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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.

Voor taxonomie, volgorde en naamgeving van vogels in Dutch Birding worden de volgende overzichten aangehouden: *Dutch Birding-vogelnamen* door A B van den Berg (2008, Amsterdam; online update 2015, www.dutchbirding.nl/page.php?page_id=228) (taxonomie en wetenschappelijke, Nederlandse en Engelse namen van West-Palearctische vogels); *The Howard and Moore complete checklist of the birds of the world* (derde editie, door E C Dickinson (redactie) 2003; vierde editie, deel 1, door E C Dickinson & J V Remsen Jr (redactie) 2013) (taxonomie en wetenschappelijke namen van overige vogels van de wereld); en *IOC world bird names 5.1* door F Gill & D Donsker (2015, www.worldbirdnames.org) (Engelse en Nederlandse namen van overige vogels in de wereld; Nederlandse namen door P Vercruijsse en A J van Loon).

Voor (de voorbereiding van) bijzondere publicaties op het gebied van determinatie en/of taxonomie kan het Dutch Birding-fonds aan auteurs een financiële bijdrage leveren (zie Dutch Birding 24: 125, 2001, en www.dutchbirding.nl onder 'Tijdschrift').

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Dutch Birding is a bimonthly journal. It publishes original papers and notes on morphology, systematics, occurrence and distribution of birds in the Benelux, Europe and elsewhere in the Palearctic region. It also publishes contributions on birds in the Asian-Pacific region and other regions.

For taxonomy, sequence and nomenclature of birds in Dutch Birding the following lists are used: *Dutch Birding bird names* by A B van den Berg (2008, Amsterdam; online update 2015, www.dutchbirding.nl/page.php?page_id=229) (taxonomy and scientific, Dutch and English names of Western Palearctic birds); *The Howard and Moore complete checklist of the birds of the world* (third edition, by E C Dickinson (editor) 2003; fourth edition, volume 1, by E C Dickinson & J V Remsen Jr (editors) 2013) (taxonomy and scientific names of remaining birds of the world); and *IOC world bird names 5.1* by F Gill & D Donsker (2015, www.worldbirdnames.org) (English and Dutch names of remaining birds of the world; Dutch names by P Vercruijsse and A J van Loon).

For (preparation of) special publications regarding identification and/or taxonomy, the Dutch Birding Fund can offer financial support to authors (see Dutch Birding 24: 125, 2001, and www.dutchbirding.nl under 'Journal').

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Atlas Pied Flycatcher: variability of identification characters

Andrea Corso, Ottavio Janni, Michele Viganò & Lorenzo Starnini

Atlas Pied Flycatcher *Ficedula speculigera* (hereafter *speculigera*) has received little attention from birders and ornithologists, probably because it was long considered a subspecies of European Pied Flycatcher *F hypoleuca* before being elevated to species level (Lundberg & Alatalo 1992, Sætre et al 2001a, Sætre & Sæther 2010). As recently as the mid-1990s, the first comprehensive papers were published on field characters and plumage variation of European Pied, Collared *F albicollis* (hereafter *albicollis*) and Semicollared Flycatcher *F semitorquata* (hereafter *semitorquata*) (Mild 1993, 1994ab, Mild & Shirihai 1994). However, the characters of *speculigera* have remained poorly known due to the species' less accessible breeding areas, limited knowledge of its wintering range and the small number of specimens in European museums. After 2000, the taxon has been depicted in modern field guides (eg, Svensson et al 2009), while a number of identification papers in various European journals were published (Etherington & Small 2003, van den Berg & The Sound Approach 2006, Duquet 2008, Copete et al 2010). However, the extensive plumage variability of *speculigera* has not yet been thoroughly described and its identification characters have not been rigorously tested to assess reliability and variability. To date, only van den Berg & The Sound Approach (2006) and, more recently, Copete et al (2010) have attempted to analyze identification criteria but they focused on some characters only. Furthermore, Duquet (2008) noted the similarity between typical Iberian Pied Flycatcher *F h iberiae* (hereafter *iberiae*) and *speculigera* and reviewed the identification criteria of the former.

Recently, there have been reports of putative *speculigera* in Europe, most notably on the southern Mediterranean islands of Italy (Linosa, late April 2006; Pantelleria, late April 2009; and Siracusa, Sicily, late April 2012 (two; Corso et al 2012; Brian Small & Andrea Corso unpubl); in central Italy (Ventotene island, late April 2012; Andrea Ferri & Fernando Spina/ISPRA in litt); and in Malta (late April 2012; Raymond Galea in litt). All the reports are still awaiting ratification by the Italian and Maltese rarities committees, respectively. Triggered by these reports, we undertook a thorough study of the identification of *speculigera* in order to assist with the record assessment process. Here, we present a summary of our findings, which should be taken as a starting point for future studies and a tool for European birders and rarities committees to improve their understanding of *speculigera*. Our goal is to shed light on the species' variability and address some erroneous assumptions. We focus on adult males. The separation of poorly-marked *speculigera* from the most strongly marked *iberiae* remains a problem and female and juvenile plumages remain very little known.

Materials and methods

The data reported here are based on: 29 skins of male *speculigera* (17 adult and 12 second calendar-year) collected on the breeding grounds during the breeding season in Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia; 22 skins of *iberiae* (16 adult, six second calendar-year) collected on the breeding grounds and during the breeding season in Spain; and over 1000 skins of nominate *hypoleuca* (herafter *hypoleuca*) and 500 of *albicollis* from throughout the Western Palearctic (WP). The skins (specimens) are held at the Natural History Museum, Tring, England (NHM); Museo Civico di Zoologia di Roma, Rome, Italy (MCZR); Museo Civico di Storia Naturale di Milano, Milan, Italy (MCSM); Museo Civico di Storia Naturale di Carmagnola, Torino, Italy (SNCa); Malmö Natural History Museum, Malmö, Sweden; Natural History Museum of Wien, Vienna, Austria (NMW); Museum für Naturkunde, Berlin, Germany (ZMB), Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle, Paris, France (MNHN); and several others, as well as two private bird collections in Italy. In order to exclude potentially mislabeled specimens (eg, *iberiae* migrating through Morocco in spring), we excluded birds collected during pre-breeding migration periods (March to mid-May) and/or away of breeding grounds from our analysis. Further, we double-checked the identification of all specimens labeled as *speculigera* by using plumage characters but especially by wing length measurement (Svensson 1992; pers obs). The identification as *speculigera* of one of the two birds ringed recently in Italy (at Ventotene island, Lazio, Roma, on 22 April 2012) was confirmed by DNA analysis (Andrea

FIGURE 1 Atlas Pied Flycatchers / Atlasvliegenvangers *Ficedula speculigera (Lorenzo Starnini)*. Images from birds on breeding grounds in Morocco and Tunisia in May. Perched bird shows typical adult male in fresh plumage with large white forehead patch, semi-collared appearance, square white wing patch on greater covers, all-black tail and pale greyish rump. Same bird with stretched wing shows wholly black outermost greater coverts, with black base to gc4-5 now visible on open wing. Note also that central median coverts are two thirds white. On some birds, white patch at base of primaries is as large as on well-marked Collared Flycatcher *F albicollis*. In flight, two adult males showing variability in wing pattern, extent of pale on rump and semi-collared appearance. Note that upper bird approaches *albicollis* in rump pattern while lower bird approaches European Pied Flycatcher *F hypoleuca*. Note extensive white patch on primary bases, reaching inner web of p2, as well as broad white base of all secondaries. Lowest bird is second calendar-year male showing retained outer tail-feathers edged white and smaller white primary patch, similar to that of *hypoleuca*.

