been claimed in Pakistan by Roberts (1991) who relied only on bare-part coloration, a character of little or no diagnostic value in this case (Yésou & Hirschfeld 1997). Therefore, the occurrence of *mongolicus* in western Asia remains undocumented.

Phenotypic variation

The original description of *mongolicus* by Sushkin (1925) is as follows: 'Above as *vegae* [Vega Gull *L vegae*], darker than *cachinnans* ([from] Kirghiz steppe and Lake Zaissan), feet pink, orbital ring vermilion-red; grey wedges of the inner webs of primaries shorter and darker than in *cachinnans* but lighter than in *vegae*. Wing male 462-480, female 442-450, tarsus 65-70, middle toe 52-58. From 8 specimens, South-Eastern Altai and NW Mongolia. Type: male ad., 9.VII.1914, Lake Uring-noor, NW Mongolia' (Sushkin's descriptions of new taxa are both in Russian and English).

Further details were given by Stegmann (1934). He studied 27 skins of adult birds and mentioned a wing-tip pattern darker than in *cachinnans* and closer to Birula Gull *L v birulai*, with black on the seven or eight outermost primaries and a subterminal black bar on p10 (primaries are numbered ascendently). The latter taxon was given the name *birulai* (Pleske 1928), in honour of the great sailor and Arctic explorer Birula, hence the male gender. Regrettably, many authors kept using the name '*birulae*', a misspelling by Stegmann (1934). *Birulai* is hardly differentiated from *vegae*, except for the variable leg colour and darker iris in some birds. It is treated as either a synonym of *vegae* or a subspecies of it (eg, Stepanyan 1990, Kennerley et al 1995, Yésou & Hirschfeld 1997, Panov & Monzikov 2000).

Thereafter, information on the phenotype of *mongolicus* remained scanty for a long time. Dement'ev (1951), in his review of the gulls of the USSR, simply stated that the plumage is similar to that of *vegae* and summarized Stegmann's (1934) description of the wing pattern. The most recent Russian systematic review (Stepanyan 1990) was even more anecdotal: 'mantle colour a little darker than in *cachinnans*, leg colour varying from pink-grey to yellow'. In his review of the variation of the Palearctic large white-headed gulls, Devillers (1983) simply mentioned a mantle similar to or darker than that of Yellow-legged Gull *L michahellis*, with more black on the primaries.

Then, western pioneers began to visit the breeding grounds of *mongolicus*, in particular Steve Madge. He described the iris as 'definitively' dark (Madge 1983), before acknowledging that the iris in fact varies from almost white to very dark (Madge 1985). Also, he found the legs to be fleshy-pink in most adult birds (Madge 1985). Grant (1986) mentioned that birds seen in Mongolia were pink legged, some yellowish legged, and seemed to have a dark iris.

Lastly, Pyzhianov & Tupitchyn (1992) published a short article, unfortunately hardly accessible to western gull students, that is the most detailed publication on the phenotypic variation of *mongolicus* to date. They mostly focused on leg colour which varied from pink to yellow and orange, none of these colours occurring in more than half of the adult birds at any of their study plots. Further articles on Asian gulls (eg, Kennerley et al 1995, Yésou & Hirschfeld 1997) were no more informative, with the exception of Panov & Monzikov (2000) who gave information on the wing-tip pattern of *mongolicus*.

87 Mongolian Gulls / Mongoolse Meeuwen *Larus (cachinnans) mongolicus*, Maloye More, north-western Lake Baikal, Siberia, Russia, June 1992 *(Pierre Yésou)*

88 Mongolian Gulls / Mongoolse Meeuwen *Larus (cachinnans) mongolicus*, Maloye More, north-western Lake Baikal, Siberia, Russia, June 1992 *(Pierre Yésou)*. Note that incidence of light influences perception of mantle colour

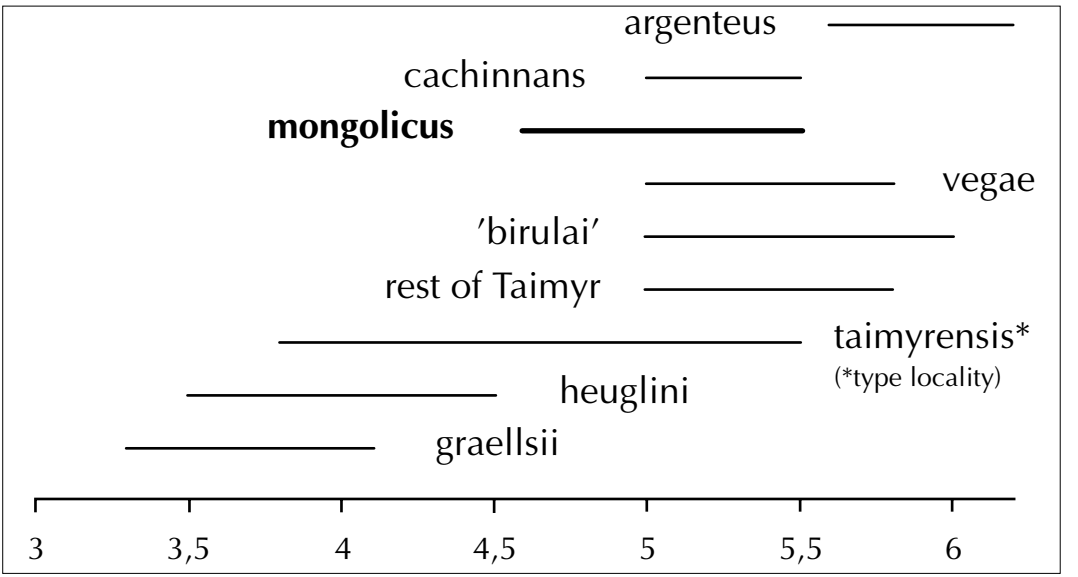

FIGURE 1 Munsell's index (37-step scale) of colour refraction of mantle colour for selected Palearctic taxa of *Larus argentatus-cachinnans-fuscus* complex. Darkness of grey mantle decreases from left to right. Only specimens of range given in type description, ie, lower reaches of Yenisei river in south-western Taimyr, have been included in Taimyr Gull *L (heuglini) taimyrensis*. Specimens used for Birula Gull *L vegae birulai* came from western Yakutia and east to Kolyma delta, those for Vega Gull *L vegae* from east of Kolyma river to Chukchi peninsula. *Argenteus*, not representing a valid subspecies according to Dutch committee for avian systematics (CSNA) (Sangster et al 1999), refers to western and paler population of Herring Gull *L argentatus*. Data from Barth (1966) and by courtesy of Andrey Filchagov (in litt) and Sergey Pyzhianov (in litt)

Results

Overall appearance

Mongolicus is a large and heavy gull, with a mean weight of 1140 g at the time of incubation (880-1580 g, n = 11, unsexed). The wingspan, calculated from freshly dead birds (positioned as live birds), is 140-160 cm (with four females ranging from 138 to 146 cm and five males from 146 to 156 cm). Further measurements are given in table 1.

TABLE 1 Measurements (mm) of 42 adult (unsexed) Mongolian Gulls *Larus (cachinnans) mongolicus* trapped at nests at Lake Baikal, Siberia, Russia, on 2-26 June 1992. Two different measurements of tarsus were taken: *1* from centre of both joints as usually done on skins ('museum'); and *2* from outer extremity of both articulations which is most convenient way when measuring live birds ('field')

	Range	Mean ± SD
Culmen	48.0-61.7	54.9 ± 3.0
Gonys height	16.6-22.0	19.0 ± 1.4
Head plus bill length	115-139	126.3 ± 6.1
Tarsus (museum)	63.2-79.3	68.9 ± 3.2
Tarsus (field)	67.8-87.8	80.5 ± 3.9
Folded wing	432-494	458.5 ± 14.8

It is a large-chested, broad-necked and large-billed bird. The bulky appearance is partly tempered as the birds often stand rather upright on their long legs while the long wings give them an attenuated rear body.

The mantle is mid-grey, with Munsell's index of colour refraction ranging from 4.5 to 5.5 in 32 birds of Lake Baikal (Sergey Pyzhianov pers comm). This means that *mongolicus* is distinctly paler than *heuglini*, the mantle colour of many birds matching that of *cachinnans* as well as that of many *vegae* (including *birulai*) and *taimyrensis* (figure 1).

The wing-tip is among the darkest of the Asian taxa: usually seven (ranging from six to nine) outer primaries show black, sometimes extending onto the outermost coverts. There are two white mirrors, less often only one. Large white scapular and tertial crescents (13-27 and 19-42 mm wide, respectively, in 44 birds) are shown on the folded wing. The rest of the plumage is white, except for the pale grey underwing.

In contrast to the well-marked winter plumage

89-91 Mongolian Gull / Mongoolse Meeuw *Larus (cachinnans) mongolicus*, adult, Lake Baikal, Siberia, Russia, June 1992 *(Pierre Yésou)*. Note distinct white trailing edge to wing **92** Mongolian Gull / Mongoolse Meeuw *Larus (cachinnans) mongolicus*, adult, Lake Baikal, Siberia, Russia, June 1992 *(Pierre Yésou)*. Note contrast between pale grey coverts, darker grey band formed by bases of remiges and white (almost translucent) trailing edge to wing

of *vegae* and birds of Taimyr, *mongolicus* only shows poorly developed dark streaks on the head after the post-breeding moult (Dement'ev 1951). Birds still present at Lake Baikal in November show a virtually all-white head and neck (Sergey Pyzhianov pers comm).

The bill is yellow with a red gonydeal spot and shows variable dark markings. The iris varies from yellowish-white to dark grey-brown and the legs from pale flesh to bright orange. All these variations, and those in the wing-tip pattern, will be detailed in the next paragraphs.

Wing-tip pattern

According to a study of 89 adult-plumaged birds in the hand in colonies at Lake Baikal (an examination of museum skins did not result in additional information), at least some black occurs on the six (p5-10) to nine outermost primaries (p2-10), most often on the seven outermost ones (p4-10), with a different number of black-tipped primaries in the two wings in c 10% of the birds (table 2). The black extends onto some or all outermost primary-coverts in 25 out of 84 birds with black on at least seven outer primaries. Such an extension of black onto the outer coverts (which otherwise always have a black shaft) was not observed in birds with only six black-tipped primaries. This could, however, be explained by the sample size. The proportion of adult birds with at least some black markings on the outer coverts is c 30%. Due to both the number of

93 Mongolian Gulls / Mongoolse Meeuwen *Larus (cachinnans) mongolicus*, adults, Lake Baikal, Siberia, Russia, June 1992 *(Pierre Yésou)*. Note contrast between pale grey underwing-coverts, darker grey band formed by bases of remiges and white (almost translucent) trailing edge to wing **94** Mongolian Gulls / Mongoolse Meeuwen *Larus (cachinnans) mongolicus*, adults, Lake Baikal, Siberia, Russia, June 1992 *(Pierre Yésou)*. Note distinct white trailing edge to wing

TABLE 2 Number of black-tipped primaries in Mongolian *Larus (cachinnans) mongolicus*, Vega *L vegae* and Baraba Gulls *L (c) barabensis*. Data on *barabensis* and *vegae* from Panov & Monzikov (2000) and from skins at Zoological Institute of St Petersburg, Russia, respectively. [a] Number of black-tipped primaries can differ by one, thus bird showing, for instance, eight black-tipped primaries in one wing and nine black-tipped primaries in other wing is scored 8.5. [b] *Vegae* includes Birula Gull *L v birulai* but no birds of Taimyr have been considered in sample. [c] Panov & Monzikov (2000) did not look for asymmetry in number of black-tipped primaries. Also, their small sample did not include any specimen with nine black-tipped primaries; however, such birds do occur (Yésou & Hirschfeld 1997)

Number of black-tipped primaries	*mongolicus* (%)	*vegae* [b] (%)	*barabensis* (%)
8.5 [a]	1	-	- [c]
8.0	11	-	39
7.5 [a]	8	-	-
7.0	74	36	39
6.5 [a]	-	10	-
6.0	6	42	22
5.5 [a]	-	4	-
5.0	-	8	-
Sample (n)	89	50	18

black-tipped primaries and the frequency of black on the coverts, the wing-tip of *mongolicus* is among the darkest of the Asian taxa of the *argentatus-cachinnans-fuscus* complex, averaging darker than in *vegae*. Only *barabensis* more frequently shows black on eight primaries (table 2).

The tongue on the inner web of the outermost primary (p10) is pale grey. It is usually rather long, ending 9-15 cm from the primary-tip (see also Panov & Monzikov 2000) and covering about two-thirds of the width of the inner web. It is, however, shorter (ending up to 20 cm from the primary-tip) and narrower and somewhat darker in some birds, particularly those with eight or nine primaries with black, then resembling the usual *vegae* and *birulai* pattern. In such birds, the pale tongue can be less distinctly delineated from the black inner part of the web, being suffused with blackish.

White mirrors usually occur on both p9 and p10 but seven out of 67 (10%) adult-plumaged birds examined showed only a white mirror on p10.

The white mirror on p10 invariably forms a complete band covering the full width of both webs. It is usually separated from the white wing-tip by a subterminal black bar of 5-25 mm width although this bar was absent in two birds and incomplete in four others. The subterminal black bar was thus lacking, at least in part, in 9% of the handled birds. By way of comparison, this bar was incomplete or absent in 13 out of 45 (29%) skins of *vegae* and *birulai*, and it is usually absent in *cachinnans* (eg, Garner & Quinn 1997, Panov & Monzikov 2000). The length (measured along the feather-shaft) of the white mirror on p10 varied from 19 to 47 mm (with a mean of 36.4 mm), being 34-40 mm in half of the sample. It was worn at the tip and 48 and 55 mm long, respectively, in the two birds without a subterminal black bar.

The white mirror on p9 extends onto both webs (68% of 60 birds with a white mirror on p9) or is limited to the inner web (32%), exceptionally to the outer web (one case was mentioned by Panov & Monzikov 2000, ie, 1% of 92 birds, pooling their and mine samples). It forms either a complete white band (nine birds, 15%) or more often one or two white spots of variable pattern: white on both webs, extending to the border of the inner web (28%); white on both webs, fully surrounded with black (25%); white on the inner web only, extending to the border of the web (12%); white on the inner web only, fully surrounded with black (20%). The maximum length of the white mirror on p9 (measured parallel to the feather-shaft) varied from 6 to 31 mm (with a mean of 17.7 mm), being 10-22 mm in 77% of the cases.

No strong statistical relationship was found between the respective sizes of the white mirrors on p9 and p10 (n = 60).

Bill colour

The bill is yellow, varying from pale yellow to bright orange-yellow, commonly with a paler tip. The red gonydeal spot usually does not reach the upper edge of the lower mandible, falling short by 2-3 mm. Dark markings (spots or broken lines in front of the red gonydeal spot) occur in one out of three birds. Of 107 adult-plumaged birds trap-

95-96 Mongolian Gull / Mongoolse Meeuw *Larus (cachinnans) mongolicus*, adult, upperwing, Lake Baikal, Siberia, Russia, June 1992 *(Pierre Yésou)*. Typical wing-tip patterns. Note large white mirror and subterminal black bar (white tip more or less abraded) on p10 and mirror of variable extent on p9

97 Mongolian Gull / Mongoolse Meeuw *Larus (cachinnans) mongolicus*, adult, upperwing, Lake Baikal, Siberia, Russia, June 1992 *(Pierre Yésou)*. Less common wing-tip pattern. Note incomplete subterminal black bar on p10

98 Mongolian Gull / Mongoolse Meeuw *Larus (cachinnans) mongolicus*, (sub)adult, upperwing, Lake Baikal, Siberia, Russia, June 1992 *(Pierre Yésou)*. Wing-tip pattern shown by a minority of birds. White mirror on p9 is missing. Note black markings on outer greater coverts in this otherwise fully adult-plumaged breeding bird

99 Mongolian Gull / Mongoolse Meeuw *Larus (cachinnans) mongolicus*, (sub)adult, upperwing, Lake Baikal, Siberia, Russia, early June 1992 *(Pierre Yésou)*. This bird shows very dark wing-tip pattern, without white mirror on p9, and with many dark markings on outer coverts. Although bird was trapped at nest, its advanced moult stage (growing inner primaries and in particular fresh unmarked outer median coverts contrasting with older, brown-tinged, surrounding feathers) suggests that it has not yet reached fully adult plumage **100** Mongolian Gull / Mongoolse Meeuw *Larus (cachinnans) mongolicus*, adult, underwing, Lake Baikal, Siberia, Russia, May 1992 *(Pierre Yésou)*. Note contrast between mid-grey remiges, paler grey greater and median coverts, and white lesser coverts. Shadow is partly masking pale grey tips to primaries that appear white and translucent when seen from below in flight

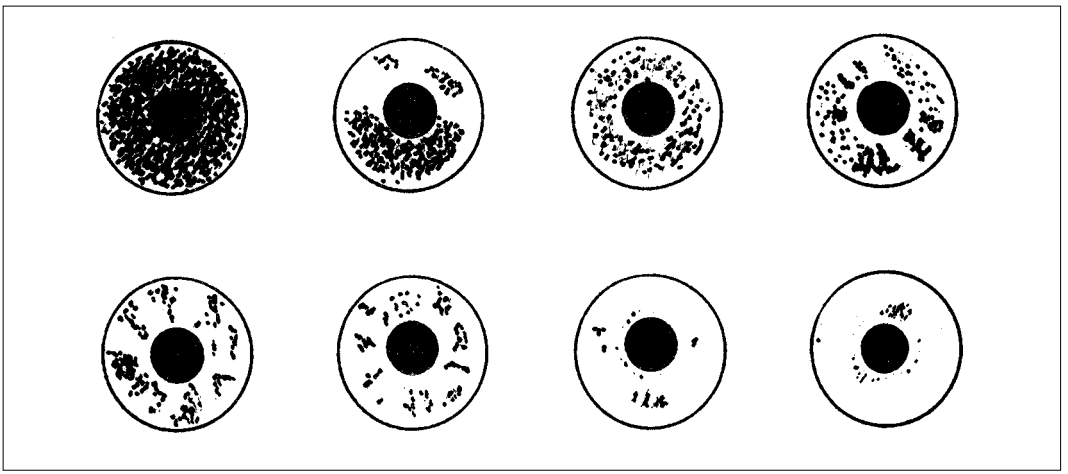

FIGURE 2 Variability of iris pigmentation in Mongolian Gull / Mongoolse Meeuw *Larus (cachinnans) mongolicus* at Lake Baikal, Siberia, Russia (redrawn from field sketches of birds in hand) *(Pierre Yésou)*

ped at nests and examined in the hand, 17% showed dark markings on the upper mandible only and 15% on both mandibles (in one extreme case, the markings formed an almost complete dark bill band of c 3 mm width).

Eye colour

The orbital ring was vermilion-red in all adult-plumaged birds I examined in the hand.

Pyzhianov & Tupitchyn (1992) described the iris as ranging from pale ashy-grey to olive-grey to dark smoky-grey. 54 and 68% of their samples of Lake Baikal and Lake Khubsugul, respectively, were pale eyed. They found no correlation between iris and leg colours (a point I did not check).

In the birds I examined in the hand, the iris was dull yellow (very pale, almost whitish, in some), usually peppered with grey (pale bluish-grey to dark grey-brown) minute spots in variable density over a much variable extent of the iris surface. In some birds, the grey was peppered quite uniformly over the iris, often with a few small aggregations forming dark marks on the overall pale eye. In other cases, dense grey spots formed one or more large dark areas over the eye while sparse spotting left the yellow iris colour showing over the rest of it (figure 2). Eye darkness is not sex related. Pale eyes and dark eyes are found in both males and females and pairing occurs irrespective of the iris colour (of eight pairs, the male had darker eyes than the female in four cases and the female had darker eyes than the male in three cases; the partners of the remaining pair showed similarly coloured eyes).

Such a high variability of iris pigmentation makes it difficult to accurately comment on the eye colour of *mongolicus*. In a first analysis of 43 birds in the hand, I classified 28% of them as pale eyed, 42% as intermediate and 30% as dark eyed. A more detailed analysis, including two more samples (table 3), showed that nearly one-third was pale eyed while grey spots covered more than half of the iris surface in another third. Really dark-eyed birds, however, accounted for less than 10%.

In the field, colour assessment is less easy. Of 236 adult birds studied through binoculars or telescope, 89% were classified as yellow or yellowish eyed. It thus seems that eyes classified as pale grey in the hand are perceived as yellowish in the field while dark-eyed birds accounted for only 4% in the field sample (not statistically different from the 8% found during the in-hand examination).

Leg colour

Pyzhianov & Tupitchyn (1992) described the high degree of variability of the leg colour at Lake Baikal and in Mongolia. They examined various series of birds in the hand, comparing the leg colour with colour charts. Grey legs accounted for 22-40%, yellow 13-27%, pink 21-46% and flesh 4-10%, while 6-30% of the birds showed mix-coloured legs. The proportion of each colour type varied between colonies and from one year to the other in a given colony. Also, in a proportion of birds, the leg colour showed temporal changes. According to Pyzhjanov (1998), not

TABLE 3 In-hand assessment of dominant iris colour in three samples of adult Mongolian Gulls *Larus (cachinnans) mongolicus* trapped at nests at Lake Baikal, Siberia, Russia, in May-June 1992 (percentage of sample size). [a] Several colonies. [b] Different colony

	Maloye More [a] 31 May-7 June (%)	Maloye More [b] 15 June (%)	North-eastern Lake Baikal 26 June (%)	Pooled (%)
Yellow (grey < 10%)	28	28	42	29
Yellowish (grey 10-50%)	44	42	8	41
Pale grey (grey > 50%)	21	21	33	22
Dark grey	5	9	-	6
Brown	1	-	17	2
Sample (n)	97	43	12	152

only the intensity but also the tone of the coloration changes. He hypothesized that these changes are related to external conditions (food composition) and age. It is a largely acknowledged fact that carotine-rich food can enhance the expression of the carotinoid colouring matter in the legs of gulls (cf Lönnberg 1933). Any relation with age, however, remains to be proven.

