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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 (2001, 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). Voor afwijkingen van en aanvullingen op bovenstaande overzichten zie Dutch Birding 19: 21-28, 1997; 20: 22-32, 1998; 24: 22-24, 2002.

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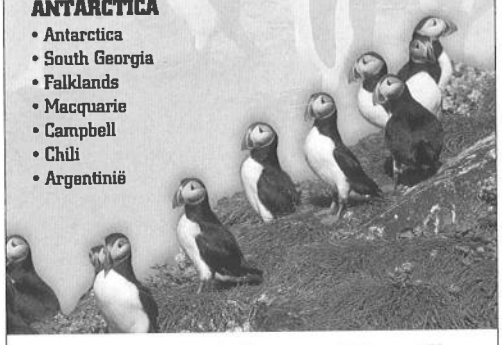

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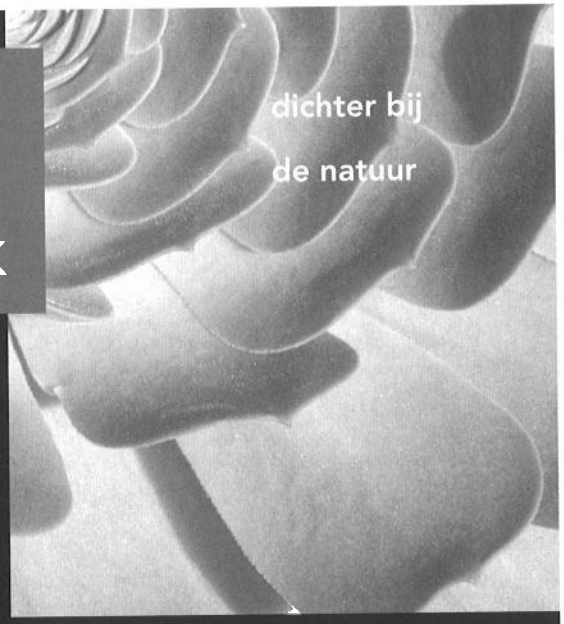

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Sardijnse Grasmus te Knokke-Heist, België, in mei 1997

Vincent Legrand & Gunter De Smet

Op 3 mei 1997 vogelden Alain De Broyer en Vincent Legrand een dagje in de omgeving van Zeebrugge, West-Vlaanderen, België. Het warme weer en de aanhoudende zuid-zuidoostelijke wind zorgden voor vrijwel onophoudelijke trek. Dit leverde enkele minder algemene vogelsoorten op als Steltkluut *Himantopus himantopus*, Temmincks Strandloper *Calidris temminckii*, Draaihals *Jynx torquilla* en Ortolaan *Emberiza hortulana*. Rond 17:00 bezochten zij Park 58 te Duinbergen, Knokke-Heist, waar al drie dagen een mannetje Oostelijke Baardgrasmus *Sylvia cantillans albistriata* verbleef. Daar ontmoetten zij enkele vogelaars die op de terugweg waren en hen konden aanwijzen waar de Baardgrasmus kort tevoren was gezien. Na een kwartier vond VL vlakbij een grasmus in een meidoorn en riep ADB: 'Elle est là, ta fauvette!'. Vervolgens maakte hij een video-opname en naderde voorzichtig. Toen ADB de vogel in de verrekijker kreeg zag hij met verbazing dat die geenszins op een Baardgrasmus leek. In het blauwe zoekerbeeld van zijn videocamera bemerkte VL niet dat de vogel die hij filmde geen Baardgrasmus was. Toch vond ook VL de vogel vreemd en ADB zei hem verontrust dat het wel eens een Sardijnse Grasmus *S sarda* kon zijn. De vogel hield de staart opgericht en foerageerde actief aan de binnenkant van een dichte meidoornstruik, waardoor de waarneming soms bemoeilijkt werd. Af en toe verscheen hij op de buitenste takken waar hij rond de bloemen insecten ving. Na c 10 min vloog de vogel weg en verdween in ondoordringbare duindoorns. Na deze aangrijpende waarneming besloten ADB en VL het nieuws op de Belgische vogellijn te melden.

Hun parate kennis over de variatie van onvolwassen Provençaalse *S undata* en Sardijnse Grasmus (inclusief Balearische Grasmus *S balearica*, toen nog algemeen als ondersoort van Sardijnse Grasmus beschouwd), was evenwel ontoereikend en zij besloten daarom om de vogel als een mogelijke Provençaalse Grasmus in een 'lastig kleed' door te piepen. Een mediterrane grasmussoort melden op een plek waar al drie dagen een Baardgrasmus verblijft, in een gebied dat tot een kwartier voordien door 10-tallen vogelaars werd uitgekamd, is immers geen risicovrije zaak. Gelukkig doken al na enkele minuten Patrick Beirens en Jan Vanwynsbergh op. VL en ADB bespraken de waarneming met hen en probeerden de vogel terug te vinden. Terwijl een 10-tal vogelaars toestroomde, kwam de zon steeds lager te staan... Pas tegen de avond verscheen de grasmus weer enkele seconden. PB werd lijkbleek toen hij de vogel terugvond: dit moest een Sardijnse Grasmus zijn. Een zekere determinatie was in zo'n korte waarnemingstijd onmogelijk maar de grijsblauwe kleur was frappant.

De waarnemers besloten om gezamenlijk naar Brussel te rijden om daar de videobeelden op het televisiescherm te bekijken. Na een rit van een uur kwamen zij eindelijk aan. Zenuwachtig werden de videoaansluitingen gemaakt: de videoband loopt, de vogel verspringt van tak naar tak maar is moeilijk te zien; plotseling poseert hij eventjes naast een bloem, en JV schreeuwt het uit: 'Sardijnse Grasmus, zeker!!!'. Om 00:15 werd de Sardijnse Grasmus op basis van de uitstekende videobeelden als 'zeker' doorgepiept. Gelukkig bleef de vogel de volgende ochtend en de dagen daarna nog aanwezig; tot en met 12 mei liet hij zich door vele 10-tallen waarnemers bekijken.

Beschrijving

De beschrijving is opgesteld aan de hand van videobeelden van VL, foto's van Marnix Vandegehuchte en Johan Buckens (cf Dutch Birding 19: 137, plaat 135, 1997) en notities van Gunter De Smet.

ALGEMENE INDRUK Grijze versie van Provençaalse Grasmus, met relatief korte staart. Normaler van proporties lijkend dan Provençaalse Grasmus (minder 'bolletje met lange staart') met meer horizontale positie.

GROOTTE & BOUW Als Provençaalse Grasmus, maar met iets (1/5?) kortere staart. Afstand van vleugeltop tot staarttop ongeveer even groot als vleugellengte. Handpenprojectie zeer kort (twee handpentoppen) of c 1/5 van tertiallengte. Vleugel kort en sterk afgerond. Langste tertials iets korter dan armpennen.

KOP Licht leigrijs met donkergrijs masker, reikend van voorhoofd en teugel tot net achter oog. Kin wit. Bij ideale belichting grijze tipjes van keelveren zichtbaar (voornamelijk op keelzijden, in vooraanzicht soms indruk van onopvallende lichte mondstreep vormend). Bij minder gunstig licht (of op iets grotere afstand) indruk van effen grijze keel, lichter wordend naar kin toe.

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BOVENDELEN Licht leigrijs, lichter dan bij mannetje Oostelijke Baardgrasmus (waarmee direct te vergelijken).
ONDERDELEN Licht leigrijs. Bij bepaald licht met vaag bruin waas. Donkerste gedeelte van onderdelen effen grijze borstband vormend. Lichtste gedeelte gevormd door nauwe lichte strook van buik naar anaalstreek. Geen spoor van rode tinten.
STAART Donkergrijs. Staartpennen overwegend puntig, sterk gesleten. Geen duidelijk witte staartzijden, hooguit wat vuilwit langs de toprand (buitenvlag) van buitenste staartpen.
VLEUGEL Alula donkergrijs met witte rand; donkerste gedeelte van vleugel. Vleugel overigens effen bruin (sterk en gelijkmatig gesleten), met uitzondering van iets versere en donkerder grijze tertials met witte rand en iets versere en donkerder grijze grote dekveren.
NAAKTE DELEN Poot oranjegeel. Oogrand rood. Iris roodoranje. Snavelbasis licht strogeel; vrij uitgebreide, duidelijk afgetekende zwartachtige snaveltop.
GELUID Roep *trruk-trruk*; sterk lijkend op tweede deel van roep van Roodborsttapuit *Saxicola rubicola*. Geen gelijkenis met andere *Sylvia*-soorten en sterk verschillend van roep van Provençaalse Grasmus. Overwegend zwijgzaam.
GEDRAG Bij voorkeur foeragerend op 2-3 m hoogte in meidoorn. Vast traject volgend. Kruinveren niet opgericht zoals vaak bij Provençaalse Grasmus (minder expressief).

Determinatie

De eerste stap in de determinatie is het onderscheid tussen Sardijnse/Balearische Grasmus en Provençaalse Grasmus. Sardijnse en Balearische lijken zeer sterk op Provençaalse maar onderscheiden zich in het voorjaar door de grijze keel en onderdelen. De witte buik is doorgaans minder duidelijk afgetekend dan bij Provençaalse. De roep van Sardijnse en Balearische verschilt sterk van die van Provençaalse. In juveniel kleed kan de roep zelfs het enige betrouwbare veldkenmerk zijn. Sardijnse en Balearische vertonen in vergelijking met de meeste andere grasmussoorten zeer weinig wit in de staartzijden (enkel nauwe lichte tippen en buitenranden aan de buitenste staartpen; Shirihai et al 2001ab).

Een volgende stap in de determinatie is het onderscheid tussen Sardijnse Grasmus en Balearische Grasmus. (Shirihai et al (2001ab) beschouwen Sardijnse Grasmus als een 'superspecies' met twee 'eiland-allospecies', Balearische Grasmus *Sylvia* [*sarda*] *balearica* (hierna *balearica*) en Sardijnse Grasmus *Sylvia* [*sarda*] *sarda* (hierna *sarda*). Redactie Dutch Birding (2002) beschouwt deze taxa als twee aparte soorten, een split waarover de Taxonomic Advisory Committee of the Association of European Rarities Committees (AERC TAC) nog geen consensus heeft bereikt.) Beide taxa vertonen verschillen in grootte, bouw, kleur van het verenkleed, zang, roep en mitochondriaal DNA. De contactroep is in alle kleden het beste kenmerk voor *sarda*: het harde Roodborsttapuit-achtige *trruk-trruk* (of *tak-tak*) verschilt duidelijk van de nasale en lage *tsrek-* of *trt*-roep van *balearica* en nog meer van de nasale Matkop *Parus montanus*-achtige contactroep van Provençaalse Grasmus. De gehoorde contactroep wijst op *sarda* (Shirihai et al 2001ab) en was identiek aan wat *sarda* op Corsica laat horen (Gunter De Smet pers obs).

Vier andere verschilpunten tussen *balearica* en *sarda* zijn in het veld niet altijd even duidelijk waarneembaar. Deze verschilpunten kunnen evenwel bijkomende informatie over het taxon geven (Shirihai et al 2001ab): *1 Bouw Balearica* lijkt meer op Provençaalse en *sarda* benadert de structuur van Kleine Zwartkop *S melanocephala*. *Balearica* lijkt doorgaans een langere staart te hebben dan *sarda* maar er is in de hand een aanzienlijke overlapping in de staart/vleugelverhouding. De afstand tussen de vleugel- en de staartpunt is meestal duidelijk kleiner dan de vleugellengte bij *sarda* maar (bijna) gelijk aan de vleugellengte bij *balearica*. Dit kenmerk is moeilijk objectief na te meten op foto's en de staartlengte van de Belgische vogel leek ongeveer even lang als de vleugellengte (mogelijk in de zone van overlap); het kan wellicht beter als een handkenmerk dan als een veldkenmerk gebruikt worden. *2 Pootkleur* Juveniele *sarda* heeft altijd overwegend grijsbruine poten (in eerste winterkleed ten minste tot in het late najaar), duidelijk verschillend van de oranje tot oranjebruine poten van *balearica*. Dit kenmerk is niet relevant bij een voorjaarswaarneming. *3 Kleur van de onder-*

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delen (van geen belang bij juveniele). De keel van *balearica* is effen witachtig grijs en contrasteert duidelijk met de donkere teugel en soms met de borst. De keel van *sarda* is meer effen grijs, bij mannetjes met dezelfde grijstint als de borst; *sarda* mist bijgevolg de contrasterend lichte keel van typische *balearica*. Wat dit kenmerk betreft, komt de Belgische vogel beter overeen met *sarda* dan met *balearica*. *4 Snavelkleur* Hoewel dit verschil moeilijk in het veld waarneembaar is, heeft *balearica* gemiddeld een minder zwarte en kleinere zwartachtige punt aan de ondersnavel; bij sommige exemplaren (hoofdzakelijk juveniele) ontbreekt deze zwartachtige ondersnavelpunt; *sarda*, daarentegen, heeft een meer uitgebreide en duidelijk afgetekende zwartachtige punt. De lichte snavelbasis is meestal geelachtig oranje bij *balearica*, maar meer roze-achtig bij *sarda*. De Belgische vogel had een uitgebreide zwartachtige punt aan de ondersnavel (goed voor *sarda*) maar een geelachtige snavelbasis. De determinatie als *sarda* werd bevestigd door Gabriel Gargallo (in litt).

Geslacht en leeftijd

Bij Sardijnse Grasmus is het geslacht in het voorjaar niet altijd met zekerheid te bepalen (Svensson 1992, Shirihai et al 2001ab), maar bij de Belgische vogel betrof het een mannetje vanwege het donkere, duidelijke masker en de vrij zuivere grijze kleur.

Sardijnse Grasmus kent doorgaans een partiële postjuveniele rui in juni-november van het eerste kalenderjaar. Deze rui omvat doorgaans de twee binnenste tertials en alle grote dekveren. Adulte vogels hebben altijd een complete rui in het broedgebied (juni-oktober) en een partiële rui (in februari-maart en september-november). Minder dan 10% van de eerstejaars Sardijnse ruit een gedeelte van de slagpennen; deze slagpenrui kan bovendien verdeeld zijn over twee ruiperiodes. In dat geval kunnen vogels in tweede-kalenderjaar (alle) juveniele handdekveren behouden, hoewel de buitenste handpennen en de binnenste armpennen vernieuwd zijn. Het is dus niet noodzakelijk dat de corresponderende handdekveren van de postjuveniele handpennen eveneens geruid zijn. Een exemplaar dat in het voorjaar een duidelijk ruicontrast in de handpennen vertoont en/of een duidelijk ruicontrast tussen handdekveren en buitenste handpennen is met zekerheid een tweede-kalenderjaar. Omwille van de zeer geringe handpenprojectie bij Sardijnse zijn details van de handpennen in het veld doorgaans niet waarneembaar. Een poging tot leeftijdsbepaling in het veld of op basis van fotografische documentatie zal zich dus in de praktijk vaak beperken tot beter zichtbare delen, met name de alula en de buitenste tertial. De vogel van Duinbergen vertoonde een relatief verse alula en buitenste tertial. Deze veren worden bij 60-90% van de Sardijnse tijdens de postjuveniele rui vervangen. De partiële rui in februari-maart is variabel, maar schijnt bij de meeste Sardijnse niet voor te komen; minder dan 10% van de tweede-kalenderjaar en adulte exemplaren vervangt dan enkel de twee binnenste tertials (Jenni & Winkler 1994, Shirihai et al 2001ab). De waargenomen vogel vertoonde een uniform bruine vleugel, met uitzondering van de geruide alula en de tertials, die niet van dezelfde generatie waren als de rest van de vleugel, de adult-achtige grote dekveren buiten beschouwing latend. Dit contrast wijst op een tweede-kalenderjaar vogel. De leeftijdsbepaling als tweede-kalenderjaar blijkt evenwel nog het duidelijkst aan de hand van enkele sterk gesleten lichter bruine

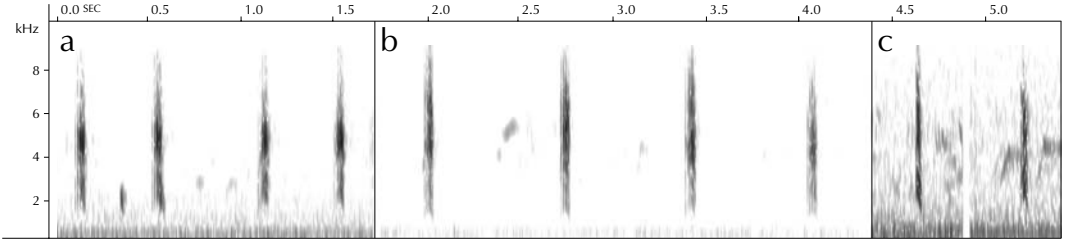

FIGURE 1 Sonagrammen van Sardijnse Grasmus / Marmora's Warbler *Sylvia sarda (Arnoud B van den Berg/ The Sound Approach).* **a** Contactroepen van adult / contact calls of adult, Col de Sevi, Corsica, Frankrijk, 12 april 2001. **b** Contactroepen van adult / contact calls of adult, Col de Sevi, Corsica, Frankrijk, 13 april 2001. **c** Contactroepen van partner van b / contact calls of mate of b, Col de Sevi, Corsica, Frankrijk, 13 april 2001

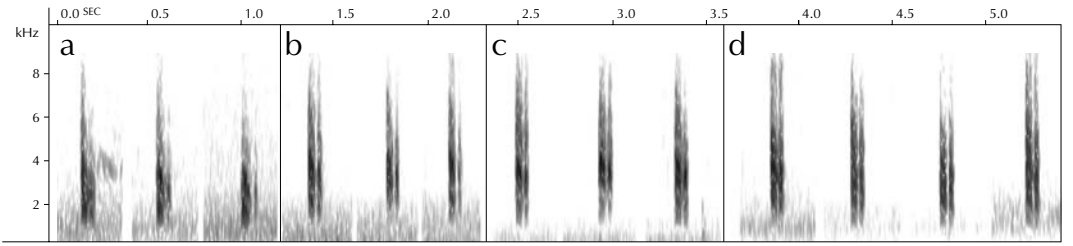

FIGURE 2 Sonagrammen van Balearische Grasmus / Balearic Warbler *Sylvia balearica (Magnus S Robb/The Sound Approach)* **a** Contactroepen / contact calls, La Mola, Formentera, Balearen, Spanje, 9 augustus 2002. **b** Contactroepen van juveniele / contact calls of juvenile, Cap de Berberia, Formentera, Balearen, Spanje, 10 augustus 2002. **c** Contactroepen van andere juveniele / contact calls of another juvenile, Cap de Berberia, Formentera, Balearen, Spanje, 10 augustus 2002. **d** Contactroepen van andere juveniele / contact calls of another juvenile, Cap de Berberia, Formentera, Balearen, Spanje, 10 augustus 2002

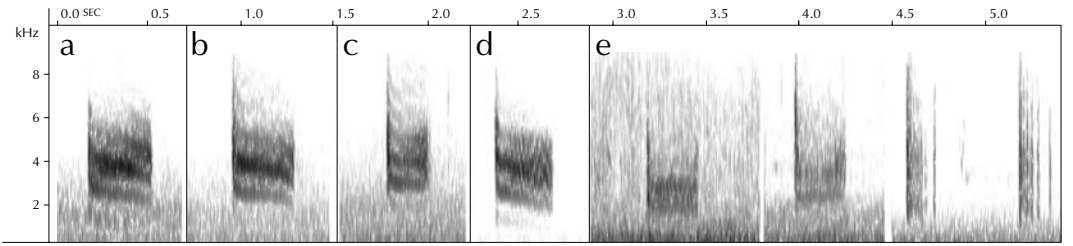

FIGURE 3 Sonagrammen van Provençaalse Grasmus / Dartford Warbler *Sylvia undata.* **a** Contactroep van adult mannetje / contact call of adult male, Capo Pertusato, Corsica, Frankrijk, 17 april 2001 *(Arnoud B van den Berg/The Sound Approach).* **b** Contactroep van ander adult mannetje / contact call of another adult male, Capo Pertusato, Corsica, Frankrijk, 17 april 2001 *(Arnoud B van den Berg/The Sound Approach).* **c** Contactroep van adult / contact call of adult, Capo Pertusato, Corsica, Frankrijk, 17 april 2001 *(Arnoud B van den Berg/The Sound Approach).* **d** Contactroep van juveniele / contact call of juvenile, Sierra de Aitana, Alicante, Spanje, 4 augustus 2002 *(Magnus S Robb/The Sound Approach)* **e** Contactroepen gevolgd door alarmroepen van adult vrouwtje / contact calls then alarm calls of adult female, Poole Harbour, Dorset, Engeland, 1 september 2002 *(Magnus S Robb/The Sound Approach)*

juveniele staartpennen (bemerk evenwel dat er slechts enkele juveniele staartpennen resteren; aan de buitenzijde van de staart waren er reeds sommige vervangen door staartpennen van het adulte type; de centrale staartpennen waren het bruinst) (Gabriel Gargallo in litt). Bovendien is bij de meeste *Sylvia*-grasmussen 'overshooting' (zie onder) veel gebruikelijker bij eerste-zomer mannetjes. In tegenstelling tot de aanwezige Baardgrasmus heeft de Sardijnse Grasmus bij Knokke-Heist evenwel nooit gezongen.

Verspreiding en voorkomen

Sardijnse Grasmussen zijn eilandbewoners van de westelijke Middellandse Zee. De soort broedt met name op Corsica, Sardinië en Pantelleria, en enkele kleinere eilanden langs de westkust van Italië en op Zembra voor de kust van Tunesië (Shirihai et al 2001ab). Het is hoofdzakelijk een standvogel, maar een deel van de populatie overwintert in Noord-Afrika (Noord-Algerije, Tunesië en Noordwest-Libië). Balearische Grasmus broedt alleen op de Balearen (alle eilanden behalve Menorca) en is voor zover bekend standvogel, waardoor de kans op een dwaalgastwaarneming in West-Europa extreem klein of zelfs uitgesloten is.

De waarneming te Knokke-Heist werd door het Belgisch Avifaunistisch Homologatie Comité (BAHC) aanvaard als eerste Sardijnse Grasmus voor België (De Smet et al 2000). Buiten het broedareaal en met uitzondering van de laars van Italië werden intussen 38 Sardijnse Grasmussen aanvaard door zeldzaamhedencommissies die bij de AERC zijn aangesloten; slechts zes hiervan werden buiten het Middellandse Zeegebied waargenomen. De Belgische vogel betrof het 34e geval en is tot nu toe het meest noordelijke op het Europese vasteland.

In Brittannië werden tot nu toe vijf exemplaren vastgesteld: *1* Midhope Moor, Langsett, South Yorkshire, Engeland, 15 mei tot 24 juli 1982; *2* Spurn, North Humberside, Engeland, 8-9 juni 1992; *3* St Abbs Head, Borders, Schotland, 23-27 mei 1993; *4* Scolt Head, Norfolk, Engeland, 12 en 18 mei 2001; en *5* Sizewell Power Station, Suffolk, 29 mei 2001 (Lunn 1985, Lewington et al 1991, Evans 1994; Colin Bradshaw in litt).

Op het Franse vasteland zijn 18 exemplaren vastgesteld. Voor 1997 zeven exemplaren: *1* Torreilles, Pyrénées-Orientales, 28 april 1973; *2* monding van de Var, Nice, Alpes-Maritimes, 31 maart 1987; *3* St-Jean-Cap-Ferrat, Alpes-Maritimes, 19 maart 1989; *4* Tête de Chien/La Turbie, Alpes-Maritimes, 28 maart 1989; *5* St-Jean-Cap-Ferrat, 22 maart 1990; *6* St-Jean-Cap-Ferrat, 4 april 1992; en *7* La Londe, Var, 10 mei 1995. Tussen 5 april en 3 juni 1997 was er een opmerkelijke influx van negen exemplaren (in Ornithos 5: 169, 1997, werden er aanvankelijk zelfs 11 gemeld): *8* jardin botanique, Nice, 5-6 april; *9* jardin botanique, Nice 6-7 april; *10* monding van Grand-Rhône, Camargue, Bouches-du-Rhône, 8 april; *11* Aigues-Mortes, Camargue, 9 april; *12* Beauduc, Camargue, 10-11 april; *13* Leucate, Aude, 13 april; *14* Leucate, 23 april; *15* Vaufrèges, Marseille, Bouches-du-Rhône, 24 mei; en *16* La Verdière, Var, 1 en 3 juni. De Belgische waarneming past goed in deze influx. Latere gegevens van continentaal Frankrijk dateren van: *17* jardin botanique, Nice, 18 april 1998; en *18* La Motte-en-Champsaur, Hautes-Alpes, 21 april 1998. Alle gevallen op het Franse vasteland werden opgetekend langs de Franse Mediterrane kust met uitzondering van het laatste geval (*18*) in de Alpen. Er is geen bewijs voor het voorkomen van *balearica* in Frankrijk maar de verschillende taxa werden niet aan homologatie onderworpen (Pierre Crouzier, Pierre-André Crochet & Philippe Dubois in litt).

Broedgevallen van *sarda/balearica* in continentaal Spanje worden niet erkend door de Spaanse dwaalgastencommissie en er is geen enkele aanvaarde waarneming van *balearica* op het Spaanse vasteland (Eduardo de Juana & Ricard Guttiérez in litt). Wel is er één aanvaard geval van *sarda* op het Spaanse vasteland: op 25 mei 1997 op Monte la Morella, Parque Natural de El Garraf, Begues, ten zuiden van Barcelona, vanwaar Mallorca – het broedgebied van *balearica* – bij helder weer aan de horizon te zien is. Ook dit exemplaar maakte wellicht deel uit van de influx van 1997 (Ricard Gutiérrez in litt). Meldingen van Sardijnse Grasmus op het Spaanse vasteland komen talrijk in de literatuur voor maar zijn doorgaans niet van recente datum en onvoldoende of in het geheel niet gedocumenteerd. Muntaner (1997) schrijft meldingen van *sarda/balearica* op het Spaanse vasteland toe aan dispersie van eerstejaars *balearica*, maar dit vraagt bevestiging (cf Shirihai et al 2001ab). Gabriel Gargallo (in litt) rekent *balearica* niet tot de broedvogels van het Spaanse vasteland. Hij vindt het evenwel aannemelijk dat *balearica* tijdens de herfst en winter de oostkust van Spanje zou kunnen bereiken. *Balearica* is het talrijkst op de zuidelijke Balearen (Eivissa en Formentera) en in de herfst zouden eerste-winter exemplaren de oversteek van minder dan 100 km naar het continent kunnen maken. Tot nu toe ontbreken evenwel goed gedocumenteerde waarnemingen van *balearica* op het Spaanse vasteland.

Op het vasteland van Italië is Sardijnse Grasmus een onregelmatige doortrekker ('overshooting') in Alpi Marittime, Liguria en Piemonte. Het is onduidelijk of de soort daar al dan niet tot broeden komt maar er zijn wel meldingen van broedgevallen (Andrea Corso in litt). Deze regio's zijn ideaal gelegen voor 'overshooting' uit Corsica en Sardinië, wat ook uit de talrijke meldingen van Moltoni's Baardgrasmus *S c moltonii* blijkt. Er is een recente melding van zingend mannetje in de provincie Cuneo, Piemonte (22 mei 1999) (Alessandria et al 2002). In een checklist voor Lazio wordt Sardijnse Grasmus als broedvogel

opgegeven. De soort werd tijdens de trekperiode ook al opgemerkt in Campania en Molise (maar determinatie twijfelachtig, Ottavio Janni in litt). Het is een schaarse doortrekker op Sicilië. Dwaalgasten werden opgetekend in Valle d'Aosta (1995), Monte Brisighella, Marche (3 april 1991) en Calábria. Checklists voor de meeste Italiaanse regio's bevinden zich op www.ebnitalia.it. Aangezien dit overzicht voor Italië nog onvolledig is, worden Sardijnse Grasmussen op het Italiaanse vasteland niet in het totaal van dit artikel opgenomen. Er is evenwel weinig twijfel over dat de soort regelmatiger op het Italiaanse vasteland voorkomt dan Shirihai et al (2001ab) doen vermoeden. Net als in Spanje kunnen determinatiefouten echter het ware patroon vertekenen aangezien Provençaalse Grasmus in de meeste van deze regio's broedt.