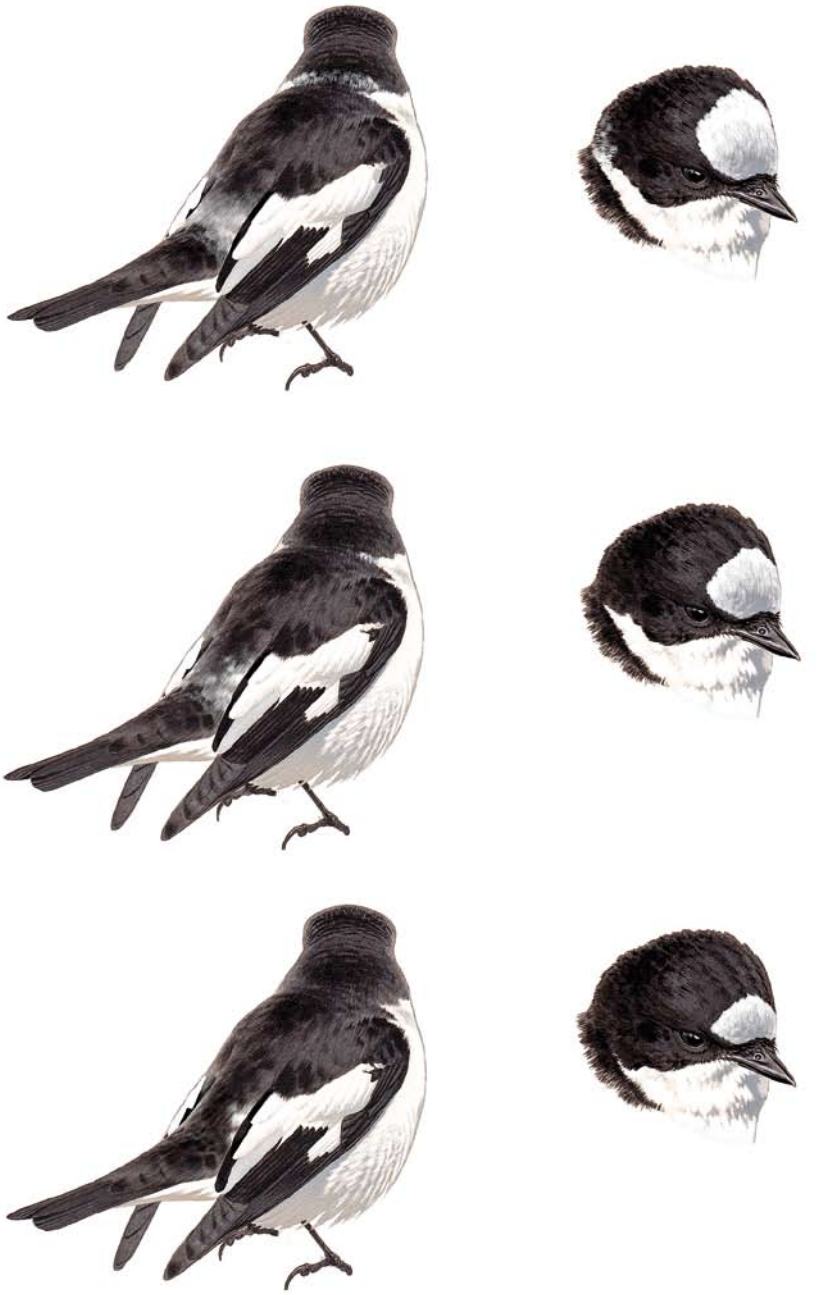

FIGURE 2 Atlas Pied Flycatchers / Atlasvliegenvangers *Ficedula speculigera (Lorenzo Starnini)*. Three adult males, showing variability in white forehead patch, collar and rump pattern. Central bird is typical individual, upper bird illustrates maximum extent of white forehead patch, and lower bird minimum extent, found in some birds from Morocco and approaching European Pied Flycatcher *F hypoleuca*. White forehead patch on Iberian Pied Flycatcher *F h iberiae* is often similar to that of lower two birds, and occasionally approaches that of upper bird.

221 Atlas Pied Flycatcher / Atlasvliegenvanger *Ficedula speculigera*, adult male, Ventotene island, Lazio, Italy, 22 April 2012 *(Andrea Ferri/ISPRA)*. Same bird as in plate 227 and 257. Ringed during ISPRA 'Piccole Isole Project', co-ordinated by Fernando Spina. Identification of this 'classic' adult male Atlas Pied was confirmed by DNA analysis. **222** Atlas/Iberian Pied Flycatcher / Atlasvliegenvanger/Iberische Bonte Vliegenvanger *Ficedula speculigera/hypoleuca iberiae*, adult male, Ventotene island, Lazio, Italy, 22 April 2012 *(Andrea Ferri/ISPRA)*. Same bird as in plate 258. Bird caught in same mist net and at same time as bird in plate 221, 227 and 257. No genetic data were obtained from this individual but plumage is typical of adult male *speculigera*, and it was together with a proven male *speculigera*.

Galimberti & Andrea Ferri in litt) and we used that bird as an important reference. We also analyzed 70 photographs of male *speculigera* taken on the breeding grounds (preferably in May-June), some of which are published here. Likewise, for *iberiae*, we only analyzed photographs and specimens taken on this taxon's breeding grounds during its breeding season; 80 photographs were provided, most notably by José Luis Copete and Eduardo Garcia del Rey. Andrea Corso has gained field experience with all WP *Ficedula* taxa during the last 25 years in Europe, North Africa, the Middle East and Central Asia, while Ottavio Janni, Lorenzo Starnini and Michele Viganò have extensive field experience with most of them. We studied field notes on *speculigera* obtained from Morocco, mainly at Ifrane and in various other Middle Atlas and High Atlas localities, and in north-western Tunisia at various localities (Arnoud van den Berg in litt, Georges Olioso in litt, Ian Wallace in litt; AC pers obs). *Iberiae* was studied in the field in central Spain in summer by AC but most information derived from correspondence with José Luis Copete (in litt).

Although much has been written about biological and evolutionary aspects of hybrids *albicollis x hypoleuca* (eg, Alatalo et al 1990, Gelter et al 1992, Sætre et al 2001b, Sætre & Sæther 2010, Qvarnström et al 2006, 2011), much less discussion about their field and in-hand identification and their variability has taken place (Mild 1993, 1994, Etherington & Small 2003, Bonnet et al 2011). We studied many photographs of proven hybrids as well as hybrids in the field. We tested and reassessed the reliability and variability of identification characters mentioned in the literature – most of which focus on patterns of tail, greater coverts and rump – and attempted to find new identification features. For this, we used skins and photographs, paying particular attention to males, which are better represented in photographic and specimen collections. Because material of females and juveniles was underrepresented, we only deal with their identification very briefly.