I examined in the hand the legs and feet of 152 birds of most colonies I visited at Lake Baikal. It readily appeared that the fleshy-pink colour usually was tinged with some yellow pigment over a very variable extent. Yellow was more often found on and around the knee and on the rear leg while webs often were of a deeper pink (one pink-legged bird with orange webs was most unusual). Some birds exhibited either bright pink or yellow (pale to bright, then resembling *michahellis*) legs but most showed a variable leg colour. This rendered any reference to colour charts rather subjective and I relied on my own assessment when establishing the dominant leg colour in the examined adult birds. Of them, 15.8% had flesh-to-pink legs, 76.3% yellowish-flesh, 5.9% pale yellow and 2% bright yellow.

In the field, the perception of the yellow tinge varies markedly, depending on the light incidence and on whether the legs are wet or not (yellow shows better on wet legs). Even birds which seem to have yellow legs when looked at them with the naked eye occasionally showed pinkish legs through binoculars. The field score nevertheless matched the in-hand results, with almost all 555 birds studied in the field showing 'pale' (ie, flesh or pink more or less obviously admixed with yellow) legs and only seven (1.3%) yellow legs.

Discussion

Mantle colour and wing-tip pattern

On the basis of the type specimen collected in north-western Mongolia, Sushkin (1925) described the mantle of *mongolicus* as being darker than that of *cachinnans*, a statement repeated by Stepanyan (1990). Dement'ev (1951) described the mantle colour of *mongolicus* as similar to that of *vegae*. My research on museum skins showed that some birds of north-western Mongolia are on the darker side of the variation found in *mongolicus*, a tentative explanation of Sushkin's description. Many *mongolicus*, however, are paler than this and their mantle colour overlaps with that of both *cachinnans* and *vegae* (see figure 1). Birds of the latter taxon can, however, be paler than any *mongolicus*, particularly in the northernmost part of the range of *birulai* (unpublished data from museum study).

The grey inner tongue on p10 was mentioned by Sushkin (1925) but no information was available on the wing-tip pattern of *mongolicus*, except for Stegmann's (1934) statement of seven to eight primaries with black and the presence of a subterminal black bar on p10, and complementary figures given by Panov & Monzikov (2000). My reference to a much larger set of birds showed that the inner tongue on p10, although usually pale grey (ie, paler than in *vegae*, which is in agreement with Sushkin's original description), is darker in some birds and then resembles the pattern found in *vegae* and *birulai*. Also, the number of primaries with black (six to nine) is more variable than previously thought and the presence of a subterminal black bar on p10 is no absolute rule.

Obviously, the larger the number of birds studied, the better the understanding of the phenotypic variation. Our knowledge, first based on small samples (either museum series or migrants of known origin), has strongly increased by studying birds in colonies (see, for instance, Buzun 1993, Filchagov 1993, Liebers & Dierschke 1997, Liebers & Helbig 1999, Panov & Monzikov 2000). This also holds for measurements, the range of which often increases with sample size (mean values are less affected).

101 Mongolian Gull / Mongoolse Meeuw *Larus (cachinnans) mongolicus*, adult, Lake Baikal, Siberia, Russia, June 1992 *(Pierre Yésou)*. Dark-eyed bird. Note that red gonydeal spot does not reach upper edge of lower mandible
102 Mongolian Gull / Mongoolse Meeuw *Larus (cachinnans) mongolicus*, adult, Lake Baikal, Siberia, Russia, June 1992 *(Pierre Yésou)*. Dark-eyed bird. Note that red gonydeal spot does not reach upper edge of lower mandible. Note also dark bill-marking
103 Mongolian Gull / Mongoolse Meeuw *Larus (cachinnans) mongolicus*, adult, Lake Baikal, Siberia, Russia, June 1992 *(Pierre Yésou)*. Pale-eyed bird. Note that red gonydeal spot reaches upper edge of lower mandible. Such an extension of red is only found in a minority of birds. Note also small dark mark on upper mandible
104 Mongolian Gull / Mongoolse Meeuw *Larus (cachinnans) mongolicus*, adult, Lake Baikal, Siberia, Russia, June 1992 *(Pierre Yésou)*. Pale-eyed bird

Bare-part coloration

The bare-part coloration of *mongolicus* I established agrees with most previous descriptions in the literature. The vermilion-red orbital ring was mentioned in Sushkin's (1925) original description. The variability of iris and leg colours is known since Madge (1985). It remained, however, unquantified until Pyzhianov & Tupitchyn (1992) and this study.

Such a large variation in bare-part coloration in one population may be surprising to western birders accustomed to colonies inhabited by uniformly looking Herring *L argentatus*, Yellow-legged or Lesser Black-backed Gulls. However, the fact is that highly variable grey or brown pigmentation over the yellow iris occurs in breeding birds of all Asian taxa of the *argentatus-cachinnans-fuscus* complex, seemingly being the least marked in *vegae* (Filchagov 1993, Liebers & Dierschke 1997, Liebers & Helbig 1999, Panov & Monzikov 2000, Andrey Filchagov and V I Grabovsky pers comm, pers obs). It also occurs,

although very rarely leading to grey-looking irides, in *michahellis* (N Baccetti pers comm). Regarding the variability of leg colour, this is also found in *cachinnans* (Liebers & Dierschke 1997, V I Grabovsky pers comm) and is commonplace in northern Siberia, from north-western Taimyr to the Lena delta at least, over the range of *birulai* (eg, Yésou & Hirschfeld 1997).

Until Hirschfeld (1992) and Madge (1992), little attention has been paid to the frequency and size of dark bill-markings in adult large gulls. This is the first time that these are described for *mongolicus*. Such bill-markings are shared, in variable size and proportion, with the Asian taxa of the *argentatus-cachinnans-fuscus* complex (Filchagov 1993, Liebers & Dierschke 1997, Yésou & Hirschfeld 1997, Panov & Monzikov 2000).

Systematics

Recently proposed systematic arrangements (eg, Devillers & Potvliege 1981, Haffer 1982, Devillers 1983, Stepanyan 1990, del Hoyo et al 1996, Sangster et al 1999) have generally presented *mongolicus* as a subspecies of *cachinnans*, in classifications encompassing (almost) all the southern taxa of Palearctic yellow-legged large white-headed gulls under *cachinnans*. This treatment is based on the supposed continuity in distribution (as given in oversimplified distribution maps like, for instance, the one in Yésou & Hirschfeld 1997), similarity in mantle colour and possibly also in the white head in winter shown by most southern taxa (*atlantis*, a subspecies of *cachinnans* according to some of the abovementioned authors, is dark hooded in winter). This, however, remains a hypothetical classification, pending further research on the relationships between *cachinnans* and neighbouring taxa (eg, Yésou et al 1994, Sangster et al 1999).

On the basis of the now available information, it is clear that there are marked phenotypic differences between *mongolicus* and *cachinnans*, particularly in wing-tip pattern (the number of primaries with black, the grey inner tongue and subterminal black bar on p10; see, for instance, Garner & Quinn (1997) and Jonsson (1998) for a description of the wing-tip of *cachinnans*) and underwing colour (pale grey in *mongolicus* and white in *cachinnans*). Such differences are sufficient to consider *mongolicus* and *cachinnans* as different species under the Phylogenetic Species Concept (PSC). Proponents of the Biological Species Concept (BSC) could argue that intergradation remains a possibility in a still undocumented contact area. If intergradation ever occurs, it should in any case be limited by the low density of both *mongolicus* and *cachinnans* in the neighbouring part of their respective breeding ranges (Pyzhjanov & Tupitsyn 1994, Pyzhianov 1996, Andrey Filchagov pers comm). Occasional mix-pairing has no taxonomic value, even under the BSC (see, for instance, the occasional *argentatus x graellsii* or *argentatus/graellsii x michahellis* pairs in western Europe; Yésou 1991). Furthermore, a preliminary mitochondrial DNA analysis (Crochet 1998) showed that *mongolicus* largely differs genetically from *cachinnans*, thus invalidating the hypothesis of the existence of significant gene flow between the two taxa. In fact, *mongolicus* is genetically closer to the Siberian taxa *heuglini* and in particular *birulai* of Taimyr (Crochet 1998, who had no access to material of eastern *birulai* and *vegae*).

Also, although no comparative analysis has been performed to elucidate vocal relationships in Siberian gulls, the vocalizations of *mongolicus* clearly differ from those of *cachinnans* (according to observers with a hearing ability better than mine) and seem closer to those heard in Taimyr (Andrey Filchagov pers comm).

Should *mongolicus* be considered as a full species or should it be considered as a subspecies of *vegae*, together with *birulai*? The fact is that these taxa resemble each other although differences have been noted, particularly in wing-tip pattern (the number of primaries with black, the size and colour of the tongue on p10, proportion of birds without a complete subterminal black bar on p10) and in winter-plumage markings.

The ranges of *vegae* (including *birulai*) and *mongolicus*, which breed in the Arctic tundra and at lakes in the steppe belt, respectively, are separated by a more than 1000-km wide taiga belt where no large gulls are known to breed. The breeding environment of *mongolicus* and *vegae* nevertheless shows marked similarities, due to the late and cold spring at Lake Baikal. As an illustration of this, the behavioural adaptation to low temperatures shown by fleas parasiting nests of *mongolicus* at Lake Baikal is otherwise known only from fleas of Arctic and Antarctic seabirds (Guiguen et al 1993). Could then some spring migrants, which regularly stop over at Lake Baikal when *en route* to Taimyr and possibly western Yakutia (Sergey Pyzhianov pers comm), be attracted by seemingly favourable environmental conditions and stay to breed at Lake Baikal, then leading to some degree of intergradation? This seems, however, unlikely as Arctic birds start to breed 35-45 days later than Lake Baikal birds

(Filchagov et al 1992, pers obs) and they are presumably hormonally not in breeding condition when passing through the Lake Baikal area.

In conclusion, species status should be given to *mongolicus* under both the PSC (diagnostic differences in, for instance, wing-tip pattern and winter-plumage markings) and the BSC (not interbreeding freely to any significant degree). It then appears that the Asian taxa until recently considered as subspecies of *cachinnans* are now better taken as full species, namely *armenicus*, *barabensis* and *mongolicus* (Buzun 1993, Filchagov 1993, Liebers & Helbig 1999, Panov & Monzikov 2000, this study), as Panov & Monzikov's (2000) suggestion that *barabensis* is a subspecies of *heuglini* is easily rejected on arguments similar to those I have developed about the relationships between *mongolicus* and other taxa.

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Samenvatting

FENOTYPISCHE VARIATIE EN SYSTEMATIEK VAN MONGOOLSE MEEUW Mongoolse Meeuw *Larus (cachinnans) mongolicus* broedt van Zuidoost-Altai naar Hukun Nor in Noordoost-China, over Noord-Mongolië, het Tuva Autonome Gebied, het Baikalmeer en Transbaikalia. (De taxonomische verwantschap van de Zilvermeeuwen van het Khankameer (gelegen in het grensgebied van Oost-China en het Russische Verre Oosten) is onbekend.) De gehele populatie, geschat op slechts 19 000-22 000 paren (met inbegrip van 7200 paren in het Baikalmeer) of minder dan 100 000 vogels (met inbegrip van jonge en niet-broedende exemplaren), overwintert waarschijnlijk in de kustgebieden van Zuidoost-Azië.

In het voorjaar van 1992 onderzocht de auteur de fenotypische variatie van broedende *mongolicus* in het Baikalmeer. Dit onderzoek had onder meer betrekking op meer dan 150 op of bij nesten gevangen vogels. *Mongolicus* is een grote en zware meeuw, met een gemiddeld gewicht van 880-1580 g tijdens de broedtijd; de vleugelspanwijdte bedraagt 140-160 cm. Hij heeft een middengrijze ('mid-grey') mantel (de Munsell index, een maat voor de refractie van kleuren, varieert van 4.5 tot 5.5). Dit betekent dat *mongolicus* een duidelijk lichtere mantel heeft dan Heuglins Meeuw *L (heuglini) heuglini*. Hierin komen vele *mongolicus* overeen met vele Vegameeuwen *L vegae* (met inbegrip van Birulameeuw *L v birulai*) en Taimyrmeeuwen *L (h) taimyrensis*. *Mongolicus* heeft in vergelijking met andere Aziatische taxa een van de donkerste vleugelpunten. Zwart bevindt zich gewoonlijk op de zes tot negen buitenste handpennen, het vaakst op de zeven buitenste handpennen). Het zwart komt soms voor tot op de buitenste handdekveren. Gewoonlijk komt een witte spiegel (handpenvlek) voor op de buitenste twee handpennen (p9 en p10), minder vaak alleen op de buitenste handpen (p10). Meestal scheidt een subterminale zwarte band de witte spiegel van de witte handpenpunt. In tegenstelling tot Arctische meeuwen vertoont *mongolicus* slechts een zwakke kopstreping na de rui naar adult winterkleed. De gele snavel, met een rode gonysvlek,

vertoont een variabele zwarte tekening. De iriskleur varieert van geelachtig wit tot donker grijsbruin en de pootkleur van licht vleeskleurig tot helder oranje.

Mongolicus vertoont duidelijke fenotypische verschillen met Pontische Meeuw *L (c) cachinnans*. De belangrijkste verschillen worden gevormd door de tekening van de vleugelpunt (het aantal handpennen met zwart, de grijze tong en subterminale zwarte band op p10) en de kleur van de ondervleugel (licht grijs bij *mongolicus* en wit bij *cachinnans*). Er bestaan ook duidelijke vocale en genetische verschillen tussen deze twee taxa. *Mongolicus* lijkt nauwer verwant met *vegae* (met inbegrip van *birulai*) en *taimyrensis* alhoewel hij van deze taxa verschilt door de tekening van de vleugelpunt en het winterkleed. Doortrekkende *vegae* en *taimyrensis* verblijven in het voorjaar op het Baikalmeer. Hybridisatie van deze Arctische meeuwen met lokale *mongolicus* lijkt onwaarschijnlijk aangezien deze meeuwen in broedbiologisch opzicht 35-45 dagen 'achterlopen'. De fenotypische, vocale en genetische verschillen van *mongolicus* met *cachinnans* en het feit dat *mongolicus* reproductief geïsoleerd lijkt te zijn van de verwante Arctische taxa *vegae* (met inbegrip van *birulai*) en *taimyrensis* vormen aanwijzigingen dat *mongolicus* als een aparte soort dient te worden opgevat (zowel onder het Fylogenetisch als het Biologisch Soortconcept).

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Madeiran Storm-petrel off Denia, south-eastern Spain, in June 1997

On 30 June 1997 at 16:00, I noticed an unfamiliar storm-petrel *Oceanodroma* close to the shore near the harbour of Denia, Alicante, Spain. It was feeding amongst c 50 European Storm-petrels *Hydrobates pelagicus* and was quite easily picked out by its larger size and foraging behaviour. I could observe the bird for 4-5 min with binoculars and telescope at a distance ranging from 100 to 125 m, and I identified it as a Madeiran Storm-petrel *O castro* (cf Lewington et al 1991, Jonsson 1992).

At first sight, the bird looked like a dark Leach's Storm-petrel *O leucorhoa*, about equal in size, but with a very large white rump patch which extended onto the flanks and undertail-coverts, as in European Storm-petrel. Upon closer look, the tail was only slightly forked, unlike Leach's, and the wingbar on the upperwing was hard to see at a distance of c 125 m. The flight was completely different from either European or Leach's: a direct flight, with the wings held backwards like a small skua *Stercorarius*. It flew in a line parallel to the coast, first from north to south, then it turned after a few 100 m to do it in reverse direction. This feeding flight was repeated at least five times.

In this area, European Storm-petrel breeds on the nearby Balearic isles of Ibiza and Formentera and in the coastal region south of Denia (eg, Islote de Benidorm and Tabarca) (Purroy 1997), and flocks of 30-50 birds were seen daily, feeding close to the pier at Denia from June to August 1997.

This observation has been accepted by the Spanish rarities committee (Eduardo de Juana in litt) and constitutes the third record of Madeiran Storm-petrel for Spain and about the 10th for Europe, and it is the first for the Mediterranean.

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Blyth's Reed Warbler at Nieuwegein in June-July 1998

On 14 June 1998, a singing male Blyth's Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus dumetorum* was discovered by Frank Engelen on a narrow strip of wasteland along the industrial area Laagraven, Nieuwegein, Utrecht, the Netherlands (Poot et al 1999). During subsequent visits, the bird appeared to be paired with an *Acrocephalus* warbler eventually identified as female Marsh Warbler *A palustris*. This resulted in successful mixed breeding: four eggs were produced, four hybrid young hatched of which only two (probably) fledged (the other two disappeared unnoticed) (Poot et al 1999). On 13 July, the two remaining nestlings were ringed (Arnhem AB02501 and AB02502) by Guido Keijl and André van Loon. On 18 July, the nest was empty but both adults were alarming, while they were seen carrying food on 19 July. An attempt on 13 July to trap the adult birds failed but on 23 July the Blyth's Reed Warbler was caught in a mistnet, ringed (Arnhem AB02503), described and photographed by GK and AvL. The empty nest was also collected on 23 July and is now in the collection of the National Museum of Natural History (NNM) at Leiden, Zuid-Holland. After 23 July, the Blyth's Reed Warbler nor its mate or the hybrid juveniles were seen again.

Observations on singing, courtship, pairing and nesting and other details of the behaviour and the breeding process were extensively described by Poot et al (1999) who also discussed the occurrence of hybridization between Blyth's Reed and Marsh Warblers. Here, our main aim is the identification of the Blyth's Reed Warbler.

The field description is based on notes taken by FE (see also Poot et al 1999), the description in the hand is based on notes and photographs by GK and AvL made during ringing.

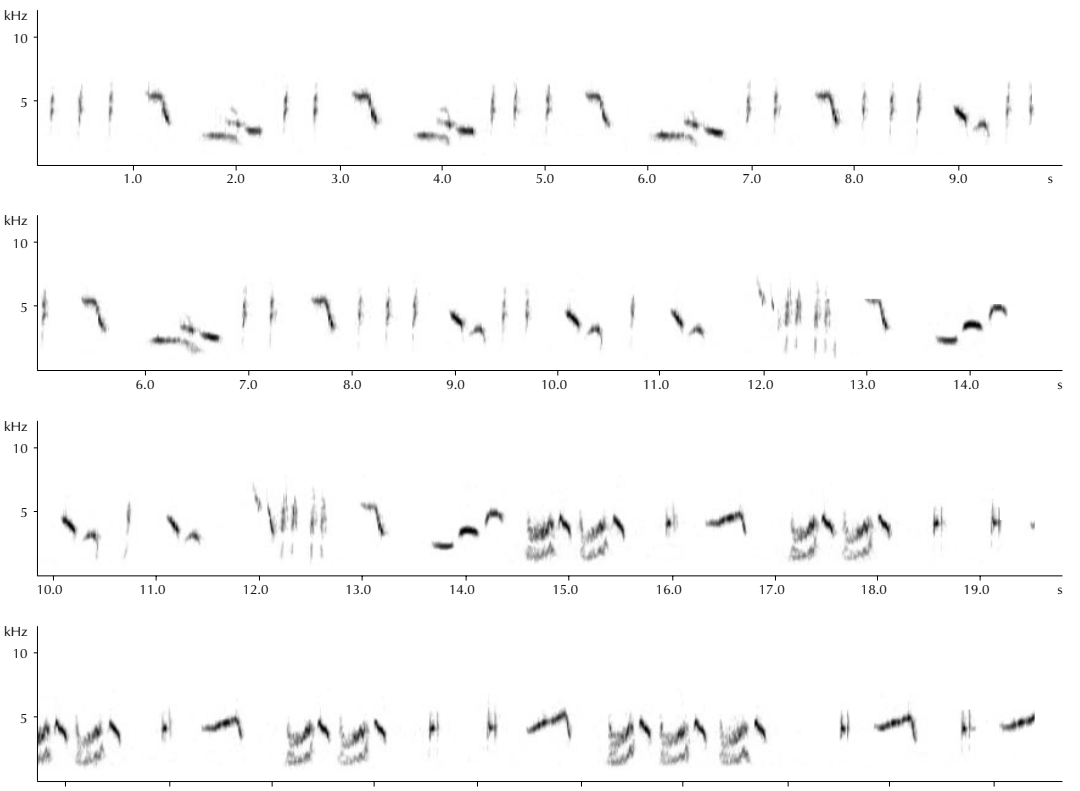

FIGURE 1 Blyth's Reed Warbler / Struikrietzanger *Acrocephalus dumetorum*, song of male, Laagraven, Nieuwegein, Utrecht, 17 July 1998, 03:15 *(Frank Engelen)*

105-106 Blyth's Reed Warbler / Struikrietzanger *Acrocephalus dumetorum*, adult male, Laagraven, Nieuwegein, Utrecht, Netherlands, 23 July 1998 *(André J van Loon)*. Note flat forehead, obvious supercilium only from base of bill to above eye, longish bill, rather cold-brown upperparts and relatively short wing with only c six primary tips visible beyond tertials. In plate 106, note emarginated p3-4 (numbered ascendently) and even slightly emarginated p5 and worn primaries (indicating adult bird). Marsh *A palustris* and European Reed Warbler *A scirpaceus* have only p3 emarginated, sometimes also p4 weakly in European Reed

Field description

STRUCTURE Forehead flat, reaching highest point behind eye. Bill relatively long. Wing short and rounded, with short primary projection and wing-tip ending before rear of vent and undertail-coverts. Tail broad and rounded.
HEAD Supercilium running from bill to just behind eye, brightest between bill and eye.
UPPERPARTS & UPPERWING Mantle drab-brown; wing darker with remiges darkest. Rump appearing pale greenish-brown.
UNDERPARTS Chin and vent dirty-white. Belly dirty-white to brownish.
TAIL Uppertail reddish-brown.
BARE PARTS Lower mandible of bill pale-yellowish at base. Leg dark-grey.
VOICE Song characterized by repetitive elements of whistles of varying pitch. Same element repeated six to eight times, alternated with equally frequently repeated imitation of one other bird species, most imitated species being Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica* (alarm call), Blue-headed Wagtail *Motacilla flava* (call), Common Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs* ('rain call'), European Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis* (call), Common Linnet *C cannabina* (accelerated imitation of song) and Common Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus* (contact call). Also, repetition of contact calls frequently incorporated in song (*teck* or *teck-teck-teck*).
BEHAVIOUR Observed singing from 14 to 19 June 1998. Prolonged singing periods, from 03:00 (or earlier) to c 12:00. Regularly moving between various songposts up to 4 m in willows *Salix*. During night and early morning singing continuously from one fixed songpost; after dawn energetically moving about while foraging and singing. Bird approachable (or bird approaching observer) up to 1 m. Often sitting in horizontal position. Tail moving to and fro in phase with song, sometimes half spread during singing.