Op Malta zijn negen gevallen bekend (13 exemplaren): *1* locatie onbekend, november 1943; *2* Marsascala, 26 februari 1975; *3* Mizieb, 16 november 1976; *4* Mtahleb, 24 november 1976; *5* Mizieb, tot vijf exemplaren, december 1976; *6* Qammieh, 5-29 januari 1994; *7* Delimara, 28 februari 1994; *8* Qammieh, 2 maart 1994; en *9* Mistra, 5 februari 1995 (John Attard Montalto in litt; AERC European Birdlist third draft for 18 countries, www.aerc.be/Documents.htm).

Sardijnse Grasmus is ook vastgesteld in Noordwest-Egypte (mannetje verzameld te Salum op 28 januari 1928, specimen in BMNH; Goodman & Meininger 1989).

Dankzegging

De mailing list van de AERC was doeltreffend om het overzicht van de dwaalgastwaarnemingen samen te stellen. Met name John Attard Montalto, Colin Bradshaw, Andrea Corso, Pierre-André Crochet, Pierre Crouzier, Philippe Dubois, Ricard Gutiérrez, Ottavio Janni, Eduardo de Juana, András Schmidt, Laszlo Szabo en Bernard Volet worden bedankt voor toelichtingen over de status van Sardijnse Grasmus in hun land. Gabriel Gargallo bevestigde de determinatie als *sarda*, alsook de leeftijds- en de geslachtsbepaling.

Summary

MARMORA'S WARBLER AT KNOKKE-HEIST, BELGIUM, IN MAY 1997 On 3-12 May 1997, a Marmora's Warbler *Sylvia sarda* stayed at Duinbergen, Knokke-Heist, West-Vlaanderen, Belgium; it was photographed and videoed. This individual constituted the northernmost record of the exceptional 1997 influx which included nine individuals on mainland France and the first record for mainland Spain. The bird was present at the same location as a male Eastern Subalpine Warbler *S cantillans albistriata* during the same period. It was accepted by the Belgian rarities committee (BAHC). Dartford Warbler *S undata* and Balearic Warbler *S balearica* were excluded on basis of the underpart coloration (grey, excluding Dartford), slightly shorter tail than in Dartford, and call (European Stonechat *Saxicola rubicola*-like *trruk trruk*, excluding both Dartford and Balearic). A full description of the bird is given and its occurrence as a vagrant is discussed. The bird was a male based on the relatively dark mask and generally purely grey colour. It was a second-calendar-year because of the relatively fresh dark alula, the contrast between greater coverts and tertials with the brown rest of the wing, and particularly the paler brown and more worn overall appearance of the juvenile unmoulted rectrices.

This observation constitutes the 34th European record of a vagrant Marmora's Warbler outside the known breeding range (Corsica, Sardinia and Pantelleria and several smaller islands in the western Mediterranean) and wintering range (northern Algeria, Tunisia and north-western Libya); the species is partly resident but some winter in northern Africa. This total does not include records in mainland Italy, where the species is an irregular migrant in Alpi Marittime, Liguria and Piemonte. Other vagrant records have been in Britain (five), mainland France (18), Italy (exact number unknown), Malta (nine records involving 13 individuals) and north-western Egypt (one). Balearic Warbler, formerly considered a subspecies of Marmora's Warbler, breeds on the Balearic Islands (except Menorca) and is considered resident; there are no confirmed extralimital records of this taxon although some of the individuals reported on the Spanish east coast may be *balearica*. Older breeding reports of 'Marmora's Warblers' in mainland Spain have not been substantiated and are no longer considered acceptable.

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Spaanse Mus te Camperduin in mei 2000

Op zaterdag 13 mei 2000 hielden Roy de Haas, Leo Heemskerk, Jan van der Laan en Wil Leurs voor de negende maal een landelijke *big day*. Om c 10:45 voerde de route naar Camperduin, Noord-Holland, op zoek naar de Rouwkwikstaart *Motacilla yarrellii* die hier in de voorgaande periode regelmatig gezien was. Het team verspreidde zich over het parkeerveld vlak bij de opgang naar de dijk van de Hondsbossche Zeewering. Alle aanwezige vogels werden gecheckt, zo ook de mussen *Passer*. Op c 4 m afstand zag LH een mus in het hek zitten met de borst naar voren. Direct waarschuwde hij de anderen met de mededeling: 'Dat lijkt wel een Spaanse Mus'. In de volgende seconden werd de vogel met zekerheid als Spaanse Mus *P hispaniolensis* gedetermineerd en kon de mogelijkheid van een hybride worden uitgesloten. Samen bewonderden zij deze onverwachte toevoeging aan de *big day*-lijst. Snel werden andere vogelaars gewaarschuwd; Nick van der Ham was dicht in de buurt en al na c 5 min ter plekke. Tot de vroege avond kon de vogel door vele 10-tallen vogelaars worden bewonderd, vaak op korte afstand. Ook werd de vogel regelmatig zingend gehoord. De volgende dag was de Spaanse Mus niet meer aanwezig.

De beschrijving is gebaseerd op aantekeningen van Max Berlijn en foto's van Marc Guyt en

236 Spaanse Mus / Spanish Sparrow *Passer hispaniolensis*, adult mannetje, Camperduin, Noord-Holland, 13 mei 2000 *(Jan van Holten)*

237-238 Spaanse Mus / Spanish Sparrow *Passer hispaniolensis*, adult mannetje, Camperduin, Noord-Holland, 13 mei 2000 *(Jan van Holten)*

Jan van Holten (cf Birding World 13: 186, 2000, Birdwatch 9 (98): 63, 2000, Dutch Birding 22: 179, plaat 156, 2000, 23: 340, plaat 390, 2001, Vogeljaar 46: 239, 2000; van den Berg & Bosman 2001) en videobeelden van Marc Plomp (Plomp et al 2001).

GROOTTE & BOUW Vrij grote mus, iets groter lijkend dan mannetje Huismus *P domesticus*, waarmee direct vergelijkbaar. Snavel forser lijkend dan bij Huismus. Vaker rechtop zittend dan Huismus met in die houding meer hoekige kop.
KOP Gehele kruin warmbruin met kommavormige uitloper op zijhals. Scherp afgescheiden smalle witte halsband, niet verbonden in nek. Oorstreek en wangvlek wit. Witte wenkbrauwstreep voor oog, niet tot aan snavel reikend. Zeer korte witte wenkbrauwstreep achter oog. Teugel en gedeelte rondom oog zwart, masker vormend. Kin en keel zwart.
BOVENDELEN Mantelveren zwart met witte tot licht zeemkleurige zoom. Gesleten langste schouderveren zwart met brede licht zeemkleurige buitenrand en smalle binnenrand. Rugveren zwart met smalle lichte rand. Stuit en bovenstaartdekveren effen grijsbruin.
ONDERDELEN Zwarte bef op witte ondergrond met puntige zwarte vlekken. Op middenborst aaneengesloten zwart en verbonden met zwarte keel. Zwarte tekening (pijlpunten) uitlopend op flank en naar achteren toe 'dunner' wordend. Buik vuilwit.
VLEUGEL Vleugeldekveren warmbruin met witte top aan middelste dekveren, brede witte vleugelstreep vormend. Grote dekveren en tertials bruin met donker centrum.
STAART Bovenstaart grijsbruin.
NAAKTE DELEN Snavel zwart. Oog donker. Poot donker vleeskleurig.
GELUID Zang tsjilpend, gelijkend op zang van Huismus.
RUI & SLEET Verenkleed contrastrijk en 'netjes' overkomend.

De combinatie van beschreven kenmerken past alleen op een adult mannetje Spaanse Mus (cf Clement et al 1993, Svensson et al 1999). De enige verwarring die zou kunnen optreden is met een mannetje Italiaanse Mus '*P italiae*' (tegenwoordig veelal beschouwd als ondersoort van Spaanse Mus, *P h italiae*, cf Clement et al 1993) of een hybride Huismus x Spaanse Mus of Italiaanse Mus x Spaanse Mus maar geen van de kenmerken duidt op deze mogelijkheden (cf Clement et al 1993, Bonaccorsi & Jordan 2000). Het ontbreken van lichte veerranden in het bruin van de kop en het zwart van kin en keel en de volledig zwarte snavel duiden op een mannetje in 'zomerkleed'. Dit kleed ontstaat als de lichte veerranden van het verse kleed na de complete

rui van het verenkleed in juli-september geleidelijk aan afslijten. Het sterk gesleten voorjaars- en zomerkleed ziet er daardoor veel contrastrijker en 'netter' uit dan het verse najaars- en winterkleed (cf Cramp & Perrins 1994).

Deze waarneming betreft de tweede Spaanse Mus voor Nederland (cf van der Vliet et al 2001). De eerste bevond zich van 4 tot 15 mei 1997 in de tuin van het Texel Birdwatching Center bij De Cocksdorp, Texel, Noord-Holland. Ook hier ging het om een mannetje (Gaxiola & Wassink 1998).

Spaanse Mussen broeden in Zuid-Spanje, Noord-Afrika, Sardinië, Zuidoost-Europa en Zuidwest-Azië. Vooral de oostelijke populaties zijn trekvogels. Het broedgebied in met name Kroatië breidt zich geleidelijk in noordwestelijke richting uit (extreme datums van aanwezigheid op Istrië zijn 23 april en 23 september; Rubinič 2001; cf Dutch Birding 24: 244, 2002). De overwinteringsgebieden liggen van Noordwest-Afrika tot Saoedi-Arabië en Noordwest-India. Als dwaalgast is de soort zeldzaam in Noord- en West-Europa met tot en met 2001 (naast de Nederlandse gevallen) c 10 gevallen, waarvan meer dan de helft in Groot-Brittannië (cf van den Berg & Bosman 2001). Voor een overzicht van West-Europese gevallen tot en met 1997 wordt verwezen naar Gaxiola & Wassink (1998). De waarneming van maximaal zes vrijwel zeker per schip meegevoerde vogels te Le Havre, Seine-Maritime, Normandië, Frankrijk, in mei 1995 geeft aan dat Spaanse Mussen in West-Europa niet op eigen kracht hoeven te arriveren (Dubois 1995). Er is bij de gevallen in Nederland geen indicatie voor een niet-wilde herkomst of een verplaatsing die niet op eigen kracht heeft plaatsgevonden. Omdat met name oostelijke Spaanse Mussen over forse afstanden trekken en ook de westelijke populaties in bepaalde mate trekbewegingen vertonen, moet de soort zeker in staat worden geacht West-Europa op eigen kracht te bereiken (Gaxiola & Wassink 1998).

Summary

SPANISH SPARROW AT CAMPERDUIN IN MAY 2000 On 13 May 2000, an adult male Spanish Sparrow *Passer hispaniolensis* was discovered during a *big-day* at Camperduin, Noord-Holland, the Netherlands. The bird was seen for most of the day and was regularly heard singing. This is the second record for the Netherlands; the first concerned a male on Texel, Noord-Holland, on 4-15 May 1997.

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Black-browed Albatross off La Spezia, Italy, in July 2000

On 18 July 2000, I made the crossing by ferry from Bastia, Corsica, France, to La Spezia, Italy. At 18:50, c 4 km off La Spezia harbour, I observed an adult Black-browed Albatross *Diomedea melanophris*. The weather conditions were excellent, with sunny skies, a weak wind and a temperature of 24-26°C; visibility was good and allowed observation of seabirds such as Balearic Shearwaters *Puffinus mauretanicus* and Scopoli's Shearwaters *Calonectris diomedea* as well as dolphins at great distance. The albatross approached the ferry from the east. Only when I discovered the bird, I saw it frontally. Afterwards, it was only seen in side or rear view. This explains why only the upperparts of the bird could be observed. The albatross was

observed during c 2 min. The observation distance from the initial sighting until the bird crossed the waterway behind the ferry was difficult to estimate by lack of any reference points but was not closer than 100 m and not further than 150 m. The best observation was possible when the bird flew alongship.

GENERAL IMPRESSION Majestic bird, size out of proportion, seemingly twice the size of previously observed Scopoli's Shearwaters. Wingspan estimated definitely over 2 m, reminding of White-tailed Eagle *Haliaeetus alibicilla*. Long dark upperwings, contrasting with white robust head and chest. Bill also appearing very heavy.
WING Upperwing colour variable depending on viewing point and light conditions. Alongside ferry: bleached black, sometimes giving dark brown impression. Behind ferry: black. Alongside ferry: base of primaries clearly white, white becoming gradually finer towards wing tip. Behind ferry: white in primaries not visible. Underwing not observed.
HEAD White with black eyebrow (together with darkish eye appearing large and giving 'evil' expression).
UPPERPARTS Mantle and back black as upperwing. Rump white.
UNDERPARTS Breast white. Belly not seen well due to viewing conditions.
TAIL Uppertail grey, paler than upperwing. White centres of tail feathers more obvious than white in primaries. Undertail not observed.
BARE PARTS Bill for 75% yellow. Towards bill tip more intensely yellow, rather pale orange. Transition not as abrupt as for instance in gonys of black-backed gulls *Larus*. Eye dark to black. Leg and foot not noticed.
FLIGHT When first noticed, flying towards me from the east, 4-5 m above surface of sea. Then turning, moving up somewhat, gliding for first time briefly, moving down, moving slightly up after few powerful wing beats and continuing on straightly, just above sea level, crossing waterway behind stern and finally disappearing as small spot in western direction. Moving very quickly, despite rather heavy wing beats.

The combination of size, shape, dark upperparts and upperwing, yellow bill and dark eye and eyebrow fits only Black-browed Albatross. The most similar albatross is Laysan Albatross *D immutabilis* from the Pacific which is extremely unlikely to occur in Europe. This species shows a dull flesh-coloured bill with greyish tip, dark rump patch and a darker (blackish instead of grey) uppertail. When the underwing can be observed well, this species also shows much darker underwings than Black-browed. Campbell Albatross *D impavida*, formerly treated as a subspecies of Black-browed, breeds on the Campbell Islands and is also very unlikely to appear in Europe. It differs from Black-browed by a pale yellowish iris (which would have been visible under the condition described above off La Spezia), a more extensive black 'brow', especially in front of the eye, and a broader black leading edge to the underwing. Yellow-nosed Albatross *D chlorohynchos*, which has been recorded as a vagrant in Europe, shows a nearly all-black bill with yellow upper ridge and small orange tip (cf Harrison 1986, 1987, Enticott & Tipling 1997, Tickell 2000, Shirihai 2002).

The sighting off La Spezia has been accepted by the Italian rarities committee (CIR) and presumably represents the first record of Black-browed Albatross for Italy (Pierandrea Brichetti in litt), and the second for the Mediterranean Sea after one off the Chafarinas Islands, Spain, close to the Moroccan coast in 1997 (Ricard Gutiérrez in litt). Black-browed Albatross is the only 'regular' albatross occurring as a vagrant in the northern Atlantic region, with accepted records from Britain, Canary Islands, Faeroes, France, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Morocco, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Spitsbergen and Sweden. Some have summered for many consecutive years in breeding colonies of Northern Gannet *Morus bassanus*. Other records of unidentified albatrosses in these and other European countries in many cases most probably also refer to Black-browed (eg, Lewington et al 1991, Snow & Perrins 1998).

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Systematics of *Larus argentatus-cachinnans-fuscus* complex revisited

After the first modern attempt by Dwight (1925), a number of taxonomists and systematists, as well as dedicated ornithologists and birders, have tackled the tricky – and still partly unsolved – problem of the nomenclature and classification of the large white-headed gulls. After a summarized presentation of this group and the debates on its systematics, this article will focus on the taxa of the *Larus argentatus-cachinnans-fuscus* complex, intending to propose a reappraisal of their classification on the basis of the most significant recent contributions in the literature.

Birds and studies

Large white-headed gulls

The large white-headed gulls form a group of taxa which are considered to be phylogenetically closer to each other than to any other gull species because they share some distinctive phenotypic features, particularly an immaculate white head in breeding plumage (which separates them from the dark-hooded gulls like, for example, Pallas's Gull *L ichthyaetus*) and an obvious red spot at the gonydeal angle of the bill (which separates them from some smaller but otherwise similar-looking species like, for example, Mew Gull *L canus*). Other characters common (but not exclusive) to the group include a large size and a grey mantle and wings, usually with a black wing-tip showing one or two white mirrors on the outermost primaries (in a minority of large white-headed gulls, however, the wing-tip is pale grey to white, almost concolorous with the rest of the wing). The intensity of the grey mantle and the details of the wing-tip pattern (the number of primaries with black, the colour and pattern of the paler tongue on the inner web to the outer primaries, the form and number of the white mirrors) have classically been considered the most useful characters to sort out most taxa because these parameters vary between taxa (even if overlap occurs) and are easily studied in museum collections. The leg colour, flesh-coloured, pink or yellow of variable intensity, is also a character widely used in their classification.

The large white-headed gulls have a mostly northern Holarctic distribution, from the Mediterranean to the High Arctic, and consist of up to 33 taxa (the number of accepted species and subspecies varies with time and author). The only representatives in the Southern Hemisphere are five taxa generally considered as subspecies of Kelp Gull *L dominicanus* (hereafter referred to as *dominicanus*) although their heterogeneity is higher than usually acknowledged and their relationships remain poorly understood (for an introduction to this question – which is beyond the scope of this article – see Jiguet et al 2001 and in particular Jiguet 2002).

The northern large white-headed gulls consist of seven species recognized as such by all taxonomists and two groups of taxa of which the number of valid (sub)species is widely discussed, the 'Iceland Gull Group' and the 'Herring Gull Group'.

Seven 'easy' species

Only two taxa, the well-differentiated Great Black-backed *L marinus* and Glaucous Gulls *L hyperboreus* (hereafter referred to as *marinus* and *hyperboreus*, respectively), kept their scientific name and species status unchallenged since Dwight (1925). Also, it is generally accepted to consider California *L californicus*, Slaty-Backed *L schistisagus*, Yellow-footed *L livens*, Western *L occidentalis* and Glaucous-winged Gulls *L glaucescens* (hereafter referred to as *californicus*, *schistisagus*, *livens*, *occidentalis* and *glaucescens*, respectively) as good species. This has not always been the case, however, and the classification of any of these five taxa has been challenged at least once since Dwight (1925). For instance, Stegmann (1934) considered *schistisagus* and *glaucescens* as subspecies of *marinus* and *hyperboreus*, respectively, and *californicus* has been classified as a subspecies of either Herring Gull *L argentatus* (Stegmann 1934) or Lesser Black-backed Gull *L fuscus* (Meinertzhagen 1935).

Iceland Gull Group

The status of the Iceland Gull *L glaucoides* Group, including Kumlien's *L (g) kumlieni* and Thayer's Gulls *L (g) thayeri* (hereafter referred to as *glaucoides*, *kumlieni* and *thayeri*, respectively), has been a matter of debate over a much longer period and is still disputed.

Dwight (1925) recognized *glaucoides* as a

good species while he considered *thayeri* as a subspecies of *argentatus* (because of the wing-tip pattern) and *kumlieni* a hybrid population between *glaucoides* and *thayeri*. Buturlin (1934a) still regarded *glaucoides* as a species but the Iceland Gull Group was thereafter treated as part of *argentatus* after Stegmann (1934) and until the late 1940s (Stresemann & Timofeeff-Ressovsky 1947) or even classified under *fuscus* (Meinertzhagen 1935 who advocated that all taxa of the *argentatus-cachinnans-fuscus* complex were better grouped in one highly polymorphic species, *fuscus*). Since the 1950s (Dement'ev 1951), the Iceland Gull Group was no longer regarded as conspecific with *argentatus* or *fuscus* (except by Timofeeff-Ressovsky & Stresemann 1959) but its systematic treatment varied. Depending on the author's view, *glaucoides*, *kumlieni* and *thayeri* represent one, two or three species.

In the most recent study of the Iceland Gull Group, Weir et al (2000, cf McGowan & Kitchener 2001) focused on the changing distributions of *glaucoides*, *kumlieni* and *thayeri* during the 19th and 20th centuries and on the phenotypic variation of *kumlieni*. This study added weight to the opinion of Dwight (1906, 1925) and others that *kumlieni* is a hybrid population between *glaucoides* and *thayeri*. They also showed that in a not so distant past *glaucoides* and *thayeri* were breeding sympatrically in a part of their range and that *kumlieni* is phenotypically highly variable as can be expected for a hybrid population.

Weir et al (2000) and McGowan & Kitchener (2001), waiting for the results of genetic studies, did not discuss the possible systematic consequences of their findings. The fact is, however, that under the Phylogenetic Species Concept (PSC) the marked phenotypic differences between their proposed parent taxa obviously lead to recognize them as two distinct species, *glaucoides* and *thayeri*. This conclusion could be reached under the Biological Species Concept (BSC) too as the BSC recognizes that hybridization zones can occur where closely related species come into contact and mix (as found in, for example, the *Alectoris* partridges). A peculiarity of the Iceland Gull Group is that the supposedly resulting hybrid population (which should then be named '*kumlieni*'; note the inverted commas and see taxonomic note 1) extends in a wide zone while a narrow hybridization zone is a more usual situation when introgression occurs between species (but see, for instance, the wide hybridization zone between *glaucescens* and *occidentalis*; Bell 1996).

Herring Gull Group

Taxonomists usually consider that the remaining taxa (which are the core of this article), ie, Herring *L argentatus* (including *L a argentatus*, *L a* '*omissus*' and *L a argenteus*), Lesser Black-backed *L fuscus* (including *L f fuscus*, *L f intermedius* and *L f graellsii*), Heuglin's *L heuglini*, *L* '*taimyrensis*', East Siberian *L vegae* (including *L v vegae*, *L v* '*birulai*' and *L v mongolicus*), American Herring *L smithsonianus*, Pontic (Caspian) *L cachinnans* (including *L c cachinnans* and *L c* '*ponticus*'), Armenian *L armenicus*, Baraba (Steppe) *L barabensis* and Yellow-legged Gulls *L michahellis* (including *L m michahellis* and *L m atlantis*), excluding some disused synonyms, are closely related and form a distinct group among the large white-headed gulls. Hereafter, the listed taxa are referred to as *argentatus*, nominate *argentatus*, '*omissus*', *argenteus*, *fuscus*, nominate *fuscus*, *intermedius*, *graellsii*, *heuglini*, '*taimyrensis*', *vegae*, nominate *vegae*, '*birulai*', *mongolicus*, *smithsonianus*, *cachinnans*, nominate *cachinnans*, '*ponticus*', *armenicus*, *barabensis*, *michahellis*, nominate *michahellis* and *atlantis*, respectively.

This group has received various names since Stresemann & Timofeeff-Ressovsky (1947) called it the 'Formenkreis' ('ring of forms') *argentatus-cachinnans-fuscus*. Recently, it has even been named the 'assemblage of large white-headed gulls' (eg, Kennerley et al 1995, Yésou & Hirschfeld 1997), a disputable choice since the large white-headed gulls proper encompass a larger set of taxa as mentioned above. More appropriate (but see taxonomic note 2) is the 'Herring Gull Group' (Goethe 1963), now a popular name used from Europe to the Far East (eg, Hoogendoorn et al 1996). The recently coined 'Herring Gull Assemblage' (de Knijff et al 2001) is an interesting alternative as it vividly suggests that the various taxa form a heterogeneous assortment.

The initial reference to an *argentatus-cachinnans-fuscus* complex indicates that these taxa can be arranged into three groups as effectively done by Dwight (1925) who separated the northern taxa in two species, *argentatus* and *fuscus*, and grouped the southern ones into one species, *cachinnans*. Alexander (1928) followed this classification in the first-ever field guide on the seabirds of the world. Thereafter however, most authors lumped the southern taxa with *argentatus* (eg, Stegmann 1934, Mayaud 1940, Dement'ev 1951, Vaurie 1965, Barth 1968, 1975, Voous 1977) or *fuscus* (eg, Goethe 1963, Voous 1963).

Such a treatment, which gave a higher importance to the northern taxa, can be tentatively explained by the growing credit then given to the theory that the Herring Gull Group is a fine example of ring speciation (Mayr 1940, 1963).

The concept of ring species refers to a chain of intergrading populations which progressively encircles a barrier. Although the neighbouring populations interbreed, they tend to diverge (in their behaviour, phenotype and genetics). The more geographically distant from the initial population, the more they diverge, up to the point that, when the ring is closed, the terminal taxa no longer recognize each other as belonging to the same species and coexist without interbreeding. There are few accepted cases of ring species in birds (Collinson 2001a, Irwin et al 2001). In the case of the Herring Gull Group, it has been postulated that the divergence occurred during the Pleistocene under the following scenario. The ancestor of the Herring Gull Group supposedly lived in central Asia, more or less within the range of present-day *cachinnans*. During some interglacial period, it expanded northwards. This resulted in a population, *fuscus* or an ancestor of *fuscus*, which developed capacities to breed in colder climates and then went into an eastward expansion around the northern Holarctic. The divergence led to populations which, among other points, became paler and paler (present-day *heuglini*, *vegae* and *smithsonianus*). The ring was closed when birds crossing the Atlantic Ocean diverged into *argentatus* (Voous 1959) which overlapped with *fuscus* without interbreeding, behaving as good species. Meanwhile, the southern taxa had evolved from the ancestor population which had already given rise to the northern ring. The full process might have taken place recently, during the Holocene (ie, the last c 10 000 years), or might have lasted several glacial periods (including a series of southward retreats to ice refuges and northward expansions when these populations possibly went into secondary contact). In this proposed context of ring speciation, the challenge for taxonomists was to decide where to put the divide between *argentatus* and *fuscus*: to which species does each taxon belong? Then, the southern taxa often received less attention as they played no role in the northern speciation process.

Alternatively, Barth (1968) proposed that *argentatus* and *fuscus* were already separated as species at the beginning of the Holocene: *argentatus* was living in North America and *fuscus* in the Caspian Sea area. As the ice melted, *fuscus* moved to Fennoscandia and representatives of *argentatus* started to colonize the Old World. Expanding both east- and westwards along both northern and southern routes, they were the ancestors of present-day northern European *argentatus* and eastern Siberian *vegae* as well as those of all southern taxa. Barth's (1968) theory also included a complicated series of hybridization with *fuscus* (for example, he postulated that *atlantis* is a hybrid swarm between North American immigrants and *graellsii*) but he basically regarded *argentatus* as a 'double-ring' species.

This theory of the Herring Gull Group as ring species has been discussed in textbooks and is still widely taught to students up to the tertiary level although it has been weakened by information collected over the last c 15 years, as will be seen below, and critics just begin to spread out of the circle of informed gull enthusiasts (Allano & Clamens 2000).

Short history of recent advances

Rise of modern gullwatching

Up to the early 1970s, systematic studies of the Herring Gull Group, whether they covered the whole group or only a part of it, mostly relied on museum material and re-interpretation of the work of previous authors as only Dwight (1925) and Stegmann (1934) studied skins of all taxa described at their time. Biological data were not ignored for those taxa which breed sympatrically in north-western Europe, ie, at the doorstep of a majority of authors, but little information was available on the biology of taxa breeding in more remote areas.

Then, the situation dramatically changed. The interest in gull identification suddenly grew among European birders, fed by the work of a handful of mostly British pioneers. Particularly determinant was a series of papers by Peter Grant, published in *British Birds* in the late 1970s and thereafter united as a book (Grant 1982) which stands as a landmark in the field study of gulls and was rapidly updated to include North American taxa (Grant 1986).

Simultaneously, the northward expansion of southern birds, viz *michahellis*, in western Europe put them into contact with northern taxa. Their breeding in sympatry was a situation of importance in systematics (Nicolau-Guillaumet 1977, Yésou 1991) while their increasing frequency on northern shores resulted in ever-improving field-identification skills (eg, Hume 1978a, Dubois & Yésou 1984, Madge 1984, to

mention some early papers on the identification of *michahellis*).