General characters of *speculigera*

In general, *speculigera* is intermediate in appearance between *albicollis* and nominate *hypoleuca*, albeit closer to the former. The main plumage characters are: ***1*** lack of a white collar, although it often has a half-collar and occasionally an almost complete one; ***2*** large white primary patch which is either intermediate between *albicollis* and *hypoleuca* (often similar to *semitorquata*) or as wide as in *albicollis*; ***3*** fully black tail in adult male plumage, without any trace of white; ***4*** on average,

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223 Atlas Pied Flycatcher / Atlasvliegenvanger *Ficedula speculigera*, adult male, Tafilalt, Morocco, 16 April 2011 *(Ivan Maggini)*. Close-up view of 'classic' male Atlas Pied showing large, diamond-shaped white forehead patch and very large and square white wing patch (greater coverts and tertials). Note that outermost greater coverts are black, some with narrow white fringing. White patch at base of primaries clearly reaches p3, and resembles Collared Flycatcher *F albicollis* in this regard. Typically jet-black plumage of this fresh individual can fade to sooty grey when worn. **224** Atlas Pied Flycatcher / Atlasvliegenvanger *Ficedula speculigera*, adult male from breeding grounds, Ain-Soltane, Tunisia, 9 May 2012 *(Georges Olioso)*. Bird ringed on breeding ground. This individual has small white forehead patch, barely larger than in most European Pied Flycatchers *F hypoleuca* but note all-black tail typical of adult male Atlas Pied, velvety jet-black upperparts, and large white primary patch reaching p3. Wing-patch formed by greater coverts and tips of median coverts very squared, and while no black bases are visible on white greater coverts, outermost greater coverts are fully black. This bird lacks semi-collar, approaching many European Pied in this regard. **225** Atlas Pied Flycatcher / Atlasvliegenvanger *Ficedula speculigera*, adult male from breeding grounds, Ifrane, Morocco, 9 June 2014 *(Sander Bot)*. Note square white wing-patch, black outer greater coverts and all-black tail. Rather small white forehead patch but still larger than in any European Pied Flycatcher *F hypoleuca*. Note that as early as June some worn sooty-grey feathers contrast with fresh black ones. **226** Atlas/Iberian Pied Flycatcher / Atlasvliegenvanger/Iberische Bonte Vliegenvanger *Ficedula speculigera/hypoleuca iberiae*, adult male, Malta, 15 April 2012 *(Nicholas Galea)*. Same bird as in plate 244 and 259. Identified by ringers as Atlas Pied. Bird looks like 'classic' *speculigera* and we suspect it was identified correctly; in that same week, four adult males were reported in Italy, including one of which identification was confirmed by DNA analysis. Although this is a 'picture perfect' adult male *speculigera* in every aspect, we found that some *iberiae* can show same features, so that in vagrant context and in absence of DNA or vocal data, such birds should be classified as *speculigera/iberiae*.

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227 Atlas Pied Flycatcher / Atlasvliegenvanger *Ficedula speculigera*, adult male, Ventotene island, Lazio, Italy, 22 April 2012 *(Andrea Ferri/ISPRA)*. Same bird as in plate 221 and 257. Ringed during ISPRA 'Piccole Isole Project', co-ordinated by Fernando Spina. Identification of this 'classic' adult male Atlas Pied was confirmed by DNA analysis. **228** Atlas Pied Flycatcher / Atlasvliegenvanger *Ficedula speculigera*, second-calendar year male from breeding grounds, Ain-Soltane, Tunisia, 9 May 2012 *(Georges Olioso)*. Very advanced male, ringed on breeding grounds. Tail appears all black, so that either all feathers have been renewed or any retained juvenile outer tail-feathers are not visible on closed tail. Note that most new median coverts are half white. **229** Atlas Pied Flycatcher / Atlasvliegenvanger *Ficedula speculigera*, second-calendar year female from breeding grounds, Ain-Soltane, Tunisia, 18 May 2012 *(Georges Olioso)*. Advanced female. Note striking resemblance to Semicollared Flycatcher *F semitorquata*. **230** Atlas Pied Flycatcher / Atlasvliegenvanger *Ficedula speculigera*, adult female (collected at Atlas mountains, Morocco, on 21 June 1919), NHM, Tring, England, 23 June 2005 *(Justin J F J Jansen/©NHM London)*. This worn individual shows how similar female *speculigera* and Semicollared Flycatcher *F semitorquata* can be: worn uppertail almost same colour as rump and mantle and pale fringes on the tertials very narrow, nearly matching pattern of *semitorquata*. In a vagrant context, tail pattern and call would be most crucial features.

largest white forehead patch of all black-and-white flycatchers, although it can occasionally be smaller; and finally (at least in most cases) ***5*** white-tipped median coverts, as in *semitorquata*.

Plumage variation

Body plumage colour

In adult male *speculigera*, the body plumage is always jet-black, at least as intense as in *albicollis*, and always purer and more velvety-black than in any *hypoleuca*. This important character was mentioned in all previous literature. We did not find any adult male *speculigera* with greyish-tinged plumage or female-like plumage as in *hypoleuca*, though faded second calendar-year males often appear very sooty grey or blackish with faded, greyish feathers on upperwing, scapulars, rump, neck, nape and crown, contrasting with newly moulted head-feathers. This contrast contributes to a rather patchy appearance in many second calendar-year males. Further, later in spring/summer, faded adult males could also appear less jet-black or even greyish tinged, either uniformly or patchily, depending

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231 Iberian Pied Flycatcher / Iberische Bonte Vliegenvanger *Ficedula hypoleuca iberiae*, adult male, La Hiruela, Spain, 16 June 2012 *(José Luis Copete)*. This individual is very similar to male Atlas Pied Flycatcher *F speculigera*, with tentative differences including median coverts lacking any white tips and p1 only slightly longer than primary coverts. Birds like these can only be safely identified by DNA and calls, and possibly by measurements (pending additional data). **232** Iberian Pied Flycatcher / Iberische Bonte Vliegenvanger *Ficedula hypoleuca iberiae*, adult male, La Hiruela, Spain, 17 June 2012 *(Ferran López)*. Individual showing white tips to median coverts and matching Atlas Pied Flycatcher *F speculigera* in wing pattern. Small square forehead patch more typical of *iberiae* although some *speculigera* can show this as well. **233** Iberian Pied Flycatcher / Iberische Bonte Vliegenvanger *Ficedula hypoleuca iberiae*, second calendar-year male, La Hiruela, Spain, 17 June 2012 *(Ferran López)*. Note striking white tips to median coverts and impressively large white forehead patch, making this bird impossible to distinguish from male Atlas Pied Flycatcher *F speculigera*. Retained coverts faded brownish-grey and retained primaries showing smaller and shorter patch at base compared with adults. Tail appearing wholly black probably because retained, white marked, outer tail-feathers are hidden by new black ones. **234** Atlas Pied Flycatcher / Atlasvliegenvanger *Ficedula speculigera*, adult male, Ifrane, Morocco, 9 June 2014 *(Sander Bot)*. Typical adult male. Note jet-black upperparts, all-black tail, large diamond-shaped forehead patch, short white 'indentation' on neck-side, large square white patch on wing-coverts (with most median coverts almost fully white), large primary patch and pale-tinged side of rump.

on wear. Many adult male *iberiae* can be (almost?) as jet-black as *speculigera*, so this feature can only be used to separate the latter from *hypoleuca* but not from *iberiae*. Some adult male *iberiae* can apparently show a greyish tinge, and this taxon might also have a female-like male plumage (as *hypoleuca*), although this remains uncertain (José Luis Copete in litt; Andrea Corso pers obs). However, many female *iberiae* can appear male-like, sometimes with a well-marked pale forehead patch (Potti 1993). Hybrids *albicollis x hypoleuca* are generally not jet-black but some '*albicollis*-type' hybrids can approach *speculigera* in this regard, albeit without the velvety-black quality to the plumage, which tends to show a dark-brown hue.