In-hand description

STRUCTURE Nostril round. Hind nail strongly curved.
HEAD No dark on lateral crown above supercilium. Supercilium whitish, obvious from base of bill to above eye, inconspicuous behind eye. Lore dirty-white. No dark eye-stripe.
UPPERPARTS Grey-brown. Rump perhaps slightly paler than mantle but hardly contrasting with mantle or tail.
UNDERPARTS Dirty-white, with brownish tinge on flank and (vaguely) on breast. Undertail-coverts dirty-white with yellowish tinge.
WING Uniformly brown with slightly reddish tinge.
BARE PARTS Leg greyish-pink. Foot dirty ochre-yellow. Hind claw uniformly greyish-pink, claws of front toes slightly greyer.
MOULT & WEAR Remiges and rectrices worn. Also body-feathers worn. No moult of body-feathers.
MEASUREMENTS Wing length 66 mm, tail length 55 mm, tarsus length 22.3 mm, bill length (to feathering) 13.6 mm, bill length (to skull) 17.9 mm, bill width (at base) 4.3 mm, leg width (above ring) 1.7 mm, foot span (including claws) 30.0 mm, foot span (excluding claws) 20.5 mm. Wing formula (primaries numbered ascendently): p3-4 wing-tip, p2 4.5 mm, p5 1.5 mm, p6 4 mm, p7 5.5 mm, p8 8 mm, p9 10 mm and p10 11 mm shorter than wing-tip; p1 2 mm shorter than longest primary covert; p3-4 emarginated on outer web, p5 slightly emarginated near tip; notch on p2 13 mm, falling between s3 and s4 (secondaries numbered ascendently); tip of p2 falling between p6 and p7. Visible tertial length 20 mm, primary projection beyond longest tertial 13 mm, six primary tips visible beyond longest tertial. Tail formula: difference between longest (t1) and shortest tail-feather (t6) 5 mm. Weight (at 07:15) 10.7 g.

In the field, the bird was easily identified by its characteristic song and by characters like the relatively long bill, flat forehead, obvious super-

cilium only from base of bill to above eye, and short wings with short primary projection (Poot et al 1999, cf Svensson et al 1999). In the hand, the identification was confirmed by the emarginated outer webs of p3-4 (only clearly emarginated on p3 in Marsh and European Reed Warblers *A scirpaceus*), the relatively short p2 (longer in Marsh and European Reed) with deep notch, wing-tip formed by p3-4 (formed by p3 in Marsh and European Reed) and the short primary projection (cf Svensson 1992, Schulze-Hagen & Barthel 1993).

This is the third record for the Netherlands, after a bird trapped at Lelystad, Flevoland, on 26 June 1990 and a bird singing at Walem, Valkenburg, Limburg, from 20 June to 1 July 1996 (van den Berg & Bosman 1999, Wiegant et al 1999).

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Brieven

Common Kestrel with white central claws

Separation of Common Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus* and Lesser Kestrel *F naumanni* can be a challenging identification problem. Especially in immature and female plumages, a combination of characters is needed to establish the identification. Most important are size, wing formula, tail length, head pattern, feather pattern of the upperparts and underwing pattern (cf Forsman 1999). Because of overlap in plumage and measurements, identification can be impossible in some instances. There is, however, one character that may be hard to see in the field – and normally impossible to see on flying birds – but that is generally considered infallible to ensure a safe identification: the colour of the claws. These are black in Common Kestrel but pale in Lesser Kestrel. This is normally the easiest and most reliable character to check on a bird in the hand or perched at short distance.

However, the accompanying photograph demonstrates that even this character is not always decisive. It depicts a 27-day-old juvenile Common Kestrel, ringed as one of four fledglings at Kapelle, Zeeland, the Netherlands, on 24 June 2000. The central claw on both feet is very pale,

107 Common Kestrel / Torenvalk *Falco tinnunculus*, 27-day-old juvenile, Kapelle, Zeeland, Netherlands, 24 June 2000 *(Niels de Schipper)*

nearly white, just the colour one would expect in Lesser Kestrel. The other claws, however, are deep black and thus normally coloured for Common Kestrel. Also in all other respects the bird is a normal juvenile Common Kestrel. The three other fledglings showed no anomalies in bare parts coloration.

On 17 December 1996 at Zeewolde, Flevoland, the Netherlands, a first-year female Common Kestrel was trapped with a yellowish-white central claw on the right leg (wing length 262 mm). This was the only bird with a pale claw out of 388 trapped full-grown Common Kestrels during the 1990s in Flevoland (Kees Breek & Ton Eggenhuizen in litt).

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CDNA-mededelingen

Recente CDNA-besluiten Tijdens de vergadering van de CDNA van 20 januari 2001 te Santpoort-Zuid, Noord-Holland, is in overleg met de CSNA besloten om de status van (onder)soorten door de CDNA te laten beoordelen. Tot dan behoorde dit tot het takenpakket van de CSNA. De CDNA zal het vermogen van een soort om hier te lande af te dwalen, het zogenaamd 'vagrancy potential' (cf Vinicombe & Cottridge, *Rare birds in Britain and Ireland: a photographic record*, 1997) als belangrijkste criterium laten wegen en niet het aantal dat in gevangenschap voorkomt. Laatstgenoemd criterium is naar het inzicht van de CDNA vrijwel onbruikbaar om vast te stellen of een soort als wild beschouwd moet worden of niet. In principe kan vrijwel *ieder* taxon in gevangenschap worden aangetroffen maar het *aantal* dat van iedere soort in Europa wordt verhandeld is vrijwel niet vast te stellen. Indien dit wel mogelijk zou zijn, is het vervolgens ondoenlijk om op verantwoorde wijze te bepalen bij welk aantal een soort als wild moet worden beschouwd of als ontsnapt. Wel eist de CDNA van bepaalde taxa dat is vastgesteld of de vogel in kwestie geen ring draagt of andere tekenen van niet-wilde herkomst vertoont, zoals leren veters, gebleekte vleugelpennen en vervormde naakte delen. In het verleden gold deze eis voor Bronskopeend *Mareca falcata*, Buffelkopeend *Bucephala albeola*, Kokardezaagbek *Lophodytes cucullatus* en Jufferkraanvogel *Anthropoides virgo*. Tijdens de vergadering is besloten deze lijst uit te breiden met Ross' Gans *Anser rossii* en Siberische Taling *Anas formosa*. Het betreft hier taxa waarvan naar de mening van CDNA en CSNA exemplaren in wilde staat en op eigen kracht *kunnen* arriveren. Echter, voor al deze taxa geldt dat in het veld aangetroffen exemplaren die nader konden worden geobserveerd vaak een verdachte ring droegen of andere afwijkingen vertoonden. Voor deze soorten geldt daarom dat ze pas als wild worden beschouwd wanneer ze met zekerheid geen sporen van gevangenschap bezitten (hier geldt dus de '*omgekeerde bewijslast*'). Voor alle andere potentiële dwaalgasten geldt dat ze als wild worden beschouwd tenzij er aanwijzingen voor een verleden in gevangenschap zijn te zien.

De CDNA blijft Siberische Tjiftjaf *Phylloscopus collybita tristis* beoordelen (cf Limosa 66: 158, 1993). Op de AERC-bijeenkomst in oktober 1993 op Helgoland, Schleswig-Holstein, Duitsland, werd besloten van dit taxon alleen vogels in de hand te aanvaarden of geluidsopnames van zingende vogels (cf Limosa 67: 169, 1994). De afgelopen zeven jaar heeft de CDNA alle Nederlandse gevallen conform deze afspraak beoordeeld. De hoeveelheid aanvaarde gevallen geeft echter aanleiding te denken dat dit taxon algemener is dan werd aangenomen en wel degelijk in het veld te herkennen is. Daarom kan een gedetailleerde beschrijving van het verenkleed onder goede omstandigheden in combinatie met beschrijving van de roep volstaan. Oude niet-aanvaarde gevallen zullen met behulp van deze criteria worden herzien.

Een ander taxon dat voor identificatie- en beoordelingsproblemen kan zorgen is Balkankwikstaart *Motacilla feldegg*. Voor aanvaarding komen alleen in aanmerking goed gefotografeerde vogels waarbij de glanzend zwarte kopkap en de nek zichtbaar zijn of gevallen met een geluidsopname van de soms kenmerkende roep.

Na het verschijnen van het identificatieartikel van izabelklauwieren *Lanius arenarius/isabellinus/phoenicuroides* (Dutch Birding 22: 323-362, 2000) zijn alle vier aanvaarde gevallen van izabelklauwier opnieuw in circulatie gebracht om te worden beoordeeld conform de in dit artikel beschreven identificatiecriteria.

Na acht jaar trouwe dienst namen C S (Kees) Roselaar en Jelle Scharringa afscheid van de CDNA. Kees Roselaar zal echter als adviseur en museumconsultant bij het werk van de CDNA betrokken blijven. Jelle Scharringa zal zich blijven inzetten voor de CDNA bij de digitalisering van het geluidenarchief. Bert de Bruin volgt Jelle Scharringa op als secretaris. Nils van Duivendijk en Teus Luijendijk nemen de opengevallen plaatsen in en treden toe als nieuw lid.
JAN VAN DER LAAN

Masters of Mystery

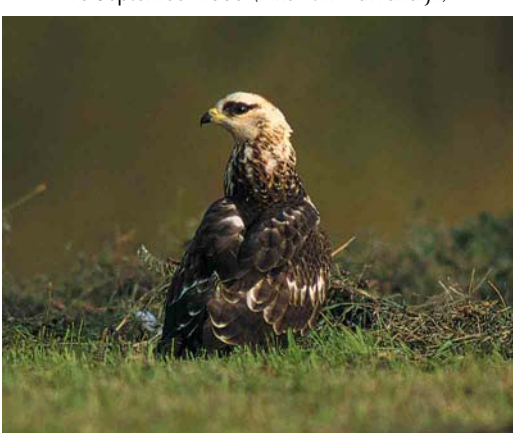
SWAROVSKI
OPTIK

Solutions of first round 2001

Mystery photographs I-II (Dutch Birding 23: 36, 2001) of the first round marked the start of a new competition. Both of a them showed a raptor facing away.

I The first mystery photograph showed a heavy-bodied, large bird with broad wing-feathers, typical of medium-sized and large raptors. The bird has a whitish head and neck contrasting with dark brown upperparts and upperwings. It may seem difficult to establish the genus but, fortunately, there is no large raptor (eagle or vulture) that matches this combination. Nevertheless, a surprisingly large part (22%) of the entrants went for Imperial Eagle *Aquila heliaca*, surely because of the pale rear head and neck and because a hint of white shoulder patches is present on the mystery bird. In that species, however, head and neck would be less whitish and more buffish. Also, the pale markings on the scapulars are formed by exposed pale feather-bases in the mystery bird and not by largely white feathers as in adult Imperial (note that the pale scapular-bases on the right side are largely concealed and that roughly the same pattern of pale spots on the feather-bases is also shown by some median coverts). In medium-sized raptors, the combination of a pale head and neck and brown upperparts can only be found in buzzards *Buteo* and honey buzzards *Pernis*, well-known for their variable plumages.

108 European Honey Buzzard / Wespendief *Pernis apivorus*, juvenile, Philipsdam, Zeeland, Netherlands, 18 September 1999 *(Nils van Duivendijk)*



Now that we know that this is a buzzard or honey buzzard, the next step in solving this mystery bird is ageing. Since we know the picture was taken in September, ageing is rather easy as such raptor in uniformly fresh plumage can then only be a juvenile. The mystery bird shows faintly (but in this photograph noticeably) barred greater coverts and tertials which is normal for juvenile honey buzzards while juvenile buzzards have uniformly dark greater coverts and tertials. This is an important difference for solving the mystery bird. Some very pale juvenile Common Buzzards *B buteo* show some barring on their greater coverts and tertials but in these birds the median and lesser coverts and scapulars show much white. The obvious long neck is also typical for honey buzzards.

We are now left with European Honey Buzzard *P apivorus* and Crested Honey Buzzard *P ptilorhyncus*. Juvenile plumages of both species are very variable and also similar to each other. Eliminating Crested Honey is far from easy (especially from this angle) but none of the entrants identified the mystery bird as a Crested Honey, probably because it only occurs as a rarity in the east of the WP. As its name suggests, Crested Honey has longer nape-feathers than European Honey (although only slightly longer in the northern subspecies *P p orientalis* that turns up in the WP) forming more or less a crest, which should probably be visible in the photograph.

This juvenile European Honey Buzzard, photographed at Philipsdam, Zeeland, Netherlands, on 18 September 1999 by Nils van Duivendijk, is a rather typical example of a pale individual showing an obvious dark mask emphasized by a pale head. Plate 108 shows another photograph of the same bird. Note also that the cere is yellow in juvenile honey buzzards (and grey in adults), while the opposite is true in most other raptors. This bird was identified correctly by 36% of the entrants. Incorrect answers were Imperial Eagle (22%), Long-legged Buzzard *B rufinus* (9%), Common Buzzard (8%), Rough-legged Buzzard *B lagopus* (8%), Spanish Imperial Eagle *A adalberti* (5%) and Golden Eagle *A chrysaetos* (4%).

II In contrast to the first mystery bird, none of the entrants experienced any problems in assigning the second to the correct family: all entrants

109 Red-footed Falcon / Roodpootvalk *Falco verpertinus*, first-summer female, Lesbos, Greece, 8 May 2000 *(Peter de Knijff)*. Aged as first-summer by old and worn primaries and tertials, which are retained juvenile feathers. Dark streaking on crown and nape also indicative of this age **110** Red-footed Falcon / Roodpootvalk *Falco vespertinus*, adult female, Lesbos, Greece, 8 May 2000 *(Peter de Knijff)*

recognized it as a falcon *Falco*. The blue-grey upperparts that contrast with the rufous nape can only fit female Red-footed Falcon *F vespertinus*, adult Barbary Falcon *F pelegrinoides*, male Merlin *F columbarius* and adult Lanner Falcon *F biarmicus*. Male Merlin shows less extensive rufous on the nape and more uniform blue-grey upperparts (more finely streaked with dark instead of barred with dark) than the mystery bird. However, female Red-footed, adult Barbary and adult Lanner look quite similar from this angle. The size is difficult to judge, as is so often the case in mystery photographs, but in comparison with the surrounding vegetation the bird looks rather compact and not very large which does not seem quite right for Barbary and Lanner. The European subspecies of Lanner *F b feldeggi* shows a rufous nape in adult plumage (more buffish in *F b erlangeri* from northwestern Africa), but this is often darker than that of the mystery bird. Also, both Barbary and European Lanner show a darker and more uniform (less finely streaked) crown than the mystery bird. Unfortunately, too little of the tail is visible to see whether the pattern fits or eliminates Barbary (which has dark bars distinctly broadening toward the tip). The pattern of the feathers of the upperparts is of more help here: they are predominantly blue-grey with a somewhat paler fringe and on most feathers only a dark subterminal bar is visible. This pattern matches that of female Red-footed perfectly. Both Barbary and European Lanner have the feathers of the upperparts more regularly barred throughout, with the dark bars broader than the pale bars, while in Red-footed the dark bars are narrower than the pale ones.

The not very extensive rufous and the dark streaks on the head of the mystery bird look strange for adult female Red-footed Falcon. First-summer females of this species are more variable and some dark streaking may be present on nape and crown (but others show a head pattern very similar to adult female). A good look at this bird's primaries confirms that this is a first-summer bird: the primaries are brownish and it is even visible that they are worn. Adult female has blackish and less worn primaries. In spring, second calendar-year Red-footed of both sexes can be aged by their retained juvenile primaries and secondaries which are browner and more worn than in adult birds. The tertials of the mystery bird look also worn, as retained juvenile feathers. Plate 109 shows another photograph of the same bird. The old primaries and tertials are well visible here. First-summer birds also often show retained juvenile tail-feathers and some wing-coverts but on this bird most of these feathers have already been renewed (but note the two old inner greater coverts). Plate 110 shows an adult female Red-footed for comparison.

Knowing the month when the photograph was taken and ageing the bird first makes it simpler to solve this mystery bird, as some keen entrants may have done. On a falcon in May, the combination of fresh adult-type upperparts and wing-coverts with worn and brownish primaries and tertials suggests a first-summer bird. This combination also indicates a Red-footed Falcon because in May first-years of both European Lanner and

Mystery photograph III (December)

Mystery photograph IV (June)

Barbary Falcon show more of the juvenile plumage on upperparts and wings.

This first-summer Red-footed Falcon was photographed on Lesbos, Greece, on 8 May 2000 by Peter de Knijff. It was correctly identified by 58% of the entrants, while 22% thought it was a Barbary Falcon, 13% Lanner Falcon and 4% a Merlin.

A record 194 readers participated in the start of the new competition, 38 of whom identified both mystery birds correctly. The names of these 38 entrants can be viewed at www.dutchbirding.nl. From them, **Willem Gilles** (Belgium), **Daniele Occhiato** (Italy) and **Leon Peters** (Netherlands) were drawn as the winners of a copy of the second edition of *Swifts: a guide to the swifts and treeswifts of the world* by Phil Chantler and Gerald Driessens, donated by GMB Uitgeverij.

Second round 2001

Photographs III and IV represent the second round of 2001 competition. Please, study the rules (Dutch Birding 23: 36, 2001) 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 www.dutchbirding.nl

Entries for the second round have to arrive by **1 May 2001**. From those entrants having identified both mystery birds correctly, one person will be drawn who will receive a copy of the *Collins bird guide* 'Large Format' by Lars Svensson, Peter Grant, Killian Mullarney and Dan Zetterström, donated by HarperCollins Publishers Ltd. Swarovski Benelux will award a Swarovski AT80 telescope with 30x wide angle eyepiece to the overall winner after six rounds.

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Aankondigingen & verzoeken

Dutch Birding videojaaroverzicht 2000 Zoals inmiddels traditie, presenteerde Marc Plomp op de DBA-vogeldag op 3 februari 2001 het Dutch Birding videojaaroverzicht 2000. Dit is alweer het zesde overzicht op rij en met een lengte van bijna drie uur is het de langste band tot nu toe. Voor de toegenomen lengte zijn verschillende oorzaken te noemen. Ten eerste neemt het aantal videografen bij zeldzame soorten steeds meer toe. Voor deze band werden opnames van maar liefst 11 verschillende vogelaars gebruikt, al nemen twee daarvan, Marc Plomp en Leo Boon, samen wel het merendeel voor hun rekening. Ten tweede was 2000 een rijk vogeljaar waarin meer dwaalgasten dan ooit in Nederland werden vastgesteld. En ten derde is het jaaroverzicht dit keer voor het eerst aangevuld met opnames uit België. In totaal staan er ruim 60 soorten op de band.