Also, an increasing number of birders went to travel further abroad, opening new grounds in the field identification of Asian taxa on their wintering places. An era of improving knowledge began with studies of *armenicus* in the Near East (eg, Hume 1978b, Géroudet 1982, Dubois 1985).

It has then become obvious that field studies (including the field description of phenotypic traits and their variation) will invaluably complement museum research.

Re-invigorated debate on systematics

Pierre Devillers, a systematist with a long field experience in gulls, was then studying series of all taxa of the Herring Gull Group in museums around the world, also collecting information on their biology and distribution. He was rapidly convinced that Dwight's (1925) partition into three species should be re-invigorated and re-installed the southern taxa at the species rank under *cachinnans* (Devillers 1977). Unfortunately, the details of his systematic study of the Herring Gull Group remained unpublished (Devillers sine dato) and, when preparing the systematic account for *The birds of the Western Palearctic 3* (Devillers 1983), he was asked by the editors to follow Voous's (1977) line, ie, keeping the southern taxa as subspecies of *argentatus*.

Conversely, after the systematic account by Haffer (1982), the other major European handbook, *Handbuch der Vögel Mitteleuropas*, decided to treat the southern taxa under *cachinnans*, with *armenicus* a different species (what Devillers & Potvliege 1981 had already done). No doubt that the contradictory – but otherwise rich – contributions by Haffer (1982) and Devillers (1983) boosted the interest of many readers in the systematics of the Herring Gull Group.

'Eastern' studies

A new interest in the systematics of the Herring Gull Group developed in the former USSR too, after the progress of field research and the internal taxonomic debate. Getting his first experience of *mongolicus* in the field, the gull expert Victor Zubakin (pers comm) realized that this taxon differed more markedly from both *argentatus* and *cachinnans* than suggested by the study of skins and inferred systematics. Convinced that the taxa of the Herring Gull Group breeding in the country were worthy of a full reappraisal, he encouraged Andreï Filchagov, who had already been involved in the study of three taxa breeding in the Kola peninsula and the White Sea area (Filchagov & Semashko 1987, Filchagov et al 1992a), to engage himself in this way. In 1989, he was at the Yenisey mouth working on an enigmatic taxon, '*taimyrensis*' (Filchagov et al 1992b). In 1990, Andreï Filchagov got the first modern experience of *armenicus* on its breeding grounds (Filchagov 1993), then paid the first serious visit to colonies of *barabensis* since this taxon had been described (Johansen 1960) and visited Taimyr later in the season (Filchagov et al 1992b). This resulted in a wider research project launched by the USSR Academy of Sciences (Panov et al 1991a) and stimulated parallel research (eg, Buzun 1992).

In the mean time, the volume of the *Birds of the USSR* on gulls was published. As regards systematics, however, Russian gull students critically received the part on the Herring Gull Group (Yudin & Firsova 1988) as it ignored the recent advances (K A Yudin died at the first stage of this review which has been written by L V Firsova). Stepanyan (1990) then proposed a better-informed approach in his taxonomic review of the Soviet avifauna.

At the same time – thanks to the end of the Cold War – a handful of gull students from western Europe were offered opportunities to study the eastern taxa both in colonies and in the rich collections of Russian zoological museums. The Academy of Sciences of USSR invited me to take part in expeditions to Taimyr and northern Yakutia in 1990-91 (Yésou 1994) and to Lake Baikal in 1992 (Yésou 2001a). In 1994, Lars Jonsson (pers comm) took part in a summer-long scientific cruise visiting c 20 sites along the Arctic coast of Russia between the White Sea and Wrangel Island. Thereafter, he visited the mouths of the Indigirka and the Ob (1996) and breeding grounds of *barabensis* (1999) where he was on the steps of Andreas Helbig and others who visited the same area in 1998 (Liebers & Helbig 1999). Meanwhile, Finnish ornithologists undertook a series of visits to north-western Russia since 1995, particularly studying *heuglini* (Eskelin & Pursiainen 1998, Rauste 1999).

Also, nature tours began to visit remote Russian places, allowing western birders to familiarize themselves with some eastern taxa in their breeding areas. For most birders, however, wintering grounds remained the only place to look at these birds and useful contributions to the knowledge of phenotypic variation within the

eastern components of the Herring Gull Group came from the shores of Asia (eg, Kennerley et al 1995, Bourne 1996, Harris et al 1996, Hoogendoorn et al 1996, Garner 1997a, Yésou & Hirschfeld 1997).

New techniques

During this time, new research tools helped to improve our understanding of the Herring Gull Group.

The development of colour-ringing on breeding grounds rapidly proved to be efficient in tracing the origin of migrants seen far away from their ringing place. Not only, it invaluably improved our knowledge of their dispersal (for early studies of movements of *michahellis* from Mediterranean colonies, see, for instance, Carrera et al 1981, 1993, and Yésou 1985) but studying birds of known origin also helped to improve our knowledge of their phenotypic variation and of little-known immature plumages. In particular, our knowledge of *cachinnans* (Klein 1994, Klein & Gruber 1997) and *fuscus* (Jonsson 1998a) benefited from this. Descriptive work at breeding places nevertheless remains necessary to ascertain the full range of variation (eg, Liebers & Dierschke 1997, in the case of *cachinnans*).

Much more complicated techniques have been developed for genetic studies in which great expectations have been put since the 1980s. Even though, if the results available until now were not always as clear-cut as it was hoped for, they are worth a detailed presentation.

Genetic studies

Using electrophoresis of protein, the most readily method available at the time, Tegelström et al (1980), Ryttman et al (1981), Johnson (1985) and Snell (1991a) found little genetic differentiation between the taxa they studied, an unexpected situation in contradiction with their acknowledged phenotypic differences. These authors concluded that the observed low level of genetic differentiation was due to recent ancestry (in accordance with the proposed development of the Herring Gull Group as ring species during the last c 10 000 years) and/or to important gene flow, ie, frequent hybridization. Although the latter proposal is supported by some local situations (for example, *argentatus* x *hyperboreus* in Iceland; Ingolfsson 1970, 1993, Schütt 1989), it was not expected to play the main role in most cases.

Technical developments then allowed researchers to work on mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA) and significant differences were found between European representatives of the three groups of the *argentatus-cachinnans-fuscus* complex (Wink et al 1994, but see Helbig 1994, Heidrich et al 1996). Crochet (1998) thereafter analysed mtDNA of 12 taxa, from a larger set of populations. His findings (published as Crochet et al 2002) confirmed the significant genetic differences between *argentatus, fuscus* and *(cachinnans) michahellis*. Among other results, which will be referred to later on in this article, he also found that the divergence between *argentatus* (including *argenteus*) and *smithsonianus* is so important that it refutes the ring-species theory: *argentatus* is not the result from the recent colonization of Europe by North American birds. He also confirmed the reality of occasional hybridization between *argentatus* and *hyperboreus* in Iceland (contra Snell 1991b, 1993) while showing that hybridization occurs – or has occurred – more often than usually thought between sympatric taxa of large white-headed gulls. For instance, haplotypes specific of *argenteus* and *smithsonianus* are found in the mtDNA of *marinus* from western France and Canada, respectively.

The recently developed AFLP (Amplified Fragment Length Polymorphism) technique has the advantage of representing genetic information on both sexes and should improve the results of mtDNA analysis which are biased towards female inheritance. It has been applied to 11 taxa of the Herring Gull Group by de Knijff et al (2001) whose detailed phylogenetic analysis failed to group individuals according to their phenotype or geographical origin, despite significant differences in genetic distances between all taxon pairs. Instead, they found that, among the gulls they have studied, c 77% of the total genetic variation could be explained by within-taxon differences, only c 23% of the total genetic variation being due to between-taxa differences. They concluded that their results did not contradict the ring-species theory (seemingly, they were not aware of Crochet 1998) which they nevertheless considered as 'probably not entirely correct' and recommended that in the present state of knowledge a conservative approach of the systematics of the Herring Gull Group should be adopted, ie, grouping all taxa under the three species *argentatus, cachinnans* and *fuscus* (for a discussion of their findings, see also Collinson 2001b).

Thus, genetic studies told us that the genetic variation is weaker in taxa of the Herring Gull Group than expected from their phenotypic

differences, that intra-population variation plays the larger role in the total genetic variation, and that the situation is complicated by occasional hybridization between sympatric taxa. Although in some cases genetic distances between taxa were such that they validated their ranking at species level, the results did not allow a complete reappraisal of the phylogeny of the Herring Gull Group. This was partly due to the fact that no genetic study has yet encompassed the full range of concerned taxa but also was partly linked to methodological limitations (eg, Helbig 1994).

Then, Liebers et al (2001) added much significant knowledge, wisely making use of the most variable part of the mitochondrial control region, the Hypervariable Control Region-I (HVR-I), which had not been previously studied in the Herring Gull Group. Referring to larger samples than most of their predecessors, they investigated the genetic variation in the six taxa of the southern Herring Gull Group (the Caspian Gull Group) and the three taxa of the Lesser Black-backed Gull Group, *graellsii*, *heuglini* and '*taimyrensis*' (according to figure 1 in Liebers et al 2001, their sample of '*taimyrensis*', however, comes from the range of '*birulai*'; see below). Their results added weight to the ranking of the four southern Asian taxa at species level, ie, *cachinnans*, *armenicus*, *barabensis* and *mongolicus*, as already proposed after a more traditional field and museum approach (Yésou 2001ab), while showing that *atlantis* is a subspecies of *michahellis*. They also gave information on the gene flow in hybridization zones and gave strong elements, which will be presented below, for the construction of the phylogeny of the Herring Gull Group.

Herring Gull Group taxonomy revisited

In line with my previous contributions to this debate (Yésou 1991, Yésou et al 1994), I have referred to the Biological Species Concept (BSC) to rank taxa of the Herring Gull Group as species or subspecies. Under the BSC, their reproductive isolation is the central criterion establishing whether two taxa are different species (Mayr 1942, 1982). Confirmation of reproductive isolation can be obtained only for taxa which come into contact or are sympatric. Regarding allopatric taxa, it is, therefore, their potential reproductive isolation which must be inferred, from both their biology and the level of phenotypic and genetic divergence between them (Helbig 2000). The fact is that the classification proposed below does not differ greatly from the classification that would be expected under the Phylogenetic Species Concept (PSC). This owes much to recently improved knowledge of phenotypic and genetic differences between allopatric taxa that lead to similar conclusions under BSC or PSC. Conversely, however, recent information on genetics oblige to group under the same species taxa which have been considered as different species under the PSC (Sangster et al 1998, 1999). Another difference from the proposed PSC classification concerns the treatment of subspecies. Whatever the issue of debates on their usefulness in the study of evolution, it seems necessary to name those parts of the population which, within a given species, are diagnosable enough to help in field research and distribution studies.

As their reproductive isolation can be confirmed only when their breeding ranges overlap, or at least come into contact, the various taxa of the Herring Gull Group are better presented according to a geographical sequence. The northern taxa will be presented eastwards, from north-western Europe to North America, beginning with the Herring Gull Group eponym *argentatus*, globally following the sequence of the ring-species theory described above: an opportunity to highlight information inconsistent with this theory. The southern taxa have traditionally been grouped with *cachinnans* (either as a 'Caspian Gull Group' of subspecies within *argentatus* or *fuscus* or as subspecies of *cachinnans*). Thus, *cachinnans* will be presented first, then the taxa breeding to the east of it (with the exception of *mongolicus*, treated with the northern forms as a subspecies of *vegae*), then those breeding to the west.

This review will develop the reasons for which any taxon should be ranked as species or subspecies or must be ignored (synonym or invalid taxon), following the guidelines by Helbig et al (2002, cf Collinson 2002) for assigning species rank. The review will refer to information on breeding biology and/or genetics and/or phenotypic variation when relevant. It is not intended, however, to develop the phenotypic description of each taxon and reference will be made to informed articles on this matter.

Herring Gull

Argentatus breeds in north-western Europe, from Iceland to the White Sea, south to western France and the Basque country in Spain. It overlaps with *fuscus* (including *intermedius* and

239 Herring Gull / Zilvermeeuw *Larus argentatus argenteus,* Cap Fréhel, Côtes-d'Armor, France, July 1970 *(Fanch Yésou)*

graellsii; see below) in most of its range. *Argentatus* and *fuscus* are phenotypically well differentiated (eg, Grant 1982, 1986), having developed isolation behaviour (Brown 1967), so interbreeding remains a relatively rare event (eg, Harris et al 1978, Yésou 1991), and a significant genetic divergence has been found in their mtDNA (Wink et al 1994, Heidrich et al 1996, Crochet 1998, Crochet et al 2002). Their ranking as two species is, therefore, widely accepted.

For the last 25 years, *argentatus* has also been breeding sympatrically with *michahellis* in western France. Interbreeding remains occasional and the two taxa are better described as ignoring each other when breeding in mixed colonies, behaving as two good species (Yésou 1991, P Yésou unpublished data). This is further supported by the level of divergence in their mtDNA (Wink et al 1994, Heidrich et al 1996, Crochet 1998). Actually, it is generally agreed to consider *argentatus* as specifically distinct not only from *fuscus* but also from the southern taxa.

Furthermore, genetics showed that it is distant from the North American *smithsonianus* to such a degree that the latter taxon should not be ranked as a subspecies of *argentatus* (Crochet 1998, Crochet et al 2002).

A recurring taxonomic debate, however, remains, related to phenotypic variation within *argentatus*: should the western population be designated as *argenteus* or not? (for an early review of this debate, see Barth 1968). With the few exceptions of authors still following Vaurie (1965), recent classifications of the Herring Gull Group follow Barth (1968) and regard *argenteus* as a valid subspecies. Sangster et al (1998, 1999), however, considered that its recognition is not properly supported by the published studies of phenotypic variation to call it a taxon. The fact is that the variation in size and wing-tip pattern can be interpreted as following north-south clines, with larger birds showing less black on the wing-tip in the north. Variation in mantle colour may also be considered clinal, depending on one's interpretation of the data in Barth's (1968) detailed study of this character. It must be acknowledged, however, that almost no overlap exists in mantle colour between western birds and those from most of Fennoscandia (≤ 3% overlap between birds breeding in the British Isles, Faroes and Iceland and birds from Norway; Barth 1968). There is still only 12% overlap between birds from the Netherlands and those from Norway. Overlap, however, reaches 30%

when comparing western birds to birds from Denmark. The situation described by Barth (1968) then legitimates the ranking of the western population at the subspecies level, under the 90% rule (Amadon & Short 1992). Nominate *argentatus* and *argenteus* breed east and west of Denmark, respectively, while the Danish population shows intermediate characters. Preserving the name *argenteus* in such a treatment recognizes that an important phenotypic divergence exists in *argentatus*, a fact that might be underestimated otherwise. Also, it is of interest in distribution studies as it facilitates the reporting of darker birds mixing with western ones outside the breeding season in north-western Europe (eg, Dubois et al 2000, McGeehan 2002).

'*Omissus*' problem

Pleske (1928) gave the name '*omissus*' to the *argentatus* breeding at the Gulf of Finland, in the White Sea area and along the Murmansk coast, ie, in the easternmost part of the range of *argentatus*. However, Pleske simply referred to unpublished research by P P Sushkin and gave a simplified version of Sushkin's thoughts (Buturlin 1934a, Jonsson 1998b). The main point in Pleske's (1928) short description is that the legs of '*omissus*' are 'sometimes flesh-coloured, sometimes yellow'.

Lönnberg (1933) rapidly raised doubt about the taxonomic value of leg colour in this case as he found carotenoids in the skin of flesh-coloured legs as well. Further studies on the phenotypic variation of eastern *argentatus* (from Stegmann 1934, Voipio 1954, Stegmann 1960 and Barth 1968 to Mierauskas et al 1991 and Mierauskas & Greimas 1992) showed that '*omissus*' should be treated as a synonym for nominate *argentatus*.

Meanwhile, some authors have focused on the yellow legs in Pleske's (1928) description, in line with the fact that colonies where all breeding birds had yellow legs reportedly occurred in Belarus (Gunter De Smet in litt), Finland, Estonia and Latvia and possibly in Karelia (for a review, see Kumari 1978), and/or the theory that the yellow legs of eastern *argentatus* were due to intergradation with *cachinnans* (Voipio 1954). This restricted use of the name '*omissus*' is either a misinterpretation or a misuse, however, as it ignores part of the range and/or part of the phenotypic description initially given by Pleske (1928). The resulting situation is taxonomically confusing and hardly defendable, particularly since it has been shown that yellow-legged *argentatus* phenotypically owe nothing to *cachinnans* (Mierauskas et al 1991, Mierauskas & Greimas 1992; contra Haffer 1982).

It is strongly suggested that '*omissus*' continues to be considered as a synonym for nominate *argentatus*, after Stegmann (1934) and many others, and that it is placed between inverted commas when it needs to be mentioned (Yésou et al 1994; see taxonomic note 3). Further information and comments on the '*omissus*' debate can be found in the reviews by Yésou et al (1994), Jonsson (1998b) and Panov & Monzikov (1999).

Lesser Black-backed Gull

Fuscus breeds in north-western Europe from Iceland to the White Sea, south to Portugal. In most of its range, it is sympatric with *argentatus* (which see for their recognition as different species).

It is sympatric with *michahellis* sensu lato (for a discussion of the populations concerned, see the section below on *michahellis*) in western France and Iberia. Mixed pairing is exceptional in France where the two taxa have markedly different breeding calendars (Yésou 1991, P Yésou unpublished data) but has been recorded more often, although still rarely, in north-western Iberia (Paterson 1997) where their breeding calendars overlap as environmental conditions lead *michahellis* to breed later in the season. These two taxa are phenotypically and geneticallly differentiated (Wink et al 1994, Heidrich et al 1996, Crochet 1998, Crochet el al 2002, Liebers et al 2001), to such a degree that they are widely accepted as different species.

Lastly, at the east of its range *fuscus* is parapatric with *heuglini*. The latter has often been considered as a subspecies of *fuscus*; recent studies, however, indicate that the two taxa are specifically distinct (for details, see the section on *heuglini*).

Fuscus is markedly variable in phenotype and behaviour. In short, birds from most of Fennoscandia and the Baltic area, forming nominate *fuscus*, tend to be smaller, have a blackish mantle, migrate to the south-east and have a protracted moult strategy. Western birds (from Iceland through the British Isles to western Iberia) average bigger, have a mid-grey mantle, migrate to the south-west and moult early in the season; they have been recognized as *graellsii*. Birds breeding in between show all intermediates between nominate *fuscus* and *graellsii* in mantle colour which varies clinally, hence have been named *intermedius*. This classification has been

widely accepted after Barth's (1968) detailed study of this phenotypic variation.

It has been argued, however, that north-eastern birds differ from the others not only phenotypically and in their migration and moult strategies but also in their dynamics and feeding behaviour and, thus, might be specifically distinct (eg, Hario 1984, 1994, Strann & Vader 1992). Since 1998 (Sangster et al 1998, 1999) indeed, the Dutch committee for avian systematics (CSNA), applying the PSC, has distinguished Baltic Gull *L fuscus* from Lesser Black-backed Gull *L graellsii* on the basis of the above-mentioned differences while it considers *intermedius* as an invalid subspecies and merges it with *graellsii*.

Expectedly, this choice is disputed. There is no thorough study of the relationship between nominate *fuscus* and *intermedius* in the field, so the question whether they interbreed or not cannot be answered. Intergradation is nevertheless strongly suggested as the darkest individuals within *intermedius* are phenotypically indistinguishable from nominate *fuscus* (Jonsson 1998a). The two taxa should then mix easily if they have not developed any discriminating behaviour. The alleged differences in feeding behaviour are of little or no taxonomic value. They might be explained by local environmental constraints and are not unexpected as the adaptiveness to various environmental situations is an acknowledged character of the taxa of the Herring Gull Group (including nominate *fuscus*; eg, Götmark 1984). There is no complete segregation in migration behaviour as a minority of nominate *fuscus* move south-westwards after breeding. For example, colour-ringed birds have been seen in France, Portugal and Morocco and there are ringing recoveries from Finland to France, Iberia, Morocco and western Africa (including Mauritania and Senegal) (Kilpi & Saurola 1984, Dubois et al 2000; Finnish Ringing Centre fide J Valkama's presentation at the Sixth International Gull Meeting at Lammi, Finland, in August 2002). More importantly, no difference in breeding behaviour (including courtship) has ever been suggested between these taxa, and no significant difference has been found when comparing the mtDNA of nominate *fuscus* from Finland to that of *graellsii* from Ireland and western France, a strong suggestion that an important gene flow occurs between these taxa (Crochet 1998, Crochet et al 2002).

As their isolation is far from being confirmed, it is wiser to keep these taxa united under the same, polymorphic, species name. But how many subspecies should be recognized in *fuscus?* At first glance, the recognition of *graellsii* poses no problem, given its marked phenotypic differences from nominate *fuscus*. Deciding whether *intermedius* warrants taxonomic recognition is more debated. The fact that mantle colour varies clinally within *graellsii-intermedius* has been argued to reject *intermedius* as a valid taxon (Sangster et al 1998). But, applied to *fuscus* as a whole, this principle would oblige to reject *graellsii* too, for the reason that the cline goes from nominate *fuscus* to that taxon. Then, taxonomy would no longer describe the species' phenotypic variation: a useful descriptive tool would be lost. Moreover, most (more than 75%) *intermedius* are phenotypically diagnosable (Barth 1968), only the palest and darkest individuals being indistinguishable from *graellsii* and *fuscus*, respectively. Among the difficult individuals are those breeding in the Netherlands, Belgium and northern France. A small number of such birds also breed within the range of *graellsii* in western France and have been involved in extralimital breeding in, for instance, France (Loire and Rhône valleys), Mediterranean Spain (Ebro delta) and Switzerland. These birds tend to be a shade darker than typical *graellsii* (and are sometimes referred to as the 'Dutch type') but genetically appear to be significantly closer to this subspecies than to *intermedius* from southern Norway (de Knijff et al 2001).

Therefore, my conclusion is that taxonomy needs to express the marked phenotypic variation, thus, nominate *fuscus*, *graellsii* and *intermedius* should continue to be recognized, even if the situation somewhat departs from the 90% rule for subspecific recognition (but is in accordance with the former and still largely accepted 75% rule; Amadon 1949). Also, further research is required on the relationship between *fuscus* and *intermedius*.

Heuglin's Gull

Heuglini breeds in northern Russia from the Kola peninsula to the Gydan peninsula and possibly the north-western reaches of the Yenisey (where the situation is obscured by '*taimyrensis*'; see below). Long-lasting confusion has surrounded its scientific name (it has been referred to as '*antelius*' by various authors; see taxonomic note 4) and little was known about its phenotypic appearance (eg, Hario 1992) until Eskelin & Pursiainen (1998) and Rauste (1999) gave a detailed description of birds from the western part of the species' range. Then, Buzun (2002)

240 Heuglin's Gull / Heuglins Meeuw *Larus heuglini*, Tampere, Finland, 7 August 2002 *(Theodoor Muusse).* Note that light incidence makes mantle look darker than it actually is

241 Heuglin's Gulls / Heuglins Meeuwen *Larus heuglini*, Bahrein, 27 February 2001 *(Theodoor Muusse)*

described birds from the central part of the range and added much to the knowledge of the species' biometrics. He indicated a cline towards slightly paler birds in the east which is clearly shown in museum series (Moscow and Saint Petersburg, pers obs).

Heuglini is parapatric with *argentatus* and *fuscus* in the Kola peninsula and the White Sea area where the three taxa do not interbreed; in particular *heuglini* mostly occurs in tundra habitats inland while *fuscus* is more connected to the sea (Filchagov & Semashko 1987, Filchagov et al 1992a). Significant differences in mtDNA have been found between *heuglini* and both other taxa (Crochet 1998, Crochet et al 2002).

In the eastern part of its range, *heuglini* comes into contact with *vegae*. Although the two species probably interbreed occasionally (see the section below on '*taimyrensis*'), leading to some degree of gene flow, differences have been found in their mtDNA (Crochet 1998, Crochet et al 2002, Liebers et al 2001; both studies referred to material from the '*birulai*' component of *vegae*) and these taxa remain well differentiated phenotypically (particularly there is no overlap in mantle colour; see Yésou 2001a: figure 1).

Breeding isolation, phenotype and genetics concur to rank *heuglini* as a good species (which remains very hard to tell from *graellsii/intermedius*).

'*Taimyrensis*': a valid taxon?

The name '*taimyrensis*' has a complicated history. It has been initially devised to describe the birds breeding at the gulf of Yenisey and the most south-western part of Taimyr (Buturlin 1911). Then, Stegmann (1934) united all yellow-legged gulls breeding in western Taimyr, in south-western Siberia and northern Kazakhstan (present-day *barabensis*) and in Armenia (present-day *armenicus*) under the subspecific name '*taimyrensis*'. This name was thereafter used in a more restricted sense, covering the reaches of the lower Yenisey and the whole of Taimyr (Dement'ev 1951).

Then Johansen (1960) suggested that '*taimyrensis*' could be of hybrid origin. Indeed, Buturlin himself (in Tugarinov & Buturlin 1911, quoted by Andreï Filchagov in litt) already considered that birds intermediate between '*taimyrensis*' and both *heuglini* and *vegae* were not uncommon, an opinion later shared by Stegmann (1934).

When describing '*taimyrensis*', Buturlin (in Tugarinov & Buturlin 1911) compared the type series with specimens of *cachinnans*, *heuglini* and nominate *vegae*. He found that the wing-tip pattern of '*taimyrensis*' differed from that of *cachinnans* but not so markedly from *heuglini* and *vegae*. Buturlin emphasized that the yellow legs of '*taimyrensis*', similar to those of *heuglini*, were the most obvious difference from *vegae* which was then described as always having pink legs. Some years later (Dwight 1925, Buturlin 1934a quoting Birula 1907, Stegmann 1934), it was, however, recognized that yellow-legged individuals occur in the western half of the range of nominate *vegae* (the so-called '*birulai*'; see below).

The uncertainties affecting '*taimyrensis*' led Andreï Filchagov (pers comm) to study the type series in the collections of the zoological museums at Moscow and Krasnoyarsk, along with other specimens from the type area of '*taimyrensis*' and further south along the lower valley of the Yenisey. A similar study was thereafter conducted in Moscow by Lars Jonsson who presented his findings at the Fourth International Gull Meeting at Le Portel, France, in October 1999.

The specimens studied by Andreï Filchagov and Lars Jonsson show much variation in mantle colour which overlaps with that of both *heuglini* and nominate *vegae* (see Yésou 2001a: figure 1). Such a marked within-taxon variation is unique to '*taimyrensis*' among the eastern taxa and occurs in a small range (the lower valley and gulf of Yenisey and the most south-western part of Taimyr); within the Herring Gull Group, such a variation is matched only by *intermedius* although in a much larger range. However, most of the studied specimens are either similar to nominate *vegae* or intermediate between it and *heuglini* in mantle colour. Only a minority of specimens, including some from the type series, are as dark as eastern *heuglini*. These dark individuals all come from the western part of the Yenisey valley, ie, close to the range of *heuglini*, and possibly have been labelled '*taimyrensis*' on geographical grounds only. Also, it must be borne in mind that when A Y Tugarinov collected the type specimens in 1906-07, he approached only one colony where he stayed at a distance from the nests; there is no certainty that all the birds he collected where local breeders (Andreï Filchagov pers comm).

The most rational interpretation of these facts is that '*taimyrensis*' has been described from a series comprising *heuglini*, yellow-legged *vegae* (as found in the so-called '*birulai*'; see below) and individuals showing characters intermediate

between *vegae* and *heuglini*. The intermediate birds suggest some degree of interbreeding between these two taxa. That *vegae*-like individuals have been included in the type series is easily understood as at the time it was ignored that yellow legs do occur in nominate *vegae*.