Forehead patch

As reported in all previous literature, the white forehead patch of *speculigera* is on average the largest of all black-and-white WP *Ficedula* flycatch-

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235 Atlas Pied Flycatcher / Atlasvliegenvanger *Ficedula speculigera*, adult male, Azrou, Morocco, 8 June 2012 *(Paul French)*. Another typical adult male, with very large forehead patch and longer but narrower white patch at primary base (cf plate 234), and several black outer greater coverts. Pale tinge at side of rump barely visible. **236** Atlas Pied Flycatcher / Atlasvliegenvanger *Ficedula speculigera*, adult male, Azrou, Morocco, 8 June 2012 *(Paul French)*. Example showing smallest and most squared forehead patch found in male *speculigera*. **237** Atlas Pied Flycatcher / Atlasvliegenvanger *Ficedula speculigera*, adult male, Azrou, Morocco, 11 June 2010 *(Arnoud B van den Berg/The Sound Approach)*. Other example of breeding male with small white forehead patch. Wing pattern, however, typical with large square white patch on wing-coverts (many median coverts half white) and broad and long white patch at primary bases. **238** Atlas Pied Flycatcher / Atlasvliegenvanger *Ficedula speculigera*, adult male, Ifrane, Morocco, 9 June 2014 *(Sander Bot)*. Other example of small white forehead patch, in this bird more diamond-shaped compared with birds in plate 236-237 but still rather small and reminiscent of European Pied Flycatcher *F hypoleuca*.

ers (figure 2). Combined measurements from various sources give a range of 5-11 mm long, with an average of 9 mm (Svensson 1992, Sætre et al 2001, Bruvik 2007; AC pers obs). *Albicollis* comes close in this respect. In some *speculigera*, the patch extends to the lores and all the way up to the crown immediately above the eye, forming a large round or diamond-shaped patch. Note that we found several undoubted *speculigera* with smaller forehead patches than usual, even as little as 5 mm long (smaller than the 7 mm reported in Svensson 1992). In these birds, the forehead patch is the same size as those of typical *iberiae* and even as some well-marked *hypoleuca* (eg, from southern Finland; Sirkiä 2011).

In *iberiae*, the forehead patch ranges between 4-7.5 mm long (Svensson 1992), smaller than in most *speculigera*. However, just as some *speculigera* can show a smaller forehead patch, some *iberiae* can show a longer and larger one, up to 8.5 mm long or more (José Luis Copete & Eduardo Garcia del Rey in litt; pers obs). Thus, while we suspect that extremely large forehead patches occur only in *speculigera*, we believe this feature cannot be used to conclusively separate *speculigera* from *iberiae*. Note that many hybrids – especially '*albicollis*-type' hybrids – are similar in this respect but the patch never reaches the crown directly above the eye. However, since *speculigera* can show a smaller forehead patch than previously re-

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239 Atlas Pied Flycatcher / Atlasvliegenvanger *Ficedula speculigera*, adult male, Azrou, Morocco, 8 June 2012 *(Paul French)*. Note very broad, square and white patch on wing-coverts, with no black bases visible to any of white greater coverts (but outermost greater covert entirely black). Primary patch and rump pattern on this bird similar to Collared Flycatcher *F albicollis*. **240** Atlas/Iberian Pied Flycatcher / Atlasvliegenvanger/Iberische Bonte Vliegenvanger *Ficedula speculigera/hypoleuca iberiae*, male, Pantelleria, Sicily, Italy, 24 April 2009 *(Andrea Ciaccio)*. Same bird as in plate 241. Identified in the field as *speculigera* based on call but best treated as *speculigera/iberiae*. Note almost complete semi-collar and all-black tail. **241** Atlas/Iberian Pied Flycatcher / Atlasvliegenvanger/Iberische Bonte Vliegenvanger *Ficedula speculigera/hypoleuca iberiae*, male, Pantelleria, Sicily, Italy, 24 April 2009 *(Andrea Corso)*. Same bird as in plate 240. **242** Collared Flycatcher / Withalsvliegenvanger *Ficedula albicollis*, Pantelleria, Sicily, Italy, 24 April 2009, adult male *(Andrea Corso)*. Note that white forehead patch in some *albicollis* is as large as smaller white patches in Atlas Pied Flycatcher *F speculigera*, white patch on wing-coverts not as square and more greater coverts having black bases, and white patch at base of primaries being larger than in other black-and-white *Ficedula*. Tail is all black in many adult males *albicollis* as well.

ported, identification must be based on a full suite of characters.

Neck pattern

The presence or lack of a white semi-collar is quite variable and has been discussed extensively in eg, van den Berg & The Sound Approach (2006) and Duquet (2008): some *speculigera* indeed show a semi-collar, others just a narrow hint (as a narrow 'tooth') of white on the neck-sides, and still others an almost full white collar broken only by greyish or blackish feathers mixed on the back of the neck (figure 2). We found that the 'tooth' pattern is the most common. However, few authors (eg, Etherington & Small 2003) mention the fact that some birds have no trace of a collar at all and appear like typical *hypoleuca* in this regard (figure 2). Such birds are rare, as even poorly-marked birds usually show at least a small white 'tongue' around the ear-coverts and neck-side. *Iberiae* is similar, therefore again significantly differing from *hypoleuca*. The presence of a collar in *iberiae* is age related and occurs more frequently in older birds (Potti & Merino 1995); we lack sufficient data to establish whether such a correlation exists in *speculigera* as well. A partial neck collar is a regular feature in

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243 Atlas Pied Flycatcher / Atlasvliegenvanger *Ficedula speculigera*, adult male, Ain-Soltane, Tunisia, 9 May 2012 *(Georges Olioso)*. Same bird as in plate 224, showing large diamond-shaped forehead patch. **244** Atlas/Iberian Pied Flycatcher / Atlasvliegenvanger/Iberische Bonte Vliegenvanger *Ficedula speculigera/hypoleuca iberiae*, adult male, Malta, 15 April 2012 *(Nicholas Galea)*. Same bird as in plate 226 and 259. Note size and shape of forehead patch. **245** Atlas Pied Flycatcher / Atlasvliegenvanger *Ficedula speculigera*, adult male (collected at Ain-Draham, north-western Tunisia, on 16 June 1839), NHM, Tring, England, 27 January 2009 *(Ottavio Janni/©NHM London)*. Forehead patch on this bird is largest we have found in *speculigera* and even larger than in Collared Flycatcher *F albicollis*. This feature should be measured on larger sample of birds to determine extent of overlap with Iberian Pied Flycatcher *F hypoleuca iberiae*, and whether latter can ever show such large forehead patch. **246** Atlas Pied Flycatcher / Atlasvliegenvanger *Ficedula speculigera*, adult male (collected at Ain-Draham, north-western Tunisia, on 16 June 1839), NHM, Tring, England, 28 January 2009 *(Andrea Corso©NHM London)*. Bird showing almost complete white collar; Collared Flycatchers *F albicollis* breeding in Italy can occasionally show this pattern, especially if not fully adult. **247** Atlas Pied Flycatcher / Atlasvliegenvanger *Ficedula speculigera*, adult male (collected at Azrou, Morocco), NHM, Tring, England, 28 January 2009 *(Andrea Corso/©NHM London)*. Typical head and neck pattern of male *speculigera*. **248** Atlas Pied Flycatchers / Atlasvliegenvangers *Ficedula speculigera* (collected in Lower and Middle Atlas, Morocco, in June), 28 January 2009 *(Andrea Corso/©NHM London)*. Skins showing extremes in range of white forehead patch in *speculigera*.