De kwaliteit van de opnames is wederom buitengewoon hoog en de volledigheid van het overzicht is indrukwekkend; opvallend is wel dat een paar soorten waarvan alleen matige opnames beschikbaar waren ('record shots') niet op de band staan, ook al betreft het zeer zeldzame soorten als Steltstrandloper *Micropalama himantopus* en Zwartkeellijster *Turdus ruficollis atrogularis*. Het commentaar is dit keer ingesproken door Diederik Kok; in vergelijking met voorgaande jaren is de gesproken informatie nog uitgebreider, met veel aandacht voor op de video zichtbare kenmerken met betrekking tot soortdeterminatie, leeftijd, geslacht en ondersoort. Voor de CDNA-leden wordt het leven steeds gemakkelijker: een avondje video kijken met de voltallige commissie stelt ze in staat om het gros van de zeldzame soorten van 2000 in één keer te beoordelen. Nieuw is ook de aanduiding van de locatie in Nederland aan het begin van elke soort. Leerzaam zijn onder andere de opnames van de Noordse Kwikstaart *Motacilla thunbergi* van Katwijk, Zuid-Holland, op 7 mei die aanvankelijk als Balkankwikstaart *M feldegg* gemeld werd; op de beelden is duidelijk de grijze achternek te zien, waarmee Balkankwikstaart uitgesloten kan worden. Een opsomming van alle soorten op de band gaat hier te ver maar vermeldenswaard zijn een aantal prachtige opnames, zoals – in chronologische volgorde – die van Franklins Meeuw *Larus pipixcan*, Roodkeelpieper *Anthus cervinus*, Baardgrasmus *Sylvia cantillans*, Grijskopspecht *Picus canus*, Spaanse Mus *Passer hispaniolensis*, Monniksgier *Aegypius monachus*, Witstaartkievit *Vanellus leucurus*, Arendbuizerd *Buteo rufinus* en Turkestaanse Klauwier *Lanius phoenicuroides*. Van de Belgische opnames spreekt vooral de Kleine Sprinkhaanzanger *Locustella lanceolata* tot de verbeelding.

De video is een productie van Plomp Digital Video in samenwerking met de Dutch Birding Association en Cursorius Photo & Video Library. De band is te bestellen door NLG 65.00 (inclusief portokosten) over te

maken op rekening 899007287 tnv Plomp Digital Video in Linschoten, ovv naam en adres en 'video DBA 2000'. De jaaroverzichten van 1996 tot en met 1999 zijn nog te bestellen voor NLG 55.00 per stuk; vermeld bij bestelling 'video DBA' en het gewenste jaartal. ENNO B EBELS

Dutch Birding video year review 2000 The Dutch Birding video year review 2000 contains almost three hours of high quality video images of rarities in the Netherlands and Belgium in 2000. In total, more than 60 species are shown, reflecting the fact that 2000 was probably the best rarity year ever in the Low Countries. Images are shown of such high quality vagrants as, for instance, Franklin's Gull *Larus pipixcan*, Grey-headed Woodpecker *Picus canus*, Spanish Sparrow *Passer hispaniolensis*, Black-winged Kite *Elanus caeruleus*, Booted Eagle *Hieraaetus pennatus*, Eurasian Black Vulture *Aegypius monachus*, White-tailed Lapwing *Vanellus leucurus*, Long-legged Buzzard *Buteo rufinus*, Turkestan Shrike *Lanius phoenicuroides* and, from Belgium, Lanceolated Warbler *Locustella lanceolata*. The video can be ordered from Plomp Digital Video; for details, please contact Marc Plomp at plompdigitalvideo@planet.nl, telephone/fax +31-348433730. The 2000 video as well as the video's from 1996-99 can also be ordered directly through the homepage of the Dutch Birding Association (www.dutchbirding.nl). ENNO B EBELS

Recensies

MICHAEL DENSLEY 1999. *In search of Ross's Gull*. Peregrine Books, 27 Hunger Hills Avenue, Horsforth, Leeds LS 18 5SJ, West Yorkshire, UK. 268 pp. ISBN 09-520268-6-4. GBP 34.95.

Ross's Gull *Rhodostethia rosea* has graced the (inside) cover of every issue of Dutch Birding since it was chosen as the official emblem of the Dutch Birding Association in 1979. Therefore, it is inevitable that a review of Michael Densley's *In search of Ross's Gull* should appear in this journal. The 'Dutch connection' is further strengthened by the beautiful cover photograph of a displaying Ross's Gull taken at Churchill, Manitoba, Canada, by Dutch photographer Chris Schenk.

In this book, the history of Ross's Gull as one of the most enigmatic and sought-after gull (or even bird) species is described in many aspects. The book is also a personal account of an almost 40-year long fascination for this species held by the author, starting on the day he visited Bridlington, Yorkshire, England, back in 1962 and heard that a Ross's Gull – a species totally unknown to him at that point – had been observed there a few weeks earlier. By an amazing stroke of luck (or predestination?), the author and his wife found their own Ross's Gull at … Bridlington 12 years later, in January 1974. From then on, a life-long search for Ross' Gulls, both physically and scientifically, began which led Densley to some of the more remote places of the Northern Hemisphere and resulted in various publications in ornithological journals (including 'Ross's Gulls in Siberia' in Dutch Birding 13: 168-175, 1991) and, finally, in the book reviewed here.

The book starts with an introduction describing the author's personal fascination for Ross's Gull – which he shares with so many other ornithologists and birdwatchers on the globe. The next chapter describes the first British records, from 1856/47 to 1974, the year in which Densley first 'connected' with the species. The book continues with the description of the history of this species, from the ornithological expeditions in the 1800s, the first collected specimen by James Clark Ross in June 1823 and the many ornithologists involved in further studies and expeditions related to Ross's Gull. Then, migration and vagrancy are discussed, including surveys of extralimital records in Europe and North America, focussing strongly on Britain and Ireland. Although updated up to 1996 for these two countries, this chapter does not refer to, for instance, the seven (!) Dutch records in 1992-95. Therefore, this book should not be regarded as – and was presumably not meant to be – the ultimate source of reference for records of vagrant Ross's Gulls. Separate chapters focus on Alaska and the author's visit in autumn 1975 to this region, where significant numbers of Ross' Gulls migrate along Point Barrow. This trip was followed by a visit to the breeding grounds in the Kolyma, Siberia, Russia, in the summer of 1990, and again this trip is described in lively details. The final chapter summarizes the developments regarding the studies of Ross's Gulls and Densley's own activities in the last decade, during which this book gradually took form.

In every chapter, the author describes much more than (the search for) Ross's Gulls. The text is a readable mix of travel stories, natural history and personal accounts. This mix is reflected in the 80 photographs in the book, which range from actual Ross's Gulls to other species (birds as well as plants) characteristic for the Arctic tundra, portraits of ornithologists and photographs of various places that have something to do with Ross's Gull, including such interesting 'trivia' as the tombstone of Sir James Clark Ross himself. A personal criticism regarding the plates is the annoying choice to separate the captions from the plates and list all captions together, forcing a lot of thumbing through the pages. In the text itself, there are the occasional errors, for instance the statement that Antwerp is situated in Holland instead of Belgium.

All together, this is a highly commendable mix of scientific studies and personal history, fitting well into the mainly British tradition of 'ornitho-history' with

authors such as Barbara and Richard Mearns, Richard Vaughan and many others. Being 'something of everything', this also points to the possible weak spot of the book, in that respect that it is not an in-depth study into the biology of Ross's Gull that professional ornithologists might like to see, nor the 'easy-to-swallow' coffee-table book about one of the world's most wanted species that the average birder would possibly be satisfied with. ENNO B EBELS

W L N TICKELL 2000. *Albatrosses*. Pica Press, The Banks, Mountfield, Nr Robertsbridge, East Sussex TN32 5JY, UK. 448 pp. ISBN 1-873403-94-1. GBP 40.00.

To use that old cliché from Woody Allen again: this book seems to be the 'everything you wanted to know about albatrosses but were afraid to ask'. Everything? Well no: people predominantly interested in taxonomy or solutions to thorny identification problems will not find this book to their liking, although it does include useful sections on moult and ageing as well as an introduction to the identification of taxa. Personally, I felt some regret that the book did not solve the identification problem of 'my' recent albatross in South African waters. The book has a selection of mostly good-quality photos of all relevant taxa, including one of an Amsterdam Albatross *Diomedea amsterdamensis*. However, everything on albatross biology is there, be it the oceanic distribution of albatrosses, their breeding sites and breeding biology, albatross numbers, diet, behaviour (including their magnificent display) or threats. There is a useful section on the different breeding islands and island groups one always hears but never reads about. Quite remarkably for a book of its nature, it concludes with a chapter of the albatross in poems. So, what about the final judgement of the book? I would say that it will be of interest for all birders who want to know everything about the biology of these mighty birds. Also, because of its descriptions of all these remote islands in the oceans, it may appeal to those with a more general interest in seabirds and their habitat. Above all, however, and more importantly perhaps, the book can serve as a highly needed testimony to these wonderful birds and their habitat as, alas, even albatrosses have joined the long list of species threatened by activities of man. ROLAND VAN DER VLIET

CALLAN COHEN & CLAIRE SPOTTISWOODE 2000. *Essential birding – western South Africa*. Struik Publishers, Cornelis Struik House, 80 McKenzie Street, Cape Town, 8001, South Africa (distributed by New Holland Publishers, London). Full colour. 136 pp. ISBN 1-86872-524-3 (paperback). GBP 9.00.

The Cape region of South Africa is one of the world's most popular destinations for birders because it is famously rich in endemic birds while there are also great opportunities for watching seabirds and mammals. The diversity of habitats, the landscape's scenic beauty, and the general accessibility add to the region's attraction. Until recently, the area's best bird finding guide was Wally Petersen & Mel Tripp's *Birds of the southwestern Cape and where to watch them* (1995; ISBN 0-620-19700-5), which offers detailed information on the 40 best birding spots near Cape Town. Other bird finding guides, like Hugh Chittenden's *Top birding spots in Southern Africa* (1992; ISBN 1-86812-419-3), have less precise and less detailed information on the Cape region. Compared to Petersen & Tripp's book, *Essential birding* is better produced and covers a much larger area, including Namaqualand, Bushmanland and Kalahari and extending further east. Thanks to the excellent lay-out, it is also much more user friendly. The information is very accurate and easy to find thanks to the use of colours throughout the book. There are 26 colour site maps and at least 168 high-class colour photographs of landscapes and birds, often with extensive and informative captions. Separate 'select specials' give details on biology and identification of key species to complement field guides. The excellence of this beautiful booklet is further demonstrated in its coverage of new bird names, taxonomic changes and species concepts, seasonal tables for seabirds off the Cape and for vagrant waders, and by one of the most concise and complete annotated bird checklists one could wish for. Weighing just 300 g and being 147x209x7 mm in size, it is a much recommended travel companion. ARNOUD B VAN DEN BERG

C HILARY FRY, STUART KEITH & EMIL K URBAN 2000. *The birds of Africa. Volume 6*. Academic Press Ltd, Harcourt Place, 32 Jamestown Road, London NW1 7BY, UK. 724 pp. ISBN 0-12-137306-1. GBP 99.00.

This is the last-but-one volume in a series the planning of which began a quarter-century ago. It was inspired by Leslie Brown, who sadly died whilst the first volume was in preparation. Previous volumes were published in 1982, 1986, 1988, 1992 and 1997. In only a few years from now, this worthy successor of the six-volume *African handbook of birds* by C W Macworth-Pread and C H B Grant (1952-1973) will be completed.

This book is, like the previous volumes, again an impressive achievement of editors, authors, artists, contributors and publisher. It deals with the songbirds from the babblers to the starlings and includes colourful and peculiar families like sunbirds Nectariniidae, sugarbirds Promeropidae, true shrikes Laniidae, bush-shrikes Malaconotidae and starlings Sturnidae. Almost all species are illustrated on 36 excellent colour plates by Martin Woodcock. Ian Willis was the artist of most of the functional line drawings in the texts of many species, illustrating aspects like identification details, behaviour and nests.

The introduction is brief and includes sections on literature, locality names and terms, mapping, vegetation, evolution, biogeography and taxonomy. During the writing of *The birds of Africa*, the hitherto widely used Biological Species Concept (BSC) has been challenged by alternative species concepts, in particular the

Phylogenetic Species Concept (PSC). The authors have chosen to use *subspecies* in the conventional manner, apply the concept of *superspecies*, and generally follow the BSC. Many African taxa still need thorough studies, using bioacoustic and molecular techniques in addition to morphometric and plumage studies. Until these are available, doubts about taxonomic relationships and ranking of African birds will remain and controversies flourish.

The species accounts are well organized and informative, accurately summarizing a wealth of information in sections on range and status, description, field characters, voice, general habits, food, breeding habits and a few key references. The lay-out of the maps has been greatly improved compared with the first volumes of this series. In the first volumes, the maps only presented a very general outline of a species' range, often without even distinguishing breeding and non-breeding distribution. Now the maps show breeding distribution in red, areas where the species occurs during migration hatched, non-breeding distribution in two types of shading (densely and sparsely distributed), migration routes with arrows and extralimital records with a symbol. The detailed distribution as mapped for many areas has clearly greatly benefited from national and regional atlassing, eg, in southern Africa, Tanzania, Kenya and Egypt. The full details of the references can be found in a 40-page bibliography which, in addition to a section on general and regional references, is arranged by family. There is also a list of acoustic references. Scientific, English and French names can be found in three indexes. Considering the use of many 'new' names compared with much other literature on African ornithology, the inclusion of synonyms (in the main text, the indexes or both) would have been useful.

This 724-page book, weighing almost 4 kg, printed on good quality paper and solidly bound, is a recommended purchase for anyone interested in African ornithology. PETER L MEININGER

JAMES ROBERTS 2000. *Romania: a birdwatching and wildlife guide*. Burton Expeditions, 4 Viney's Yard, Bruton, Somerset BA10 OEU, UK, e-mail jameselena@netgates.co.uk. 308 pp. ISBN 0-9513513-6-2. GBP 22.00.

The Danube delta has always been a magnet for birders, even many years ago when it took much more effort to visit it than at present. Nowadays, the famous delta is still one of the best birding spots of Europe and well worth visiting. But Romania offers many more ornithological delights. Vast areas of mountains and naturally-grown forests of native trees, covering almost one third of the country, guarantee a wealth of wildlife. In addition, Romania also has hill hay-meadows and considerable areas of wetland, upstream along the Danube as well as in the interior. As in eastern Poland, the key to the country's remarkable richness of wildlfe is the antiquated nature of much of its agricultural activities. Each year, James Roberts spends more than six months in the wilder parts of Romania, showing the country's wildlife to groups of naturalists. So the author is well informed.

This book gives more information than the standard 'where to watch birds...' guides. Divided into eight chapters, the first offers information about climate, travelling, health, visa, food, the nation's conservation measures and all other things an independent birder visiting the country likes to know. Six further chapters deal with information about the country's most important regions: Wallachia, Transylvania, the Carpathians, Moldavia, Dobrogea and the Danube delta. After a general overview, each of these chapters offers a varying number of sites, presented in detail, most of them with a map and information about accommodation. Many of the sites described are hitherto unknown. Sometimes we read that even by Romanian standards the sites are unworked and 'certainly hold surprises'. Chapter 8 (The birds of Romania) offers the Romanian birdlist. In spite of the fact that the author estimates that the country holds 4000 active birdwatchers, the present breeding status concerning species like Imperial Eagle *Aquila heliaca*, Saker Falcon *Falco cherrug* and Great Bustard *Otis tarda* is unknown (all these species were encountered by me during winter visits to the Dobrogea 30 years ago). Indeed a lot of fieldwork needs to be done to get more certainty about the status of many Romanian bird species. The presence of 36 White-tailed Lapwings *Vanellus leucurus* in the Danube delta in summer 2000, including pairs with chicks at four sites (cf Dutch Birding 22: 234, 2000), indicates that one may expect sensational discoveries for Europe. Roberts mentions White-tailed Lapwing on his list only as a vagrant.

Other appendices include a bibliography, lists of Romanian mammals, butterflies, flowers, language including birders' jargon and a list with explanations of some memorial village names, probably meant for birders who are keen on history. In contrast, an appendix with information on the Romanian Ornithological Society is very useful. While studying this book, I sometimes wondered if the galaxy of information Roberts presents does not obstruct the main point for birders, which is 'where can I find the species I like to encounter'. It is clear that Roberts loves Romania (which I sympathize) but sometimes it seems as if his sympathy for the country results in a lack of objectiveness. On the other hand, again, Romania is one of the least known countries of our part of the world and, while travelling there, questions may arise. There is a reasonable chance that this guide can supply satisfactory answers.

Because of the number of typographical errors it seems that no professional editor was involved with the production. And if in the future a second print will be published, it is advisable to put a more lifelike sketch of Pygmy Cormorant *Microcarbo pygmeus* on the cover. However, birders who intend to go to this country (and there are many reasons to do so) must not forget to buy this guide. After all, they have no choice. Another one does not exist. GERARD L OUWENEEL

Total birding

by Anthony McGeehan

In darkest Belfast

Apart from a terminal avocation as a birder, what is your day job? Mine is a diplomat. Add to that labourer, window-cleaner, reed-cutter and general dogsbody and you've got a pretty comprehensive picture of what a nature reserve warden has to do. I work in the middle of Belfast docklands or, to be more precise, on the adjoining reclaimed waste-ground that developers cannot be bothered to fight over any more. This land, for the sake of 'conservation', has been set aside and trumpeted as an innovative urban reserve – a new concept in introducing the public to the natural world. Indeed. Except that the place is something of a poisoned chalice. It's a pig's ear and I'm expected to turn it into a silk purse. I wouldn't have taken the job but for the fact that this is my native city and I stood by powerless for twenty years while most of the area's habitats were systematically ruined, only to see the remnants spared in the nick of time. I'm not complaining. Few people are given something to work with that is already in good shape – look at what Sven Göran Eriksson has inherited. The irony in my situation is that I'm the classic poacher turned gamekeeper; the arch trespasser of the 1980s has become the upright custodian of the 21st century. And, would you believe it, not only do I liaise with the port police and military authorities – former adversaries – but I've discovered that they are also pleased that things are finally happening to protect the birds.

It's uplifting when the people you least expect to earn respect from show signs of giving you that very thing. But can you really trust them? I know all eyes are on me and that every development will be scrutinized, chewed over and discussed out of my hearing. If things go well, fine. However, make one slip and all credibility will disappear faster than a dot com company. So a game of cat and mouse is being played. I am the mouse but the cat can be a bit gullible. Recently the cat took the form of Sergeant Burke, a man apparently with better eyesight than mine. With advancing years I can put up with impending baldness and the long white hairs that are starting to sprout from my ears and down my nose, but the prospect of fading eyesight is no laughing matter.

It transpired that, from his imperious sentry box overlooking the roadside along which three of us were planting a hawthorn hedge, Sergeant Burke had noticed numbers of birds and other animals that I had missed, thereby exposing my fading eyesight, if not growing incompetence as a birder. Here are three examples. (1) Instead of an estimated 20 rabbits attacking our hawthorn seedlings after dark he'd seen 'hundreds'. (2) The number of Golden Plovers roosting on nearby grassland did not total 850 but amounted to 'at least a million'. (3) I was wrong about the identity of the white owl that hunted in the general vicinity. Based on his description of size 'wingspan bigger than a Landrover', it couldn't possibly be a Barn Owl and must be either a Snowy Owl (first record in Co Down since 1843) or a creature that special agents Mulder and Scully should be told about.

This, of course, was incredible news. Think about the implications. An esteemed member of the security forces whose exaggerations would be believed – even in a court of law. I was presented with a diplomatic coup par excellence. Here was an opportunity to infiltrate the docklands' mass media through an impeccable source. The last thing I was going to do was to query any of his census figures or meticulous attributions of wingspan size. Quite the reverse. I dropped a few statistics that he might find interesting. Did he know how many thousands of trees we intended to plant and what a great help a mechanical digger would be? That took care of immediate needs. The rodent problem took a little longer to crack but, in the end, he managed to beat my claimed personal best of shooting 20 rabbits in one night which, evidently, had the added benefit of frightening away all the scores of others.

Own goal

God bless Sergeant Burke, his heart is in the right place. Sharon, on the other hand, is not on the same wavelength and regards working for birds in an entirely different light. It would be unfair to describe her as Cinderella. She is the cleaner who has taken over my nocturnal round of maintenance duties in the reserve's posh visitor centre, grandly referred to as the Observation Room. It really is lovely and provides amazingly close views of, among others, Teal, Wigeon and Black-tailed Godwits. I felt sorry for Sharon who, because she arrives in the dark, doesn't get to see the spectacle. I suggested that she should call during daylight. 'Would that be overtime?' I said it wouldn't, I just thought she might be interested.

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111 Black-tailed Godwits have a sinister side that, quite frankly, some people find scary *(Anthony McGeehan)*

'Listen big fella, I'll leave the birds to you and your patience; I'm only paid to scrub down the Institution Room.' Sharon has a certain directness and an imperfect way with words that I can relate to, or thought I could. Her early attempts at washing the tiled floors were disastrous. No doubt she was keen to impress and to do a good job, but she was using too much detergent. When she goes home at night the floors are wet and look okay but the dried out versions that greet me in the morning resemble a skating rink. Reluctantly, I phoned her. She said, 'But I do all my hospital floors the same.' The awful truth dawned on me. Her calling the building the 'Institution Room' was no accident. She assumed I ran a clinic or some kind of asylum. Even her remark, 'You and your patience' took on a new chilling connotation – obviously, the true transcription was 'You and your *patients.*' My God, she reckons birdwatchers are nutters!

Although our backgrounds were far from similar, I thought we shared at least one thing in common: a desire for high standards in cleanliness. I was mistaken. On warm evenings millipedes are attracted to the lights around the entrance. Their presence sickens and disgusts Sharon. She vacuums them up. When I commented that they were harmless and could stay, she was appalled. 'If I had vermin like that climbing up the walls of my house I'd move out and get the public health people in.' This statement implied that if I tolerated such insanitary conditions at work then I probably lived in abject squalor. I felt like I badly needed the services of a PR consultant. I desperately wanted to claw back some street cred with Sharon who, by this stage, was doubtless drawing parallels between the reserve and either One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest or The Adams Family. Comparisons with the latter were reinforced when I got an urgent communication from her supervisor. Sharon, the fax said, didn't want to come to work anymore because the premises were haunted. What?