Expecting that field studies could help to clarify the situation, Andreï Filchagov went in 1989-90 to the gulf of Yenisey and western Taimyr where he visited various colonies (Filchagov et al 1992b). He found neither dark nor intermediate breeding birds but only yellow-legged birds with a mantle colour matching *vegae*. Dark birds, which have been identified as *heuglini*, nowadays are uncommon visitors to the lower reaches of the Yenisey and south-western Taimyr (Andreï Filchagov pers comm, pers obs) and it is doubtful whether interbreeding with *vegae* presently takes place in the area (Filchagov 1994). Up to the 1970s, however, dark-mantled birds considered to be *heuglini* were still accounting for c 20-25% of 'Herring' gulls in western Taimyr (A A Vinokurov fide Andreï Filchagov pers comm).

To summarize, '*taimyrensis*' probably refers to a limited hybridization zone which possibly existed up to 30 years ago when *heuglini* and nominate *vegae* came into contact at the gulf of Yenisey and south-western Taimyr. As characters of '*taimyrensis*' overlap with those of nominate *vegae* (see below), this name has no descriptive value. Thus, '*taimyrensis*' should be considered as an invalid taxon and be placed between inverted commas when it has to be quoted (see also taxonomic note 5).

Vega Gull (nominate subspecies of East Siberian Gull)

Nominate *vegae* breeds in north-eastern Siberia from the gulf of Yenisey to the Chukchi peninsula. Its range does not overlap with that of other taxa of the Herring Gull Group. It comes in near-contact with *heuglini* west of the Yenisey and possibly interbreeds with it to a limited degree (interbreeding probably occurred until recently; see the section above on '*taimyrensis*'). The two taxa are phenotypically well differentiated, however, as there is no overlap in mantle colour (figure 1 in Yésou 2001). Phenotypic differentiation and lack of true intergradation argue for their recognition as different species (eg, Kennerley et al 1995; see, however, taxonomic note 6).

Its other closest neighbours are *mongolicus* in southern Siberia and *smithsonianus* in North America and their relationship will be discussed when dealing with these taxa. At the south-eastern part of its range, *vegae* meets *schistisagus* and the two species, which appear to be genetically not so distant (Liebers et al 2001), regularly interbreed at low frequency (Portenko 1963, Kistchinski 1980, V I Grabovsky pers comm).

Nominate *vegae* is a polymorphic taxon showing little variation in mantle colour, the northernmost birds (New Siberian Islands) being the palest and both the westernmost (western Taimyr) and the easternmost (Chukchi Peninsula) being the darkest. Variation in leg colour is more dramatically marked. The westernmost birds (the lower Yenisey and the most south-western part of Taimyr, ie, '*taimyrensis*' as discussed above) have yellow legs. From western Taimyr to the Lena delta, birds have yellow (bright or pale), pink (with visible yellow or not) or flesh-coloured legs; the frequency of yellow legs seems to decrease eastwards. Virtually, only flesh-coloured-legged birds have been reported east of the Lena although Stegmann (1934) mentioned a yellow-legged individual from the New Siberian Islands.

Pleske (1928) was the first to subspecifically name the birds breeding from central Taimyr to the New Siberian Islands (the type series includes specimens from this archipelago; Andreï Filchagov pers comm), at Sushkin's suggestion. He named this population '*birulai*'. Many authors eventually considered this taxon of little or no taxonomic value (eg, Buturlin 1934a), with the notable exception of Stegmann (1934) who specified that these birds show either fleshy or yellow-coloured legs, and introduced the widely used misspelling '*birulae*'. The name '*birulai*' has been put forward again recently, not always in a well-informed manner. Particularly, Kennerley et al (1995) postulated that '*taimyrensis*' and '*birulai*' were phenotypically differentiated to a point that they could be identified in the field (under '*birulai*'; these authors included only the pink-legged component of the population) and were breeding in sympatry or in parapatry in a huge area, behaving as different species. Recent field work, however, produced a totally different picture. In all colonies investigated between western Taimyr (from the Pyasina) and north-western Yakutia (Flichagov et al 1992, A V Filchagov unpublished data, P Yésou unpublished data), breeding birds show a highly variable leg colour, ranging from bright yellow to flesh-coloured. These birds are otherwise similar in mantle colour; the variation in wing-tip pattern is not related to the leg colour. There is no sexual selection for leg colour; ie, yellow- and pink-legged birds pair with each other. This corro-

242-243 Vega Gulls / Vegameeuwen *Larus vegae vegae*, Anadyr, Chukotka, Russia, June 2000 *(Chris Schenk)*

borates Pleske's (1928) and Stegmann's (1934) descriptions, clearly indicating that only one population occurs there (contra Kennerley et al 1995) and that this population is characterized by a highly variable leg colour.

Further, field and museum studies (A V Filchagov unpublished data, P Yésou unpublished data) failed to distinguish yellow-legged '*birulai*' from the slightly darker-plumaged but otherwise similar yellow-legged gulls which breed in the range of '*taimyrensis*' in south-western Taimyr and at the gulf of Yenisey. Nor was it possible to tell a pink-legged '*birulai*' from an eastern nominate *vegae*. Obviously, the characteristics attributed to '*birulai*' do not efficiently segregate one population and this name does not accurately describe a subspecies. It must then be considered as invalid and placed between inverted commas when it needs to be used.

The name *vegae* is, therefore, better applied to all those gulls breeding in northern Siberia east of *heuglini*, even if they are showing a marked variation in leg colour: always pink in the eastern half of its range, pink or yellow from the Lena delta to most of Taimyr ('*birulai*'), and always yellow in the restricted westernmost part of its range ('*taimyrensis*').

Mongolian Gull (southern subspecies of East Siberian Gull)

Mongolicus breeds from south-eastern Altai to north-eastern Mongolia and the western part of north-eastern China. An isolated population at Lake Khanka, not far from Vladivostok at the border of easternmost China and Far Eastern Russia, and previously classified under *cachinnans* (La Touche 1934), has been included in *mongolicus* by Stepanyan (1990), followed by Pyzhjanov & Tupitsyn (1994) and Pyzhjanov (1996), but this lacks sound basis (see taxonomic note 7).

Phenotypically different from its southern neighbours *barabensis* and particularly *cachinnans*, it is closer in wing pattern to northern Siberian nominate *vegae,* to which it has been linked by Buturlin (1934a). Also, the leg colour of *mongolicus* is variable and no assortative mating occurs regarding to leg colour, a situation similar to that found in nominate *vegae* (Panov & Monzikov 2000, Yésou 2001a). Similarly, *mongolicus* genetically differs from all southern taxa previously melted in the 'Caspian Gull Group' and is more closely related to nominate *vegae* (both '*birulai*' and typical *vegae*; Crochet 1998, Liebers et al 2001). This suggests that *mongolicus* is a southern isolate of *vegae* which possibly stayed in southern Siberia and Mongolia when present-day *vegae* moved northwards at the end of the last glacial period. Meanwhile, significant phenotypic differences have developed between *mongolicus* and nominate *vegae* and presently these two taxa appear to be reproductively isolated. In these respects, *mongolicus* might be considered as a species (Yésou 2001a). However, the phenotypic differences between *mongolicus* and nominate *vegae* can be validated on series only; overlap occurs particularly in wing tip pattern (see Yésou 2001a), thus, in the present state of knowledge, it is not possible to ascribe some individuals to one taxon or the other. Then, following the guidelines by Helbig et al (2002), it is preferable to provisionally consider *mongolicus* as a subspecies of *vegae*, pending further research.

American Herring Gull

Smithsonianus breeds in the northern half of North America, from Alaska to the Atlantic coast. The only taxon of the Herring Gull Group breeding in the New World, it has long been considered a subspecies of *argentatus* in spite of an early report that European *argenteus* did not react to playback vocalizations of *smithsonianus* (Frings et al 1958), suggesting that these taxa were biologically isolated. It has now been shown from their mtDNA that American and European taxa are not phylogenetically closely related and are better treated as different species (Crochet 1998, Crochet et al 2002).

This contradicts the ring-species theory. This theory also postulated that *smithsonianus* was closely related to *vegae*, its neighbour from the other side of the Bering Sea. Actually, it is widely recognized that the Bering Strait has been a colonization route followed by a variety of species invading America from Asia. The dark juvenile plumage of *smithsonianus* (eg, Devillers 1983, Dubois 1997) is somewhat shared by juvenile *vegae* which too shows dark grey underparts although probably never as uniformly dark as in the darkest North American birds and the rump and tail are paler. However, adult *smithsonianus* and *vegae* differ in structure and plumage (Chu 1998), even if there is some overlap in mantle colour (the palest, northernmost, *vegae* are similar to *smithsonianus* in this respect) and wing-tip pattern. This suggests that the two taxa do not introgress (*vegae* is a regular visitor to north-western Alaska where it might at least occasionally interbreed with *smithsonianus*). Moreover, differences in the mtDNA of *smithso-*

nianus and *vegae* (from the range of '*birulai*') concur to show that these taxa are not closely related (Crochet 1998, Crochet et al 2002).

Genetic and phenotypic differences lead to consider *smithsonianus* as a good species (contra Yésou 2001b). In our present state of knowledge, it is a monotypic species. Important variation, however, occurs in the wing-tip pattern at least (eg, Sibley 2000, Jonsson & Mactavish 2001) which remains insufficiently studied. Should this variation be organized in a way supporting any subspecific designation?

Pontic (Caspian) Gull

Cachinnans breeds from the Black Sea to Kazakhstan (Lake Balkhash and possibly also Lake Zaysan further east). Its eastern limits are, however, imprecisely known. A portion of the population migrates to the north (eg, Buzun & Greimas 1997). A small number of birds recently started to breed in central and eastern Europe, reaching Nizhny Novgorod in Russia (Filchagov 1994, Panov & Monzikov 1999, Andreï Filchagov pers comm) and Krakow in southern Poland (Faber et al 2001). *Cachinnans* interbreeds occasionally with *fuscus, heuglini, argentatus* and *michahellis*, taxa which are here also extralimital. Such occasional mixed pairing has no taxonomic significance.

Cachinnans has long been considered conspecific with *michahellis*, its western neighbour, until the two taxa were found breeding in near-sympatry in Romania, without interbreeding (Klein & Buchheim 1997). These taxa were already known to differ in social display, *cachinnans* adopting a 'long-call' posture reminiscent of that of *fuscus*, often with an albatross-like posture (Panov et al 1991bc, Mierauskas & Greismas 1992), while *michahellis* behaves more like *argentatus*. This marked difference in recognition signal might lead to reproductive isolation and indeed the two taxa exhibit marked genetic differences (de Knijff et al 2001, Liebers et al 2001; see also Collinson 2001b), obliging to consider *cachinnans* and *michahellis* as different species.

Cachinnans also must be considered as specifically distinct from its eastern neighbours *armenicus, barabensis* and *mongolicus* (Heidrich et al 2001, Yésou 2001ab) (for details, see the sections below on these taxa).

It shows a fair degree of variation in wing-tip

244 American Herring Gull / Amerikaanse *Zilvermeeuw Larus smithsonianus*, Barnegat, New Jersey, USA, 26 January 1995 *(Arnoud B van den Berg)*

245 Armenian Gulls / Armeense Meeuwen *Larus armenicus*, Bet Shean, Israel, April 1990 *(René Pop)*

246 Baraba Gull / Barabameeuw *Larus cachinnans barabensis*, Bahrein, 1 March 2001 *(Theodoor Muusse)*. Compare the structure of this slender taxon with that of the more powerful *heuglini*

pattern and mantle colour, with eastern birds having more black on the primaries and a slightly paler mantle (eg, Jonsson 1998b). This was first noticed by Stegmann (1934) who gave the subspecific name '*ponticus*' to the birds breeding from the Black Sea to the western shore of the Caspian Sea; those breeding more to the east then holding as nominate *cachinnans*. However, this proposed new subspecies was not recognized as valid by most later authors. Although some field observers recently drew attention to it (eg, Garner 1997a, Dubois 1998, Jonsson 1998b), the way in which this variation is organized remains practically unknown and it is questionable whether the recognition of '*ponticus*' as a valid subspecies could be supported.

Armenian Gull

Armenicus breeds on lake islands on high plateau's in Armenia, Georgia and Turkey (Anatolia) and probably also in north-western Iran (Buzun 2000, Rufray 2000). No attention was paid to its phenotypic peculiarities and their taxonomical implications until the early 1930s. According to Buzun (1993a) and Andreï Filchagov (in litt), P P Sushkin was the first to suggest that the birds breeding at Lake Sevan in Armenia warranted subspecific ranking. However, he considered that he did not have enough material at his disposal to properly name a new subspecies. Then, Stegmann (1934) found similarities in wing-tip pattern and mantle colour in the birds breeding in Taimyr, in south-western Siberia and northern Kazakhstan (present-day *barabensis*) and in Armenia, and placed them under the name '*taimyrensis*'. Simultaneously, Buturlin (1934b) described *armenicus* as a new subspecies. This taxon then remained poorly known until recently when research conducted on its breeding grounds showed important phenotypic, behavioural and genetic differences from *cachinnans* (Buzun 1992, 1993b, Filchagov 1993, Liebers & Helbig 1999, Liebers et al 2001), validating the ranking of *armenicus* as a different species. In fact, *armenicus* is genetically much closer to *michahellis* which breeds sympatrically in western Anatolia and sometimes interbreeds with it (Liebers & Helbig 1999). There is little intergradation, however, as the two taxa remain phenotypically well differentiated, only a minority of individuals showing intermediate characters in the limited hybridization zone.

Baraba (Steppe) Gull

Barabensis breeds in steppe lakes in south-western Siberia, from the Urals to the Omsk region, and in northern Kazakhstan. Pleske (1928) and Stegmann (1934) realized that these birds differ phenotypically from *cachinnans*, with which they were initially merged, and placed them in the subspecies '*taimyrensis*'. This opinion was followed (eg, Dement'ev 1951) until Johansen (1960) described these birds as a different subspecies under the name *barabensis*. This gained little credit, however, as for 30 years specimens were hardly accessible to most gull researchers and there was almost no information on the morphology and biology of this taxon. Then, in 1990, Andreï Filchagov collected specimens at breeding sites of *barabensis*. Study of these skins supported the view that *barabensis* is a good taxon. The now available information on the wing-tip pattern greatly helped the identification of *barabensis* on the wintering grounds (Garner 1997a, Yésou & Hirschfeld 1997).

Another visit to colonies was organized in 1997, leading to the publication of the first detailed description of the breeding biology and phenotypic characters of *barabensis*, based on birds of known origin (Panov & Monzikov 2000). These authors alleged that birds intermediate with *cachinnans* occur in the southern range of *barabensis*, as already claimed by Johansen (1960), unfortunately giving no detailed information on such birds. They, however, concluded that *barabensis* is distinct from *cachinnans* but is more closely related to *heuglini* and suggested that it is treated as a subspecies of it, a proposal made earlier by Bourne (1993).

Then, genetics (Crochet 1998, Crochet et al 2002, Liebers et al 2001) showed that *barabensis* clearly differs from *armenicus* to which it has been associated by various authors (eg, Stegmann 1934, Bourne 1993). It also clearly differs from *michahellis* and is only distantly related to *cachinnans* while it turned out not to be significantly differentiated from *heuglini* at the mtDNA level. This suggests that *barabensis* has recently diverged from *heuglini*, too recently to allow measurable genetic differentiation (Liebers et al 2001). The two taxa possibly began to diverge after the last glacial period when birds moved northwards – present-day *heuglini* – while others stayed in the south and gave rise to present-day *barabensis*. They are, however, phenotypically differentiated (in structure, mantle colour and wing-tip pattern) and have adapted their breeding biology to a markedly different environment where *barabensis* lays c 1 month earlier than *heuglini*. This suggests that they have reached a

fair degree of reproductive isolation and it has been proposed that *barabensis* is recognized as a different species from *heuglini* (Yésou 2001a). This is, however, a borderline case in the application of the guidelines for species ranking – in the present case, allospecies – proposed by Helbig et al (2002). As the reproductive isolation of *barabensis* and *heuglini* is not proven, and their level of divergence is weak, one could argue that *barabensis* is provisionally better considered as a subspecies of *heuglini*.

Yellow-legged Gull

Michahellis breeds from the Macaronesian Islands (the Azores and the Canary and Madeiran Islands) to western Anatolia, through the Atlantic coasts of Morocco, Iberia and France, and the whole Mediterranean basin. After a marked expansion in range and numbers since the 1970s, a small number of extralimital birds now breed in western and central Europe, north to Britain. Although extralimital birds occasionally pair with *argentatus* or *fuscus*, mixed pairing remains an uncommon event where the three species overlap in western France and north-western Spain. They behave as different species and their treatment as three species is fully supported by genetic studies (Wink et al 1994, Heidrich et al 1996, Crochet 1998, Liebers et al 2001, Crochet et al 2002).

In Romania, at the known north-eastern limit of its range (information that the taxon breeds east to Crimea needs confirmation), *michahellis* comes into close contact with *cachinnans*, without interbreeding (Klein & Buchheim 1997). These taxa show a marked difference in recognition signal (as presented under *cachinnans*; see above) and genetics (de Knijff et al 2001, Liebers et al 2001; see also Collinson 2001) which leads to consider them as different species.

South of the taxon's range, at Banc d'Arguin in Mauritania, an extralimital *michahellis* has recently (1997-98) been found paired to a vagrant *dominicanus* (Pineau et al 2001). The two taxa differ markedly in both phenotype (eg, Jiguet et al 2001) and genetics (Crochet 1998, Crochet et al 2000, 2002). This unexpected case further illustrates that interbreeding can occur between distantly related taxa of large white-headed gulls.

Michahellis shows marked phenotypic variation. *Atlantis*, which has a darker mantle, a darker wing-tip (usually with only one mirror) and a densely streaked head in winter plumage (eg, Dubois 2001), has been described from the Azores (Dwight 1922). Some authors thereafter extended this name to the birds breeding in the Canary and Madeiran Islands (eg, Mayaud 1940, Vaurie 1965, Devillers 1983) and even the Atlantic coasts of Morocco and Iberia (de Knijff et al 2001, Liebers et al 2001). Comparing specimens, Beaubrun (1988), however, concluded that birds from Atlantic Morocco and Iberia are intermediate in size and plumage between those from the Macaronesian Islands and those breeding in the western Mediterranean. More recently, Dubois (2001) concluded from field and museum studies that Azorean birds differ from those breeding in the Canary and Madeiran Islands in a number of aspects. It is wise to restrict the use of the name *atlantis* to the birds breeding in the Azores, as Dwight initially did, pending the results of further research on the phenotypic and genetic variations of the western populations of *michahellis*.

Genetics already suggest that the Atlantic populations (except the recently established population of western France) are ancestral to the recent ones of the Mediterranean (Liebers et al 2001). Also, there is evidence that the population of north-western Spain (from the Basque country to the Cantábrican region and possibly Asturias), the so-called 'Cantábrican' *michahellis*, also sometimes referred to as *L m lusitanius* or *L m bernisi*, differs in structure and voice from those of Portugal, Atlantic Morocco and the western Mediterranean (Teyssèdre 1983, 1984, Carrera et al 1987, Dubois 1987, Beaubrun 1988, Garner 1997b), to a point that it seems appropriate to rank them at the subspecies level (Carrera et al 1987; see taxonomic note 8). More needs to be studied, however, before the variation of *michahellis* is accurately described and the relationships between the various populations are understood. Particularly, almost nothing is known about the variation in northern Africa and in the eastern Mediterranean.

Discussion

The evidence presented above indicates that the Herring Gull Group does not comprise three species, *argentatus*, *cachinnans* and *fuscus* (as still conservatively proposed by, eg, de Knijff et al 2001), but most probably comprises eight to 10 species, ie, *argentatus, armenicus, barabensis* (a borderline case in species ranking, might be considered as a subspecies of *heuglini*), *cachinnans, fuscus, heuglini, michahellis, smithsonianus* and *vegae*. Although *mongolicus* differs from nominate *vegae* to the point that its recognition as a species has been advocated, this is another borderline case and it is

247 Yellow-legged Gull / Geelpootmeeuw *Larus michahellis*, Lesvos, Greece, 28 April 2002 *(René Pop)*

248 Yellow-legged Gull / Geelpootmeeuw *Larus michahellis*, Madeira, 3 March 1980 *(Arnoud B van den Berg)*. In the past, birds of Madeira (and Canary Islands) were regarded to belong to *L m atlantis* (which is now considered to be restricted to the Azores)

provisionally proposed to treat *mongolicus* a subspecies of *vegae*. Thus, *vegae* becomes polytypic and for this reason is more aptly named East Siberian Gull than Vega Gull.

This new proposal is based on recent advances in both field and laboratory research which particularly benefited the previously understudied Asian taxa. Unexpected results also came from allegedly better-known taxa, the status of which has long remained unquestioned. This is particularly true in the case of *smithsonianus* which resembles *argentatus* so much that it is still virtually impossible to tell them apart in adult plumage, a situation long held as enough evidence to consider them as conspecific until genetics told us that they are not. Conversely, equally unexpected is the result that little genetic distance has been found between some phenotypically differentiated taxa such as *heuglini* and *barabensis* which form an allospecies pair.

A surprise of another kind was to learn that *cachinnans* could easily be told from *michahellis* in the field. Their differences escaped the attention of so many birders, who over the years had been looking at huge numbers of them on their breeding and wintering grounds, to be first noticed by a very small number of sharp-eyed observers looking at uncommon migrants at the limit of their range. More research quickly followed, making it clear that the two taxa, long considered as conspecific, are in fact specifically distinct. This exemplifies the invaluable input of birders in improving our knowledge of the phenotypic variation and biology of large gulls.

In spite of the acknowledged amount of recent progress, many points, however, remain understudied, even concerning Western Palearctic taxa. It has been stressed that the phenotypic variation within *michahellis* remains partly unknown and insufficiently understood, and the ongoing debate on the validity of the subspecies of *argentatus* and *fuscus* shows that the description of phenotypic variation still has to be improved in both species. Also, everyone will be interested to learn more about the differences between *argentatus* and *smithsonianus*.

Further research is needed in Asia too. The need is obvious in the case of the 'Khanka Gull' which presently cannot be ascribed to any taxon. Also, the variation within *cachinnans* remains understudied and a satisfying explanation is still lacking for the surprisingly high variation of the bare-part coloration in Asian taxa, particularly in nominate *vegae* and *mongolicus* (a situation also encountered in Europe in *'omissus'*). A better understanding of the relationships between some taxon pairs will also need further research, particularly regarding *barabensis* and *heuglini* (phenotypically differentiated, not intergrading, but showing genetic similarities), *heuglini* and nominate *vegae* (phenotypically differentiated but possibly intergrading to some degree) and nominate *vegae* and *mongolicus* (biologically isolated and phenotypically differentiated but sharing marked similarities). Also, it is worth studying the relationships between the latter two taxa and *smithsonianus*, particularly since their shared dark underparts in juvenile plumage differ markedly from those of other taxa of the Herring Gull Group and suggest common ancestry. Such forthcoming research will also help to understand the phylogeny of the Herring Gull Group and genetic studies are particularly needed in this respect. The information already available is, however, sufficient to invalidate the ring-species theory of a recent common origin to all taxa of the Herring Gull Group.

Some results obtained from different techniques (de Knijff et al 2001, Liebers et al 2001) did not contradict the ring-species theory that an ancestor dispersing from central Asia evolved into the dark-mantled taxa now breeding in northern Europe and north-western Siberia and into paler taxa now breeding in western and central Asia. According to Liebers et al (2001), central Asian *cachinnans* actually is the oldest taxon in this 'assemblage' (de Knijff et al 2001, Liebers et al 2001) and *graellsii, heuglini,* nominate *vegae* (Liebers et al 2001 actually referred to '*taimyrensis*' although their specimens are from the *'birulai'* range of *vegae* as described in this review), *mongolicus, barabensis* and *cachinnans* can be grouped into one clade. These conclusions may agree with the first steps of the ring-species theory.

However, Liebers et al (2001) also mentioned that both *mongolicus* and eastern nominate *vegae* possess genetic material indicating colonization primarily from an eastern Siberian or Pacific source, ie, at the opposite of the ring-species theory of a unidirectional, eastward, expansion. Whether some eastern Siberian gulls have nevertheless colonized North America, as the ring-species theory postulates, will remain unknown until genetic material of *smithsonianus* is compared with that of other taxa. What is known, however, is that *smithsonianus* genetically differs from *argentatus* to such a degree that the theory of a recent colonization of north-western Europe from North America is no longer

supported (Crochet 1998, Crochet et al 2002). Lastly, the ring-species theory is contradicted by the mitochondrial phylogeny of the duet *michahellis* and *armenicus* which differs markedly from that of *cachinnans* and other north-western Palearctic and western and central Asian taxa (Liebers et al 2001).

Then, even if ring speciation might have occurred locally (particularly, the lineage from *cachinnans* to *barabensis* through *fuscus* and *heuglini*, as proposed by Barth 1968, remains unchallenged with the present state of knowledge), this theory cannot explain the phylogeny of the whole Herring Gull Group. Probably, radiation played a larger role than ring speciation. Among the radiations which have occurred, the divergence of *argentatus* and *fuscus* may date back between 170 000 and 1 million years ago (Crochet et al 2002) and that of *michahellis* and *cachinnans* at least 256 000-295 000 years ago (Liebers et al 2001). Such datings are disputed, however, as they are based on a rate of molecular evolution leading to results hardly compatible with fossil records, and the Herring Gull Group may be much older (de L Brooke 2002). Anyway, it is now clear that the speciation process within the Herring Gull Group has spanned a much longer period than the last 10-12 000 years sometimes proposed under the ring-species theory. Moreover, it probably began before the Pleistocene usually considered under this theory as fossil material referred to as *L* affinis *argentatus* has been found in Early Miocene layers (c 4.5 M years old) in North Carolina, USA (Warheit 2002). Possibly, we have to change our views not only on the systematics of the Herring Gull Group but on its birth place too: it might not be central Asia.

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Samenvatting

SYSTEMATIEK VAN *LARUS ARGENTATUS-CACHINNANS-FUSCUS* COMPLEX: EEN BESPREKING De 'grote witkoppige meeuwen' *Larus* vormen een groep nauw verwante taxa met duidelijke fenotypische kenmerken (ongetekende witte kop in broedkleed, rode gonysvlek). De grijswaarde van de mantel en de details van het handpenpatroon, parameters die variëren van taxon tot taxon en gemakkelijk te onderzoeken zijn in museumcollecties, worden traditioneel beschouwd als de bruikbaarste kenmerken om de meeste taxa te onderscheiden. De pootkleur, vleeskleurig, roze of geel met een variabele intensiteit, is eveneens een kenmerk dat algemeen gebruikt wordt bij hun classificatie.

De grote witkoppige meeuwen omvatten maximaal 33 taxa (het aantal aanvaarde soorten is afhankelijk van de tijd en de auteur) met een overwegend noordelijke Holarctische verspreiding: de enige vertegenwoordigers op het Zuidelijk Halfrond zijn vijf taxa die als ondersoorten van Kelpmeeuw *L dominicanus* worden beschouwd. De noordelijke grote witkoppige meeuwen omvatten zeven onbetwiste soorten (Grote Mantelmeeuw *L marinus*, Grote Burgemeester *L hyperboreus*, Prairiemeeuw *L californicus*, Kamtsjatkameeuw *L schistisagus*, Geelvoetmeeuw *L livens*, Californische Meeuw *L occidentalis* en Beringmeeuw *L glaucescens*) en twee groepen van taxa waarvan het aantal volwaardige (onder)soorten ter discussie staat: de 'Kleine Burgemeester Groep' (het meest recente onderzoek wijst aan dat Kleine Burgemeester *L glaucoides* en Thayers Meeuw *L thayeri* verschillende soorten zijn terwijl 'Kumliens Meeuw' een hybridenpopulatie tussen deze soorten onderling vormt) en de 'Zilvermeeuwgroep'.