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249-250 Iberian Pied Flycatcher / Iberische Bonte Vliegenvanger *Ficedula hypoleuca iberiae*, male, La Hiruela, Madrid, Spain, 17 June 2012 *(Ferran López)*. Note large, diamond-shaped forehead patch; this is shown by many *iberiae* and matches typical pattern of Atlas Pied Flycatcher *F speculigera*. **251** Iberian Pied Flycatcher / Iberische Bonte Vliegenvanger *Ficedula hypoleuca iberiae*, adult male, La Hiruela, Madrid, Spain, 17 June 2012 *(José Luis Copete)*. Note rather large, round forehead patch, as in many Atlas Pied Flycatchers *F speculigera*. **252** Iberian Pied Flycatcher / Iberische Bonte Vliegenvanger *Ficedula hypoleuca iberiae*, male, La Hiruela, Madrid, Spain, 17 June 2012 *(José Luis Copete)*. Another example of large white forehead patch in *iberiae*. **253** Collared Flycatcher / Withalsvliegenvanger *Ficedula albicollis*, adult male, Pantelleria, Sicily, Italy, 29 April 2011 *(Andrea Corso)*. Same bird as in plate 254. Note forehead patch similar to many Atlas Pied Flycatchers *F speculigera*. **254** Collared Flycatcher / Withalsvliegenvanger *Ficedula albicollis*, adult male, Pantelleria, Sicily, Italy, 29 April 2011 *(Andrea Corso)*. Same bird as in plate 253. Usually, forehead patch of *albicollis* is as large as in Atlas/Iberian Pied Flycatcher *F speculigera/hypoleuca iberiae* but rather squared instead of diamond shaped; square forehead patch is quite unusual in *speculigera/iberiae*.

255 Atlas Pied Flycatchers / Atlasvliegenvangers *Ficedula speculigera*, adult males (collected in North Africa), NHM, Tring, England, 29 January 2009 *(Andrea Corso/©NHM London)*. Note variability in neck and rump pattern.

male *semitorquata* (but some have no collar), while a minority of *albicollis* in Italy can show a broken collar (Bonnet et al 2001; Andrea Corso pers obs). Therefore, a partial collar can be found in any of the four species but in different percentages. Bonnet et al (2011) suggested that a partial collar may be an ancestral character, shared by the four species. Hence, the trait may also occasionally be expressed in populations that normally lack it (atavism). It should be noted that adult male *speculigera* with a nearly full collar are strikingly similar to *albicollis*. In such birds, the pattern of median and inner greater coverts (presence of dark bases and presence of white tips on median) and the extent of white on the inner web of the median and outermost secondaries need to be carefully checked (see below).

Rump pattern

Mild (1993, 1994a), Etherington & Small (2003) and van den Berg & The Sound Approach (2006) reported that *speculigera* has an obvious, and often wide, white rump patch; Duquet (2008) also reported that the rump is rather extensively white or greyish-white in both *iberiae* and *speculigera*, and his photographs supported this. On the other hand, Copete et al (2010) argued that previous authors overstated the extent of the white on the rump and that the most common pattern on the rump was in fact dark, flecked with white or greyish feathers. The truth lies in between, as both white-rumped and dark-rumped birds can be found, with the pattern being quite variable (figure 1). Most birds show a rump of which the centre is jet-black or greyish black, with small white lateral patches, thus appearing rather dark in the field. However, some birds show extensive white sides to the rump while rarely it is even quite similar to *albicollis* (Copete et al 2010). It is usually never bright white as in typical adult male *albicollis* in fresh plumage. Mirroring the correlation between the extent of white in the neck area and the size of the white forehead patch found in *iberiae* (Potti & Merino 1995), it seems that *speculigera* shows a correlation between the extent of white on the rump and on the neck. Such birds also seem to show more white on the greater and median coverts. We do not have enough data to explore age-related variations in the amount of white in the plumage in *speculigera*, as found in some populations of *iberiae* (Potti & Merino 1995), where older birds are more likely to show a white semi-collar or almost complete collar and a wider forehead patch; this correlation was not confirmed in other populations of *iberiae* (Galván & Moreno 2009). Note that in second calendar-year birds the rump can appear brownish, faded off-white/greyish, or brownish-black sullied with off-white or greyish lateral patches. Worn adults lose the white on the rump (and often rump-sides) almost completely as the white tips to the rump-feathers wear off, while the rump is much whiter in fresh birds. Plumage wear thus strongly affects the appearance of the rump, as it does the intensity of the black colour of males.

Primary pattern

As reported in all literature, the white patch at the base of the primaries is very extensive in adult males *speculigera*, often similar to that in adult male *albicollis* and therefore longer and wider than in *hypoleuca* (figure 1-2). This character is one of the first 'alarm bells' that can alert observers to the presence of a migrant or vagrant *speculigera*. The average width of this primary patch for adult males, measured as the amount of white beyond the primary coverts, is 7.3 mm (range of 6.7-11 mm, although Svensson (1992) reports a range of 4-9 mm; our upper range overlaps with *albicollis* (Sætre et al 2001, Bruvik 2007; pers obs)). Males in their second calendar-year consistently show a shorter and narrower buff-white or off-white patch. Although this patch can be narrower in some adult males (mostly in third calendar-year – according to ringed birds of known age; José Luis Copete in litt), it is still very long, reaching almost all the way to the outer-

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256 Atlas Pied Flycatcher / Atlasvliegenvanger *Ficedula speculigera*, adult male, Tafilalt, Morocco, 16 April 2011 *(Ivan Maggini)*. Same bird as in plate 223. Note clearly visible black outer greater coverts (at least three), very long p1 projecting visibly beyond primary coverts, very broad and long white patch at primary base (reaching inner web of p2) and rather broad and regular white base along secondaries. **257** Atlas Pied Flycatcher / Atlasvliegenvanger *Ficedula speculigera*, adult male, Ventotene island, Lazio, Italy, 22 April 2012 *(Andrea Ferri/ISPRA)*. Same bird as in plate 221 and 227. Ringed during ISPRA 'Piccole Isole Project', co-ordinated by Fernando Spina. Identification of this 'classic' adult male Atlas Pied was confirmed by DNA analysis. Note pattern of median coverts approaching that of Semicollared Flycatcher *F semitorquata*, extensively white greater coverts, although three outermost ones are black, and wide white patch at primary base reaching inner web of p3 (and just barely on p2) and outer web of p4. **258** Atlas/Iberian Pied Flycatcher / Atlasvliegenvanger/Iberische Bonte Vliegenvanger *Ficedula speculigera/hypoleuca iberiae*, adult male, Ventotene island, Lazio, Italy, 22 April 2012 *(Andrea Ferri/ISPRA)*. Same bird as in plate 222. Note white at primary base reaching inner web of p2-3 and outer web on p4, at least three black outer greater coverts and rather extensively pale rump patch. **259** Atlas/Iberian Pied Flycatcher / Atlasvliegenvanger/Iberische Bonte Vliegenvanger *Ficedula speculigera/hypoleuca iberiae*, adult male, Malta, 15 April 2012 *(Nicholas Galea)*. Same bird as in plate 226 and 244. Bird showing exceptional amount of white on greater coverts, with only outermost one (gc1) entirely black, while gc2-3 are black and white. Note also extensively white primary base and obviously off-white rump.

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260 Iberian Pied Flycatcher / Iberische Bonte Vliegenvanger *Ficedula hypoleuca iberiae*, male, La Hiruela, Madrid, Spain, 17 June 2012 *(Ferran López)*. Note black outermost greater coverts (at least three), with wing pattern matching that of many Atlas Pied Flycatchers *F speculigera*. **261** Iberian Pied Flycatcher / Iberische Bonte Vliegenvanger *Ficedula hypoleuca iberiae*, male, La Hiruela, Madrid, Spain, 17 June 2012 *(José Luis Copete)*. Another Atlas Pied Flycatcher *F speculigera*-like wing pattern in *iberiae*; note two wholly black outermost greater coverts with third being white tipped, white primary base reaching inner web of p2 and very tip of p1, and *speculigera*-like pattern of innermost secondary. **262** Iberian Pied Flycatcher / Iberische Bonte Vliegenvanger *Ficedula hypoleuca iberiae*, second calendar-year male, La Hiruela, Madrid, Spain, 17 June 2012 *(Ferran López)*. Note that all primaries, secondaries (with exception of innermost), primary coverts and alula are retained juvenile feathers and quite faded, with primaries almost lacking white base. Same pattern can be found in second calendar-year male Atlas Pied Flycatcher *F speculigera*. **263** Collared Flycatcher / Withalsvliegenvanger *Ficedula albicollis*, adult male, Pantelleria, Sicily, Italy, 29 April 2011 *(Andrea Corso)*. Typically, both *albicollis* and nominate European Pied Flycatcher *F hypoleuca hypoleuca* show obvious white bases to greater coverts, unlike Atlas Pied Flycatcher *F speculigera* and Iberian Pied Flycatcher *F h iberiae*. White primary bases are most extensive in adult *albicollis*, extending to outer web of p3; pattern of innermost secondary is similar to *speculigera/iberiae* but white on central secondaries extends further down.

most primary on the closed wing. These birds show a primary patch pattern identical to that of many hybrids *albicollis x hypoleuca*, in which the width is intermediate between the two parent species, while the length is comparable with *albicollis*. Svensson (1992) and other authors report that the white on the primaries of *speculigera* usually starts at p3-4(5) (numbered from outside). Our data show that the white starts on average from p3 inwards all the way to p10, while the white on the *inner* web of the primaries always reaches p2/3, and in many birds the tip of p1 as well.