The supervisor told me that she'd heard 'bloodcurdling noises' outside the building and found a handwritten note addressed to me by one of the volunteer staff confirming 'goblin' activity. She read a photocopy of it back to me. When she got to the line '250 of them are almost pecking at the windows', the penny dropped. I said, 'Oh, *those* goblins. I think you'll find that in this particular period of history they're not winged evil spirits but simply birds called godwits.' We were both relieved; we both laughed. Somehow I don't think Sharon saw the funny side of the incident. In its wake I'm trying hard to remain on friendly terms, which requires me to pay even closer attention to any other misgivings that she might have. Sharon may not like birds but I don't want her to become afraid of them. There is too much at stake. Let's put it another way. If that damn Barn Owl happens to pick the wrong moment to fly past the Observation Room's windows I could be back on toilet duties for the foreseeable future.

WP reports

This review lists rare and interesting birds reported in the Western Palearctic mainly in **January-February 2001** 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.

GEESE Both in Friesland and at the Haringvliet area, Zuid-Holland, the Netherlands, single white morph **Ross's Geese** *Anser rossii* wintered with Barnacle Geese *Branta leucopsis*; at Haringvliet, a second was present on 1-3 January but that could have been the Friesland bird. Several presumed vagrant **Lesser Canada Geese** *B hutchinsii* and **Greater Canada Geese** *B canadensis* were reported from Scotland this winter. On 5 October, a **Hutchins's Canada Goose** *B h hutchinsii* (also known as Richardson's) was seen with Pink-footed Geese *A brachyrhynchus* at Letham, Angus. On Islay, Argyll, up to two Hutchins's were with Barnacles at Bridgend and two **Intermediate Canada Geese** of the subspecies *B c parvipes* (confusingly often referred to as Lesser) were with Barnacles at Bowmore during December-February. A possible *parvipes* was with Greylag Geese *A anser* on Tiree, Argyll, on 10-13 January. Unidentified individuals were at Aberlady, Lothian, on 12 October, at Gruinart, Islay, Argyll, from 16 October to 8 December, and at Killiechronan, Mull, Argyll, on 21 November. In England, an unidentified individual was at Martin Mere, Burscough Bridge, Lancashire, on 1 November. In Ireland, one was at Raughley Point, Sligo, on 7 January while another tentatively identified as a **Taverner's Canada Goose** *B h taverneri* was with Barnacles at Dunfanaghy, Donegal, from 25 February to at least 10 March. In Hungary, a **Dark-bellied Brent Goose** *B bernicla* was seen on 7 January near Ferto lake (where 21 **Red-breasted Geese** *B ruficollis* were present on 14 January). In western France, at least eight **Black Brants** *B nigricans* were wintering during February, including four on Ile de Ré, Charente-Maritime. In the Netherlands, 15 to 20 were present during January-February, including up to four on Texel, Noord-Holland, and up to three at Scharendijke, Zeeland. Five adults were in Norfolk and at least eight more were reported from elsewhere in England. The first for Belgium remained from 22 November to 17 December at Uitkerkse Polders, West-Vlaanderen. In Egypt, an **Egyptian Goose** *Alopochen aegyptiacus* was present at Sharm-el-Sheikh sewage treatment

112 Steppe Eagle / Steppearend *Aquila nipalensis*, third or fourth calendar-year, with Hooded Crow / Bonte Kraai *Corvus cornix* (left) and Common Raven / Raaf *C corax* (right), Bornholm, Denmark, 19 February 2001 *(Ole Krogh)*

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113 Grey-morph egret / grijze zilverreiger *Egretta*, Tavira, Algarve, Portugal, January 2001 *(Ray Tipper)*

114 Lesser Scaup / Kleine Topper *Aythya affinis*, male, Huningue, Haut-Rhin, France, 14 January 2001 *(Raffael Aye)*

115 Giervalk / Gyr Falcon *Falco rusticolus*, Ouessant, Finistère, France, 4 March 2001 *(Marc Ameels)* **116** Steppe Grey Shrike / Steppeklapekster *Lanius pallidirostris*, Penisola Magnisi, Siracusa, Italy, January 2001 *(Andrea Corso)* **117** Probable hybrid Mallard x Red-crested Pochard / vermoedelijke hybride Wilde Eend x Krooneend *Anas platyrhynchos x Netta rufina*, Huningue, Haut-Rhin, France, 15 January 2001 *(Raffael Aye).* Note Mallard-like tail with much white; uniform brown head and body with paler head sides and dark-grey bill (but without pink) are reminiscent of Red-crested Pochard **118** Probable Taverner's Canada Goose / vermoedelijke Taverners Canadese Gans *Branta hutchinsii taverneri*, with Barnacle Geese / Brandganzen *B leucopsis*, Dunfanaghy, Donegal, Ireland, 25 February 2001 *(Chris Batty)* **119** Probable Black-throated Loon / vermoedelijke Parelduiker *Gavia arctica*, albino, Lauffen, Baden-Württemberg, Germany, December 2000 *(Christoph Randler)*

plant, South Sinai, on 7 February. The sixth **Cotton Pygmy-goose** *Nettapus coromandelianus* for the United Arab Emirates (UAE) stayed from 28 December into February at the Sharjah rubbish dump.

DUCKS At least 410 **Red-crested Pochards** *Netta rufina* were counted at Larache marshes, Morocco, on 29 December. A presumed hybrid Mallard x Red-crested Pochard *Anas platyrhynchos x Netta rufina* was photographed at Huningue, Haut-Rhin, France, on 15 January. From November to January, the single male **Canvasbacks** *Aythya valisineria* remained in Essex and Kent; the one in Kent remained through March. From 14 January to at least 10 February, an unringed male **Lesser Scaup** *A affinis* visited France, Germany and Switzerland in the Rhine basin north of Basel, Switzerland; it was the second for Switzerland (the first returned for many winters to Lac Léman and was ringed during its stay; cf Dutch Birding 15: 83-84, 1993, 16: 78, 1994, 17: 29, 1995, 20: 246, 1998). The two females present from 19 November at Roquito del Fraile, Tenerife, Canary Islands, remained into March. Rare ducks in Iceland during February were three male **Ring-necked Ducks** *A collaris*, one female **Common Scoter** *Melanitta nigra*, three male **American Wigeons** *Mareca americana* (five were reported during January) and two male **American Black Ducks** *A rubripes* (one of which being present since 1993). Rare ducks in France during January-February included at least four single **Ring-necked Ducks**, another male **Lesser Scaup** at Chalamont, Dombers, Ain, a first-winter female **King Eider** *Somateria spectabilis* at Douarnenez, Finistère, from 30 December into March, two single **Surf Scoters** *M perspicillata* in Finistère from 7 January to 9 February and in Charente-Maritime from 25 February, and three **American Wigeons** in Côtes-d'Armor. A female **Steller's Eider** *Polysticta stelleri* stayed on Sylt, Schleswig-Holstein, Germany, from 25 December to at least 20 January. In the Netherlands, two single male **King Eiders** remained on Texel, Noord-Holland, from 28 August to late February. The first-winter male at Laxe, A Coruña, Galicia, Spain, was present from 12 December to 12 January. The pair of **Harlequin Ducks** *Histrionicus histrionicus* at Kirkjubo, Faeroes, remained through January. A male was seen for 2.5 hours at Afon Llyfnant, Dyfed, Wales, in the morning of 27 February. A male **Black Scoter** *M americana* stayed at Llanfairfechan, North Wales, on 19-28 January. At Oostduinkerke, West-Vlaanderen, a male **Surf Scoter** was seen on 31 January and 1 February and a pair on 12 March; last year, the first two for Belgium were at the same site. In Ireland, nine were present during January in Donegal (three), Kerry (two), Meath (one) and Sligo (two). There were also four at Black Rock Sands, Gwynned, Wales, in early January and a total of eight males in eastern Scotland. The second **Bufflehead** *Bucephala albeola* for the Azores was a female at Santa Cruz, Graciosa, on 16-19 December (the first was on Pico in November 1998). Presumed vagrant female **Wood Ducks** *Aix sponsa* were at Laguna de Barlovento

120 Sykes's Nightjar / Sykes' Nachtzwaluw *Caprimulgus mahrattensis*, Al Wathba camel track, United Arab Emirates, 16 February 2001 *(Tom M van der Have)*

121 White's Thrush / Goudlijster *Zoothera aurea*, Skårup, Thisted, Nordjylland, Denmark, 6 March 2001 *(Roef Mulder)* **122** White's Thrush / Goudlijster *Zoothera aurea*, Skårup, Thisted, Nordjylland, Denmark, 5 March 2001 *(Kim Aaen)*. Aged as first-winter by outermost retained juvenile greater covert which is more rusty tinged than renewed other greater coverts

on Parma, Canary Islands, on 18 November, in Mallorca from 22 December through January, and at Lajes das Flores, Flores, Azores, on 11 February. Other interesting ducks on Flores on 10-11 February included a female **Hooded Merganser** *Lophodytes cucullatus* at Caldeira Branca, a pair of **Eurasian Wigeon** *M penelope* (another pair was on Pico), a male and three female **American Wigeons** at Lagoa Branca, and five **American Black Ducks** at Lagoa Seca (where seven hybrids American Black Duck x Mallard were also identified). The **American Black Duck** found on 21 October in A Coruña, Galicia, was still present in February. Four long-stayers in Britain in Cornwall (two sites), in Devon and at Loch Fleet, Highland (female) also remained. In early March, the long-staying males in Ireland were still on Achill Island, Mayo, and Barrow Harbour, Kerry. Three **Marbled Teals** *Marmaronetta angustirostris* remained at Canal Vell lagoon, Ebro delta, Spain, from 13 January to 2 February (the Ebro delta is now the species' northernmost regular site). One of the two staying in Dubai from 20 December, constituting the third for the UAE, was still present on 9 February.

LOONS TO CORMORANTS An albino loon *Gavia* was photographed at Lauffen, Baden-Württemberg, Germany, on 24-26 December (the observers identified it as **Black-throated Loon** *G arctica*). A flock of 180 **Great Northern Loons** *G immer* at Kalmanstjörn, Hafir, Iceland, on 7 January is noteworthy. In France, a **Yellow-billed Loon** *G adamsii* wintered at Lac-du-Der, Marne, from 28 January into March. On Helgoland, Schleswig-Holstein, an oiled individual was picked up moribund on 9 January. The **Pied-billed Grebe** *Podilymbus podiceps* at Saint-Denis d'Orques, Sarthe, France, remained from 24 June into March. The first for mainland Spain stayed from 19 February onwards at Pantano de La Grajera, Logroño, La Rioja. In the Azores, one was seen at Lagoa das Furnas, São Miguel, on 19 February. The first **Great Shearwater** *Puffinus gravis* in winter for Iceland was observed off Bakkahöfði, Skjálfandi, on 4 February. In Israel, a record nine **Sooty Shearwaters** *P griseus* were counted off Yafo, Tel-Aviv (five) and Haifa (four) during a storm on 4 February; on the same day, 13 **Leach's Storm-petrels** *Oceanodroma leucorhoa* were seen off Yafo. In the Azores, two first-winter **Double-crested Cormorants** *Hypoleucos auritus* wintered at Santa Cruz das Flores, Flores, one was seen at Ilhéub Deitado, Madalena, Pico, on 13-15 February, and the one at Angra, Terceira, was still present on 23 February. The first **Pygmy Cormorant** *Microcarbo pygmeus* for Belgium was a first-year at both sides of the French border at Warneton and Ploegsteert, Hainaut, from 28 December to 1 January and again on 16, 18 and 21 January. In Austria, up to five were on the Danube in Vienna, from 28 January onwards. In Switzerland, one turned up on 15 February at Bodensee. In north-eastern Italy, more than 200 were counted in January.

HERONS TO IBISES On 18 February, a flock of nine **Cattle Egrets** *Bubulcus ibis* came in from the west at Ponta Delgada harbour on São Miguel, Azores, and rested for a while on boats and buildings before continuing eastwards the same day. The pale-morph **Indian Reef Egret** *Egretta gularis schistacea* photographed at Llobregat delta, Barcelona, Spain, stayed until 29 November (Birding World 13: 479, 2000). A **grey-morph egret** was photographed at Tavira, Algarve, Portugal, in January. There is much discussion whether a dark-morph Little Egret *E garzetta* really exists as, at least in some cases, such birds appeared to be Western Reef Egrets *E g gularis* or probable hybrids. Grey morphs are not only rare in Little but also in Western Reef (which are almost always black). As in other problem egrets, the identification of this bird remains speculative, at least for the time being. In the eastern Camargue, Bouches-du-Rhône, France, three **Black Storks** *Ciconia nigra* remained through February. In western Morocco, the numbers of **Glossy Ibis** *Plegadis falcinellus* seem to increase with, for instance, 89 at Larache on 29 December and 15 at Oued Massa on 1 January. Similarly, in Spain, large flocks of 67-81 were present during January-February at Ebro delta, Tarragona, at Brazo del Este, Sevilla, and at El Rocío, Doñana, Huelva. In the past three years, the population of **Northern Bald Ibis** *Geronticus eremita* in south-western Morocco seems to be on the increase as well with perhaps more than 500 individuals at two roosts in the Massa area and 105 at Tamri on 1 January.

RAPTORS The second **White-eyed Buzzard** *Butastur teesa* for the UAE was seen at the Emirates golf course on 15 February. A juvenile **Lesser Spotted Eagle** *Aquila pomarina* at Vendicari, Siracusa, Sicily, Italy, from November to at least 21 January may constitute the species' first wintering record for Europe. Following several sightings of at least two **Greater Spotted Eagles** *A clanga* in five Dutch provinces from 4 November to 10 December, a juvenile wintered at Lauwersmeer, Friesland/Groningen, from 24 January into March. Another juvenile was present at Alphen aan den Rijn, Zuid-Holland, on 21-24 January and perhaps the same bird was reported on 25 February from Noord-Brabant. Apart from the Netherlands, the annual occurrence of wintering individuals seems to be increasing in the rest of Europe as well. In Hungary, for instance, the species was noted at Ferto lake (up to two; at Austrian border), Kisbalaton lake and the northern side of Balaton lake. In Slovenia, one was at Medvedce on 14-16 December. In Austria, an adult was at the species' traditional Seewinkel site on 21 January. On 11 and 17 February, the species was reported at Niederriedstausee, Bern, Switzerland, where it had been wintering in the past two years. In Spain, an adult was seen at Lucio del Lobo, Sevilla, on 25 November and a pale juvenile was at Aiguamolls de l'Empordà, Girona, on 18-21 December. In France, two were present through February at the regular winter haunt in the Camargue and two were at St Martin de Seignanx, Landes; also in February, singles turned up at Etang de Vendres, Hérault, on 18 February (an adult) and at Lac-du-Der, Marne, on 23-24 February. At least 10 were wintering in the northern

123 Northern Hawk Owl / Sperweruil *Surnia ulula*, Kallstorp, Skåne, Sweden, 17 February 2001 *(René van Rossum)* **124** Pine Grosbeak / Haakbek *Pinicola enucleator*, adult male, Nyholla, Skåne, Sweden, January 2001 *(Marc Ameels)* **125** Pine Grosbeak / Haakbek *Pinicola enucleator*, probably first-winter male, Espoo, Helsinki, Finland, 12 February 2001 *(Nigel Blake)*. Narrow white fringes on just visible greater coverts indicate first-winter (white fringes are broader in adult); orange on head and breast indicates first-winter male

half of Italy, including the one staying for its third consecutive year at Vasche di Maccharese, Roma. A third- or fourth-year **Steppe Eagle** *A nipalensis* first seen flying past Bornholm on 25 September was rediscovered here on 1 October and twitched until it was seen flying south on 23 October. However, on 17 December, it was relocated again on Bornholm where it remained to at least mid-March. It constituted the species' 17th record for Denmark and the first in three years. The **Tawny Eagle** *A rapax* near Urim, Israel, was still present in early March. On 29 December, a pale morph **Booted Eagle** *Hieraaetus pennatus* occurred at Larache marshes, Morocco. In southern Italy, four were staying in Sicily through January. On 30 December, a **Saker Falcon** *Falco cherrug* was seen at Lentini lake, Sicily. The white morph **Gyr Falcon** *F rusticolus* reported in Dublin, Ireland, during December was seen again on 6 January. The first for France since 1979 was a first-winter on Ouessant, Finistère, from 27 December into March. A juvenile stayed at Margrethe Kog, Sønderjylland, Denmark, from 30 December to 7 January. On 7 March, an injured white morph was captured and died 160 km east of Aberdeen, Scotland.

RAILS TO WADERS The 14th **White-breasted Waterhen** *Amaurornis phoenicurus* for the UAE remained at the Emirates golf course from 7 February into March (the 13th was here on 2 December). On 7 February, a **Demoiselle Crane** *Anthropoides virgo* was seen at the Sharm-el-Sheikh sewage treatment plant, South Sinai. The first **Kittlitz's Plover** *Charadrius pecuarius* for Spain was discovered at la Mancha lagoons, Toledo, on 12 March. In Occasional Paper Number 104 of the Canadian Wildlife Service, R I G (Guy) Morrison et al present estimates of shorebirds populations in North America. Interesting numbers include, for instance, 350 000 **Upland Sandpipers** *Bartramia longicauda* (10 000 in Canada) and 15 000 **Buff-breasted Sandpipers** *Tryngites subruficollis*. The most abundant waders in North America are **Wilson's Snipe** *Gallinago delicata* (2 000 000), **American Woodcock** *Scolopax minor* (5 000 000) and **Red-necked Phalarope** *Phalaropus lobatus* (2 500 000). The population of **Eskimo Curlew** *Numenius borealis* is noted as less than 50 although there have not been any reliable records since the 1960s (the last photograph was in April 1962 at Galveston, Texas, USA, and the last specimen was shot on 4 September 1963 in Barbados). The first **Long-billed Dowitcher** *Limnodromus scolopaceus* for Belgium stayed 1 km from the Dutch border at Het Zwin, Knokke, West-Vlaanderen, on 16-18 January. Perhaps the same individual wintered in the Netherlands at Prunjepolder, Schouwen, Zeeland, from 17 February to at least mid-March. The one first seen in July 1999 at Belfast Lough, Down, Northern Ireland, was still present in March. Another remained through February-March at Seaforth, Liverpool, Merseyside, England. In Spain, the **Greater Yellowlegs** *Tringa melanoleuca* staying at Ría de Ortigueira, A Coruña, Galicia, from 4 November was still present on 18 February. The first-winter **Lesser Yellowlegs** *T flavipes* at Laugharne Marsh, Carmarthenshire, Wales, remained from 12 December into March. An adult **Spotted Sandpiper** *Actitis macularia* was discovered on Costa Teguisa, Lanzarote, Canary Islands, on 10 January. The first for Senegal was a bird in winter plumage photographed on the eastern side of Ile de Goree, Dakar, on 20 February. In Morocco, up to 20 **Grey Phalaropes** *P fulicaria* were seen near Larache on 29-30 December.

GULLS TO AUKS In Spain, first-winter **Laughing Gulls** *Larus atricilla* were seen in Alicante on 14 February and at Getxo, Bizkaia, on 19 February. In England, one was at Swindon, Wiltshire, on 9-13 January and then in Bedfordshire from 27 January into February. A first-winter **Franklin's Gull** *L pipixcan* was coming to roost off Tor Bay, Devon, England, from 19 January to at least mid-March. An adult **Bonaparte's Gull** *L philadelphia* stayed at Hinckley, Somerset, England, from 3 February into March. Another was reported at Kilkee, Clare, Ireland, on 6 February. On 3 February, at least 143 **Relict Gulls** *L relictus* (including at least 82 adults and 34 first-winters) were counted at the Song island roost, South Korea. A count of large gulls in Nordrhein-Westfalen, Germany, on 9 December resulted in 12 680 **Herring** *L argentatus*, 49 **Lesser Black-backed** *L graellsii*, 32 **Yellow-legged** *L michahellis*, 31 **Pontic** *L cachinnans* and six **Great Black-backed Gulls** *L marinus*. In Cork, Ireland, up to three first-winter **American Herring Gulls** *L smithsonianus* stayed at Cobh from 6 January into March and one was at Ballycotton from 17 December into March. At least four **Kumlien's Gulls** *L glaucoides kumlieni* were also reported from Ireland in January. In the Azores, first-winter **Glaucous Gulls** *L hyperboreus* were seen on Flores, Pico and São Miguel. During 9-18 February, up to six **Ring-billed Gulls** *L delawarensis* were found on Flores, up to six on Faial (all first-winters), and one on São Miguel. In January alone, a total of 35 (20 adults) were seen in Britain and 22 in Ireland. During February, eight were present in western France (five in Finistère) and three on Madeira. The first for Italy was an adult at Val di Brenta, Chioggia, from 18 December to at least 20 January. The only **Ross's Gull** *Rhodostethia rosea* so far this winter was an adult at Peterhead, Grampian, Scotland, on 4-5 March. The second **Forster's Tern** *Sterna forsteri* for France lingered at Carantec, Finistère, from 6 January to 11 February. A **Brünnich's Murre** *Uria lomvia* was found dead on North Ronaldsay, Orkney, Scotland, on 29 January.