Hoewel dit artikel een overzicht geeft van alle taxa van witkoppige meeuwen, behandelt het voornamelijk de Zilvermeeuwgroep, ook bekend als het *Larus argentatus-cachinnans-fuscus* complex. Lange tijd werd aangenomen dat een ringsoort de grondslag voor dit complex vormde waarbij het ruimst aanvaarde scenario als volgt klonk: de voorouder van de Zilvermeeuwgroep woonde ergens in Centraal-Azië. Tijdens een of ander interglaciaal tijdvak waaierde deze noordwaarts uit. Hieruit ontstond een populatie, Kleine Mantelmeeuw *L fuscus* of een voorouder van Kleine Mantelmeeuw, die zich in oostelijke richting rond het noordelijke Holarctische gebied verspreidde. Door divergentie ontstonden populaties die onder meer steeds lichter werden (Heuglins *L heuglini*, Oost-Siberische *L vegae* en Amerikaanse Zilvermeeuw *L smithsonianus*). De ring was rond toen vogels de Atlantische Oceaan overstaken en divergeerden tot Zilvermeeuw *L argentatus*, die met Kleine Mantelmeeuw overlapte zonder hybridisatie, als een valide soort. Intussen ontstond de zuidelijke populatie uit de oorspronkelijke populatie waaruit de noordelijke ring ontstond. Deze theoretische benadering was evenwel gebaseerd op een onvolkomen studie van de groep aangezien tot voor kort weinig bekend was over het uiterlijk, de fenotypische variatie en de biologie van vele, hoofdzakelijk Aziatische taxa.

Sinds de jaren 1970 ontstond zowel onder amateurs als onder professionelen een diepgaande interesse in de Zilvermeeuwgroep. Door de toename in vogelreizen verbeterde de kennis van meerdere taxa, voornamelijk op basis van observaties in de overwinteringsgebieden. Na de Koude Oorlog kregen sommige ornithologen uit Het Westen de gelegenheid om Aziatische taxa zowel in de broedgebieden als in de rijke Russische collecties te onderzoeken. Kleurringprojecten en in het bijzonder genetische studies brachten betere inzichten in de kenmerken, de biologie en de determinatie van diverse taxa. De toegenomen interesse genereerde tal van publicaties die tot een betere kennis leidden en een herziening van de systematiek van de Zilvermeeuwgroep mogelijk maakten.

Op basis van de huidige kennis is het beter om de Zilvermeeuwgroep in negen soorten te verdelen die zowel fenotypsch als genetisch duidelijk diagnoseerbaar zijn. De polytypische Zilvermeeuw omvat de ondersoorten *L a argentatus* en *L a argenteus*. Andere polytypische soorten zijn Kleine Mantelmeeuw (met de ondersoorten *L f fuscus*, *L f graellsii* en *L f intermedius*), Oost-Siberische Meeuw (met de ondersoorten *L v vegae* en *L v mongolicus*) en Geelpootmeeuw *L michahellis* (met de ondersoorten *L m michahellis* en *L m atlantis*, de laatste alleen op de Azoren). De ondersoortverdeling van deze vier soorten komt overeen met ruim aanvaarde regels voor de bepaling van ondersoorten en is een hulpmiddel in verspreidingsstudies. Amerikaanse Zilvermeeuw, Pontische (Kaspische) Meeuw *L cachinnans*, Armeense Meeuw *L armenicus*, Barabameeuw (Steppemeeuw) *L barabensis* en Heuglins Meeuw zijn monotypisch. Zilvermeeuw (alleen *L a argentatus*) en Oost-Siberische Meeuw (zowel *L v vegae* als *L v mongolicus*) vertonen sterke individuele variatie in pootkleur, van vleeskleurig tot geel, maar op een wijze die geen subspecifiek onderscheid toelaat: *L a* '*omissus*' moet bijgevolg beschouwd worden als een synoniem van *L argentatus* (Zilvermeeuw) en *L v* '*birulai*' als een synoniem van *L vegae* (Oost-Siberische Meeuw) (de komma's geven aan dat deze namen geen taxonomische waarde hebben). Recent veldwerk in het typegebied en onderzoek van de typereeks geven sterke aanwijzingen dat *L* '*taimyrensis*' het resultaat is van een beperkte hybridisatiezone (die in ieder geval in het verleden bestond) tussen Heuglins en Oost-Siberische Meeuw.

Er is evenwel bijkomend onderzoek wenselijk om de volledige variatie binnen elk taxon van de Zilvermeeuwgroep en de verwantschappen tussen de taxa onderling te doorgronden. De fenotypische variatie van Geelpootmeeuw is nog gedeeltelijk onbekend terrein. De voortdurende discussie over de validiteit van de ondersoorten van Zilvermeeuw en Kleine Mantelmeeuw vraagt om een betere beschrijving van de feno-

typische variatie bij deze soorten. De variatie binnen Pontische Meeuw blijft onvoldoende onderzocht (is *L c* '*ponticus*' een valide ondersoort?) en de grote variatie in de kleur van de naakte delen bij sommige taxa (in het bijzonder bij *L v mongolicus* en *L v vegae* maar ook bij *L a* '*omissus*') is nog niet verklaard. Meer onderzoek is ook wenselijk om de relatie tussen bepaalde taxa beter te begrijpen, in het bijzonder tussen Barabameeuw en Heuglins Meeuw (fenotypisch duidelijk verschillend, zonder intergradatie, maar met genetische overeenkomsten), tussen Heuglins Meeuw en *L v vegae* (fenotypisch duidelijk onderscheiden maar mogelijk in bepaalde mate intergraderend) en tussen *L v vegae* en *L v mongolicus* (biologisch geïsoleerd en fenotypisch verschillend maar met opmerkelijke overeenkomsten). Ook is het interessant om de verwantschappen tussen de twee laatstgenoemde taxa en Amerikaanse Zilvermeeuw te bestuderen.

De huidige informatie is ontoereikend om te weerleggen dat de ringsoort-theorie en een recente herkomst van alle taxa uit de Zilvermeeuwgroep een verklaring kan bieden voor de herkomst van de hele groep. Waarschijnlijk speelde radiatie evenwel een belangrijkere rol dan ringvorming. Stervormige verspreiding kan al tussen de 170 000 en 1 miljoen jaar geleden begonnen zijn. Bovendien begon de soortvorming binnen de Zilvermeeuwgroep mogelijk al voor het Pleistoceen (dit tijdvak wordt vaak genoemd in de ringtheorie), aangezien er tot deze groep gerekend fossiel materiaal werd aangetroffen in c 4.5 miljoen jaar oude lagen in Noord-Carolina, VS.

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Taxonomic notes 1-8

1 If this scenario is confirmed by the announced genetic studies, then *kumlieni* must be treated as an invalid taxon because of its hybrid nature and high phenotypic variation. At best, this name should then be written between inverted commas to show that it has no taxonomic value.

2 Reference to the Herring Gull Group ('Assemblage') is common practice. From a taxonomic point of view, however, this is a disputable habit. When all taxa are to be grouped under only one species name, it should be under *fuscus* (as Meinertzhagen 1935 did; see also the reminder by Helbig 1997) as nomenclatural rules oblige to use the oldest name and *L fuscus* Linnaeus 1758 predates *L argentatus* Pontoppidan 1763. The 'Lesser Black-backed Gull Group' ('Assemblage') might theoretically be preferred to the Herring Gull Group.

3 Inverted commas indicate that the name has no taxonomic value. Moreover, there are cases where reference to geographical terminology (for example, 'southern Baltic *argentatus*' or the like, according to the population considered) should be more informative, and far less confusing, than reference to '*omissus*'. Lastly, if forthcoming studies were to show that a yellow-legged population clearly diagnosable from *argentatus* exists in eastern Baltic or western Russia, then a new non-confusing name should be devised for it (Yésou et al 1994).

4 The name '*antelius*', designed by Iredale in 1913, was given to these birds (eg, Pleske 1928, Buturlin 1934a, Stegmann 1934) until it was admitted that

they phenotypically matched the type specimen of *heuglini*, a name coined by Bree in 1876 from a specimen collected on the Somalian coast, thus, initially not attributed to any breeding population. After having examined the type of *heuglini*, Neumann (1934) and Goethe (1973) were convinced that this specimen matched birds here called '*taimyrensis*'. Some authors followed their opinion; for instance, Stepanyan (1990) named '*L h heuglini*' and '*L h antelius*' what is here referred to as '*taimyrensis*' and *heuglini*, respectively. Buzun (2002) adopted the same nomenclature, supporting his choice on a reappraisal of the descriptions by Heuglin (1873) and Goethe (1973). Buzun, however, had no access to the type specimen of *heuglini*. Meanwhile, this type specimen had been examined by Pierre Devillers (in litt, and in Haffer 1982) who compared it with skins of '*antelius*' and '*taimyrensis*'. He had no doubt that it matched the former, hence the taxonomic treatment adopted in *The birds of the Western Palearctic* (Devillers 1983). Then, Lars Jonsson (pers comm) also had a look at the type specimen of *heuglini* and shared Pierre Devillers's opinion. I recently had the opportunity to study photographs and measurements of this specimen by courtesy of F Woog, curator of the Staatliches Museum für Naturkunde at Stuttgart, Germany, where it is housed, and showed them to Andreï Filchagov. We both agree that this specimen better matches the phenotype of the birds named *heuglini* in this article, not '*taimyrensis*'. Its primary pattern agrees with both forms (see also Buzun 2002) but it looks similar in mantle colour to birds from the eastern range of *heuglini*, being darker than most specimens in the type series of '*taimyrensis*'. Buzun (2002) put forward that its tarsus length (60 mm according to Heuglin 1873) is too short for *heuglini*. However, tarsus length is the less reliable among the classical biometric measurements, so it seems unwise to question the value of the type specimen of *heuglini* on this point alone. Goethe's (1973) own measurement of the mounted specimen was 64 mm which is fully compatible with *heuglini* according to the biometrics in Buzun (2002) and my own data.

5 '*Taimyrensis*' has been described (Buturlin 1911) as a subspecies of '*antelius*', synonym for *heuglini*, and it is traditionally treated as such. It is remarkable, however, that most specimens in the type series of '*taimyrensis*', or collected later in the type area, are similar to *vegae* in mantle colour. When *vegae* and *heuglini* are considered as two different species, '*taimyrensis*' is better placed under the former species.

6 Some introgression from *heuglini* into *vegae* can be suggested as only yellow-legged *vegae* (the so-called '*taimyrensis*') occur close to the range of the yellow-legged *heuglini,* then the frequency of yellow-legged individuals decreases eastwards in a seemingly clinal way. Past records indeed point to some degree of interbreeding where these taxa come in near-contact (for details, see '*taimyrensis*'). For this reason, some authors (particularly Stepanyan 1990, followed by, eg, Filchagov et al 1992ab and Beaman 1994) placed all northern Siberian taxa under the same species name, *heuglini* (including *vegae* as subspecies). The difference in mantle colour between *heuglini* and *vegae* is clear-cut, however, without any introgression in this character, while mixed pairing certainly is an uncommon event limited to a narrow (if still any) contact area, thus, phenotypic differences and biological segregation lead to recognize two species.

7 Nothing is known, however, about either the phenotype or the genetics of the 'Khanka Gull' which on geographical grounds is markedly isolated from both *mongolicus* and *vegae*. Indeed, this population needs an in-depth study if it still exists: the most recent reports mentioned only 25-35 pairs (Glustchenko 1984).

8 Joiris (1978) proposed a new subspecies, *lusitanius*, from the birds he observed in January at Peniche, Portugal, and compared them with three *argentatus* he considered to be nominate *argentatus*. The latter assertion is surprising, to say the least, as *argentatus* remains a mere vagrant to Portugal (the subspecies *argenteus*; Paterson 1997) and nominate *argentatus* has never been recorded for certain in north-western Iberia (Andy Paterson pers comm). The description of this proposed new subspecies is inconclusive (Garner 1997b) and no specimen was collected. Furthermore, Peniche is a distance away from the Basque country and Cantábrican region, and Joiris indeed specified that he was intending to describe a Portuguese subspecies. There is absolutely no reason to give this poorly supported name to the 'Cantábrican' *michahellis* when this population is given subspecific rank. Conversely, it is worth putting on record that Pierre Devillers was soon convinced that these 'Cantábrican' birds should be considered as a valid subspecies which he suggested to name *bernisi* to honour Professor F Bernis, a pioneer in the study of bird distribution in Iberia (Pierre Devillers pers comm). According to nomenclature rules, *lusitanius* should, however, be the right name when it is intended to give subspecific rank to the Atlantic population of Iberia as a whole, from the Basque country to southern Portugal, as proposed by Jean-Marc Pons and Pierre-André Crochet (presentation at the Sixth International Gull Meeting at Lammi, Finland, in August 2002; pers comm) who have studied birds breeding from Galicia southwards; unfortunately, their sample did not include any specimen from the Basque country to Asturias, ie, there study did not cover the area where the 'Cantábrican' gulls have been claimed from.

EDITORIAL NOTE It should be noted that a number of taxonomic proposals in this article not necessarily reflect the view of and remain to be decided upon by the Dutch committee for avian systematics (CSNA).

Masters of Mystery

SWAROVSKI
OPTIK

Solutions of fourth round 2002

The solutions of mystery photographs VII and VIII (Dutch Birding 24: 227-228, 2002) appear below.

VII The bird depicted in mystery photograph VII is easily identified as a summer-plumaged pratincole *Glareola*. Three species of pratincole are on the Western Palearctic list: Collared Pratincole *G pratincola* and Black-winged Pratincole *G nordmanni* as breeding birds in dry habitat in southern and eastern parts of the Western Palearctic and Oriental Pratincole *G maldivarum* as a vagrant with, eg, five records in Britain in 1981-93 (an individual in Sweden has not (yet) been accepted by the Swedish rarities committee). Identification of pratincoles can be problematic as the differences between the three species may be difficult to see under field conditions. The colour of the underwing coverts (red-brown in Collared and Oriental and black in Black-winged Pratincole), the presence or absence of a white trailing edge (absent in Oriental and Black-winged and present in Collared) and tibia length (shortest in Collared and longest in Black-winged) are usually safe identification characters. However, these features can not be seen in the mystery photograph. Identification, therefore, will focus on other characters like tail length, coloration of the upperparts, amount of black on the lores and amount of red at the base of the bill.

The colour of the upperparts of the mystery bird is rather dark brown and seems to be too dark for Collared Pratincole. The nominate subspecies *G p pratincola* from Europe, North Africa and Western Asia has a pale grey-brown head and a medium brown mantle and back and Collared could, therefore, be regarded as a less likely candidate. However, the sub-Saharan African subspecies *G p fuelleborni* and *G p erlangeri*

249 Black-winged Pratincole / Steppevorkstaartplevier *Glareola nordmanni*, Mona, Anglesey, North Wales, Britain, July 2001 *(Gary Bellingham)*. Note dark upperparts, black lores and little red at bill base

250 Collared Pratincole / Vorkstaartplevier *Glareola pratincola*, Brazo del Este, Spain, 26 April 2000 *(Ray Tipper)*. Note pale brown lores and forehead with some black feathers only just above bill

251 Oriental Pratincole / Oosterse Vorkstaartplevier *Glareola maldivarum*, Perlis, Malaysia, 30 March 1994 *(Ray Tipper)*. Note rich buffish lower breast, dark upperparts, black lores and intermediate amount of red at bill base

show darker upperparts and more closely resemble Oriental Pratincole and Black-winged Pratincole. Therefore, excluding Collared on this feature alone is not safe and other characters require attention. The amount of black feathers on the lores and forehead is normally much smaller in Collared compared with Oriental and Black-winged. Although subject of some variation, the lores in Collared are in general pale brown with only just a tiny amount of black feathers above the bill (cf plate 250). The mystery bird shows extensive black lores and this character rules out Collared as one of the possibilities. In addition, in Collared the tail is often longer and projects beyond the wing tips, which seems not the case in the mystery photograph.

This leaves the choice between Oriental Pratincole and Black-winged Pratincole. Both species show quite dark upperparts and the amount of black on the lores and forehead tends to be rather extensive in both. In adult-summer plumage, Oriental is normally rich buff or even yellow-orange on the lower breast but this character is not visible on this nesting bird and therefore of no use. The amount of red at the base of the bill is a very useful character to discriminate between Oriental and Black-winged. As in Collared, the amount of red on the bill in Oriental is larger than in Black-winged. In Black-winged, the red colour usually hardly extends beyond the lateral feathering of the lower mandible. On the upper mandible it normally extends slightly further but it does not reach the nostrils (cf plate 249). In the mystery bird, the amount of red, both on the lower and upper mandible, is larger than in Black-winged, so the mystery bird can be safely identified as an Oriental Pratincole. Compared with Collared, the red on the base of the bill in Oriental is on average less extensive, especially on the lower mandible.

In conclusion, the bird depicted in mystery photograph VII is an Oriental Pratincole. The bird was photographed at Khao Sam Roi Kot, Thailand, on 1 April 1989 by Arnoud van den Berg. Another bird is depicted in plate 251. Identification of vagrant pratincoles can cause serious headaches, especially when birds are in moult (making the tail length character unreliable) and/or heavily worn (making the trailing edge character unreliable). For these birds, more subtle characters currently under study may prove relevant, such as a presumed difference in nostril shape between Collared Pratincole and Oriental. The mystery bird was correctly identified by 50% of the entrants. Both Collared Pratincole (35%) and Black-winged Pratincole (15%) were received as incorrect answers.

VIII Mystery photograph VIII shows a passerine which nearly all entrants identified correctly as a *Sylvia* warbler. What catches the eye is the large rusty-brown patch on the wing formed by the fringes of the primaries, secondaries and tertials and greater coverts. Within the genus *Sylvia*, only Tristram's *S deserticola*, Spectacled *S con-*

spicillata, juvenile Subalpine *S cantillans* and Asian Desert Warbler *S nana* and Common Whitethroat *S communis* show such a patch.

Asian Desert Warbler is ruled out most easily because this species does not show a grey head like the mystery bird. Juvenile birds of the other species mentioned do not show such a grey head either. Therefore, this bird must be an adult. The month in which this photograph was taken, April, confirms this. With this knowledge, Subalpine Warbler can also be ruled out, as adults of this species lack the rusty-brown wing-patch.

The quite broad rusty-red fringes to the primaries, secondaries and greater coverts and the short primary projection do not fit Common Whitethroat but do fit Tristram's Warbler and Spectacled Warbler. Male Spectacled and, to a lesser extent, Common Whitethroat, show a brownish-pink breast, quite different from the rusty-red breast of the mystery bird. The mystery bird has a rather long tail and the grey of the head extends onto the mantle. This leaves Tristram's Warbler as the one and only correct identification.

This Tristram's Warbler was photographed at Gorges du Todra, Tinerhir, Morocco, on 10 April 1997 by Arnoud van den Berg. The same bird is depicted in plate 252 and in Dutch Birding 19: 87, plate 85, 1997. The bird was identified correctly by 73% of the entrants. The most frequently mentioned wrong answer was Spectacled Warbler (17%). Other incorrect answers included Dartford Warbler *S undata* (4%) and a variety of other Sylvia Warblers (4%).

This round was not too difficult. From the 78 entrants to this fourth round, 32 (42%) managed to identify both mystery birds correctly. From them, Mark Zekhuis and Bernd de Bruijn were drawn as the winners of a copy of the video *Dutch Birding video-jaaroverzicht 2001*, donated by Plomp Digital Video. After four rounds, Martin Gottschling is still on the lead of the overall competition. He managed to identify all eight mystery birds correctly. He is followed by only four entrants with six correct identifications: Axel Halley (Germany), Hannu Huhtinen (Finland), Magne Pettersen (Norway) and Paavo Sallinen (Finland). Six contenders handed in five correct answers. An overview of all these entrants can be viewed at www.dutchbirding.nl.

252 Tristam's Warbler / Atlasgrasmus *Sylvia deserticola*, Gorges du Todra, Tinerhir, Morocco, 10 April 1997 *(Arnoud B van den Berg)*. Note rusty-red throat speckled white and hint of moustachial stripe

Mystery photograph IX (March)

Mystery photograph X (August)

Fifth round 2002

Photographs IX and X represent the fifth round of the 2002 competition. Please, study the rules (Dutch Birding 24: 39, 2002) 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 fifth round have to arrive by **1 November 2002**. From those entrants having identified both mystery birds correctly, two persons will be drawn who will receive a copy of the *CD-ROM guide to rarer British birds* donated by Birdguides. Swarovski Benelux will award a Swarovski AT80 telescope with a 20-60x zoom eyepiece to the overall winner after six rounds.

Rob S A van Bemmelen, Gouwzee 20, 1423 DV Uithoorn, Netherlands (masters@dutchbirding.nl)
Dick Groenendijk, Elzenstraat 14, 4043 PB Opheusden, Netherlands (masters@dutchbirding.nl)

DBA-nieuws

Betaling van abonnementsgeld voor 2003 Bij dit nummer van Dutch Birding treft u een rekening met acceptgirokaart aan waarmee het abonnementsgeld voor 2003 kan worden betaald. De abonnementsprijs blijft EUR 30.00 voor Nederland en EUR 33.00 voor België. Wij verzoeken u het abonnementsgeld voor 1 januari 2003 over te maken. In verband met de kosten die verbonden zijn aan het versturen van herinneringen en aanmaningen zal voor latere betalers EUR 2.00 extra in rekening worden gebracht.

Voorts verzoeken wij u om alle correspondentie over abonnementszaken te richten aan: Dutch Birding Association, p/a Jeannette Admiraal, Iepenlaan 11, 1901 ST Castricum, Nederland.

Payment of subscription for 2003 Enclosed with this issue, you will find the invoice for the subscription fee for 2003. The rates for 2003 remain unchanged and will be EUR 33.00 for subscribers in Europe and EUR 36.00 for subscribers outside Europe. We kindly request to follow the instructions on the enclosed invoice. Subscribers who have not paid by 1 January 2003 will be charged EUR 2.00 extra to compensate administration costs.

For all subscription matters, please use the following address: Dutch Birding Association, c/o Jeannette Admiraal, Iepenlaan 11, 1901 ST Castricum, Netherlands.

Korting op British Birds Abonnees van Dutch Birding komen in aanmerking voor een korting op de abonnementsprijs van het maandelijks verschijnende tijdschrift British Birds. Hierdoor kost dit abonnement voor 2003 GBP 43.00 (normale prijs GBP 58.00). Voor een abonnement kunt u gebruikmaken van het bij dit nummer van Dutch Birding meegezonden formulier. Voor een proefnummer kan men zich wenden tot: Vivienne Hunter, The Banks, Mountfield, Nr Robertsbridge, East Sussex TN32 5JY, UK, telefoon +44-1580882039, fax +44-1580882038, e-mail subscriptions@britishbirds.co.uk.

Concessionary rate for British Birds Subscribers to Dutch Birding can claim the concessionary rate for a subscription to the monthly journal British Birds. The concessionary rate for 2003 will be GBP 43.00 (UK, Europe and elsewhere, surface mail; normal rate GBP 58.00). For a subscription, you can use the subscription form sent with this issue of Dutch Birding. For a sample issue, please contact: Vivienne Hunter, The Banks, Mountfield, Nr Robertsbridge, East Sussex TN32 5JY, UK, telephone +44-(0)1580882039, fax +44-(0)1580882038, e-mail subscriptions@britishbirds.co.uk.

Programma Dutch Birding-vogelweek Van zaterdag 5 tot en met donderdag 10 oktober 2002 vindt op Texel, Noord-Holland, de traditionale Dutch Birding-vogelweek plaats. Er is voor deze week een aantrekkelijk lezingenprogramma samengesteld. Op zaterdag 5 oktober doet Peter van Rij in woord en beeld verslag van een vogelreis naar Gambia. Een andere populaire vogelaarsbestemming, Goa, India, is het onderwerp van de lezing van Diederik Kok op maandag 7 oktober. Samen met Nils van Duivendijk organiseert Diederik ook de traditionele mystery bird-competitie op dinsdag 8 oktober. Arend Wassink zorgt voor een hernieuwde kennismaking met Kazachstan op woensdag 9 oktober. Alle lezingen vinden plaats in Theaterzaal 'De Kiekendief' op Vakantiecentrum De Krim, De Cocksdorp. Deze zaal biedt plaats aan 250 personen en is ideaal voor het houden van lezingen. De aanvang is steeds 20:30r. De entree is gratis.

De *big day* op donderdag 10 oktober gaat een 'special event' worden. Diverse bedrijven op Texel hebben reeds toegezegd deelnemende teams te sponsoren, waarbij een bedrag betaald wordt voor elke soort die een team ziet (of een vast totaalbedrag). Het geld dat opgehaald wordt gaat naar een nog nader te bepalen goed (vogel)doel op het eiland Texel. Teams kunnen zich opgeven bij Marc Plomp (telefoon 06-54657040)

of bij Gijsbert van der Bent (telefoon 06-23532750, 071-4024547 of 071-4081909). Zie onze website www.dutchbirding.nl voor meer informatie en een inschrijfformulier. Bedrijven, instellingen of personen die zich nog willen melden als sponsor (voor een vast bedrag of een bedrag per soort) kunnen dat doen op bovenstaande telefoonnummers van Marc Plomp of Gijsbert van der Bent.

Voor 10 oktober staat 's avonds vanaf 19:00 een buffet gepland in zaal 't Robbengat, eveneens op Vakantiecentrum De Krim, waarvoor men zich van tevoren moet opgeven. Hier zullen de winnende *big day*-teams hun prijzen uitgereikt krijgen en zal het opgehaalde geldbedrag bekend worden gemaakt. Tevens zal een video vertoond worden van Rob Olivier. Deze avond is het einde van het officiële programma van de vogelweek van 2002 maar uiteraard hoeft niemand zich hierdoor te laten weerhouden om de dagen erna nog door te vogelen op Texel.

Wellicht ten overvloede wijzen wij erop dat DBA-begunstigers 20% korting krijgen op een verblijf op Vakantiecentrum De Krim gedurende de Dutch Birding-vogelweek (een weekend- of weekverblijf op De Krim ingaande op vrijdag 4 oktober, of op de midweek van maandag 7 oktober tot en met vrijdag 11 oktober). Deze aanbieding geldt voor zowel het huren van bungalows als voor kamperen. Men dient te reserveren bij De Krim, afdeling Reserveringen, telefoon 0222-390112. De aanbieding geldt niet in combinatie met andere acties en/of aanbiedingen of voor reeds gedane reserveringen.

Informatie over De Krim is te vinden op www. krim.nl. Op bovenstaand telefoonnummer is ook een brochure aan te vragen. Vakantiecentrum De Krim is strategisch gelegen in de noordwesthoek van het eiland, net ten zuiden van de bebouwde kom van De Cocksdorp, en biedt van zichzelf al mooie bosjes en andere leuke vogelplekken. GIJSBERT VAN DER BENT & MARC PLOMP

Kenmerkengids van Hollandse bodem Het is met enige trots dat wij u wijzen op de uitgave van de *Dutch Birding Kenmerkengids voor vogels van Europa, Noord-Afrika en het Midden-Oosten* van Nils van Duivendijk. In deze gids worden op systematische wijze de kenmerken van de ruim 900 vogelsoorten uit dit gebied gepresenteerd. Trots, omdat het hier een product van eigen bodem betreft. Hoe vaak is er de laatste 50 jaar een oorspronkelijk Nederlandse vogelgids verschenen? Trots, omdat het een product is van de Dutch Birding Association, in samenwerking met Ger Meesters Boekprodukties te Haarlem. En natuurlijk zijn we verheugd dat auteur Nils van Duivendijk afkomstig is uit de 'DBA-stal'. Hij is sterk betrokken bij het tijdschrift Dutch Birding (met Diederik Kok verzorgde hij jarenlang de Masters of Mystery) en bij de Dutch Birding Association (als voorzitter van de Commissie Dwaalgasten Nederlandse Avifauna CDNA). De Kenmerkengids vloeit welhaast op logische wijze voort uit de ervaringen die Nils door deze activiteiten heeft opgedaan. Vanaf deze plaats feliciteren we Nils met de verschijning van de Dutch Birding Kenmerkengids en we hopen op een ruime verspreiding onder vogelend Nederland. In het vorige nummer van Dutch Birding was een bestelformulier bijgesloten. Dit formulier en verdere informatie is ook te vinden op onze website www.dutchbirding.nl GIJSBERT VAN DER BENT

Corrigenda

In het stukje in DB Actueel over de Siberische Strandloper *Calidris acuminata* in de Ezumakeeg, Friesland, in juli 2002 (Dutch Birding 24: III, 2002) werd abusievelijk vermeld dat eerdere waarnemingen in de Ezumakeeg 'twee in augustus 2000 en één in augustus 2000' betroffen. Dit moet zijn 'twee in augustus 1998 en één in augustus 2000'. Verder kan worden toegevoegd dat de vogel op 24 juli onafhankelijk van Theo Bakker ook werd ontdekt door Emo Klunder, die het nieuws verder verspreidde.