In *hypoleuca* and most hybrids, the white patch is narrower and shorter, starting at p5 or p6, with only a few birds showing small white spots at the base of the inner web of p4. *Albicollis* is similar in this regard. In *iberiae*, the white patch is usually narrower (Svensson et al 2009), extending 2-5.5 mm beyond the primary coverts (Svensson 1992). In most *iberiae*, the white starts at p3/4, with no white at the base of the inner web of p2 (white on the inner web usually begins at p3). However, we found several birds with a wider patch, extending up to 8 mm beyond the primary coverts and with

white starting at p3 on the outer web and p2 on the inner web, much as in many *speculigera*. Note that José Luis Copete (in litt) found several *iberiae* with even wider and more conspicuous white primary bases, similar to typical *speculigera* – such birds can not be safely told from *speculigera* based on this character.

Secondary pattern

Mild (1993, 1994a) pointed out that the white on the innermost secondary is more extensive in *albicollis* and *speculigera* than in *hypoleuca*, encompassing two third of the feather. We also found differences in the middle secondaries, with *speculigera* showing more white on both the inner and outer web than in *hypoleuca* but the pattern also differing from that of typical adult male *albicollis* (figure 1). On average, in *speculigera*, the white on the inner web of the middle and outer secondaries (s1-4) is more restricted than in *albicollis*, with the white patch being narrower and often more rectangular, whereas the white in *albicollis* is wider and, chiefly on the inner web, extending further down towards the feather tip. However, some *speculigera* have extensive white on the secondaries, showing a pattern overlapping with that of poorly-marked *albicollis*. Nevertheless, secondary pattern may be a minor supporting feature. *Iberiae* shows the same pattern as *speculigera*.

Tertial pattern

Adult males *speculigera* always have more white on the tertials than *hypoleuca* and hybrids *albicollis x hypoleuca*. *Iberiae* can show the same pattern; we failed to find consistent differences with *speculigera* in this feature, contradicting Duquet (2008), who claimed that *iberiae* usually shows more white on the tertials than *speculigera*.

Greater coverts

The most common misconception regarding diagnostic features concerns – along with the tail pattern – the pattern of the greater coverts. Mild (1993, 1994a) reported that *speculigera* 'usually have all-white greater coverts', and added that in *albicollis x hypoleuca* and pure *albicollis* 'usually their outermost greater coverts are black, or all the greater coverts show at least dark bases'. The idea that *speculigera* should have entirely white greater coverts has been repeated in all subsequent publications. Etherington & Small (2003), for instance, reported: 'a fundamental difference in *speculigera* and *iberiae* is that their greater coverts are normally wholly white'. They added: 'rarely there is a small area of black at the base of the outer greater coverts' and 'some Collared may show more white on the greater coverts than Atlas, but they are never completely white'. These authors correctly pointed out that *speculigera* can have a black area at the base of the greater coverts but did not stress that a variable amount of black is always present on at least some of the white outer coverts and that this can be extensive (see below). Svensson et al (2009) depict and describe *speculigera* as having 'all-white greater coverts', as opposed to *iberiae* which shows 'much white'. We found this feature to be highly variable and we failed to find birds with a full set of all-white greater coverts. In a sample of 17 skins (full adult males collected on breeding grounds), no individual had all greater coverts entirely white: in most birds (70.5%), two to three greater coverts were black or with the third one (numbered from outside) showing narrow white fringing or a variegated black-and-white pattern, while the other birds had two black greater coverts with the third and/or fourth being half white and half black. Only a single skin had the outermost greater covert black and the next three (gc2-4) variegated. Likewise, in all close-up photographs, either in the hand or in the field, no birds showed all-white greater coverts and all had at least some black on the outermost greater coverts. So, the often-repeated claim that *speculigera* has all-white greater coverts is misleading, caused by the most visible greater coverts on the closed wing appearing all white, particularly bright and conspicuous, which is furthermore emphasized by the fact that many median coverts have quite an extensive white tip (or even distal half), covering any small black base of greater coverts. In *albicollis* and *hypoleuca*, there is always a larger number of white greater coverts with visible dark bases than in *speculigera*, and the dark bases are more conspicuous. In fact, in the vast majority of *hypoleuca*, most of the greater coverts with white also have an extensive dark base which is easily visible in the field. On the other hand, *albicollis* has on average more coverts with dark bases than *speculigera* (as reported by Etherington & Small 2003), although we found a few *albicollis* with the dark area barely visible on the closed wing, thus approaching *speculigera*.

In *iberiae*, the number of unmarked white coverts is closest to *speculigera*. On the whole, *iberiae* and *speculigera* are extremely similar in this feature, making their identification more difficult than previously suggested (eg, in Svensson et al 2009). The white patch is often less conspicuous in *iberiae* than in *speculigera* since, on average, more white feathers have black markings. Hybrids *albicollis x hypoleuca* always show more, and more extensive-

ly, black-based coverts; some hybrids (the so-called *albicollis*-type birds) may approach those *speculigera* with less white in the greater coverts but they still show more black on the median or inner greater coverts (gc4-7), at least when examined in the hand. Note that the exact pattern of the greater coverts is much easier to assess when the wing is fully open (figure 1). When closed, the unmarked, pure white tips of the median coverts overlap and conceal the pattern of the outermost greater coverts, leading to the impression of a full set (including two outermost greater coverts gc1-2) of entirely white greater coverts (see below). Indeed, on perched birds in the field, one gets the impression of a large, conspicuous white patch on the greater coverts, contributing to the misleading belief that all greater coverts are entirely white in *speculigera*. The shape of the white patch of the greater coverts is an important character, being square in male *speculigera* (cf figure 1) but becoming narrower towards the outer edge in many *albicollis* due to the higher number of median greater coverts with a dark base, which is even more evident in *hypoleuca*. In some well-marked *iberiae*, the white patch is shaped much like in typical *speculigera*, while in other individuals it narrows towards the outer edge.