DOVES TO WOODPECKERS The unidentified turtle dove *Streptopelia* staying in late December and January at Voll, Jæren, Rogaland, appeared to be a **European Turtle Dove** *S turtur* after it moulted its wing-coverts (cf Dutch Birding 23: 47, 2001). In Israel, a **Pallid Scops Owl** *Otus brucei* was seen at Ktora wadi, Kibbutz Lotan, on 2 February. A presumed new species of *Otus* owl has been photographed and sound-recorded in Sri Lanka; this is quite surprising as Sri Lanka is relatively well-explored, the last discovery of a bird species there being as long ago as 1868 (Ceylon Whistling-Thrush *Myophonus blighi*). A **Snowy Owl** *Nyctea scandiaca*

was seen at Hillerød, Nordsjælland, Denmark, on 21 January. The most southerly **Great Grey Owl** *Strix nebulosa* in 100 years for Sweden at Skummeslövstrand, Halland, was found dead as a roadkill on 25 January; the bird was seen by many birders during its stay from June 2000 onwards. On 4 February, the first **Sykes's Nightjar** *Caprimulgus mahrattensis* for the UAE was found at Dubai sewage works; from 9 February into March, two were staying at Al Wathba camel track (at the latter site, up to 16 **Egyptian Nightjars** *C aegyptius* were also present). Last spring's fourth **Grey-headed Woodpecker** *Picus canus* for the Netherlands at Oosterbeek, Renkum, Gelderland, was again observed from 4 March onwards.

LARKS TO WAXWINGS The fifth **Calandra Lark** *Melanocorypha calandra* for Sweden was at Laholm, Halland, on 2-3 January. The fourth **Bimaculated Lark** *M bimaculata* for Finland remained on Långören from 17 December to 18 January. In Sweden, the **Greater Short-toed Lark** *Calandrella brachydactyla* near Halmstad, Halland, was present on 1-14 January. On 8 January, the second **Indian Cliff Swallow** *Hirundo fluvicola* for the UAE joined the first present since 22 December at Al Wathba camel track. A **Pale Sand Martin** *Riparia riparia diluta* and a **Plain Martin** *R paludicola* (one of two from 20 October) were present at this site through February. In January, high numbers of **Bohemian Waxwings** *Bombycilla garrulus* reached southern countries like Austria, Czech Republic (a flock of 2000 near Brno), Hungary (flocks of 1000s around Budapest) and Ireland. In Finland, an estimated 50 000 were present around Helsinki. In Britain, more than c 4000 were noted between 21 December and late February and numbers remained high in March. In the Netherlands, several 100s were seen in late December and January but only a few dozen in February-March. Just 65 arrived in Belgium during January and 12 reached northern France.

THRUSHES The doubts on the identification of a male **Eastern Common Redstart** *Phoenicurus phoenicurus samamisicus* on Helgoland, Schleswig-Holstein, on 4 September appear to be unjustified (cf Dutch Birding 22: 298, plate 290, 2000, 23: 49, 2001). An unseasonal **Whinchat** *Saxicola rubetra* remained at Hjørring, Nordjylland, Denmark, from early December until at least 21 January. The eighth **Pied Stonechat** *S caprata* for the UAE stayed from 17 November through February at Fujairah national dairy farm. The first **Northern Wheatear** *Oenanthe oenanthe* in winter for Denmark was at København, Nordsjælland, until 8 January. In Spain, a first-winter male **Desert Wheatear** *O deserti* at the Llobregat delta was present from 13 January within the boundary of the Barcelona airport and ringed on 17 January. The fourth **White's Thrush** *Zoothera aurea* for Denmark was eating apples and giving stunning views in a garden at Skårup, Thisted, Nordjylland, on 4-8 March (the previous one was in 1952). A **Dusky Thrush** *Turdus naumanni eunomus* was reported in Allier, France, on 19 January. The 19th **Black-throated Thrush** *T ruficollis atrogularis* for Sweden was at Ottenby, Öland, on 6-9 January. Perhaps the earliest song ever of **White-spotted Bluethroat** *Luscinia svecica cyanecula* for the Netherlands was heard on 20 February on Texel.

WARBLERS In Belgium, at least 10 **Zitting Cisticolas** *Cisticola juncidis* remained during January at Zeebrugge, West-Vlaanderen. In Israel, an **Asian Desert Warbler** *Sylvia nana nana* was seen at Nizzana on 11 February. A **Lesser Whitethroat** *S curruca* at Castricum, Noord-Holland, from 3 March was probably the earliest ever for the Netherlands (the species has been recorded in all months except February). The first **Pallas's Leaf Warbler** *Phylloscopus proregulus* in winter for Belgium was at Louvain-la-Neuve, Brabant Wallon, from 28 January to at least 18 February. Another was reported at Kenfig Pool, South Wales, on 29 January. In the Netherlands, one stayed at Vlaardingen, Zuid-Holland, from 4 March. A **Yellow-browed Warbler** *P inornatus* wintered at Helston, Cornwall, from 3 January to at least mid-March and one was at Kerlouan, Finistère, on 5 February. A **Hume's Leaf Warbler** *P humei* was at Egmond aan Zee, Noord-Holland, the Netherlands, from 28 February to 3 March. **Dusky Warblers** *P fuscatus* wintered at Grouville Marsh, Jersey, Channel Islands, during January and at Salthammer Odde, Snogebæk, Bornholm, from 28 January to 6 February.

TITS TO BUNTINGS An **Azure Tit** *Parus cyaneus* occurred on 25 February at Landek, Jasienica, Bielsko Biala, Silesia, Poland. **'Pleske's Tits'** *P caeruleus x cyaneus* were seen at Illmitz, Austria, on 6 December, at Hyères, Var, France, from 19 December to at least 18 January, at Zerniki along the Biala Nida river, Poland, on 20 January, and at Krakow, Poland, on 2 February (trapped). A northern **Great Grey Shrike** *Lanius excubitor* was found at Campiña de Hontoria, Llanes, Asturias, Spain, on 17 February (this species is very rare in northern Spain). The second **Steppe Grey Shrike** *L pallidirostris* for Italy and Sicily stayed at Penisola Magnisi, Siracusa, from 15 December to 11 January (the first was in Sicily in 1968). An adult remained at Paphos, Cyprus, from 7 December through January. A record nine **isabelline shrikes** *L isabellinus/phoenicuroides* were present in Israel during the first week of February. In Scilly, England, a **Red-billed Chough** *Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax* was seen on St Mary's on 1 March and on St Agnes on 3 March (on 5 February, one was reported from Porthscatho, Cornwall). Up to two first-winter **Rosy Starlings** *Sturnus roseus* were near the Valverde Visitor Centre, Doñana, Huelva, in mid-December. An adult male was at Marina hotel, Benidorm, Alicante, on 17 January. A first-winter male at Colombes, Hauts-de-Seine, France, stayed from 30 December to 18 February. In England, an adult wintered in Bristol and a first-winter at Torpoint, Cornwall. Up to three **Red-fronted Serins** *Serinus pusillus* stayed near Merom-Golan, Israel, from 30 January to 3 February. The invasion of **Pine Grosbeaks** *Pinicola enucleator* in Finland reached its

highest numbers on 4 February, when some 1000s were counted in the Helsinki region (300 were ringed that afternoon 3 km north of Helsinki, many caught by hand from the road). The first for Utsira, Rogaland, Norway, was an adult male trapped on 6 November. Three **Pine Buntings** *Emberiza leucocephalos* remained at the traditional winter site of Albaron, Camargue, from November into March. At two sites in Toscana, Italy, up to 13 were observed in late January. The 17th for Sweden was a male at Trosa, Södermanland, on 2-12 January. In Israel, 11 were present at Merom-Golan on 23-30 January.

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Recente meldingen

Dit overzicht van recente meldingen van zeldzame en interessante vogels in Nederland en België beslaat voornamelijk de periode **januari-februari 2001**. 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 www.dutchbirding.nl.

Nederland

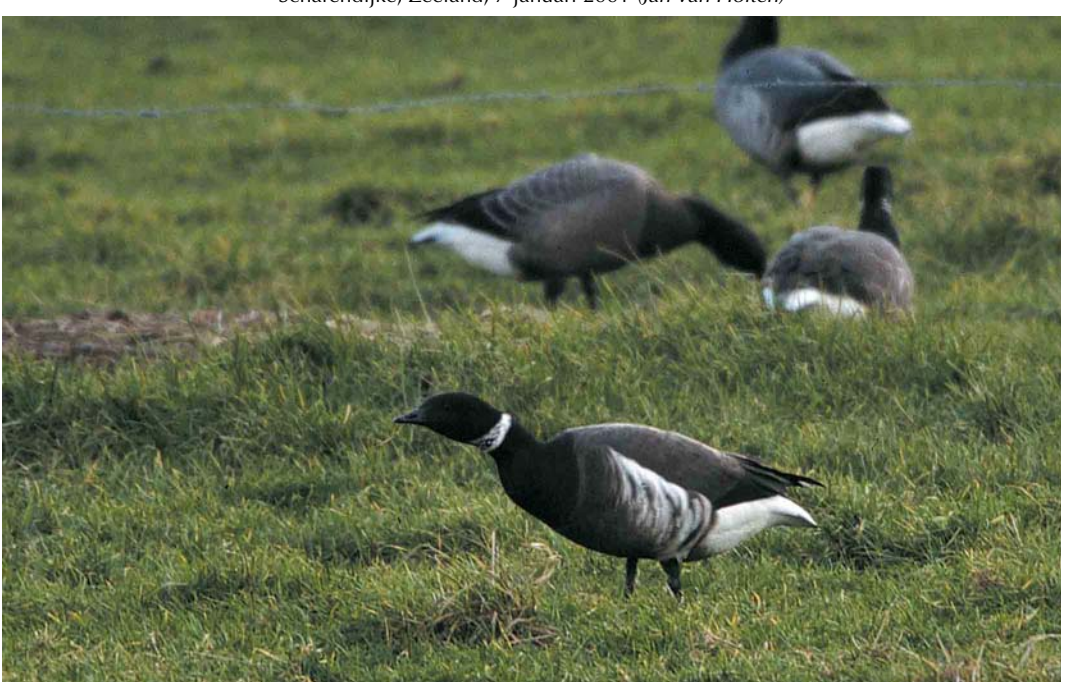
GANZEN TOT ARENDEN Er werden in januari-februari c 20 **Sneeuwganzen** *Anser caerulescens* gezien. De gehele periode werd een **Ross' Gans** *A rossii* waargenomen op de Korendijkse Slikken, Zuid-Holland, en op enkele andere locaties in de omgeving van het Haringvliet, Zuid-Holland. Van 1 tot 10 januari verbleven op de Korendijkse Slikken zelfs twee exemplaren. Van 23 januari tot 14 februari pleisterde er één in de omgeving van de Workumerwaard, Friesland, en vermoedelijk dezelfde vanaf 17 februari bij Anjum, Friesland. Een exemplaar met een kleine gele kleurring liep op 1 januari ten westen van Beilen, Drenthe. Het beeld van het voorkomen van **Dwergganzen** *A erythropus* bleef ongeveer hetzelfde als in voorgaande jaren met concentraties tot 25 februari bij Petten, Noord-Holland (maximaal 17), en tot 18 februari op de Korendijkse Slikken en bij Strijen, Zuid-Holland (maximaal 14). Verder werden er in gebieden waar veel ganzen verbleven nog c 25 opgemerkt. **Groenlandse Kolganzen** *A albifrons flavirostris* werden gemeld op 14 januari bij Tibma, Friesland, en op 16 januari nabij Beek-Ubbergen, Gelderland. Ruim 20 **Roodhalsganzen** *Branta ruficollis* werden waargenomen. Locaties waar zij het meest frequent werden gezien waren de Bandpolder, Friesland, met een maximum van vier op 18 februari, en de westkust van Friesland tussen Cornwerd en Workum met eveneens een maximum van vier op 11 en 13 februari. **Witbuikrotganzen** *B hrota* werden wat vaker gemeld, in totaal 18, waarvan maximaal drie de gehele periode bij Scharendijke, Zeeland, en maximaal vier tot 17 februari tussen Petten en Camperduin, Noord-Holland. De winterpopulatie van **Zwarte Rotgans** *B nigricans* bedroeg 15 à 20, met als opvallende aantallen maximaal drie bij Scharendijke en maximaal vier op Texel, Noord-Holland. **Witoogeenden** *Aythya nyroca* werden gemeld tot 17 januari bij Eindhoven, Noord-Brabant, op 16 en 17 januari in de Rammelwaard, Gelderland, en op 7 februari bij Badhoevedorp, Noord-Holland. Tot 21 februari verbleven nog steeds twee mannetjes **Koningseider** *Somateria spectabilis* op Texel. **Amerikaanse Smienten** *Mareca americana* werden wat vaker opgemerkt dan in andere jaren, met waarnemingen van 10 tot 27 januari bij Maassluis, Zuid-Holland, van 12 tot 15 januari maximaal twee bij Cornwerd, van 13 januari tot in maart maximaal twee op de Ouderkerkerplas, Noord-Holland, op 21 januari bij Harlingen, Friesland, en van 3 tot 19 februari in de Kapelsche Moer, Zeeland. Er was een wintergeval van **Kwartel** *Coturnix coturnix* van 20 tot 26 januari bij Katwijk aan Zee, Zuid-Holland. Bij de Brouwersdam, Zuid-Holland/Zeeland, werden op 19

126 Ross' Gans / Ross's Goose *Anser rossii*, met Brandganzen / Barnacle Geese *Branta leucopsis*, Nieuwendijk, Zuid-Holland, 14 januari 2001 *(Marten van Dijl)*

127 Koningseider / King Eider *Somateria spectabilis*, tweede-winter mannetje, met Eider / Common Eider *S mollissima*, Texel, Noord-Holland, 15 februari 2001 *(Erik Menkveld)*

128 Zwarte Rotgans / Black Brant *Branta nigricans*, adult, met Rotganzen / Dark-bellied Brent Geese *B bernicla*, Huisduinen, Noord-Holland, 21 februari 2001 *(Ruud E Brouwer)*

129 Zwarte Rotgans / Black Brant *Branta nigricans*, adult, met Rotganzen / Dark-bellied Brent Geese *B bernicla*, Scharendijke, Zeeland, 7 januari 2001 *(Jan van Holten)*



130 Zeearend / White-tailed Eagle *Haliaeetus albicilla*, juveniel, Goudplaat, Noord-Beveland, Zeeland, 13 januari 2001 *(Corstiaan Beeke)*

februari 130 **Roodkeelduikers** *Gavia stellata* geteld. De aanwezigheid van **IJsduikers** *G immer* bleef opvallend, met in de eerste dagen van januari maximaal vier bij de Brouwersdam en tot het eind van de periode hier nog twee; tot 5 januari bij Wessem, Limburg; tot 6 januari in de Brabantse Biesbosch, Noord-Brabant; tot 17 februari één à twee in de omgeving van de Oosterscheldekering, Zeeland; tot 26 januari op Texel en op 28 januari mogelijk dezelfde bij Den Helder, Noord-Holland; en vanaf 11 februari bij Oost-Maarland, Limburg. Verder waren er waarnemingen op 9 en 23 januari bij Westkapelle, Zeeland, en op 20 en 30 januari en 9 februari bij Scheveningen, Zuid-Holland. **Kuifaalscholvers** *Stictocarbo aristotelis* werden gezien op Texel (maximaal twee) tot 26 januari, op 1 januari bij Westkapelle, op 9 januari twee in de Eemshaven, Groningen, op 14 januari één en op 23 januari vier bij de Oosterscheldekering, op 20 januari bij de Maasvakte, Zuid-Holland, en van 10 tot 18 februari maximaal drie bij Huisduinen, Noord-Holland. Twee adulte **Kwakken** *Nycticorax nycticorax* vertoefden op 6 januari bij Veere, Zeeland, en één op 27 januari bij Groot-Ammers, Zuid-Holland. Na de jaarwisseling werden **Koereigers** *Bubulcus ibis* weer schaars, met slechts vanaf 14 januari één bij Wissenkerke, Zeeland. Op 16 en 17 januari werden er echter zeven (!) gemeld ten noorden van Hulshorst, Gelderland, en op 19 januari verbleef er daar nog één. Het aantal **Kleine Zilverreigers** *Egretta garzetta* nam gedurende de winter verder af; 25 werden er in deze periode gemeld. Dubbeltellingen daargelaten komt het totaal aan **Grote Zilverreigers** *Casmerodius albus* rond de 75 uit. Opvallend is dat er in januari nog geen 20 gemeld werden, maar dat in februari de aantallen weer snel toenamen, met als hoogste tellingen negen ten noorden van Nuland, Noord-Brabant, zeven bij hut de Zeearend in de Oostvaardersplassen, Flevoland, 13 op 18 februari bij het Naardermeer, Noord-Holland, 17 op 24 februari langs de Oostvaardersdijk ten zuiden van de Lepelaarsplassen, Flevoland, en acht op 27 februari bij Woerdense Verlaat, Zuid-Holland. Een wel erge 'off season' **Zwarte Ooievaar** *Ciconia nigra* werd op 6 januari gezien bij Koewacht, Zeeland. De **Zwarte Ibis** *Plegadis falcinellus* dook weer op bij Petten vanaf 10 februari. De eerste **Rode Wouwen** *Milvus milvus* werden gezien op 9 februari langs Breskens, Zeeland, op 20 februari over Soerendonk, Noord-Brabant, en op 24 februari over de Eemshaven. De adulte **Zeearend** *Haliaeetus albicilla* van de Oostvaardersplassen bleef de gehele periode aanwezig. Onvolwassen vogels werden gezien van 4 tot 14 januari bij het Veerse Meer, Zeeland, op 14 januari in noordelijke richting over de Schelphoek, Zeeland, van 16 tot 20 januari op de Slikken van Flakkee, Zeeland, van 8 tot 11 februari in de Brabantse Biesbosch, en op 11 februari over Dordrecht, Zuid-Holland. Mogelijk gaat het daarbij dus om slechts één vogel. Een kleinere arend die op 13 januari gezien werd ten oosten van Willemstad, Noord-Brabant, werd als **Schreeuwarend** *Aquila pomarina* doorgegeven. In het licht van dit verhaal is het opvallend dat van 21 tot

24 januari een juveniele **Bastaardarend** *A clanga* aanwezig was bij Alphen aan den Rijn, Zuid-Holland. Een andere juveniele verbleef op 24 en 25 januari bij Anjum en vanaf 26 januari aan de oostkant van het Lauwersmeer, Groningen. Ook was er nog een melding op 25 februari bij Maren-Kessel, Noord-Brabant.

RALLEN TOT ALKEN Begin januari werden drie hybriden **Waterhoen x Meerkoet** *Gallinula chloropus x Fulica atra* gezien bij Velp, Gelderland. **Kraanvogels** *Grus grus* verbleven van 4 tot 8 januari bij Gapinge, Zeeland (twee), van 13 januari tot 20 februari bij de Groote Peel, Noord-Brabant (13), vanaf 24 januari ten noorden van Nuland, vanaf 18 februari in het Fochtelooërveen, Drenthe (drie), en op 27 februari langs de Praamweg, Flevoland. Op voorjaarstrek vlogen er op 15 februari 13 over Oosterbeek, Gelderland, op 20 februari 15 over Utrecht, Utrecht, en op 27 februari 70 over Echt, Limburg, en 140 over Heerlen, Limburg. Een **Grote Grijze Snip** *Limnodromus scolopaceus* werd op 17 februari ontdekt en verbleef tot ver in maart bij de nieuwe plas aan de noordkant van de Prunjepolder, Zeeland. De **Poelruiter** *Tringa stagnatilis* die op 31 december gevonden werd in de Putten van Camperduin, bleef daar tot in maart. **Rosse Franjepoten** *Phalaropus fulicaria* zwommen van 3 tot 13 januari te Vlissingen, Zeeland, en op 4 januari bij Westkapelle. De steevaste **Ringsnavelmeeuw** *Larus delawarensis* van Goes, Zeeland, bleef tot 14 januari. Vaste prik was tot 28 januari ook de adulte **Grote Burgemeester** *L hyperboreus* van Den Helder. Andere werden opgemerkt op 7 januari bij Westkapelle, op 17 januari bij Ritthem, Zeeland, en op 20 januari (een adulte) bij IJmuiden, Noord-Holland. Op 1 januari werd de laatste **Witvleugelstern** *Chlidonias leucopterus* bij Den Oever, Noord-Holland, gemeld. Een reeds lang dode **Zwarte Zeekoet** *Cepphus grylle* werd opgeraapt op het Posthuiswad, Vlieland, Friesland, op 15 februari.