In de tekst en het onderschrift bij de oplossing van mystery bird VI in de derde ronde van Masters of Mystery (Dutch Birding 24: 223-228, 226, plaat 190, 2002) staat vermeld dat de afgebeelde Kleine Kortteenleeuwerik *Calendrella rufescens* zou behoren tot de nominaatvorm *C r rufescens*. Peter Symens wees als eerste ons erop dat op Fuerteventura, Canarische Eilanden, waar deze vogel werd gefotografeerd alleen de ondersoort *C r polatzeki* voorkomt. Vergeleken met *C r rufescens* is deze ondersoort lichter en iets minder rossig en minder zwaar gestreept op de onderdelen. *C r rufescens* broedt alleen op een deel van Tenerife, Canarische Eilanden, en wordt – met waarschijnlijk slechts een handvol resterende broedparen – met uitsterven bedreigd. Voor de uitslag van deze ronde van de competitie maakt deze correctie geen verschil. REDACTIE

In the text and caption of mystery bird VI in the third round of Masters of Mystery (Dutch Birding 24: 223-228, 226, plate 190, 2002) it is mentioned that the Lesser Short-toed Lark *Calandrella rufescens* depicted should belong to the nominate *C r rufescens*. However, on Fuerteventura, Canary Islands, where this bird was photographed, only the subspecies *C r polatzeki* occurs. Compared with *C r rufescens*, this subspecies is paler and slightly less rufous and shows less streaking on the underparts. *C r rufescens* breeds on part of Tenerife, Canary Islands, and – with probably only a handful of pairs remaining – is in danger of extinction. This correction does not influence the outcome of this round of the competition. EDITORS

Total birding

by Anthony McGeehan

Crunch time

After dark on 16th October 1990 it started to rain heavily on Cape Clear Island and the wind swung into an easterly quarter. That made it a night, not for sleeping, but for lying awake and listening to the drum of raindrops against the bird observatory's windows and dreaming about rarities. October is high season for vagrant hunting and I was in the right place at maybe the right time. If you'd been there and come for a walk with me next morning you too would have had butterflies in your stomach. Anything could happen. There was an eerie dim light in the air. The wind had died leaving a curtain of drizzle shrouding hedges, thickets and fields. Bedraggled Blackcaps scurried past along stone walls and Chiffchaffs slipped furtively into patches of crops, desperately anxious to get into cover after making a last gasp landfall on the very edge of Europe. They must have had a rough night on the wing, poor things. I felt drunk with anticipation. I was alone, the only person checking a tiny corridor of stunted willow bushes leading down towards the murmuring Atlantic. I wanted to find something worth remembering forever. What would the next bird be? That's how the story begins.

About 11 o'clock I rolled a six. A ghostly apparition flitted into view from among a labyrinth of brambles and bracken. It was a pallid warbler, matching the sudden change in my complexion. Although I didn't know what species I was looking at, I instantly recognized it as THE BIG ONE. In Ireland we don't see birds the colour of desert sand, so I knew its greatness was preordained. I felt like a striker facing an open net. All I had to do was tap the ball over the line to score a famous goal. However, such opportunities have sometimes been fluffed. Elation started to give way to panic.

I grabbed what information I could – plain 'milky tea' plumage, staring black sequin eye, bland lores, pale lower mandible, light legs and feet, short wings but a long tail – and bolted to get help and wider counsel. Scattered across the island were others who had seen all the suspects in the bird's identity parade which, as far as I was concerned, could be short-listed to just two candidates: Booted Warbler or Olivaceous Warbler, both species that I didn't know (and still don't). There was no time to punch the air in celebration, a job of work had to be done. The first runner to reach the scene applied recent experience of Booted Warblers observed in south-western Siberia and voted enthusiastically for Booted. Hot on his heels doubts were cast by a more perplexed spectator who, based upon a handful of Booteds seen in Britain and one Olivaceous seen in the hand at Eilat, suggested that the bird appeared to more closely resemble an Eastern Olivaceous Warbler. Time to draw breath. As DIM Wallace perceptively wrote in 1972, rarity hunting is an enjoyable sport, but it need not lack science. Hence, peering for all we were worth through hazy wet telescopes, we pooled our collective knowledge in an identification brainstorming session.

Then, seemingly helpfully, the bird started to call. That, we thought at the time, was enough to clinch it as an Olivaceous Warbler. Why? The reason was as plain and simple as one of the Ten Commandments. Vagrant Booted Warblers, the most up-to-date (1988) identification paper said, 'are invariably silent.' In addition, the text continued, they never combine calling with a downward flick of the tail. Tellingly, the bird was nervously twitching its tail. It remained on view intermittently until a downpour drove it into the shelter of a reed-bed in early afternoon, from which it never re-emerged. Presented with what purported to be a convincing description backed up with a few fuzzy photographs, the Irish Rare Birds Committee had no difficulty in accepting the record as an Olivaceous Warbler. My contemporary published account in Irish Birding News (December 1990) no doubt helped enshrine the bird's place in ornithological legend. And there, officially, the trail ends – for the time being. But for how much longer? For me, the first cracks in the identification started to appear three years later when, in 1993, a to-all-intents identical individual showed up on 22 October near Lerwick in Shetland.

Reading about the Cape Clear Olivaceous Warbler and looking at its pictures, the Shetland birders concluded that their bird was a carbon copy. The big difference was that, because it was trapped, this individual didn't leave room for guesswork and proved to be a Booted Warbler of the Central Asian subspecies *rama*. Aha! Were there irreconcilable differences between the two warblers? Believe it or not, no one in Ireland

[*Dutch Birding 24: 304-306, 2002*]

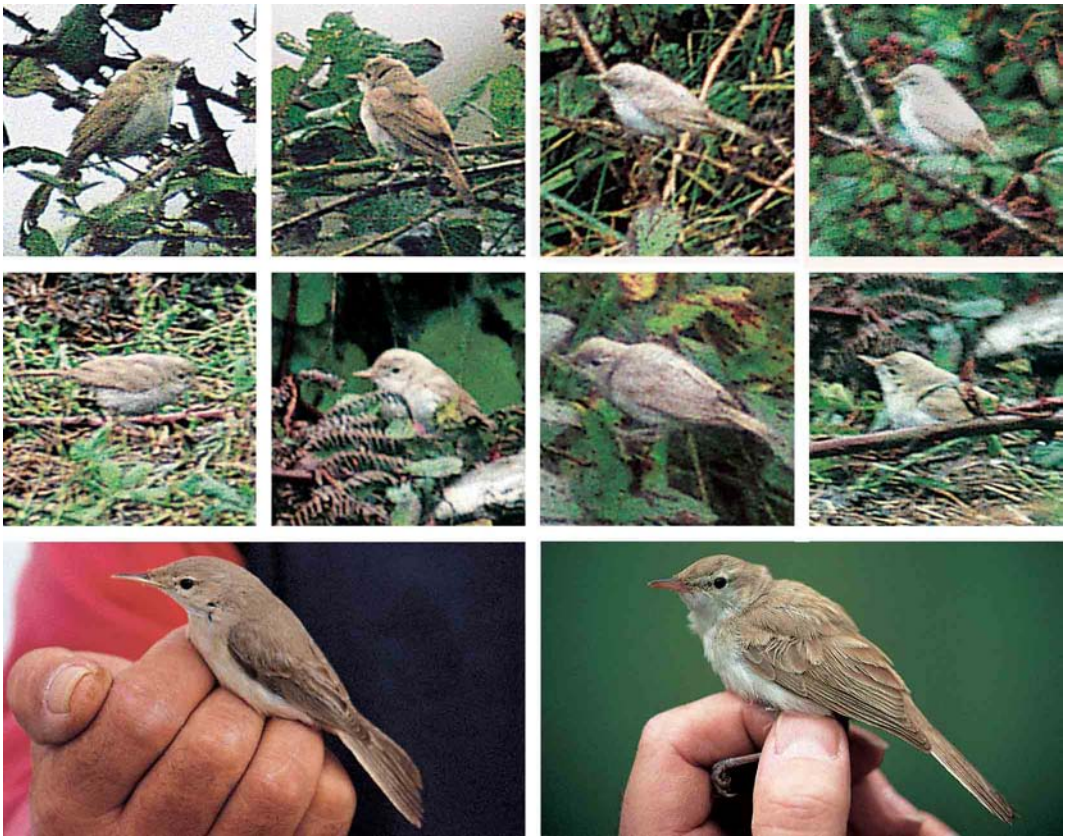

FIGURE 1 Upper eight photographs, unidentified warbler, Cape Clear Island, Ireland, October 1990 *(Anthony McGeehan & Eamon O'Donnell)*. At present accepted as Olivaceous Warbler but under review. Bottom right, Sykes's Warbler, Shetland, October 1993 *(Kevin Osborn)*. Bottom left, Olivaceous Warbler, Cape Clear Island, Ireland, September 2000 *(Oran O'Sullivan)*

showed signs of wanting to grasp the nettle and read between the lines to answer the glaringly obvious question, 'Maybe ours wasn't an Olivaceous Warbler after all?' I sat on my hands too until, in 1999, I had the good fortune to meet one of the observers of the Shetland Booted Warbler.

I got the news that the Shetlanders didn't want to tread on Irish toes since they assumed Gaelic conviction in the Cape Clear bird's identity was unassailable. A further reason for their reluctance to ruffle feathers was because Irish birders had a reputation as an untameable lot who think their avifauna is zoogeographically closer to Atlantis than it is to Britain. Being Irish, I confirmed that he was right about the avifauna but shouldn't confuse the birding community with national ambassadors like Roy Keane. My bottom line was this: I wanted to know what the Cape Clear warbler was, if indeed it was feasible to discover its identity about a decade later.

Within the last year some of the bulwarks that sustained the original identification as Olivaceous Warbler have come crashing down. For example, it is now known that it is not unusual for some vagrant Booted Warblers to call, so not all are Trappists. Which leaves the matter of the bird's tail movements. The tail was frequently flicked but the precise nature of the action did not seem to have a major significance – the propensity for movement of any sort was interpreted as yet another plank in the case favouring Olivaceous Warbler. Then, like a hand grenade tossed through a letter box, Lars Svensson's paper on the 'Identification of Western and Eastern Olivaceous Warblers, and Booted and Sykes's Warblers', arrived on my hall carpet in 2001 (Birding World 14: 192-219, 2001).

After museum research and trips to Kazakhstan, Lars recommended treating *rama* as a separate species (Sykes's Warbler) from Booted Warbler and his article was peppered with new recognition pointers. Attempting to find his modern criteria in an old field description was a faint hope, especially the exact notation of tail actions. He cited pronounced 'tail-dipping' as a good clue to eastern Olivaceous Warbler; conversely, 'flicking movements of wings and tail' indicated Booted (or Sykes's). I dug deeper and discovered that DIM Wallace (Birding World 13: 282, 2000) had made further progress on the tail movement frontier. He watched Sykes's, Booted and Eastern Olivaceous Warblers in Kazakhstan in 1988 and 2000 and teased out differences between all three. Intriguingly, the tail movement 'test' for identifying each in the field was checked by trapping that confirmed identity in the hand. And there's more. Everything that DIM Wallace said was verified by Andrea Corso (Birding World 13: 508, 2000) who had independently reached the same conclusions. So what, exactly, is the tail movement difference between Sykes's and Booted Warblers? Booted employs 'a very shallow downward flick, immediately recovered.' Sykes's uses 'a downward flick often followed by an upward and sideways twitch.' As Andrea Corso stated, 'Thus I agree that upward tail movement is typical of Sykes's rather than of Booted and it may indeed be a useful identification character.'

Can any of this be applied retrospectively to the Irish bird? There, masquerading in my 1990 notebook as a superfluous passage of purple prose, were these lines: 'Tail-twitching set off tongue-clicking calls and a very regular habit of flicking the tail downward… tail-flicking (upwards to a horizontal plane) was obviously standard behaviour for it, as it did this incessantly… wings seemed to get caught up in the same movement… the whole rear of the bird was in motion as part of its tail flick… bursts of fly-catching and wing-flicking… it could almost suggest *Phylloscopus* behaviour.' With hindsight I'd gone for a scatter-gun approach, noting down everything in the hope that sense could be made of it later. Groping for a conclusion 12 years on, I feel that Eastern Olivaceous Warbler has finally been beaten hollow by one of its Asian cousins. Now comes the big imponderable. Without trapping the bird, is it possible to tell Sykes's Warbler from Booted Warbler in the field in autumn?

This article has been written as an exploratory attempt designed to stimulate interest in the Cape Clear warbler. Since the matter is under re-investigation by the Irish Rare Birds Committee, informed opinions on the bird's identity are welcome.

WP reports

This review lists rare and interesting birds reported in the Western Palearctic mainly in **late July-August** 2002 and focuses on north-western Europe. Some earlier reports are also included in this review. The reports are largely unchecked and their publication here does not imply future acceptance by the rarities committee of the relevant country. Observers are requested to submit records to each country's rarities committee. Corrections are welcome and will be published.

DUCKS TO QUAILS The first two **Common Shelducks** *Tadorna tadorna* for Svalbard, Norway, at Adventdalen near Longyearbyen on 25-31 May were still present on 28 June. The numbers of **Ruddy Shelduck** *T ferruginea* arriving each summer in the Netherlands are still on the increase with, for instance, a flock of 130 at Eemmeer, Utrecht, on 27 July; it is a mystery where all these birds remain during the rest of the year. On 4 August, six were seen in the Camargue, Bouches-du-Rhône, France. The unringed and fully-winged male **Canvasback** *Aythya valisineria* at Pennington Flash, Greater Manchester, England, from 11 July was last seen on 3 August. The unringed and fully-winged male **White-headed Duck** *Oxyura leucocephala* at Hardley Flood, Norfolk, England, remained from 19 June to at least 24 August. In eastern France, a male was present at Appenans, Doubs, on 20-28 July. A very early individual was at Revadim, Israel, on 18 August. The long-staying male **Steller's Eider** *Polysticta stelleri* first seen in January 1998 as the ninth for Iceland remained at Borgarfjörður Eystri until at least 13 July. A female-type **Hooded Merganser** *Lophodytes cucullatus* was at Fanad Head, Donegal, Ireland, from 1 September onwards. A **Marbled Duck** *Marmaronetta angustirostris* stayed at Horbury Wyke, West Yorkshire, England, from 31 July to 3 August. The only **American Black Duck** *Anas rubripes* reported in the period was a male in Cornwall, England. During May-June, 38 **Common Quails** *Coturnix coturnix* were trapped at the Bloemendaal ringing station, Noord-Holland, the Netherlands, of which one (on 3 June) was a second-calendar-year male ringed in Alp, Girona, Spain, on 5 May.

GREBES TO TROPICBIRDS The first **Pied-billed Grebe** *Podilymbus podiceps* for Germany remained at Rethen, 10 km south of Hannover, Niedersachsen, from 6 July through August. In Norway, an adult feeding a young (presumably, a hybrid) was discovered at Smokkevatn, south of Stavanger, on 12 August and still present in September. A juvenile **Black-browed Albatross** *Diomedea melanophris* was reported 500 m off Estepona along the Spanish Mediterranean coast on 15 July. If accepted, an adult off Ingólshöfði on 30 August will be the fourth for Iceland. In Ireland, **Fea's Petrels** *Pterodroma feae* were seen off Bridges of Ross, Clare, Ireland, on 23 and 28 August. At least 40 **Bermuda Petrel** *P cahow* chicks hatched from a record total of 65 established nesting pairs in 2002 making this the most successful year ever for this Bermudian species which was rediscovered in 1951. The **Red-billed Tropicbird** *Phaethon aethereus* photographed by four sailors 32 km south-south-east off Scilly on 7 June 2001 has been accepted as the first for Britain (cf Birdwatch nr 111: 50-51, 2001).

BITTERNS TO IBISES In the Canary Islands, an immature **Dwarf Bittern** *Ixobrychus sturmii* was found at Erjos ponds, Tenerife, on 23 August and was present for at least three days; the only previous post-1900 WP record of this African species was on Gran Canaria, Canary Islands, on 21-30 January 2000. The **Snowy Egret** *Egretta thula* first seen in Scotland on 29 October 2001 turned up in Dumphries & Galloway on 7 September. A dark-morph **Western Reef Egret** *E gularis gularis* at Punta de la Banya, Ebro delta, Tarragona, Catalunya, Spain, stayed from 18 July until at least 20 August and was thought to be the same individual as last year's. Others were seen at Coto Doñana, Andalucía, Spain, on 12 July, at Mar Piccolo, Italy, on 28 July, in the Camargue from late July to at least 2 September (when with four hybrid young) and on Courant d'Huchet, Landes, France, on 21-22 August. In Spain, presumed hybrids **Western Reef Egret x Little Egret** *E garzetta* were at Ebro delta on 9-20 August and at Desembocadura del Guadalhorce, Malaga, on 24 August (the latter bird had already been reported on 30 June). In Ebro delta, seven pairs of **Great Egrets** *Casmerodius albus* and 23 pairs of **Glossy Ibises** *Plegadis falcinellus* were breeding this year. In Coto Doñana, several 100s of Glossy Ibis breeding pairs were present. The usual high August totals of storks *Ciconia* for the Netherlands included a record flock of 16 **Black Storks** *C nigra* over Zevenhuizen, Zuid-Holland, on 13 August and a flock of 130 **White Storks** *C ciconia* over several places on 17-20 August. The largest flock of White Storks for Belgium numbered 114 over Emblem, Antwerpen, on 17 August.

RAPTORS In the USA, a second originally wild **California Condor** *Gymnogyps californianus* was due to be released back into the wild after 15 years in captivity. The bird was a chick in the first nest discovered when research

253 Steller's Eider / Stellers Eider *Polysticta stelleri*, male, with Harlequin Ducks / Harlekijneenden *Histrionicus histrionicus*, Borgarfjörður Eystri, Iceland, 11 July 2002 *(Phil Koken)*

254 Pied-billed Grebe / Dikbekfuut *Podilymbus podiceps*, Rethen, Hannover, Germany, July 2002 *(Christoph Bock)* **255** Dwarf Bittern / Afrikaanse Woudaap *Ixobrychus sturmii*, Erjos ponds, Tenerife, Canary Islands, 25 August 2002 *(Ludovic Scalabre)* **256** Lesser Crested Tern / Bengaalse Stern *Sterna bengalensis*, adult, Molfetta, Bari, Puglia, Italy, 26 July 2002 *(Angelo Nitti)* **257** White-rumped Sandpiper / Bonapartes Strandloper *Calidris fuscicollis*, adult, Zwarte Haan, Friesland, Netherlands, 11 August 2002 *(Bas van den Boogaard)*

began under a recovery programme in 1980. In eastern France, a **Black-winged Kite** *Elanus caeruleus* was observed at Salin-les-Bains, Jura, on 28 July. On 22 June, a (sub)adult **Lammergeier** *Gypaetus barbatus* was seen near Bosa, Sardinia, Italy (the species had not been seen in Sardinia for years). In Germany, an immature **Egyptian Vulture** *Neophron percnopterus* flew past Klein Bieberau, Hessen, on 27 July. In Switzerland, a ringed and wing-tagged **Eurasian Black Vulture** *Aegypius monachus* (probably from the French re-introduction site in the Cévennes) frequented several sites between Fully and Leuk in August (there are four post-1900 records for Switzerland, the last dating from 14 June 1938). On 11 August, one flew over the Golan, Israel. As in summer 2001, a **Short-toed Eagle** *Circaetus gallicus* was present at the Dutch breeding site of Common Cranes *Grus grus* at Fochtelooërveen, Drenthe/ Friesland, from 25 August into September. From c 6 August, a subadult male **Pallid Harrier** *Circus macrourus* has been twitched by many observers at Elmley Marshes, Kent, England. Already the 10th report for France this year was a juvenile at La Barre du Mont, Vendée, on 16 August. On 29 August alone, nine were seen in Sweden (where it was another good year for the species). A **Long-legged Buzzard** *Buteo rufinus* was reported from Småland, Sweden, on 23 July. In Bayern, Germany, there were reports from Kochelseemoor on 31 August and Gut Seligenstedt, Kitzingen, on 5 September. A subadult **Greater Spotted Eagle** *Aquila clanga* remained at Murchin bei Anklam, Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, Germany, from June into September. The third (or fourth) **Steppe Eagle** *A nipalensis* for the Netherlands was an immature photographed at Zouweboezem, Alblasserwaard, Zuid-Holland, on 15 June. From 5 July, a subadult stayed at Pentezug, Hortobágy, Hungary. If accepted, an immature **Bonelli's Eagle** *Hieraaetus fasciatus* photographed on Vlieland, Fries-

land, on 15-17 August, will be the second for the island. A survey of **Eleonora's Falcons** *Falco eleonorae* on islets off Essaouira, Morocco, in 2000 and 2001 has logged a total population of 675 breeding pairs (c 10% of the world population). On 6 July, a large inland total of 12 or 13 for Spain was present at Laguna de Tarayuelas, Cuenca. On 18 August, two were found near Bica da Cana, Madeira, Portugal. In Skåne, Sweden, one was seen at Nabben on 9 September. If accepted, a **Lanner Falcon** *F biarmicus* in the western Rodopi mountains on 29 May might be the first for Bulgaria (there are c 10 previous claims of this species for Bulgaria in the past 130 years). A juvenile was seen in the Camargue on 5-6 September.

COOTS TO PHALAROPES A pair of **Common Moorhen** *Gallinula chloropus* with six fledglings on Porto Santo in August-September may constitute the first breeding record for Madeira. The northernmost **Red-knobbed Coots** *Fulica cristata* for Europe were two individuals at Garxal, Ebro delta, Tarragone, on 1 September. In Israel, 200 **Macqueen's Bustards** *Chlamydotis macqueenii* were counted in the Hazerim area, northern Negev, on 26 July. A **Pacific Golden Plover** *Pluvialis fulva* at Llobregat delta, Barcelona, Catalunya, from 28 August was (only) the sixth for Spain. **Sociable Lapwings** *Vanellus gregarius* were present at Willebroek, Antwerpen, Belgium, on 17 August and at Kirchwahlingen-Rethem, Niedersachsen, Germany, on 19 August. If accepted, an adult-winter **Semipalmated Plover** *Charadrius semipalmatus* at Quiberon, Morbihan, on 28-29 August will be the first and an adult-winter **Greater Sand Plover** *C leschenaultii* at Baire du Mont St Michel, Manche, on 8 September the sixth for France. A **Semipalmated Sandpiper** *Calidris pusilla* was found at Teich, Gironde, France, on 3 September and another was photographed at Tacumshin, Wexford, Ireland, on 8 September. The second **Red-necked Stint** *C ruficollis* for Ireland was an adult-summer at Ballycotton, Cork, from 31 July to 1 August. An adult **Temminck's Stint** *C temminckii* was photographed on Porto Santo, Madeira, on 3 September. The fifth **Sharp-tailed Sandpiper** *C acuminata* for the Netherlands on 24-27 July at Ezumakeeg, Lauwersmeer, Friesland (where all previous Dutch individuals except the first were seen), may have been the same bird as the adult at Prunjepolder, Schouwen, Zeeland, on 31 July. Another was reported from Makkum, Friesland, on 3 August. The adult **White-rumped Sandpiper** *C fuscicollis* at Rickelsbüller Koog, Schleswig-Holstein, Germany, from 13 July was still present on 4 August and others in Schleswig-Holstein were at Eiderstedt on 26 July and at Hauke-Haien-Koog on 21-22 August. If accepted, one at Kondas Pond, Hortobágy, on 13 July will be the second for Hungary. The fifth for Switzerland (and the first since 1981) was an adult at Chablais de Cudrefin and Fanel, Bern, on 4 August. In the Netherlands, one or two were roosting at Zwarte Haan, Friesland, between 10 and 19 August. In France, one was at Senée, Morbihan, on 9-10 August and another in the Camargue on 19-20 August. In Britain, seven were seen during July and three in August. In Ireland, **Baird's Sandpipers** *C bairdii* were found in Waterford on 4 September and at Gearagh, Cork, on 5 September. The moulting adult **Stilt Sandpiper** *Micropalama himantopus* discovered at Pennington Marshes, Hampshire, England, on 21 July remained until 3 August. In Zeeland, the Netherlands, presumably the same long-staying **Long-billed Dowitcher** *Limnodromus scolopaceus* of Prunjepolder first present from 17 February to 29 April 2001 and intermittently between 4 November 2001 and 12 April was again seen in the area from 17 August. The fifth **Spotted Sandpiper** *Actitis macularia* for Norway was an adult in Jæren, Rogaland, on 21 August. An adult in summer plumage at Machico, Madeira, on 27 August was still present on at least 6 September. The 17th (or 18th) **Wilson's Phalarope** *Phalaropus tricolor* for the Netherlands was an adult female at Scherpenissepolder, Tholen, Zeeland, from 20 July to 19 August; a juvenile moulting to first-winter was discovered at Camperduin, Noord-Holland, on 14 September.

JAEGERS TO TERNS Single **Long-tailed Jaegers** *Stercorarius longicaudus* were seen at Eilat, Israel, on 28 and 29 July and at Lac Léman, Switzerland, on 25 and 27 August. An adult-summer **Laughing Gull** *Larus atricilla* was found at Plaiaundi, Irun, Gipuzkoa, Spain, on 10 July. From 17 to at least 25 August, a **Franklin's Gull** *L pipixcan* turned up each night at a roost at Farmoor, Oxfordshire, England. An adult **Bonaparte's Gull** *L philadelphia* was reported from Ardmore Point, Lough Neagh, Armagh, Ireland, on 3 August (a **Laughing Gull** was seen at the same site on 24 July). In the Netherlands, as in previous summers, at least 60 **Caspian Terns** *Sterna caspia* were present along the IJsselmeer coast of Friesland alone, including 45 at Workumerwaard. On 26 July, an adult **Lesser Crested Tern** *S bengalensis* was photographed at Molfetta, Bari, Puglia, Italy. In France, one was with Sandwich Terns *S sandvicensis* in the Camargue on 31 August. On 28-31 July, an **Elegant Tern** *S elegans* was seen in Glenan, Finistère, France (probably the same bird occurred in this region in 2001). The presumed Elegant Tern on 26 July at Black Rock Sands, Gwynedd, Wales, concluded a remarkable series of 'orange-billed tern' records in Britain this summer (cf Birding World 15: 287-290, 2002). In France, an 'orange-billed tern' turned up at Mesquer, Loire-Atlantique, on 18 August. The 23rd **Arctic Tern** *S paradisaea* for Israel was a first-summer at Eilat on 29 July; eight **Bridled Terns** *S anaethetus* were also seen here that day. On 4 August, an **Arctic Tern** was observed at St Prex, Vaud, Switzerland. In France, a **Bridled Tern** stayed from late July to 8 August at Saint-Jacut-de-la-Mer, Côtes-d'Armor, at the same site where presumably the same bird was present during August 2001. The **Sooty Tern** *S fuscata* seen by six observers off Bridges of Ross, Clare, Ireland, in the morning of 23 July was not reported since.