Median coverts

Mild (1993, 1994a) reported that '*speculigera* differs from Semicollared by lacking the white-tipped median coverts of that species'. Etherington & Small (2003) and most other references make no mention of this. However, van Duivendijk (2010, 2011) correctly points out for *speculigera*: 'regularly one or more white tips to median coverts, though not forming a complete white bar as on Semicollared Flycatcher'. This character has been overlooked by birders but it needs to be taken into account. We found that c 90% of *speculigera* (including many females) show at least some white-tipped median coverts. Often, only two to three outermost median coverts lack a white tip, unlike *semitorquata* (figure 1-2). In many cases, the white tips are rather wide, comprising up to half the feather or even more, and covering the base of the greater coverts, giving the impression of a large white wing patch. This pattern is very rare in *albicollis* (Corso & Janni 2010) and never shown by adult *hypoleuca* with adult-type median coverts (but beware that retained juvenile coverts often show a greyish or off-white tip). We found this pattern in some *iberiae* as well; it is usually limited to the inner median coverts but in some cases can be identical to *speculigera*. Note that while the presence of white-tipped median coverts is a very good indicator for *speculigera*, its absence does not exclude this species! In spring, the retained juvenile median coverts of second calendar-year *Ficedula* flycatchers often show a pale tip, albeit usually worn; moulted adult-type coverts should, however, show the normal pattern. We failed to find any adult (or second calendar-year with adult-type median coverts) hybrid *albicollis x hypoleuca* with white-tipped median coverts. Due to the white-tipped median coverts (and the semi-collared appearance of some males), Moali et al (1991) erroneously published the first breeding record of *semitorquata* for Algeria – the bird in fact was an adult male *speculigera* with a white semi-collar and extensive white tips on the median coverts, as noticed already by Svensson & Mild (1992).

Tail pattern

As with the pattern of the greater coverts, the pattern of the tail has also been a source of confusion. Mild (1993, 1994) and other authors stated that *speculigera* show an entirely jet-black tail, as illustrated in all field guides, including Svensson et al (2009). Etherington & Small (2003) regarded the presence of white in the outer tail-feathers as exceptional, having found only a single bird with a trace of white on the tail-feathers (out of seven specimens studied), although they did not discuss age-related aspects. Later, van den Berg & The Sound Approach (2006) and Duquet (2008) mentioned that at least some birds may show white on the outer tail. Copete et al (2010) finally set things straight, showing that the presence of white on the outer tail-feathers is age related. Indeed, we found that second calendar-year *speculigera* with retained outer tail-feathers always show a variable amount of white or off-white, as with most second calendar-year males black-and-white *Ficedula* (figure 1). In most cases, juvenile outer tail-feathers are not fully black and show a varying amount of white. In second calendar-year birds, the tail can either comprise a full set of retained juvenile feathers or a mix of newly moulted central feathers (t1-4, t1-3 or t1-5) and retained outer ones (t4-6, or t5-6 or rarely t6 only); in either case, the outermost juvenile tail-feathers would show pale edges on the outer web or on both webs. Therefore, the presence of pale or white areas in the outer tail-feathers on second calendar-year males does not eliminate *speculigera*, contrary to much of the earlier literature on the subject. A few second calendar-year males are so advanced as to appear much like full adults. In adults, the tail is completely jet-black, and we found no individual with even a trace of white (un-

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264 Atlas Pied Flycatcher / Atlasvliegenvanger *Ficedula speculigera*, second calendar-year male (collected at Azrou, Morocco, on 27 May 1919), NHM, Tring, England, 28 January 2009 *(Andrea Corso/©NHM London)*. Note that retained juvenile outer tail-feathers on second calendar-year males show extensive white. **265** Semicollared Flycatcher / Balkanvliegenvanger *Ficedula semitorquata*, adult male (collected in Greece in June), MCZR, Rome, Italy, 2 July 2010 *(Andrea Corso/©MCZR)*. In second calendar-year Atlas Pied Flycatcher *F speculigera*, tail pattern may be similar to *semitorquata* but note that white edge on outermost tail-feather (t6) extends onto inner web, a feature unique to *semitorquata*. **266** Iberian Pied Flycatcher / Iberische Bonte Vliegenvanger *Ficedula hypoleuca iberiae*, adult male, La Hiruela, Madrid, Spain, 17 June 2012 *(José Luis Copete)*. **267** Iberian Pied Flycatcher / Iberische Bonte Vliegenvanger *Ficedula hypoleuca iberiae*, male, La Hiruela, Madrid, Spain, 17 June 2012 *(José Luis Copete)*. Most probably third calendar-year, showing very Semicollared Flycatcher *F semitorquata*-like pattern on t6. Unlike *semitorquata*, white on inner web of t6 does not extend beyond tip of feather.

like many *albicollis*, which can show small white tips to the tail-feathers). Adult *speculigera*-type flycatchers with any white in the tail should thus be regarded as 'probable' *speculigera*, based on current knowledge. The same holds true for *iberiae*, which shares the same pattern as *speculigera* in the same age classes, although a few adult *iberiae* apparently show tiny pale tips to t6 or t5-6 (Copete et al 2010). Further, as pointed out by Rodríguez et al (2013), confirmed by recovery data of ringed birds in Spain, some third calendar-year *iberiae* can still show white on the outer tail-feathers (even if all have already been moulted and are thus, second-generation feathers) while showing mostly adult wing-feathers (apart from retained innermost secondaries, and a few greyer outer wing-coverts) and body. Thus, a few adult-looking *iberiae* may still show some white in the tail; whether this also holds true for some third calendar-year *speculigera* should be investigated further, and may make identification even harder.

Females

Very little has been written on the identification of females, and this complicated identification problem deserves much more study. We did not test any differences that may be present between *speculigera* and *iberiae*. We draw attention to the striking resemblance of female *speculigera* to female *semitorquata*. Female *speculigera* appears rather cold

grey overall, with a rather greyish nape and neck-side, often narrow white fringing to the tertials and quite frequently, especially in second calendar-year birds with retained median coverts, a second pale wing-bar. We noted black uppertail-coverts in female *speculigera* as opposed to sooty grey (sometimes tinged blackish) in female *semitorquata* and, in female *speculigera*, reduced white on t5-6 not extending beyond one third to two thirds of the inner web, as well as much wider white fringing to the tertials, appearing as a single white patch at the tertial base. Worn birds require particular care in a vagrant context: once abraded, both second calendar-year and adult female *speculigera* show much paler, sooty grey or lead-grey uppertail coverts and very narrow, off-white fringes to the tertials, identical to a well-marked female *semitorquata*. Therefore, later in the season, the best identification characters are call and tail pattern.

Biometrics

Svensson (1992) reports a range of 78-82 mm for the wing length of *speculigera*, and 75-79 mm for *iberiae*; our measurements are quite similar (78-83.5 mm for *speculigera* and 74-79.5 mm for *iberiae*). In a population of *iberiae* from Segovia, Spain, the wing length of 892 males measured over 15 years was on average 78.3 mm (Morales 2014). *Speculigera* thus averages slightly longer winged than *iberiae*. We did not assess primary projection or primary spacing. This feature should be looked at in future studies, and more measurements should be taken in order to evaluate the extent of the overlap zone. Furthermore, we found that, in *speculigera*, p1 is visibly longer than the primary coverts and always longer than in *hypoleuca*; we also found it to be on average longer than in *iberiae* (measured from the base of the feathers to the tip, so the entire length of the feather), although José Luis Copete (in litt) and Lars Svensson (in litt) did not find differences in length according to their own measurements. Therefore, this character needs additional study.

Vocalizations

Vocalizations seem to be one of the best ways to distinguish *speculigera* from *hypoleuca* and *iberiae*. The *weet* or *vit* call uttered by *speculigera* appears to be different from the analogous call of *iberiae*, which is closer or identical to that of *hypoleuca*, and this difference may be perceived in the field by an experienced ear. The call of *speculigera* is fuller, more metallic, with a raspy tone and a stronger upward inflection; in *hypoleuca* and *iberiae*, the call is flatter, cleaner and more liquid. However, a sonagram is essential to fully appreciate these differences, and any record in a vagrant context should ideally be accompanied by sound recordings (cf Robb & The Sound Approach 2015).

Conclusions

Below, we summarize the main criteria that should allow observers to separate *speculigera* – or at least *speculigera/iberiae* – from similar black-and-white *Ficedula* flycatchers.