PIEPERS TOT KRAAIEN Een **Grote Pieper** *Anthus richardi* werd op 7 januari gezien op Texel. Vooral in de eerste dagen van januari werden nog veel **Pestvogels** *Bombycilla garrulus* gemeld. In geheel januari ging het om c 310 vogels en in februari volgden er nog slechts 25. De grootste groepen telden 28 exemplaren op 2 januari in Groningen, Groningen, en vanaf 4 januari in Amstelveen, Noord-Holland. Een vroege **Blauwborst** *Luscinia svecica* zong op 20 februari op Texel. Winterse **Beflijsters** *Turdus torquatus* verbleven van 27 tot 29 januari te Apeldoorn, Gelderland, en op 4 februari in Wageningen, Gelderland. Een **Braamsluiper** *Sylvia curruca* werd op 12 januari weer gezien in Alkmaar, Noord-Holland. Nog uitzonderlijker dan het exemplaar eind december in Huizen, Noord-Holland, was een **Tuinfluiter** *S borin* gemeld op 3 januari in Hellevoetsluis, Zuid-Holland. Een **Pallas' Boszanger** *Phylloscopus proregulus* werd gemeld op 25 januari in het Amsterdamse Bos, Noord-Holland, en een **Bladkoning** *P inornatus* op 7 januari in Middelburg, Zeeland. Een **Humes Bladkoning** *P humei* werd op 28 februari ontdekt bij

131 Poelruiter / Marsh Sandpiper *Tringa stagnatilis*, winterkleed, Camperduin, Noord-Holland, 1 januari 2001 *(Harm Niesen)*

132 Koningseider / King Eider *Somateria spectabilis*, tweede-winter mannetje, Texel, Noord-Holland, 1 januari 2001 *(Ruud E Brouwer)* **133** Huiskraai / House Crow *Corvus splendens*, Renesse, Zeeland, 5 februari 2001 *(Arnoud B van den Berg)* **134** Ringsnavelmeeuw / Ring-billed Gull *Larus delawarensis*, adult winter, Goes, Zeeland, 7 januari 2001 *(Peter L Meininger)* **135** Koereiger / Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis*, Mariapolder, Wissenkerke, Zeeland, 20 januari 2001 *(Gerwin Geertse)* **136** Kraanvogels / Common Cranes *Grus grus*, Nederweert, Limburg, 8 december 2000 *(Max Berlijn)*

137 Pestvogel / Bohemian Waxwing *Bombycilla garrulus*, adult mannetje, Julianadorp, Noord-Holland, 3 januari 2001 *(René Pop)*

138 Zwartkopmeeuw / Mediterranean Gull *Larus melanocephalus*, adult ruiend van winter- naar zomerkleed, Tolsteeg, Utrecht, Utrecht, 24 februari 2001 *(Diederik Kok)*

Egmond aan Zee, Noord-Holland, en bleef daar tot 4 maart. Er waren meldingen van **Taigaboomkruipers** *Certhia familiaris* op 7 januari bij Baarn, Utrecht, op 14 januari bij Middelstum, Groningen, op 21 januari in Schoorl, Noord-Holland, en op 27 februari bij Heesch, Noord-Brabant. Een **Notenkraker** *Nucifraga caryocatactes* vloog op 3 februari over Rijswijk, Zuid-Holland. Vanaf 10 januari werd een **Huiskraai** *Corvus splendens* waargenomen bij Renesse, Zeeland; sinds 17 augustus 1997 was deze vogel hier niet meer gemeld.

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België

ZWANEN TOT AALSCHOLVERS In januari pleisterden in Vlaanderen 18 **Wilde Zwanen** *Cygnus cygnus* waarvan er 13 bleven tot in februari. De enige **Taigarietgans** *Anser fabalis* voor de periode werd op 3 januari opgemerkt te Bredene, West-Vlaanderen. Adulte **Dwergganzen** *A erythropus* hielden zich op op 6 februari bij Wenduine, West-Vlaanderen; op 9 februari te Damme, West-Vlaanderen; en op 13 februari in de Uitkerkse Polders, West-Vlaanderen. Een vermoedelijke **Hutchins' Canadese Gans** *Branta hutchinsii hutchinsii* verbleef op 10 februari bij Damme en op 26 februari in de Achterhaven van Zeebrugge, West-Vlaanderen. Van 8 tot 12 januari was een adulte **Roodhalsgans** *B ruficollis* aanwezig in de Uitkerkse Polders. Vermoedelijk dezelfde vogel dook op 6 februari op te Vlissegem, West-Vlaanderen. Tussen 9 en 19 februari werden maximaal twee adulte waargenomen in de Uitkerkse Polders. De hele periode was goed voor 15 **Krooneenden** *Netta rufina*. Het adulte mannetje **Ringsnaveleend** *Aythya collaris* bleef de hele periode aanwezig in het Antwerpse havengebied, Antwerpen, zoals gewoonlijk vaak op Blokkersdijk en het Noordkasteel. Mannetjes **Witoogeend** *A nyroca* zwommen te Wintam (Bornem), Antwerpen, op 3 en 4 januari; op Blokkersdijk op 4 januari, van 27 januari tot 1 februari en op 17 februari; te Antwerpen-De Kuifeend op 7 januari; te Lier-Duffel, Antwerpen, van 13 januari tot 11 februari; te Mechelen, Antwerpen, op 28 januari (ontsnapt); te Eke, Oost-Vlaanderen, op 3 februari; en te Brecht, Antwerpen, op 18 februari. Vrouwtjes werden gezien te Nazareth, Oost-Vlaanderen, op 1 januari; te Kessel-Lo, Vlaams-Brabant, op 17 januari; en te Zingem, Oost-Vlaanderen, op 3 februari. Op 31 januari en 1 februari werd er weer een adult mannetje **Brilzee-eend** *Melanitta perspicillata* waargenomen op zee voor Oostduinkerke, West-Vlaanderen. Er verbleven **Rosse Stekelstaarten** *Oxyura jamaicensis* te Ruien, Oost-Vlaanderen, van 14 tot 17 januari, te Mechelen was een mannetje aanwezig op 28 januari en een vrouwtje werd op 11 februari waargenomen bij Diepenbeek, Limburg. Vanaf 25 februari verbleef een adult mannetje **Amerikaanse Smient** *Mareca americana* bij Roksem, West-Vlaanderen. Een vrouwtje **Zomertaling** *Anas querquedula* werd op 21 februari gezien te Baasrode, Oost-Vlaanderen. Op 10 februari dook weer een mannetje **Kaneeltaling** *A cyanoptera* op te Mechelen. De enige **Parelduiker** *Gavia arctica* voor deze periode vloog op 27 januari langs Oostende, West-Vlaanderen. De algemeenste duiker deze winter bleek **IJsduiker** *G immer* te zijn met waarnemingen te Heist, West-Vlaanderen, tot 14 januari en een andere van 8 tot 27 januari; te Mechelen tot 10 februari; te Zeebrugge tot 18 januari en van 27 januari tot 25 februari; te Lommel, Antwerpen, van 12 tot 15 januari; te Lier op 22 januari; te Oostende op 27 januari; en te Koksijde, West-Vlaanderen, (drie) op 3 februari. Juveniele gekleurringde **Kuifaalscholvers** *Stictocarbo aristotelis* verbleven vanaf 6 januari te Denderleeuw, Oost-Vlaanderen (als nestjong geringd op 5 juli 2000 op Isle of May, Schotland) en op 14 en 15 januari bij Péronnes, Hainaut (als nestjong geringd op 29 juni 2000 op Isle of May); op 28 januari werd een juveniele Kuifaalscholver gezien te Nieuwpoort, West-Vlaanderen. De juveniele **Dwergaalscholver** *Microcarbo pygmeus* van Ploegsteert-Warneton, Hainaut, liet zich tot 1 januari regelmatig bekijken en werd ook op 16, 18 en 20 januari nog eens teruggezien.

REIGERS TOT SNIPPEN Bij Geel, Antwerpen, werden regelmatig twee **Kwakken** *Nycticorax nycticorax* opgemerkt. Tot ten minste 10 januari verbleven nog drie **Koereigers** *Bubulcus ibis* bij Het Zwin te Knokke, West-Vlaanderen. Van 29 januari tot 3 februari verbleef er één bij Baisieux, Hainaut. **Kleine Zilverreigers** *Egretta garzetta* werden gezien te Beernem, West-Vlaanderen; Gent, Oost-Vlaanderen; Harchies-Hensies, Hainaut; Kieldrecht, Oost-Vlaanderen (vier); Knokke (zeven); Lissewege, West-Vlaanderen (22); Wintam (Bornem), Antwerpen; en Zeebrugge (twee). Waarnemingen van **Grote Zilverreigers** *Casmerodius albus* kwamen van Berlare, Oost-Vlaanderen; Diepenbeek (zeven); Doel-Prosperpolder, Oost-Vlaanderen (twee); Geel (twee); Harchies-Hensies (zes); Houthalen, Limburg; Lokeren, Oost-Vlaanderen; Meetkerke, West-Vlaanderen; Mol-Postel, Antwerpen; Neerpelt, Limburg; Virelles, Hainaut (twee); Woumen-Merkem, West-Vlaanderen (twee); Zolder, Limburg (vier); en Zonhoven, Limburg (vijf). Rond 15 januari werd bij Wortel, Limburg, een verzwakte, juveniele **Purperreiger** *Ardea purpurea* opgeraapt en overgebracht naar het vogelasiel. Vermoedelijk gaat het hier om de vogel die tot in november te Schulen verbleef. **Ooievaars** *Ciconia ciconia* werden gezien te Assenede, Oost-Vlaanderen; Berlare; Daknam (Lokeren), Oost-Vlaanderen; Dendermonde; Kalken, Oost-Vlaanderen; Maas-

139 Dwergaalscholver / Pygmy Cormorant *Microcarbo pygmeus*, Warneton, Hainaut, 28 december 2000 *(Christophe Capelle)*

140 Zwarte Rotgans / Black Brant *Branta nigricans*, Uitkerkse Polders, West-Vlaanderen, 26 november 2000 *(Peter Boesman)* cf Dutch Birding 23: 57, 2001

eik, Limburg; Roisin, Hainaut (twee); Roksem (drie); Wetteren, Oost-Vlaanderen; en Zingem. Vanaf half februari werd er trek vastgesteld maar verschillende van de Oostvlaamse waarnemingen hebben betrekking op hetzelfde exemplaar. Op 10 februari vloog een **Heilige Ibis** *Threskiornis aegyptius* over Wuustwezel, Antwerpen. Een **Rode Wouw** *Milvus milvus* vloog op 8 januari over Kruibeke, Oost-Vlaanderen, en op 18 februari werd er één gezien te Eben, Liège. In januari werd geregeld een juveniele **Zeearend** *Haliaeetus albicilla* waargenomen in Het Zwin te Knokke. Er werden **Ruigpootbuizerds** *Buteo lagopus* gezien te Oud-Heverlee, Vlaams-Brabant, op 14 januari en te Tienen, Vlaams-Brabant, op 20 februari. Reeds op 27 februari was er een waarneming van een **Visarend** *Pandion haliaetus* te Voeren, Limburg. Een **Lannervalk** *Falco biarmicus* van onbekende origine joeg op 14 januari te Poederlee, Antwerpen. Tussen 1 en 8 januari werden in Vlaanderen 83 overvliegende **Kraanvogels** *Grus grus* opgemerkt en op 13 januari vlogen er twee over Deerlijk, West-Vlaanderen; op 10 februari trokken er twee over Nivelles, Brabant-Wallon, en op 25 februari één over Galmaarden,Vlaams-Brabant, en zes over Wellen, Limburg. Op 18 januari liepen twee **Kleine Strandlopers** *Calidris minuta* in de Achterhaven van Zeebrugge. De eerste **Grote Grijze Snip** *Limnodromus scolopaceus* voor België, een adulte in winterkleed, verbleef van 16 tot 18 januari in Het Zwin te Knokke.

JAGERS TOT GORZEN **Kleine Jagers** *Stercorarius parasiticus* vlogen op 27 januari langs Wenduine en op 23 februari langs Oostende (hier ook een **Grote Jager** *S skua* op dezelfde dag). Er werden gedurende de periode in totaal 19 **Zwartkopmeeuwen** *Larus melanocephalus* waargenomen. Op 10 januari pleisterde een **Vorkstaartmeeuw** *L sabini* in de haven van Oostende. De adulte **Grote Burgemeester** *L hyperboreus* bleef daar nog tot ten minste 25 februari aanwezig. Eerstewinters werden opgemerkt te Appels (Dendermonde) op 6 januari; te Heist op 12 januari; en te Zeebrugge op 28 februari. Op 17 februari pleisterde een derdewinter op de Werf van het Kluizendok bij Gent. Ook dit jaar overwinterde weer een **Middelste Bonte Specht** *Dendrocopos medius* te Pulle, Antwerpen. De enige **Strandleeuweriken** *Eremophila alpestris* werden gezien te Oostende op 23 februari en te Zeebrugge (drie) op 24 februari. Er waren winterwaarnemingen van **Grote Piepers** *Anthus richardi* te Kallo-Melsele, Oost-Vlaanderen, op 31 januari en te Zeebrugge op 28 februari. In januari werden 65 **Pestvogels** *Bombycilla garrulus* waargenomen. De meeste aankomsten vonden plaats tussen 1 en 7 januari en de grootste groep telde 14 exemplaren te Koksijde, West-Vlaanderen, op 4 januari; hiervan bleven er negen tot in februari. Daarna werden geen Pestvogels meer gezien. In het Zeebrugse Havengebied bleven nog ten minste 10 **Graszangers** *Cisticola juncidis* aanwezig. Een **Pallas' Boszanger** *Phylloscopus proregulus* die op 28 januari werd ontdekt te Louvain-La-Neuve, Brabant-Wallon, bleef aanwezig tot ten minste 18 februari. In Lier werd op 10 februari weer een **Siberische Tjiftjaf** *P collybita tristis* gemeld. Op 20 januari verbleef een **Buidelmees** *Remiz pendulinus* te Semmerzake, Oost-Vlaanderen. Op dezelfde dag was er een waarneming van een **Notenkraker** *Nucifraga caryocatactes* te Mouscron, Hainaut. Aan de Oostdam te Heist overwinterde een 20-tal **Sneeuwgorzen** *Plectrophenax nivalis*; op 9 februari verbleef er één bij Doel.

Deze waarnemingsrubriek kwam tot stand met medewerking van Luk Bekaert (Oost-Vlaanderen), Peter Collaerts (Vlaams-Brabant), Frank De Scheemaeker (Mergus) en Willy Verschueren (Groenlink). Ook de hulp van al diegenen die (hun) waarnemingen inspraken op de Wielewaal-vogellijn (03-4880194) was hier onontbeerlijk.

Gerald Driessens, Pastoriestraat 16, 2500 Lier, België

DB Actueel

Influx van Bastaardarenden Op 4 november 2000 bevond zich een juveniele Bastaardarend *Aquila clanga* in de Lauwersmeer en omgeving, Groningen/Friesland (Dutch Birding 22: 321-322, plaat 317-318, 2000). De daaropvolgende dagen kon deze vogel niet worden teruggevonden maar wie dacht dat het daarna weer jaren zou duren voordat deze felbegeerde soort Nederland zou aandoen, bleek ongelijk te krijgen. De vogel van 4 november bleek zelfs de voorbode van een reeks aan waarnemingen.

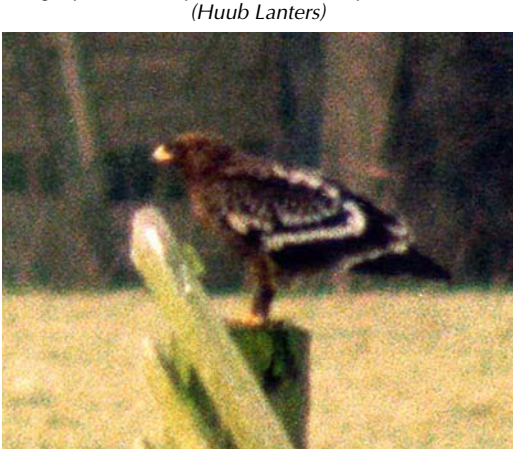
Op 11 november 2000 zag Jelle van Dijk een juveniele Bastaardarend in polder Hoogeweg bij Noordwijk, Zuid-Holland. Zoekacties naar deze vogel leverden helaas niets meer op. Nog geen week later, op 16 november 2000, ontdekte Gerard Langedijk een juveniele nabij Broek op Langedijk, Noord-Holland. De vogel bleek wel wat mobiel maar kon uiteindelijk tussen 15:00 en het donker door ten minste 10 gelukkigen worden waargenomen in polder Geestmerambacht bij Koedijk, Noord-Holland. Ook de volgende ochtend was de vogel hier nog aanwezig en kon door enkele 10-tallen waarnemers worden bekeken. Rond 08:50 vloog de vogel weg in westelijke richting waarna hij elders in Noord-Holland nog door enkele vogelaars langsvliegend werd gezien, eerst bij Egmond aan Zee en in de late ochtend tussen Castricum en Uitgeest. Uiteindelijk vloog hij weg in oostelijke richting en werd niet meer gezien.

Dat de koek nog niet op was bleek op 10 december 2000, toen Jan van Holten en Martin van der Schalk 's middags een wandeling maakten over de Haarlerberg, Nijverdal, Overijssel. MS zag twee vogels in een lage den zitten waarvan hij vermoedde dat het een Buizerd *Buteo buteo* met ernaast een Zwarte Kraai *Corvus corone* betrof. Een blik met de kijker gaf de zaak echter een heel ander perspectief: de kraai bleek een Raaf *C corax*, de Buizerd een juveniele Bastaardarend! Tijdens een kort stukje vliegen verscheen er zelfs een voorbijvliegend Korhoen *Tetrao tetrix* in hetzelfde kijkerbeeld. Mede door het sterk verslechterende weer bleef de vogel de gehele middag bovenin de aanwezige dennen zitten, omringd door een drietal Raven. De arend werd tot een half uur voor donker – toen hij uit de boom vloog en over de bomen uit zicht verdween – door zeker 25 mensen gezien. De volgende dag werd hij niet meer teruggevonden.

Op 21 januari 2001 wilde Arie de Knijff zijn schuilhut bij een voeder- en fotografeerplaats voor Buizerds bij het Spookverlaat ten zuiden van Alphen aan den Rijn, Zuid-Holland, bezoeken toen hij van afstand opmerkte dat er een juveniele Bastaardarend voor zijn schuilhut zat … De vogel vloog een stukje weg en het nieuws werd in de loop van de middag wereldkundig gemaakt. Tot donker kregen 10-tallen belangstellenden de vogel te zien, zij het op grote afstand. De vogel liet zich ook de dagen daarna zo nu en dan redelijk bekijken, al stelde hij het geduld van sommige vogelaars danig op de proef. Op woensdagmiddag 24 januari vloog de vogel in noordoostelijke richting weg en werd hierna niet meer met zekerheid waargenomen. Het gerucht dat hij al een aantal weken in de omgeving van het Spookverlaat aanwezig was kon niet worden bevestigd. Dit lijkt ook minder waarschijnlijk, aangezien hier regelmatig vogelaars komen. Een forse donkerbruine Buizerd zorgde hier waarschijnlijk voor wat verwarring en ook meldingen na 24 januari hadden in ieder geval voor een deel betrekking op deze vogel.

Ondertussen was op 24 januari 2001 alweer de vol-

141 Bastaardarend / Greater Spotted Eagle *Aquila clanga*, juveniel, Anjum, Friesland, 25 januari 2001 *(Huub Lanters)*



142 Bastaardarend / Greater Spotted Eagle *Aquila clanga*, juveniel, Anjum, Friesland, 25 januari 2001 *(Max Berlijn)*

[*Dutch Birding 23: 114-117, 2001*]

143-144 Bastaardarend / Greater Spotted Eagle *Aquila clanga*, juveniel, Alphen aan den Rijn, Zuid-Holland, 24 januari 2001 *(Marten van Dijl)*

gende Bastaardarend ontdekt, maar liefst de zesde waarneming van de soort sinds november 2000, wederom in het Lauwersmeergebied. Sietse Bernardus en Edwin de Weerd waren na een zoekactie voor een mogelijke – jawel – Bastaardarend bij Nieuwe Bildzijl, Friesland (die de volgende dag waarschijnlijk een Ruigpootbuizerd *B lagopus* bleek te zijn), op zoek naar wat ganzen in de Anjumerkolken, Friesland. Bij stom toeval ontdekten zij hier alsnog een Bastaardarend, wederom een juveniele. Deze vogel bleef tot in maart 2001 aanwezig in het Lauwersmeergebied, zowel aan de Groningse als de Friese kant, en is daarmee de langst verblijvende tot nu toe en bovendien de derde voor dit gebied.

Interessant is de vraag hoeveel Bastaardarenden er nu werkelijk in Nederland verbleven. De kans bestaat dat enkele waarnemingen betrekking hebben op één exemplaar. Een voorlopige vergelijking van kenmerken en beschikbare foto's geeft aan dat het in ieder geval drie verschillende vogels betreft. De vogel van 4 november 2000 had een hapje uit p5 aan de linkervleugel. Aangezien juveniele Bastaardarenden in hun eerste winter geen handpenrui vertonen was dit een goed kenmerk om deze vogel individueel te onderscheiden. Bovendien waren de lichte vlekken op de middelste en kleine dekveren bij deze weinig opvallend. Over de vogel(s) van Noordwijk en Koedijk is voorlopig weinig te zeggen, aangezien goed fotomateriaal ontbreekt. Een aantal waarnemers van de vogel bij Koedijk meent echter dat het hier goed om het individu van Friesland kan gaan. De vogel van de Haarlerberg kenmerkte zich door een meer opvallende rij vlekken op de middelste dekveren dan bij de Friese vogel van november en gaf mede daardoor een lichtere indruk. Het gaat hier dan ook zeer waarschijnlijk om een ander exemplaar. De vogel van Alphen werd gekenmerkt door het ontbreken van twee middelste staartpennen. Het is niet uitgesloten dat de Haarlerbergvogel in korte tijd twee staartpennen is kwijtgeraakt maar dit lijkt niet erg waarschijnlijk. Vast staat wel dat het ook hier niet de Friese vogel van november betrof, vanwege de gave p5 aan de linkervleugel en het grotere aantal vlekken. Tenslotte was de laatst ontdekte vogel in de Lauwersmeer tegelijkertijd met de vogel bij Alphen aanwezig en betrof dit dus met zekerheid een ander individu. Bovendien was deze vogel duidelijk een andere dan die in november 2000 vanwege de veel bredere rijen vlekken op grote en middelste dekveren en het gave verenkleed.