OWLS TO BUNTINGS In the Netherlands, each of three pairs of **Eurasian Eagle Owls** *Bubo bubo* successfully raised two young this summer, two in Zuid-Limburg,

258 Two-barred Crossbill / Witbandkruisbek *Loxia leucoptera bifasciata*, adult male, Fair Isle, Shetland, Scotland, August 2002 *(Deryk Shaw)*

259 Lesser Grey Shrike / Kleine Klapekster *Lanius minor*, Porsemosen, Ballerup, Denmark, 31 Juy 2002 *(Jens Søgaard Hansen)*

Limburg, and one in Achterhoek, Gelderland. If accepted, an **Alpine Swift** *Apus melba* above Baja, Hungary, on 12 July was (only) the third for Hungary. A **Little Swift** *A affinis* in Cheshire in early September might be the fifth report this year for Britain. A **European Roller** *Coracias garrulus* in Skåne, Sweden, from 31 July wore a ring of unknown origin. In August, during a Euring Swallow Project, 20 hybrids **Barn Swallow x House Martin** *Hirundo rustica* x *Delichon urbica* were trapped at Barn Swallow roosts in several places in Finland (which meant a frequency of one in 1000). A surprising number of four **Citrine Wagtails** *Motacilla citreola* were seen on Fair Isle, Shetland, Scotland, during August; two arrived on 31 August and remained into September. Recently accepted additions to the British list concern, apart from the Red-billed Tropicbird, also the **Gray Catbird** *Dumetella carolinensis* on Holy Island, Anglesey, on 4-5 October 2001 and the **Siberian Blue Robin** *Luscinia cyane* at Minsmere, Suffolk, on 23 October 2000. A **Thrush Nightingale** *L luscinia* trapped at Kinrooi, Limburg, Belgium, on 13 August was still present the next day. One trapped on Fair Isle on 27 August was probably the same bird already seen on 20 August. The third **Zitting Cisticola** *Cisticola juncidis* for Denmark stayed at Sønderhø, Fanø, Jylland, from 18 August onwards. The first proof of breeding of **Cetti's Warbler** *Cettia cetti* for the Netherlands since 1976 concerned a pair with four young at Ringselven, Budel-Dorplein, Noord-Brabant, in early September. The second-earliest ever **Lanceolated Warbler** *Locustella lanceolata* for Fair Isle was trapped on 7 September. Reportedly, a pair of **Icterine Warblers** *Hippolais icterina* successfully bred on Stronsay, Orkney, Scotland, this summer. A **Paddyfield Warbler** *Acrocephalus agricola* was trapped at Lebbeke, Oost-Vlaanderen, Belgium, on 10 August and another was seen on North Ronaldsay, Orkney, on 9 September. The first **Booted Warbler** *A caligatus* this autumn for Britain (and the earliest ever) was at Portland Bill, Dorset, England, on 15-19 August (up to 29 August, there were three subsequent records of this species which normally turns up in September). The species' first breeding for Estonia was at Värentina where two pairs with nine young were seen on 21 July. DNA-tests of a warbler trapped at Ottenby, Öland, Sweden, on 19 August indicate that it probably concerned a **Sykes's Warbler** *A rama*. Another Sykes's Warbler was trapped on North Ronaldsay on 26 August. An **Eastern Olivaceous Warbler** *A pallidus elaeicus* trapped at Hoswick, Shetland, on 18 August was twitchable for a week. Reportedly, another was trapped in Essex, England, on 24 August. In Catalunya, a **Western Olivaceous Warbler** *A opacus* was trapped at Canal Vell, Ebro delta, on 6 September. The first **Lesser Whitethroat** *Sylvia curruca* and the first **Willow Warbler** *Phylloscopus trochilus* for North America were both at Gambell, St Lawrence Island, Alaska, USA, on 8-9 September and on 25-26 August, respectively. A Willow Warbler trapped in Piteå, Norrbotten, Sweden, on 11 August showed features of the eastern subspecies *yakutensis*. The second **Turkestan Shrike** *Lanius phoenicuroides* for the Netherlands was a moulting adult male at Bleekersvallei on Texel, Noord-Holland, on 13-27 August (the first was an adult male first on Vlieland, Friesland, on 1 October 2000 and then on Texel on 2-6 October 2000). An adult male **Lesser Grey Shrike** *L minor* occurred at Porsemosen, Ballerup, Denmark, on 31 July. From 7 September, one stayed at Moanes, Stjørdal, Nord-Trøndelag, Norway. After the species' spring invasion, several **Rose-coloured Starlings** *Sturnus roseus* turned up in north-western Europe during the summer (eg, five in France and six in the Netherlands during August alone). A juvenile on Eochong Do on 1 September was the first for Korea. A sizeable invasion of **Common Crossbills** *Loxia curvirostra* brought along 100s of **Two-barred Crossbills** *L leucoptera* to Norway and Sweden and further west in Europe. In mid-August, the latter species even out-

numbered Common Crossbills at places in Norway with, for instance, c 200 in Hordaland alone; interestingly, the numbers of adults seemed to exceed those of juveniles. At Fehmarn, Schleswig-Holstein, Germany, an adult was present on 14 August and two on 17-18 August; others were reported at Eickeloh, Niedersachsen, on 17 August and at Kevelaer, Kleve, Nordrhein-Westfalen, on 25 August. More than 10 had been found in Scotland by 23 August of which most were on Fair Isle (one male on 2 August, one male, one female and two juveniles on 16-19 August, two individuals on 22 August and also a male in early September). At least three were reported from the Netherlands in August including singles trapped on Vlieland, Friesland, on 18 August (a juvenile female) and at Westenschouwen, Zeeland, on 27 August (a first-year male) and one photographed at Selwerderhof, Groningen, Groningen, on 20 August. The **White-throated Sparrow** *Zonotrichia albicollis* discovered at Folle, Orkdal, Sør-Trøndelag, Norway, on 10 July was last reported on 19 July. On 4-7 September, an adult female **Chestnut Bunting** *Emberiza rutila* was present on Fair Isle. First-winter **Yellow-breasted Buntings** *E aureola* were seen on Inner Farne, Northumberland, England, on 4 September and Sumburgh, Shetland, on 8 September. On 7 September, a female **Red-headed/Black-headed Bunting** *E bruniceps/melanocephala* was twitched on Fanø, Jylland, Denmark.

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Recente meldingen

Dit overzicht van recente meldingen van zeldzame en interessante vogels in Nederland en België beslaat voornamelijk de periode **juli-augustus 2002**. 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 VALKEN Overzomerende **Dwergganzen** *Anser erythropus* werden gezien van 7 tot 9 juli op het Rammegors, Zeeland, en op 14 augustus in de Ossenwaard bij Deventer, Overijssel. Naast 10-tallen **Casarca's** *Tadorna ferruginea* her en der in het land werden er op 27 juli maar liefst 130 geteld op het Eemmeer ten oosten van Huizen, Noord-Holland. **Witoogeenden** *Aythya nyroca* zwommen van 3 tot 15 augustus bij Elsteren, Limburg, en op 15 augustus in de Brabantsche Biesbosch, Noord-Brabant. Op 31 augustus werd een **Kuhls Pijlstormvogel** *Calonectris borealis* gemeld, vliegend langs Scheveningen, Zuid-Holland. Een vroege **Grauwe Pijlstormvogel** *Puffinus griseus* vloog op 21 juli langs Camperduin, Noord-Holland. Andere werden op 21 augustus opgemerkt langs Westkapelle, Zeeland, en twee langs Scheveningen. Er werden slechts zes **Noordse Pijlstormvogels** *P puffinus* gemeld. **Vale Pijlstormvogels** *P mauretanicus* vlogen langs Camperduin op 6, 7 en 21 juli en 3 en 31 augustus en verder op 14 juli langs de Maasvlakte, Zuid-Holland, op 21 juli langs de Langevelderslag, Zuid-Holland, en op 24 juli langs Westkapelle. **Kuifaalscholvers** *Stictocarbo aristotelis* werden gezien op 6 juli op Neeltje Jans, Zeeland, op 11 en 24 augustus bij Westkapelle en op 31 augustus bij Scheveningen. In

260 Ralreiger / Squacco Heron *Ardeola ralloides*, adult, Zuid-Schermer, Noord-Holland, 25 juni 2002
(Jan van Holten)

261 Porseleinhoen / Spotted Crake *Porzana porzana*, Starrevaart, Leidschendam, Zuid-Holland, 9 augustus 2002
(Bas van den Boogaard)

262 Roodpootvalk / Red-footed Falcon *Falco vespertinus*, juveniel, Eemshaven, Groningen, 30 augustus 2002 *(Huub Lanters)*

263 Gestreepte Strandloper / Pectoral Sandpiper *Calidris melanotos*, adult, Meers, Limburg, juli 2002 *(Karel Lemmens)*

264 Ringsnavelmeeuw / Ring-billed Gull *Larus delawarensis*, adult, Wilhelminadorp, Zeeland, 19 augustus 2002 *(Marten van Dijl)* **265** Steppearend / Steppe Eagle *Aquila nipalensis*, onvolwassen, Zouweboezem, Zuid-Holland, 15 juni 2002 *(Jurren Koerts)* **266** Ralreiger / Squacco Heron *Ardeola ralloides*, Piershil, Hoekse Waard, Zuid-Holland, 23 juli 2002 *(Chris van Rijswijk)* **267** Aziatische Goudplevier / Pacific Golden Plover *Pluvialus fulva*, adult, Dwars in de Weg, Brouwershaven, Zeeland, 27 juli 2002 *(Marten van Dijl)*

augustus werden nog **Woudapen** *Ixobrychus minutus* gezien bij Tienhoven, Utrecht, ten zuiden van Delft, Zuid-Holland, bij Alphen aan den Rijn, Zuid-Holland, en bij Kinderdijk, Zuid-Holland. Maximaal 13 **Kwakken** *Nycticorax nycticorax* werden in juli gezien in de omgeving van Liessel, Noord-Brabant; later werd bekend dat hier in ieder geval één geslaagd broedgeval heeft plaatsgevonden. Verder werd elders nog een 10-tal exemplaren gemeld. **Ralreigers** *Ardeola ralloides* bleven ons land opsieren: tot 2 juli werden de twee van de Zuid-Schermer bij Alkmaar, Noord-Holland, nog gezien, op 30 juni en 1 juli verbleef er één bij het Driesumermeer bij Dokkum, Friesland, van 22 tot 24 juli één bij Piershil, Zuid-Holland, op 8 augustus ten oosten van Gouda, Zuid-Holland, en twee vlogen op 14 augustus over Oosterend, Terschelling, Friesland. Van 16 juli tot 3 augustus verbleef een **Koereiger** *Bubulcus ibis* in het natuurontwikkelingsgebied Heerenven bij De Hamert, Limburg. Een andere werd op 26 augustus gemeld ten oosten van Gouda. 37 **Kleine Zilverreigers** *Egretta garzetta* en 33 **Grote Zilverreigers** *Casmerodius albus* werden doorgegeven maar dit moet als een klein deel van het werkelijk aanwezige aantal worden beschouwd. Na twee **Zwarte Ooievaars** *Ciconia nigra* op 8 juli over De Hamert, werden er vanaf 20 juli c 50 gemeld, vooral van eind juli tot 18 augustus. De grootste groep telde 16 exemplaren op 13 augustus over Zevenhuizen, Zuid-Holland. Een groep van – waarschijnlijk steeds dezelfde – ruim 130 **Ooievaars** *C ciconia* is het vermelden waard: op 20 augustus over Zwolle, Overijssel, en op 23 augustus eerst over Nieuwegein, Utrecht, en even later kort ter plaatse bij Lopik, Utrecht. De **Zwarte Ibis** *Plegadis falcinellus* van Noord-Holland verbleef van 3 tot 10 augustus in de omgeving van 't Zand, Noord-Holland. Een **Zwarte Wouw** *Milvus migrans* vloog op

268 Breedbekstrandloper / Broad-billed Sandpiper *Limicola falcinellus*, juveniel, Zwarte Haan, Friesland, 11 augustus 2002 *(Bas van den Boogaard)* **269** Siberische Strandloper / Sharp-tailed Sandpiper *Calidris acuminata*, adult, Prunjepolder, Zeeland, 31 juli 2002 *(Marten van Dijl)* **270** Grote Franjepoot / Wilson's Phalarope *Phalaropus tricolor*, Scherpenissepolder, Tholen, Zeeland, juli 2002 *(Max Berlijn)* **271** Grote Franjepoot / Wilson's Phalarope *Phalaropus tricolor*, Scherpenissepolder, Tholen, Zeeland, juli 2002 *(Henk de Waard)*

15 juli over Enschede, Overijssel. Ook werden in de periode vier **Rode Wouwen** *M milvus* gezien. Twee **Vale Gieren** *Gyps fulvus* werden op 4 augustus gemeld bij Hollandse Rading, Utrecht, en op 29 augustus zou er één gefotografeerd zijn in een boom bij Raamsdonksveer, Noord-Brabant. Vanaf 25 augustus verscheen weer een **Slangenarend** *Circaetus gallicus* op het Fochtelooërveen, Drenthe/Friesland. Het vrouwtje **Steppekiekendief** *Circus macrourus* van Terschelling werd daar op 29 juli voor het laatst gemeld. Nagekomen nieuws betreft een onvolwassen **Steppearend** *Aquila nipalensis* die op 15 juni werd gefotografeerd boven Zouweboezem in de Alblasserwaard, Zuid-Holland. Een lichte vorm **Dwergarend** *Hieraaetus pennatus* werd op 29 augustus gemeld van Schiermonnikoog, Friesland. De **Havikarend** *Hieraaetus fasciatus* die tot 15 juli op Terschelling verbleef, was niet de enige melding van deze soort. Een op 15 augustus gemelde Arendbuizerd *Buteo rufinus* op Vlieland, Friesland, bleek op foto's meer kenmerken van een Havikarend te vertonen. Deze vogel was ook op 16 en 17 augustus nog hier aanwezig. Tot half juli verbleven **Visarenden** *Pandion haliaetus* bij de Ventjagersplaten, Zuid-Holland, en (een paar) in het Oostvaardersplassengebied, Flevoland. Hier werd ook balts en nestbouw geconstateerd. Vanaf half juli werden er slechts c 15 op doortrek gemeld. **Roodpootvalken** *Falco vespertinus* werden gezien op 6 augustus in de Lauwersmeer, Groningen, van 26 tot 31 augustus maximaal drie in de Eemshaven, Groningen, en in totaal vier in augustus langs de Elterberg bij Spijk, Gelderland.

RALLEN TOT ALKEN **Kleine Waterhoenders** *Porzana parva* werden gezien op 10 augustus bij de vogelplas Starrevaart, Zuid-Holland, en op 31 augustus bij hut De Ral in de Kooiwaard bij Piaam, Friesland. In het

272 Turkestaanse Klauwier / Turkestan Shrike *Lanius phoenicuroides*, adult mannetje, Bleekersvallei, Texel, Noord-Holland, 14 augustus 2002 *(Réne Pop)*

273 Turkestaanse Klauwier / Turkestan Shrike *Lanius phoenicuroides*, adult mannetje, Bleekersvallei, Texel, Noord-Holland, 23 augustus 2002 *(Marten van Dijl)*

274 Bijeneter / European Bee-eater *Merops apiaster*, adult, Marnewaard, Lauwersmeer, Groningen, 13 augustus 2002 *(Jan den Hertog)*

275 Graszanger / Zitting Cisticola *Cisticola juncidis*, Colijnsplaat, Zeeland, 27 juli 2002 *(Marten van Dijl)*

276 Witbandkruisbek / Two-barred Crossbill *Loxia leucoptera bifasciata*, Selwerderhof, Groningen, Groningen, 20 augustus 2002 *(Eric Koops)*

277 Sperwergrasmus / Barred Warbler *Sylvia nisoria*, eerstejaars, Bleekersvallei, Texel, Noord-Holland, 24 augustus 2002 *(Patrick Palmen)*

Fochtelooërveen werden de gehele periode nog de **Kraanvogels** *Grus grus* met hun jong gezien. Tot 20 juli verbleef een paar **Steltkluten** *Himantopus himantopus* met vier jongen bij Harlingen, Friesland. Op 20 juli pleisterden er drie bij Paesens, Friesland, en van 25 tot 28 juli maximaal drie in de Ezumakeeg, Friesland. Een **Griel** *Burhinus oedicnemus* werd op 29 juli aangetroffen op Terschelling. Op 4 augustus werd een **Steppevorkstaartplevier** *Glareola nordmanni* gemeld bij de Philipsdam, Zeeland; op 18 en 19 augustus was er één aanwezig aan de zuidkant van de Oostvaardersplassen. Een ongedetermineerde vorkstaartplevier (vermoedelijk een Steppevorkstaartplevier) werd op 24 augustus kort gezien bij Meers, Limburg. De waarneming van een Vorkstaartplevier *G pratincola* in de vorige rubriek op 15 juni over de Lepelaarsplassen, Flevoland (Dutch Birding 24: 248, 2002) had betrekking op een Steppevorkstaartplevier. Doortrekkende **Morinelplevieren** *Charadrius morinellus* werden gemeld op 11 augustus bij Den Oever, Noord-Holland, op 24 augustus langs Parnassia, Noord-Holland, op 24 (twee), 25 (één) en 31 (acht) augustus op de Maasvlakte, op 25 (één) en 29 (vijf) augustus bij Westkapelle en op 29 augustus maar liefst 13 langs de Nolledijk bij Vlissingen, Zeeland. De inmiddels jaarlijkse oogst van **Aziatische Goudplevieren** *Pluvialis fulva* omvatte gevallen op 6 juli in de Mokbaai op Texel, Noord-Holland, van 15 juli tot 3 augustus op het eilandje Dwars in de Weg in de Grevelingen, Noord-Beveland, Zeeland, op 16 juli op Wieringen, Noord-Holland, op 28 juli in de Ezumakeeg, en op 27 en 28 augustus en 1 september ten noorden van Kamperland, Zeeland. Een **Amerikaanse Goudplevier** *P dominica* verbleef op 4 en 5 juli eveneens op Noord-Beveland, en wel bij Wissenkerke. De **Witstaartkievit** *Vanellus leucurus* op 4 juli in de Westerse Laagjes bij Nieuwendijk, Zuid-Holland, en op 5 juli bij het Stinkgat, Zeeland, werd daarna niet meer gezien. Net als in 2000 leverde de hoogwatervluchtplaats bij Zwarte Haan, Friesland, ook dit jaar weer een of mogelijk zelfs twee **Bonapartes Strandlopers** *Calidris fuscicollis* op, en wel van 10 tot 19 augustus. Vanaf 19 juli werden weer **Gestreepte Strandlopers** *C melanotos* opgemerkt; met in totaal ruim 15 waren ze erg algemeen dit seizoen. De Ezumakeeg bleek dit jaar weer goed voor een **Siberische Strandloper** *C acuminata* die daar van 24 tot 27 juli verbleef. Daarna werd de soort gezien op 31 juli in de oude Prunjeplas bij de Wevers Inlaag, Zeeland (op grond van de foto's waarschijnlijk hetzelfde exemplaar als in de Ezumakeeg), en op 3 augustus in de Makkumerzuidwaard, Friesland. **Breedbekstrandlopers** *Limicola falcinellus* werden opgemerkt op 27 juli en 8 en 24 augustus in polder Breebaart bij Termunten, Groningen, op 7 augustus bij Holwerd, Friesland, op 9 augustus bij Hippolytushoef, Noord-Holland, van 10 tot 20 augustus maximaal drie bij Zwarte Haan, op 10 en 11 augustus bij Achter de Zwarten in de Lauwersmeer, Groningen, en bij IJmuiden, Noord-Holland, en van 16 tot 21 augustus maximaal twee in de Scherpenissepolder, Zeeland. Er waren meldingen van **Poelsnippen** *Gallinago media* op 8 augustus bij Amerongen, Gelderland, op 10 augustus bij Alphen aan den Rijn en op 25 augustus twee in het Beerzerveld bij Mariënberg, Overijssel. De (of een) **Grote Grijze Snip** *Limnodromus scolopaceus* in zomerkleed, werd van 17 tot 20 augustus weer eens gezien in de Prunjepolder, Zeeland. C 15 **Poelruiters** *Tringa stagnatilis* werden gemeld, waaronder drie bij Julianadorp, Noord-Holland, en drie in de Workumerwaard, Friesland. Een **Terekruiter** *Xenus cinereus* werd gezien op 15 juli in de Ossenwaard bij Deventer. Een leuke inhaalsoort was de **Grote Franjepoot** *Phalaropus tricolor* die van 20 juli tot 19 augustus werd gezien in de Scherpenissepolder. Er werden 14 **Grauwe Franjepoten** *P lobatus* doorgegeven, met een kleine piek eind juli. Een vroege **Rosse Franjepoot** *P fulicaria* werd op 11 augustus gemeld bij Den Oever. Vanaf 21 augustus werden zes **Kleinste Jagers** *Stercorarius longicaudus* doorgegeven, waaronder één over Werkendam, Noord-

Brabant. De vierde **Franklins Meeuw** *Larus pipixcan* voor Nederland verbleef op 5 en 6 juli bij Wissenkerke. Een vroege en tevens adulte **Vorkstaartmeeuw** *L sabini* passeerde op 21 augustus Westkapelle. De **Ringsnavelmeeuw** *L delawarensis* van Zeeland verbleef vanaf 17 juli bij Wilhelminadorp en vanaf 8 augustus weer bij Goes. **Grote Burgemeesters** *L hyperboreus* werden gezien op 27 juli bij Petten, Noord-Holland (adult), van 6 tot 12 augustus bij Zwarte Haan (eerste-zomer), van 14 tot 23 augustus op Schiermonnikoog (tweede-zomer) en op 31 augustus bij Stellendam, Zuid-Holland (adult). Vanaf half juli werden **Lachsterns** *Gelochelidon nilotica* opgemerkt. In de Kop van Noord-Holland verbleven er zes tot 10, verder werden er nog 23 ter plaatse of langsvliegend gemeld. **Reuzensterns** *Sterna caspia* werden voornamelijk gezien vanaf eind juli, met alleen al aan de Friese IJsselmeerkust maxima van ruim 60 op één dag, waarvan 45 in de Workumerwaard. Buiten het westen van Friesland werden nog eens 23 exemplaren gemeld. Er werden slechts vijf **Witwangsterns** *Chlidonias hybridus* doorgegeven: op 10 juli in de Ezumakeeg, op 16 juli in de Eijsder Beemden, Limburg, op 20 en 21 juli bij de Brabantsche Biesbosch, op 9 en 10 augustus bij Burgervlotbrug, Noord-Holland (waarschijnlijk de vroegste juveniele in Nederland ooit, afgezien van bekende broedgevallen), en op 11 augustus in de Workumerwaard. **Witvleugelsterns** *C leucopterus* vertoonden zich vooral tussen half juli en half augustus; van de in totaal 20 werden er slechts vier buiten het IJsselmeergebied gezien. Het maximum bij Den Oever bedroeg zes op 22 juli. Een adult-zomer **Zwarte Zeekoet** *Cepphus grylle* werd op 25 augustus gezien op 70 km uit de kust bij Egmond aan Zee, Noord-Holland. Een **Papegaaiduiker** *Fratercula arctica* vloog op 21 juli langs Camperduin.

BIJENETERS TOT GORZEN Van de aanvankelijk drie paren **Bijeneter** *Merops apiaster* in de Lauwersmeer was uiteindelijk één paar succesvol en bracht vier jongen groot. Tot zeker half augustus werden de vogels daar gezien. Verder vlogen Bijeneters onder andere op 9 juli over Bakkeveen, Friesland (twee), op 26 juli bij Hattem, Gelderland, op 28 juli twee over Alkmaar, op 5 augustus over de AW-duinen, Noord-Holland, op 10 augustus twee over Badhoevedorp, Noord-Holland, en ten minste drie over Santpoort-Zuid en Haarlem-Noord, Noord-Holland, op 11 augustus twee in de HW-duinen, Zuid-Holland, en (dezelfde?) twee bij vogelplas Starrevaart, op 12 augustus twee over de Scherpenissepolder, op 14 augustus over Terschelling, en op 23 augustus vier in de Mariapeel, Limburg. **Hoppen** *Upupa epops* werden op 4 augustus bij Vlaardingen, Zuid-Holland, en op 25 augustus bij Kornwerderzand, Friesland, gezien. Vanaf half augustus werden ten minste 40 **Draaihalzen** *Jynx torquilla* gemeld. Piekdagen waren 25 en 26 augustus, met bijvoorbeeld op Vlieland zeven vangsten op 26 augustus. Slechts zeven **Duinpiepers** *Anthus campestris* werden op trek gemeld vanaf half augustus. Een **Waterspreeuw** *Cinclus cinclus* werd op 23 juli ten oosten van Winterswijk, Overijssel, gezien meestal op Duits grondgebied. Een juveniele verbleef op 13 en 18 augustus bij de Worm op de Duitse grens bij Kerkrade, Limburg. Interessant is de waarneming van een juveniele **Beflijster** *Turdus torquatus* op 21 augustus op Schiermonnikoog. De als Izabeltapuit *Oenanthe isabellina* gemelde tapuit bij Westkapelle op 17 augustus bleek op de foto's toch een Tapuit *O oenanthe* te zijn. Naar nu bekend is geworden heeft een paar **Cetti's Zangers** *Cettia cetti* gebroed bij Budel-Dorplein, Noord-Brabant. Behalve de maximaal c 30 van het Verdronken Land van Saeftinge, Zeeland, pleisterden **Graszangers** *Cisticola juncidis* van 17 juli tot 16 augustus (maximaal twee) bij Colijnsplaat, Zeeland, van 2 tot 19 augustus in de Scherpenissepolder, van 4 tot 28 augustus bij Westkapelle met op 29 augustus een andere daar, op 10 en 12 augustus bij IJmuiden en op 11 augustus bij Den Oever. In augustus (vooral in de eerste helft) werden c 25 **Waterrietzangers** *Acrocephalus paludicola* gemeld, met onder andere drie bij Westkapelle op 9 augustus en vier bij IJmuiden op 10 augustus. Van 8 tot 31 augustus werden al 17 **Sperwergrasmussen** *Sylvia nisoria* waargenomen, zodat het op een recordjaar begint te lijken. **Grauwe Fitissen** *Phylloscopus trochiloides* werden op 28 en 31 augustus gezien op de Maasvlakte en op 28 augustus bij Westkapelle. Een **Kleine Vliegenvanger** *Ficedula parva* werd op 22 augustus gemeld bij Oudeschip, Groningen. De adulte izabelklauwier *Lanius* die van 13 tot 27 augustus in de Bleekersvallei op Texel verbleef, was de vijfde uit dit soortencomplex op het eiland, trok veel bekijks en gaat hoogstwaarschijnlijk de boeken in als **Turkestaanse Klauwier** *L phoenicuroides*. De **Roodkopklauwier** *L senator* van Katwijk aan Zee, Zuid-Holland, bleef daar nog tot 12 juli. De influx van **Roze Spreeuwen** *Sturnus roseus* bleef nieuwe gevallen opleveren: op 5 juli en 10 augustus op Vlieland, van 12 tot 16 juli bij de vuurtoren op Texel, op 27 juli bij de Dollard, Groningen, op 7 augustus op Ameland, Friesland, op 15 augustus bij Oudeschild op Texel, op 17 augustus op Terschelling, en vanaf 24 augustus bij Kornwerderzand. Dit waren alle adulte. De eerste juveniele werd op 26 augustus gezien op Vlieland. Onvolwassen **Witbandkruisbekken** *Loxia leucoptera* werden gevangen op 18 augustus op Vlieland en op 27 augustus bij Westenschouwen, Zeeland, en op 20 augustus werd er één gezien in de stad Groningen, Groningen. Een wat seizoen betreft uitzonderlijke waarneming is die van een **IJsgors** *Calcarius lapponicus* op 13 juli bij Camperduin. Vanaf 15 augustus werden in totaal 16 **Ortolanen** *Emberiza hortulana* doorgegeven.

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België

EENDEN TOT FLAMINGO'S Te Harchies-Hensies, Hainaut, zwommen op 9 juli zeven mannetjes **Krooneend** *Netta rufina*. Op 16 augustus werd een vrouwtje te Harchies vergezeld door zeven pulli. Van 14 tot 21 juli was een mannetje en op 1 augustus een vrouwtje aanwezig te Lier-Duffel, Antwerpen. Tot ten minste 24 juli verbleef een paar **Witoogeenden** *Aythya nyroca* bij Zevergem, Oost-Vlaanderen. Op 20 juli zwom een mannetje rond te Duffel en vanaf 29 augustus een mannetje te Zonhoven, Limburg. Een exemplaar keerde terug naar Eghezée-Longchamps, Namur, vanaf 25 augustus. **Roodhalsfuten** *Podiceps grisegena* deden het beter dan in andere jaren: naast de klassieke adulte vogel die nog steeds te Harelbeke, West-Vlaanderen, verbleef, verschenen juveniele te Antwerpen, Antwerpen (twee); Gent, Oost-Vlaanderen; Lier (een groepje van acht); en Zonhoven. **Woudapen** *Ixobrychus minutus* konden worden bekeken op De Gavers te Harelbeke (één tot twee mannetjes tot 14 juli); te Lier (nog één mannetje tot 7 juli); te Gullegem, West-Vlaanderen (een paar vanaf 14 juli); en te Tienen, Vlaams-Brabant, op 1 augustus. Juveniele verschenen op De Kuifeend bij Antwerpen op 14 augustus en te Lier op 20 augustus. Tussen 9 juli en 18 augustus verbleven bij Zonhoven maximaal vier adulte en drie eerste-zomer **Kwakken** *Nycticorax nycticorax*, een adulte pleisterde in de eerste week van juli te Schilde, Antwerpen, op 24 juli was een onvolwassen vogel aanwezig bij Lokeren, Oost-Vlaanderen, en op 30 augustus één te Zevergem, Oost-Vlaanderen. Van 10 tot 12 juli pleisterde een **Koereiger** *Bubulcus ibis* te Molenbaix, Hainaut. Mogelijk dezelfde vogel verbleef op 11 augustus te Escanaffles, Hainaut. Er volgde ook een waarneming bij Reninge, West-Vlaanderen, op 16 augustus. **Kleine Zilverreigers** *Egretta garzetta* werden nog gezien op Blokkersdijk, Antwerpen; bij Bredene, West-Vlaanderen; Escanaffles; Gent (zes); Kalmthout, Antwerpen; Knokke, West-Vlaanderen (zeven); Lissewege, West-Vlaanderen (vijf); Lochristi; Mechelen; Nieuwpoort, West-Vlaanderen; Oudenburg, West-Vlaanderen (twee); Uitkerke, West-Vlaanderen; Verrebroek, Oost-Vlaanderen (twee); Zeebrugge (14); en bij Zuienkerke, West-Vlaanderen. **Grote Zilverreigers** *Casmerodius albus* werden waargenomen te Beernem, West-Vlaanderen; Belsele, Oost-Vlaanderen; Brecht, Antwerpen (drie); Gent; Harchies; Lochristi, Oost-Vlaanderen; Mechelen, Antwerpen; Retie, Antwerpen (drie); Viane, Oost-Vlaanderen; Zolder, Limburg; Zeebrugge, West-Vlaanderen (twee); en Zonhoven (drie). Een gekleurringde Grote Zilverreiger bij de Vestingen te Oudenaarde, Oost-Vlaanderen, op 17 augustus bleek op 15 mei als nestjong geringd te zijn te Lac de Grand-Lieu, Loire-Atlantique, Frankrijk. **Purperreigers** *Ardea purpurea* werden gezien bij Gent op 26 juli, van 10 tot 16 augustus en een tweede op 15 augustus; te Bredene op 27 juli; bij Mechelen op 8 augustus; te Uitkerke op 2 augustus; en te Heist, West-Vlaanderen, op 7 augustus. In Vlaanderen werden **Zwarte Ooievaars** *Ciconia nigra* opgemerkt te Gent (drie op 17 augustus); Huldenberg, Vlaams-Brabant (22 juli); Kalmthout (twee op 20 juli); Knokke (2 augustus); Lier (2 en 25 augustus); Neerpelt, Limburg (twee op 2 augustus); Oostduinkerke, West-Vlaanderen (27 juli); Oud-Turnhout, Antwerpen (15 augustus); Retie (9 augustus); Tienen (22 tot 23 juli); in de Uitkerkse Polders (27 tot 28 juli); Veurne, West-Vlaanderen (17 augustus); te Zingem, Oost-Vlaanderen (13 augustus); en te Zwevegem, West-Vlaanderen (16 augustus). Op 19 juli trok de eerste **Ooievaar** *C ciconia* over Gentbrugge, Oost-Vlaanderen. Grote groepen betroffen 114 exemplaren over Emblem, Antwerpen, op 17 augustus; een groep van 46 te Viane op 13 augustus groeide tot 30 augustus aan tot 107 vogels; en op 25 augustus vlogen er 94 over Brecht. 'Grappig' was een ontsnapte **Afrikaanse Maraboe** *Leptoptilos crumeniferus* te Lokeren, Oost-Vlaanderen, op 23 augustus. De **Flamingo** *Phoenicopterus roseus* verbleef van 2 tot 6 juli weer op Blokkersdijk; deze vogel werd vanaf 7 augustus nog gezien in de omgeving van Dendermonde, Oost-Vlaanderen, en Temse, Oost-Vlaanderen. Op 4 augustus dook er één op te Sint-Pieters-Leeuw, Vlaams-Brabant.

278 Steppekievit / Sociable Lapwing *Vanellus gregarius*, Willebroek, Antwerpen, 17 augustus 2002 *(Leo Janssen)*

WOUWEN TOT STERNS **Zwarte Wouwen** *Milvus migrans* vlogen op 9 juli over Knokke en op 10 augustus (twee) over Nieuwpoort, West-Vlaanderen. **Rode Wouwen** *M milvus* waren er te Boechout, Antwerpen, op 30 juli en te Hove, Antwerpen, op 9 augustus. Op 26 augustus verbleef een onvolwassen **Vale Gier** *Gyps fulvus* kortstondig bij een boerderij te Sint Margriete, Oost-Vlaanderen; op 27 augustus vloog wellicht dezelfde vogel over Eke, Oost-Vlaanderen. Een paartje **Blauwe Kiekendieven** *Circus cyaneus* bracht vier juveniele groot ten zuiden van Mons, Hainaut. Een mannetje **Grauwe Kiekendief** *C pygargus* trok op 16 augustus langs het Schietveld te Brecht; op 18 augustus pleisterde een juveniele in Het Zwin te Knokke; en op 25 augustus vloog een vrouwtje over Lier. Op het plateau van Haspengouw, Liège, was er een succesvol broedgeval met drie juveniele. De eerste **Visarenden** *Pandion*

279 Graszanger / Zitting Cisticola *Cisticola juncidis*, Zeebrugge, West-Vlaanderen, 27 juli 2002 *(Yves Baptiste)*

haliaetus arriveerden op 17 juli te Rijkevorsel, Antwerpen, en te Zolder. Van 21 juli tot 5 augustus pleisterde er één te Brecht. Daarna volgden waarnemingen op Blokkersdijk; te Gent (twee); Kalmthout; Lier (twee); Schulen, Limburg; en Zonhoven (zeven). Op 18 augustus trok een vrouwtje **Roodpootvalk** *Falco vespertinus* over Brecht. Bij Bredene verbleven op 7 juli nog zes **Steltkluten** *Himantopus himantopus* en tot 25 augustus bleven daar nog maximaal drie. Een paartje met twee pulli liet zich tot 1 augustus bekijken in de Uitkerkse Polders. Ze verplaatsten zich naar de Achterhaven van Zeebrugge op 3 (tot 4) augustus. Op 29 juli was er één aanwezig te Gullegem. Twee ongedetermineerde **vorkstaartplevieren** *Glareola* vlogen op 4 augustus over Wetteren, Oost-Vlaanderen. De eerste **Morinelplevier** *Charadrius morinellus* werd gezien te Thuillies, Hainaut, op 29 augustus. Een mannetje **Aziatische Goudplevier** *Pluvialis fulva* dat op 14 juli bij Reninge verbleef kon onder meer op basis van de lange pootprojectie in vlucht en de korte handpenprojectie worden gedetermineerd; helaas liet deze vogel zich slechts van grote afstand bekijken. Indien aanvaard door het BAHC betreft dit de derde voor België. Daar was hij dan eindelijk: de eerste twitchbare **Steppekievit** *Vanellus gregarius* voor België, een adulte ruiend naar winterkleed, op 17 augustus gedurende één namiddag in het broek De Nayer bij Willebroek, Antwerpen. Het betrof het vijfde geval voor België. De locatie deed duidelijk enkel dienst als tijdelijke uitwijkplaats, want van foerageren was geen sprake. **Temmincks Strandlopers** *C temminckii* werden gezien bij Gent (drie); Ollogne-sur-Geer, Liège (vier); Tienen (twee); Uitkerke; en Veurne (drie). Van 23 tot 25 augustus verbleef een adulte **Gestreepte Strandloper** *Calidris melanotos* te Bredene. Een juveniele was vanaf 31 augustus te zien in Veurne. Leuk voor de periode was een adulte **Rosse Franjepoot** *Phalaropus fulicaria* (vrijwel volledig in winterkleed) die op 18 en 19 augustus in de Achterhaven van Zeebrugge pleisterde. De eerste juveniele **Kleinste Jager** *Stercorarius longicaudus* vloog op 27 augustus langs Zeebrugge. Op 31 augustus pleisterde een juveniele te Aische-en-Refail, Namur; en één te Fexhe-le-Haut-Clocher, Liège; beide bleven tot in september aanwezig. Een adulte **Vorkstaartmeeuw** *Larus sabini* in zomerkleed pleisterde in de avond van 23 augustus op het strand van Koksijde, West-Vlaanderen. Waarnemingen van **Pontische Meeuwen** *L cachinnans cachinnans* blijven schaars tijdens de zomermaanden: ze werden gezien te Zeebrugge op 7 juli en te Nieuwpoort op 23 augustus. Op 7 juli vloog een adulte **Lachstern** *Gelochelidon nilotica* langs Zonnebeke, West-Vlaanderen. Een adulte **Reuzenstern** *Sterna caspia* liet zich tussen 16 en 25 juli bekijken op de Werf van de Kluizendokken bij Gent. Op 24 juli trok er één over Deurle, Oost-Vlaanderen, en op 15 augustus vloog een groepje van vier over Blokkersdijk. Bij Hastière, Luxembourg, vertoefde op 11 juli een eerste-zomer **Witwangstern** *Chlidonias hybridus*.

UILEN TOT GORZEN **Velduilen** *Asio flammeus* doken op te Knokke op 30 augustus en te Zeebrugge (twee) op 31 augustus. Succesvolle broedgevallen van **Bijeneter**

Merops apiaster werden opgetekend in de provincies Luxembourg (2), Vlaams-Brabant (1) en Oost-Vlaanderen (1). Naast deze broedgevallen doken Bijeneters op te De Panne, West-Vlaanderen, op 17 en 19 juli; vier te Florenville, Luxembourg, op 6 augustus; te Lier op 9 augustus; twee te Kalmthout op 28 augustus; en twee over Gent op 31 augustus. **Hoppen** *Upupa epops* pleisterden te Herentals, Antwerpen, op 25 augustus en te Heist van 28 augustus tot in september. Op 2 augustus werd de eerste **Draaihals** *Jynx torquilla* voor het najaar opgemerkt te Lier. Daarna waren er waarnemingen of vangsten te Assenede, Oost-Vlaanderen; Brecht (vier); Bredene; Heist; Kallo-Melsele, Oost-Vlaanderen; Oostmalle, Antwerpen (vijf); Tienen (twee); en Willebroek (negen). De eerste **Duinpieper** *Anthus campestris* vloog op 17 augustus over Tienen. Op 20 en 24 augustus trokken er telkens één en op 22 augustus twee over Oostmalle; op 24 augustus één over Gierle, Antwerpen, en op 31 augustus één over Loonbeek, Vlaams-Brabant. Op 13 augustus werd een eerste-winter **Noordse Nachtegaal** *Luscinia luscinia* geringd te Kinrooi, Limburg, en op 14 augustus bleek deze vogel daar nog steeds aanwezig te zijn. Nieuwe **Graszangers** *Cisticola juncidis* doken op bij De Panne op 16 juli; in de Gentse Kanaalzone op 3 augustus; in de IJzermonding te Nieuwpoort op 10 augustus; en te Lombardsijde, West-Vlaanderen, op 17 augustus. De eerste **Waterrietzanger** *Acrocephalus paludicola* van deze zomer verscheen op 2 augustus te Lier. Er volgden vangsten en/of waarnemingen te Assenede (vijf); Kruibeke, Oost-Vlaanderen (10 augustus); Lier (8 augustus); Veurne (c 20); Westmalle, Antwerpen (9 en 12 augustus); en Zeebrugge (3 en 8 augustus). Op 10 augustus werd een **Veldrietzanger** *A agricola* geringd bij Lebbeke, Oost-Vlaanderen. Van 4 tot 8 juli zong een **Orpheusspotvogel** *Hippolais polyglotta* bij Passendale, West-Vlaanderen. De eerste **Sperwergrasmus** *Sylvia nisoria* van het jaar werd op 14 augustus geringd te Koksijde. Vanaf 31 augustus liet een eerste-winter zich zeer goed bekijken te Heist. Op 29 augustus verbleef een **Grauwe Fitis** *Phylloscopus trochiloides* te Zeebrugge. Op augustus was een mannetje **Grauwe Klauwier** *Lanius collurio* aanwezig in de Uitkerkse Polders. Juveniele werden waargenomen te Heist op 8 en 29 augustus; te Brecht op 17 augustus; en te Tienen op 29 augustus. Van 1 tot 5 juli zong een **Ortolaan** *Emberiza hortulana* bij Marche-en-Famenne, Luxembourg, op 23 augustus trok er één over Oostmalle en op 30 augustus werd er één gezien te Brecht.

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

Gerald Driessens, Pastoriestraat 16, 2500 Lier, België (gerald.driessens@pandora.be)

DB Actueel

Havikarend op Vlieland Donderdag 15 augustus 2002 was de voorlaatste dag van een vakantieweek op Vlieland, Friesland, voor mijn zonen Daan en Thijs, mijn moeder en ik. Rond 16:30 vlogen bij de Badweg drie Buizerds *Buteo buteo* over. Deze waren nauwelijks verdwenen toen ik om 16:40 in de verte een veel grotere roofvogel ontdekte. De vogel cirkelde en kwam mijn richting op. Ik voelde onmiddellijk dat dit iets bijzonders was. Ik bekeek de vogel even door mijn kijker en zag de vleugels in een V-stand staan, als bij een zeer grote Buizerd. Op dat moment besloot ik dat ik foto's moest gaan maken. De vogel kwam steeds dichterbij en cirkelde uiteindelijk pal boven Daan, Thijs en mij. Met trillende handen maakte ik enkele foto's. Uiteindelijk kon ik de vogel nog even bekijken door mijn verrekijker. Het vliegbeeld en de kleuren deden me denken aan een Havikarend *Hieraaetus fasciatus*, maar ik had de vleugels toch in een V-stand zien staan...? De vogel leek naar beneden te gaan en ik raakte hem kwijt. Enigszins verbouwereerd bleef ik achter op het terras. Arendbuizerd *B rufinus*? Havikarend? Ik raadpleegde mijn vergeelde *Lars Jonsson*. Wat betreft kleuren lijken juvenielen van deze twee soorten op elkaar, en wat betreft de grootte is er overlap. Mijn eerste voorzichtige determinatie was: juveniele Arendbuizerd. Met het laatste beetje stroom in mij mobieltje sprak ik om 17:10 de waarneming in op de Dutch Birding-vogellijn. 's Avonds in het visrestaurant waar wij de vakantie afsloten mocht ik bij hoge uitzondering hun telefoon gebruiken. Ik belde Michiel Noback en vertelde hem over mijn waarneming. Rond 20:00 had ik weer tijd, stroom en bereik en belde ik eerst Piet Zuidhof en vervolgens Rommert Cazemier, die op zijn beurt weer andere vogelaars zou inlichten. Om 20:27 heb ik zelf de melding van een 'vrij zekere Arendbuizerd' op de pieper gezet.

De volgende dag gingen we terug naar huis in Groningen. In plaats van terug te fietsen vanaf Harlingen namen we de trein. Ik zou dan op tijd zijn om de foto's af te laten drukken bij een 1-uurservice. Aan het eind van de middag kon ik ze ophalen en ik was zo blij dat de foto's waren gelukt dat ik niet eens de tijd nam om ze goed te bekijken. Met een noodgang ging het naar Phons van Oploo, die de foto's voor mij wilde scannen; 's avonds had ik vier foto's naar de websites van de DBA en Rommert Cazemier gestuurd. Vogelaars uit heel Nederland konden ze zien en eventueel de volgende dag gaan zoeken.

280-281 Havikarend / Bonelli's Eagle *Hieraaetus fasciatus*, juveniel, Kroonspolders, Vlieland, Friesland, 15 augustus 2002 *(Lieuwe van Welie)*

Zaterdag 17 augustus had ik eindelijk tijd om de foto's goed te bekijken en in de boeken te duiken. Toen kwamen ook de eerste serieuze berichten dat het waarschijnlijk om een Havikarend zou gaan en dus niet om een Arendbuizerd. Ruud Brouwer had de vogel de avond daarvoor laat als 'mogelijke Havikarend' doorgepiept. Met de foto's en een stapel boeken voor me op tafel besefte ik snel dat het inderdaad om een juveniele Havikarend ging. De foto's zijn duidelijk genoeg: ze laten de lange en brede vleugels met een S-vormige achterrand zien, kenmerkend voor een juveniel, de oranjebruine kleuren, de lange staart en de zwarte toppen aan de handpennen. De buitenste handpennen hebben een lichte basis.

De vogel blijkt vrijdagmiddag 16 augustus ook door Willem van der Waal te zijn gezien, zwevend boven de Meeuwenduinen. Rob Olivier was op zaterdag de enige persoon die zocht en heeft uiteindelijk de vogel kort gezien boven de Kroonspolders. Op zondag 18 augustus reisden c 40 vogelaars af naar het eiland maar tevergeefs: de Havikarend werd niet meer teruggevonden.

Op Terschelling, Friesland, zou van 12 juni tot en met 15 juli een Havikarend aanwezig zijn geweest in een niet vrij toegankelijk deel van de Boschplaat. Waarschijnlijk ging dat om een andere vogel (!): die van Vlieland was een gave juveniel en via Theo Bakker hoorde ik dat de vogel op Terschelling een onvolwassen exemplaar was dat al enige rui vertoonde. Na gevallen bij Gendringen (24 januari 1958, vondst) en Vlieland (17-20 september 1995, op de laatste dag ook over Texel, Noord-Holland) betekent mijn waarneming op Vlieland – indien aanvaard – derhalve het derde of vierde geval voor Nederland en het tweede voor het eiland. Lieuwe van Welie

Bonelli's Eagle On 15-17 August 2002, a juvenile Bonelli's Eagle *Hieraaetus fasciatus* was seen and photographed on Vlieland, Friesland, the Netherlands. If accepted, this is the second record for the island (after one in September 1995) and the third or fourth for the Netherlands. From 12 June to 15 July 2002, an immature Bonelli's Eagle was reported in a not freely accessible area on the neighbouring island of Terschelling, Friesland. Apparently, that bird was another individual showing moult.

Bruijn's Brush-turkey comes to life Bruijn's Brush-turkey *Aepypodius bruijnii*, the endemic megapode of Waigeo Island in eastern Indonesia, which, after a deadly silence of more than half a century, was rediscovered in 2001 (Science 291 (5512): 2309, 2001; Megapode Newsletter 15 (1): 2-5, 2001) has raised its head again. In May 2002, the Belgian birder Iwein Mauro observed a male of the species working at his mound on the highest mountain of the island (Megapode Newsletter 16 (1): 2-3, 2002), and now the Indonesian Kris Tindige of the Papua Bird Club has taken the first photographs of a living bird (plate 282). KT, on a study trip in the Netherlands, proudly presented his pictures during a recent meeting in the Natuurmuseum Rotterdam (NMR). The museum's ornithology department studies Bruijn's Brush-turkey since 1999 and houses 'the 2001 specimen', the preserved head and some bones of the 24th specimen known to science.

The living bird (in reasonable condition but with a broken leg) was presented to KT on 12 August 2002 in a small bamboo cage on Doom, an islet just off Sorong, in the north-western district of the Papua province of Indonesia. The brush-turkey was incidentally trapped in a snare placed by a local hunter in hill forest near Warsambin, a village in the south of Waigeo. From the information spread in 1999 and 2000 among the inhabitants of almost all villages of Waigeo by the 'Waigeo Expeditions' of Kees Heij, Hans Post and KT, the hunter knew that he had caught the sought-after bird and kept it out of the pot. Keeping the brush-turkey alive on grated coconut, the hunter – slowly – made its way to mainland New Guinea and finally

282 Bruijn's Brush-turkey / Bruijns Boshoen *Aepypodius bruijnii*, probably female, Doom (Sorong), Papua, Indonesia, 12 August 2002 *(Kris Tindige/Papua Bird Club)*. The first photograph of a living bird of this species

managed to find KT who immediately took care of the bird and photographed it.

KH and HP of the NMR, who studied almost all historical museum specimens of Bruijn's Brush-turkey, were excited when they saw the photographs: 'Finally living proof. Now we know the natural colour of the bare parts. This new locality in the relatively low southern part of Waigeo indicates that Bruijn's Brush-turkey is not confined to the higher altitude forest of the island. The three localities known so far lie 30-50 km apart and represent three different habitats. This makes the species probably less vulnerable.' KT plans, together with his Papuan Bird Club, to teach the bird hunters of Waigeo simple field-techniques that enable them to collect biological information and to pay them for their fieldwork, so they get the financial means to buy chickens rather than catching the brush-turkeys themselves.

Bruijn's Brush-turkey is the only species of megapode which, until recently, had never been observed alive by western ornithologists, despite the effort of at least 15 expeditions. Until 2000, it was only known from 23 specimens kept in the collections of natural history museums in the USA and Europe. All but one of these birds were collected around 1880 by hunters employed by the legendary Dutch (feather) merchant Anton A Bruijn. The last 'sign of life' of the species dated back to 1938 when a local collector obtained a single bird for the Academy of Natural Sciences in Philadelphia. The discovery of a head and some bones in 2001 by the Waigeo Expedition of KH, HP and KT finally proved that the species still existed and apparently stimulated others to search for the bird. With the sighting of a bird in the wild and the first-ever photographs, Bruijn's Brush-turkey slowly comes to life. C W (Kees) Moeliker

Aankondigingen & verzoeken

4th Conference of European Ornithologists' Union in August 2003: Invitation and call for contributions All EOU members as well as other ornithologists are invited to participate in 'Links and perspectives in European Ornithology' – the 4th Conference of European Ornithologists' Union from 16-21 August 2003 in Chemnitz, Germany. Contribution of posters, oral paper presentations and whole symposium sessions are very welcome. They should follow the spirit of the conference and present new results of ornithological research linking two or more scientific fields, present comparative reviews of research running in parallel in different countries, or present joint projects of research groups from different European countries. Invited plenary speakers will give links and perspectives of population biology, behavioural ecology, life history, biogeography, evolution and large scale projects in ornithology. The 4th International Shrike Symposium will be integrated in the EOU conference. Please refer to the EOU homepage www.eou.at for all conference details. Interested persons without internet access may contact the secretary of the EOU: Wolfgang Fiedler, Max Planck Research Centre for Ornithology, Vogelwarte Radolfzell, Schlossallee 2, 78315 Radolfzell, Germany.

OSME/NHBS Book Award The Ornithological Society of the Middle East (OSME) and the Natural History Book Service (NHBS) are pleased to announce the latest recipient of the OSME/NHBS Book Award. Sadegh Sadeghi Zadegan, who works as an ornithologist for the Department of the Environment in Iran was recently awarded the following books: *Birds of the Western Palearctic* (concise edition) by D W Snow & C M Perrins (editors, 1998) and *The raptors of Europe and the Middle East: a handbook of field identification* by Dick Forsman (1999).

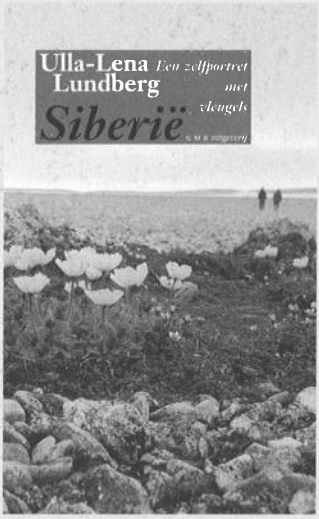
OSME and NHBS are pleased to continue supporting a book award available to Middle Eastern national birdwatchers. It is awarded annually for the purchase of a book or books up to the value of GBP 100 where it is difficult to obtain these in the country concerned. Previous recipients of the OSME/NHBS Book Award are Fares Khoury (Jordan) and Edward Gavrilov (Kazakhstan).

OSME is very grateful of the continued support from NHBS with this award which goes some way to assisting the development of birdwatching and the conservation of birds in the region.

Flight calls of migratory birds in eastern North America The long-awaited *Flight calls of migratory birds* CD-ROM by Bill Evans and Michael O'Brien is now available. This multimedia CD-ROM reference guide to the flight calls of 211 migratory landbird species in eastern North America contains audio recordings, sonagrams to facilitate comparisons between very similar sounds, and texts to further explain sound differences and calling behaviour. There will be two versions of this guide of which an html version is currently sold. In the html version, the user navigates through the information on the CD-ROM with the internet browser (no internet connection necessary). By late September 2002, an autoloading CD-ROM version will be presented which is a bit more user friendly but works on more limited operating systems (PCs only; Windows 98 or later). Both versions are identical in contents and cost (USD 35.00 plus USD 5.00 p&p within or USD 10.00 p&p outside North America). For more information and international orders, see the Old Bird website www.oldbird.org (or write to Old Bird, 605 W State St, Ithaca, NY 14850, USA).

Tweede Belgische Vogeldag op 7 december 2002 Op 7 december vindt de tweede door Natuurpunt gesteunde Belgische Vogeldag plaats in de Middelheimcampus van het RUCA, langs de Floraliënlaan te Wilrijk bij Antwerpen, Antwerpen. Het programma is als volgt:
09:00 Zaal open om 09:00.
10:00 Verwelkoming door Gerald Driessens en Joris Elst.
10:15-11:15 Geert Spanoghe over herkenning van grote meeuwen in België.
11:15-12:00 Diederik Kok en Nils van Duivendijk met de opgave van de mystery bird-competitie.
12:00-13:00 Middagpauze.
13:00-14:00 Jari Peltomäki met de adembenemende reeks 'Owls of northern Europe'.
14:00-14:30 Korte pauze, tijdens welke Jan Rodts (voorzitter van Vogelbescherming Vlaanderen vzw) vertelt over het wel en wee van de repatriëring van de Belgische Sneeuwuilen *Nyctea scandiaca*.
14:30 Oplossingen en prijsuitreiking van de mystery bird-competitie.
16:00 Levendige lezing over 'Vogelen in groepen: het succes van de DBA-vogelweken in Nederland'. En met levendig bedoelen we: …Wim Wiegant.
17:00 Einde.

Tijdens de pauzes kunnen diverse stands in de hal bezocht worden. We zorgen voor snacks, broodjes en drank. Iedereen is welkom, de toegang bedraagt EUR 5.00. We voorzien een betere wegbeschrijving en bewegwijzering dan vorig jaar!



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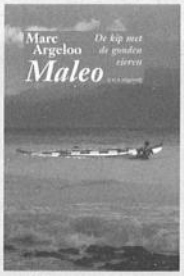

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