De CDNA mag zich tijdens de beoordeling van deze gevallen er over buigen hoeveel verschillende vogels er in het spel zijn geweest. Vooralsnog zijn er echter geen duidelijke aanwijzingen dat meerdere waarnemingen betrekking hebben op één exemplaar en de kans is dan ook groot dat deze zes waarnemingen als verschillende vogels aanvaard worden. In dat geval zouden dit de 17e tot 22e gevallen voor Nederland zijn. Hiervan waren de meeste juveniele, wat goed overeenkomt met

het algemene principe dat zwerfgedrag bij jonge (roof)vogels vaker voorkomt dan bij oudere. Het lijkt er trouwens op dat er ook in de rest van Europa deze winter iets meer Bastaardarenden dan gebruikelijk werden waargenomen. GARRY BAKKER

GREATER SPOTTED EAGLES From November 2000 to March 2001, six juvenile Greater Spotted Eagles *Aquila clanga* were observed at five locations in the Netherlands. Most of them were present for only one or a few days. However, in the Lauwersmeer area in the northeastern part of the country, one individual remained from 24 January to March. Some of these sightings might refer to a single individual but, based on plumage details, it seems certain that at least three different birds were involved. There are 16 previous records of this species for the Netherlands.

Grote Grijze Snip in Het Zwin In de late namiddag van dinsdag 16 januari 2001 merkten Koen Devos en Sabine Ramon een grijze snip *Limnodromus* op in Het Zwin te Knokke, West-Vlaanderen. Zij verwittigden Guido Burggraeve, de conservator van Het Zwin, en natuurfotograaf Misjel Decleer. KD vermoedde sterk dat het een Grote Grijze Snip *L scolopaceus* betrof maar wilde eerst geluidsopnames met de kenmerkende roep beluisteren alvorens zich met zekerheid uit te spreken. De volgende ochtend verwittigde KD enkele vogelaars om de determinatie te bevestigen. Hoewel het reservaat elke woensdag voor het publiek gesloten is, gaf GB toestemming aan een beperkt aantal vogelaars om Het Zwin te bezoeken. De vogel liet zich op 17 januari goed bekijken en de determinatie als adult winter Grote Grijze Snip werd bevestigd. Hij kon tot op 30 m benaderd worden en verbleef steevast in een ijsvrij geultje aan de voet van de 'internationale dijk' op minder dan 1 km van de Nederlandse grens. Intussen werden goede afspraken voor de organisatie van de twitch met de conservator gemaakt. Het nieuws werd vervolgens geleidelijk verspreid, waardoor sommige van de meest gedreven vogelaars de begeerde soort reeds op woensdag te zien kregen. De ontdekker had trouwens al eerder zijn wens uitgedrukt om de waarneming bekend te maken, omdat observatie van de vogel nauwelijks voor verstoring zou zorgen en de vogel in een goed toegankelijk deel van het reservaat verbleef. In de loop van die dag werden dan ook meer en meer details over de melding via de 'grapevine' (semafoon, mailing lists en vogellijn) vrijgegeven. Op de ochtend van donderdag 18 januari schoven enkele 10-tallen vogelaars om 09:00 keurig aan bij de kassa van Het Zwin, en de Grote Grijze Snip kon die dag zonder verstoring van de vele vogels in het reservaat uitstekend geobserveerd worden. Het ordelijke verloop van de twitch leverde de aanwezigen zelfs felicitaties van de conservator op. Bovendien beloofde GB om ook in de toekomst met de vogellijn samen te werken. Wie pas in het weekend vrijaf kon nemen had pech, want de Grote Grijze Snip werd na 18 januari niet meer teruggezien.

Dit betreft het eerste door het Belgisch Avifaunistisch Homologatie-Comité (BAHC) aanvaarde geval van Grote Grijze Snip voor België. Eerder werden wel twee langsvliegende grijze snippen aanvaard, vreemd genoeg telkens in het gezelschap van vier Tureluurs *Tringa totanus*: op 4 mei 1995 te Bredene, West-Vlaanderen, en 5 april 1996 te Zandvoorde, West-Vlaanderen. De vogel van Bredene werd vermoedelijk op 6-10 mei 1995 op de Molenplaat, Noord-Brabant, Nederland, teruggezien, waar hij als Grote Grijze Snip gedetermineerd werd. Beide langsvliegende grijze snippen waren waarschijnlijk Grote Grijze Snippen maar vluchtwaarnemingen van zwijgzame grijze snippen laten zelden een zekere determinatie toe. Zes meldingen (zeven exemplaren) werden niet aanvaard of niet onderzocht. Het is aannemelijk dat de vogel van Het Zwin later in de Prunjepolder, Zeeland, Nederland, werd teruggevonden, maar de documentatie van beide gevallen werd nog niet grondig vergeleken. GUNTER DE SMET

145 Grote Grijze Snip / Long-billed Dowitcher *Limnodromus scolopaceus*, Het Zwin, Knokke, West-Vlaanderen, 16 januari 2001 *(Koen Verbanck)*

LONG-BILLED DOWITCHER From 16 to 18 January 2001, a Long-billed Dowitcher *Limnodromus scolopaceus* was seen at Het Zwin, West-Vlaanderen, Belgium. This constituted the first record for Belgium. Two earlier Belgian records of dowitchers flying past have only been accepted as unidentified *Limnodromus* and six other reports (seven individuals) have not been accepted or submitted.

Grote Grijze Snip in Prunjepolder Op 17 februari 2001 besloten wij (Hans, Mart en Wietze Janse) een klein familiedagje naar vogels te kijken in Zeeland. Al vogelend besloten we richting Prunjepolder te gaan omdat daar nog een Dwerggans *Anser erythropus* gemeld was. Aan de noordzijde van de Prunjepolder zagen we een kleine groep Brandganzen *Branta leucopsis* en we besloten die even af te kijken. Voor deze groep liepen enkele Kemphanen *Philomachus pugnax*

die vanwege de jaarlijst wat meer aandacht kregen dan normaal. 'Hé, er loopt een snip tussen' meldde Hans en aan de toon van zijn stem was te horen dat het niet om een 'gewoon watersnipje' ging. Al snel werd duidelijk (grijs verenkleed, wenkbrauwstreep, lange snavel met 'blop' en korte groene poten) dat het hier om een grijze snip *Limnodromus* in winterkleed ging. Even later vloog de grijze snip helaas op en verdween ver achterin het plassengebied. Hierbij zagen we nog een duidelijke witte sigaar op de rug, een witte vleugelachterrand en een donker overkomende staart.

We piepten de vogel door als zekere grijze snip met code 01 ('minder dan een uur geleden waargenomen, waarschijnlijk nog aanwezig') om vogelaars in de omgeving te waarschuwen en mee te laten helpen met zoeken. Zo stonden we even later met enkele toegesnelde vogelaars te zoeken, toen Peter de Vries de vogel een kwartier later terug vond op een afstand van ongeveer 250 m, helaas te ver om verdere details aan de vogel te kunnen zien.

Vanwege de lange snavel, duidelijke begrensde borsttekening en in vlucht wat donker lijkende staart werden bellers gerustgesteld dat het waarschijnlijk om een Grote Grijze Snip *L scolopaceus* ging.

De determinatie als Grote Grijze Snip werd pas de volgende ochtend bevestigd door Pim Wolf, die de vogel een scherp *kiek* hoorde roepen toen deze op c 100 m voorbij vloog. Toen de vogel zich al poetsend wat beter liet bekijken, kon PW vaststellen dat de zwarte banden op de staart breder waren dan de witte. Later die dag werd de vogel nog door maar liefst c 180 vogelaars bezocht.

De Grote Grijze Snip bleef tot zeker 4 maart maar werd door de grootte en onoverzichtelijkheid van het gebied slechts onregelmatig (en op grote afstanden) gezien. Indien aanvaard is dit de 16e Grote Grijze Snip voor Nederland maar pas de tweede in de winter (na een vogel in de Dordtse Biesbosch, Zuid-Holland, van 1 tot 6 januari 1990). De kans is aanwezig dat het hier dezelfde vogel betrof als de eerste voor België bij Het Zwin, West-Vlaanderen, van 16 tot 18 januari 2001. WIETZE JANSE

LONG-BILLED DOWITCHER From 17 to at least 18 March 2001, a Long-billed Dowitcher *Limnodromus scolopaceus* was irregularly seen at Prunjepolder, Zeeland, the Netherlands. If accepted, this constituted the 16th for the Netherlands but only the second in winter.

DBA-nieuws

Geslaagde DBA-vogeldag 2001 De Dutch Birding-vogeldag die op 3 februari 2001 werd georganiseerd kan zeker een groot succes genoemd worden. Meer dan 300 bezoekers konden een keus maken uit een aantal interessante lezingen en de stands bezoeken in de hal. Tijdens zijn welkomswoord stond voorzitter Gijsbert van der Bent even stil bij vogellijn-beheerder Remco Hofland, die vorig jaar zijn functie heeft overgedragen aan Klaas Haas. Remco werd uitvoerig geprezen voor het jarenlang op uitstekende wijze beheren van de Dutch Birding-vogellijn en kreeg daarvoor onder daverend applaus de gouden Ross' Meeuw opgespeld. In totaal zijn er nu in de loop der tijden vijf gouden Ross' Meeuw-speldjes uitgereikt. Jan Wierda kreeg een speciaal zilveren Ross' Meeuw-speldje, niet alleen voor het breken van het record aantal vogelsoorten in één jaar (Jan kwam in 2000 tot 338 soorten) maar zeker ook voor de manier waarop hij dat heeft gedaan; met veel zelfwerkzaamheid. Gabriel Gargallo uit Barcelona, Spanje, hield een gedegen lezing, inclusief geluidsopnamen, over determinatie en taxonomie van enkele West-Mediterrane *Sylvia*-zangers. Gargallo's lezing maakte het publiek nieuwsgierig naar het binnenkort te verschijnen boek over de *Sylvia*-zangers, waarvan hij een van de auteurs is. Daarna was het soms moeilijk kiezen. Marc Guyt, een van de mensen van Club 4500, deed op onderhoudende wijze uit de doeken hoe vogelen er soms aan toe gaat in allerlei verre landen. Peter de Knijff maakte de vakantiebestemming Lesbos nog populairder met zijn fraaie beelden van dit Griekse eiland en goede (fotografische) tips. De mystery bird-competitie 'nieuwe stijl' door Jan van der Laan en Magnus Robb viel goed in de smaak maar was wel erg moeilijk. Zeker de geluiden bleken onoverkomelijke obstakels; de leerzame uitleg maakte echter veel goed. Winnaar werd Ward Vercruysse met 11 goed van de 25. Miguel DeMeulemeester, Peter Adriaens en Ruud van Beusekom hadden negen antwoorden goed. Prijzen werden beschikbaar gesteld door Ger Meesters Boekprodukties, Bird Songs International en Plomp Digital Video/DBA. Van de 'grote meeuwen' en de daarbij behorende problematiek zijn we nog niet af. Dat maakte Rik Winters wel duidelijk aan een gehoor van 'hard-core gull addicts'. Gerald Driessens gaf een kort maar gewaardeerd overzicht van de zeldzaamheden in België in 2000. Wim Wiegant sloot de dag weer geheel in stijl af met een uitgebreid Jaaroverzicht 2000 Nederland. Terecht vroeg hij even een applaus voor Leo Heemskerk, die al jarenlang vanuit het kleine, benauwde en eenzame hokje bovenin de zaal de diaprojectie verzorgt, en die het met de multimedia-shows van tegenwoordig steeds maar drukker krijgt. En passant deelde Wim Wiegant de 'gouden strop' uit aan Hans ter Haar, voor zijn gehele oeuvre, waaronder de Vlielandse torenvalk. Hans had het pand echter al verlaten om een gemelde mogelijke Roodkeellijster bij Amsterdam te checken. Bij het voorbereiden en in goede banen leiden van de elk jaar veelomvattender wordende DBA-

vogeldagen kan de DBA gelukkig steunen op de inzet van veel vrijwilligers. Het DBA-bestuur bedankt hierbij een ieder die belangeloos heeft bijgedragen aan het welslagen van deze dag. LEONIE OLIVIER-VAN HILLE, ROB OLIVIER & GIJSBERT VAN DER BENT

Samenwerking Natuur en Boek Naast de samenwerking die reeds bestaat met Ger Meesters Boekprodukties (Pica Press-titels en de Dutch Birding-vogelgidsen) gaat de Dutch Birding Association een samenwerkingsverband aan met Natuur en Boek. Twee keer per jaar zal Natuur en Boek een folder sturen naar alle Nederlandse abonnees met daarin veel speciale DB-aanbiedingen. Naast een korting op alle Engelstalige titels zullen de Dutch Birding-lezers ook geen portokosten hoeven te betalen. Het voordeel voor Dutch Birding-abonnees kan zodoende oplopen tot 15% per boek. THEO ADMIRAAL

Avifauna van Nederland Op dit moment worden zowel *Algemene en schaarse vogels van Nederland* (Avifauna van Nederland 2) als de herziene, tweede druk van *Zeldzame vogels van Nederland* (Avifauna van Nederland 1) (zie onder) gedrukt. In mei 2001 zullen beide delen leverbaar zijn. Iedereen die deel 2 reeds betaald heeft zal dit automatisch toegestuurd krijgen. Lezers die deel 2 nog willen bestellen of die geïnteresseerd zijn in de herdruk van deel 1 (bijgewerkt tot en met 2000), verwijzen wij voor verdere bestelinformatie naar de advertentie elders in dit nummer van Dutch Birding. THEO ADMIRAAL

Avifauna of the Netherlands Both the revised edition of *Zeldzame vogels van Nederland / Rare birds of the Netherlands* (Avifauna of the Netherlands, volume 1) and *Algemene en schaarse vogels van Nederland* (Avifauna of the Netherlands, volume 2, on common and scarce birds) are now in print and will be available in May 2001. Subscribers who have already paid for volume 2 will receive this automatically. Foreign subscribers interested in one or both volumes will find full ordering details on the internet at www.dutchbirding.nl. THEO ADMIRAAL

Herziene herdruk van Avifauna van Nederland 1: twee jaar verder In mei 2001 komt gelijktijdig met het door Rob Bijlsma, Kees Camphuysen en Fred Hustings geschreven *Algemene en schaarse vogels van Nederland* (Avifauna van Nederland 2) een herziene tweede druk uit van *Zeldzame vogels van Nederland* (Avifauna van Nederland 1).

De voornaamste reden om een herdruk uit te brengen van *Zeldzame vogels van Nederland*, waarvan de eerste druk verscheen in mei 1999, was het feit dat deze reeds binnen een jaar was uitverkocht. Doordat bovendien het werk aan *Algemene en schaarse vogels van Nederland* veel langer duurde dan voorzien, ontstond de onwenselijke situatie dat beide delen niet gelijktijdig beschikbaar konden zijn. Een ongewijzigde herdruk van deel 1 was geen optie omdat in de ruim twee jaar na het verschijnen van de eerste druk talloze gegevens konden worden toegevoegd. De eerste druk resulteerde in een golf van nieuwe gegevens over oude gevallen en bovendien worden tegenwoordig in twee jaar nu eenmaal meer waarnemingen verricht dan vroeger in meer dan 20 jaren. Een ongewijzigde herdruk zou daarom voor veel soorten een onvolledig en onjuist beeld geven over hun status en voorkomen. Een herziene herdruk bood daarentegen de kans om het overzicht van zeldzame vogels in Nederland in 1800-2000 te vervolmaken. Behalve de goede verkoop speelden ook de gunstige kritieken een rol om te kiezen voor een herdruk. Zo waren de recensies over het hele spectrum van toonaangevende buitenlandse vogeltijdschriften uiterst lovend (zie bijvoorbeeld Birding World 13: 42-43, 2000 en Ibis 142: 333, 2000). Ondanks de geografische beperking werd *Zeldzame vogels van Nederland* zelfs verkozen tot een van 's werelds beste vijf vogelboeken in 1999 (Birdwatch 9 (92): 42-43, 2000) en 2000 (British Birds 93: 494-495, 2000).

Bij het doorbladeren van de tweede druk zal men in eerste instantie mogelijk alleen enkele nieuwe foto's opmerken. Bij nadere beschouwing zal men echter ontdekken dat in de tweede druk de teksten van 95% van de pagina's deels zijn gewijzigd. In sommige gevallen werd een soorttekst geheel herschreven en in andere gevallen werden slechts enkele zinnen gewijzigd. De opsommingen van waarnemingen zijn bijgewerkt tot en met 2000 waarbij de gevallen van 2000 als voorlopige toevoeging staan vermeld. Meer dan 120 figuren werden vervangen die ten gevolge van herzieningen of toevoegingen voor de aangegeven jaren incorrect waren geworden. Figuren waarin meer dan 30% van de gevallen in 1800-2000 ontbraken, werden eveneens bijgewerkt. Bovendien werd plaats ingeruimd voor foto's van belangrijke nieuwe gevallen in 1999-2000, zoals Monniksgier *Aegypius monachus*, Arendbuizerd *Buteo rufinus*, Kleine Torenvalk *Falco naumanni*, Grijskopspecht *Picus canus*, Izabeltapuit *Oenanthe isabellina*, Turkestaanse Klauwier *Lanius phoenicuroides* en Spaanse Mus *Passer hispaniolensis*.

Hoewel de eerste druk van *Zeldzame vogels van Nederland* door de publicatie van de tweede druk voor een groot deel zijn actuele waarde verliest, bevat deze toch enkele waardevolle foto's en teksten die in de tweede druk moesten vervallen door de uitbreiding van opsommingen. Daardoor zal men in de tweede druk enkele verwijzingen naar de eerste druk aantreffen. In de toekomst zullen alle aanvullingen, correcties en wijzigingen op de tweede druk van *Zeldzame vogels van Nederland* op internet beschikbaar komen voor zover het de periode 1800-1999 betreft. Bovendien zullen nagekomen gevallen worden vermeld in toekomstige jaarverslagen van de Commissie Dwaalgasten Nederlandse Avifauna in Dutch Birding. ARNOUD B VAN DEN BERG

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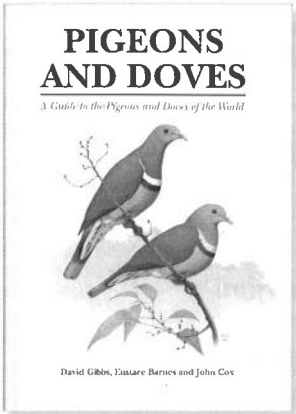

David Gibbs, Eustace Barnes en John Cox

Pigeons and Doves

Duiven komen over vrijwel de gehele wereld voor. Sommige soorten leven van fruit, terwijl andere zaadeters zijn. De meeste soorten leven in bomen en met name de tropische soorten zijn bijzonder kleurrijk. Tot de familie behoren soorten die in grote groepen trekken, maar ook schuwe, op de grond levende soorten, zoals de kroonduiven van Nieuw-Guinea.
Dit schitterende boek, geïllustreerd met 76 kleurplaten, is het eerste boek dat gewijd is aan de determinatie en verspreiding van duiven. Daarnaast wordt veel informatie verschaft over leefgewoonten, voedsel en habitat.

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Andy Swash en Rob Still

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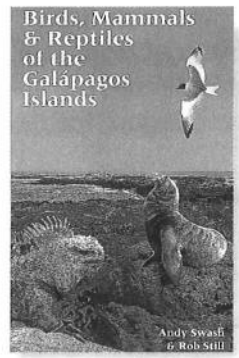

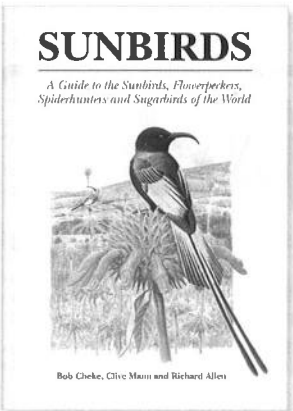

Rob Cheke, Clive Mann en Richard Allen

Sunbirds

De honingzuigers, suikervogels, spinnenjagers en bastaardhoningvogels behoren tot de fraaiste vogelfamilies. Vooral de mannetjes zijn in het algemeen zeer kleurrijk met iridiserende verenkleden, maar de vrouwtjes zijn vaak vaal en moeilijk te determineren. De grootste verscheidenheid aan honingzuigers is in Afrika te vinden, terwijl de rest in Azië leeft. De honingzuigerfamilie omvat ook de spinnenjagers van Azië, twee suikervogels van zuidelijk Afrika en de bastaardhoningvogels in Azië en Australië. De 48 kleurplaten van Richard Allen geven alle verenkleedvariaties weer, bovendien zijn veel soorten weergegeven met hun favoriete voedselplant.

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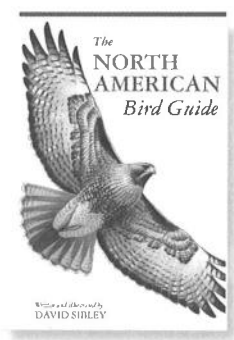

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