Adult male *speculigera* is quite different from *hypoleuca*. The most obvious character is the jet-black, almost velvety plumage of the upperparts, with a broad and squared white primary patch that reaches p3 or even p2 (the latter being the outermost visible primary). On more obvious birds, the white forehead patch is very large and reaches the crown, while the tail on adult birds (older than second calendar-year) is entirely jet-black. The tertials show more white, and so does the neck-side, with the white often extending partly around the ear-coverts. The white patch on the primary coverts is much larger with no visible dark bases to the median coverts and, in many cases, the inner coverts as well, with some median coverts often showing a bright white tip, which is missing in adult *hypoleuca* (these can be greyish white in some second calendar-year *hypoleuca* with retained median coverts). Such birds should be easy to tell apart from even the best-marked *hypoleuca*. Recording the bird's call should clinch the identification.

Males *speculigera* with a semi-collar or broken collar are much more similar to *albicollis* than previously reported: typical adult male *albicollis* generally has a larger white primary patch which extends further down on the closed wing and broadens towards the inner primaries, while most *speculigera* have a slightly narrower primary patch which is wider in the middle. However, well-marked *speculigera* and poorly-marked *albicollis* can overlap in this regard, and indeed in second calendar-year males with juvenile primaries, this feature can be similar. In adult male *speculigera*, the tail is always fully jet-black, like in most *albicollis* but some of the latter can show small white spots or tongues at the tip of the outermost tail-feathers, and if present this feature rules out *speculigera*. The clinching features are: ***1*** pattern of the middle greater coverts, which are always dark based in *albicollis* but appearing fully white on closed wing in *speculigera* (dark bases, if present, visible only on a spread wing); because of this, the white greater coverts patch in *speculigera* is more rectangular, while in *albicollis* it is narrower on the outer coverts; ***2*** white patch on the secondaries very wide and encom-

passing all of the secondaries in *albicollis*, with the white extending further down on the inner webs; this white patch is narrower and usually more rectangular in *speculigera* (though much wider than in *hypoleuca*), with the white on the inner web of the middle and outermost secondaries (s1-4) not extending as far down (though some overlap); ***3*** median coverts in *albicollis* only very rarely (only aberrant birds?; cf Corso & Janni 2011) white tipped, in contrast to *speculigera*, and when so, usually never as many as in *speculigera*; and ***4*** differences in call. Note that hybrids *albicollis x hypoleuca*, especially '*albicollis*-type' birds, can be very similar, and the best features to separate them from *speculigera* are the same as those used to separate pure *albicollis* from *speculigera*. Hybrids *albicollis x hypoleuca* appear to be highly variable. In fact, several *speculigera* can appear almost perfectly intermediate between *hypoleuca* and *albicollis* or even between *albicollis* and *semitorquata*. Separating *speculigera* from certain hybrids *albicollis x hypoleuca* remains an arduous task. Obviously, with regard to vagrants, we suggest that only the most typical birds should be identified with certainty, preferably when recordings of song and/or calls and DNA are available.

We failed to find safe morphological characters to separate *speculigera* from the very similar *iberiae*. Although the largest forehead patches and widest and longest primary patches on *speculigera* may fall outside the range of variation shown by *iberiae*, in light of the variability and overlap of all other previously reported identification characters (eg, Mild 1993, 1994a, Svensson et al 2009) we suggest that vagrants should not be identified beyond *speculigera/iberiae*, unless DNA samples or sound recordings of calls are obtained.

Acknowledgements

First and foremost, we would like to thank José Luis Copete for his essential input and insight on *iberiae* and *speculigera*, which were crucial in reaching the conclusion that there is a great degree of overlap between the two and that much study is still needed to fully work out their identification. We thank Rafael Armada, Arnoud van den Berg, Eduardo Garcia del Rey, Martin Garner, Daniel Lopèz Velasco, Magnus Robb, Brian Small and Alex Ollé Torne for very helpful discussions. A warm thanks goes to Ian Wallace, for the very instructive field notes sent to us and the accompanying detailed field sketches and comments. For photographs and other data we thank Hanna Aalto, Janne Aalto, Arnoud van den Berg, Sander Bot, JLC, Davide De Rosa, Andrea Ferri, Paul French, Nicholas Galea, Raymond Galea, Andrea Galimberti, EGdR, Justin Jansen, Lior Kislev, DLV and Georges Olioso. Essential help came from the many museum curators helping us so much during our endless studies of skins, in particular: Carla Marangoni (MCZR), Hein van Grouw and Katrina van Grouw (NHM), Giorgio Chiozzi (MCSM), Giovanni Boano (SNCa), Hans Martin-Berg and Anita Gamauf (NMW); Patrick Boussès and Anne Previato (MNHN); and Sylke Frahnert (ZMB). Special thanks go to Fernando Spina for allowing us to use ISPRA documents regarding the birds ringed at Ventotene island and to Andrea Ferri and Andrea Galimberti for the information dealing with the genetic analysis of one of the ringed birds. AC's visit to MNHN was made possible by the Dutch Birding Fund.

Samenvatting

ATLASVLIEGENVANGER: VARIATIE IN DETERMINATIEKENMERKEN In dit artikel wordt de variatie in determinatiekenmerken van Atlasvliegenvanger *Ficedula speculigera* (hierna *speculigera*) besproken aan de hand van door de auteurs onderzochte museumexemplaren en foto's van mannetjes (en in mindere mate vrouwtjes), uitsluitend afkomstig uit de broedgebieden. De variatie bleek groter dan tot nu toe vermeld in recente artikelen en veldgidsen, vooral wat betreft patroon en tekening van de grote dekveren (greater coverts; gc), de voorhoofdsvlek en de staart. Ook de verschillen met Iberische Bonte Vliegenvanger *F hypoleuca iberiae* (hierna *iberiae*) blijken variabeler dan eerder beschreven.

In eerdere literatuur wordt gesteld dat alle grote dekveren van *speculigera* geheel wit zijn (of dat hoogstens de buitenste een kleine zwarte veerbasis hebben). In deze studie blijken de buitenste twee grote dekveren (gc1-2; van buiten naar binnen genummerd) echter altijd geheel zwart, en gc3 (en vaak ook gc4) toont een variabele zwart-witte tekening; nooit zijn dus alle grote dekveren geheel wit.

De witte voorhoofdsvlek is weliswaar bij de meest uitgesproken individuen van *speculigera* het breedst van alle West-Palearctische *Ficedula*-taxa maar blijkt veel variabeler dan in eerdere literatuur vermeld. Bij sommige individuen is de voorhoofdsvlek duidelijk kleiner (even groot als bij nominaat Bonte Vliegenvanger *F h hypoleuca*) en sommige *iberiae* tonen een grote voorhoofdsvlek die overlapt met *speculigera*.

Een geheel gitzwarte staart is vaak beschouwd als een veldkenmerk voor *speculigera*. De staart kan echter soms witte of bleke tekening op de buitenste staartpen vertonen; dit is afhankelijk van de leeftijd en betreft niet geruide juveniele staartpennen van tweede-kalenderjaarvogels.

De conclusie is dat de variatie van kenmerken groter is dan tot nu toe bekend. Hierdoor is *speculigera* in de meeste gevallen niet van *iberiae* te onderscheiden. Zonder geluidsopnamen, biometrie of DNA dient daarom iedere mogelijke *speculigera* buiten het reguliere broedgebied als *speculigera/iberiae* te worden gedetermineerd.

Kenmerken van mannetjes *speculigera* (en *iberiae*) die verschillen van die van Bonte Vliegenvanger zijn de gitzwarte tint van (de zwarte delen van) het verenkleed; de grote witte vlek op de basis van de handpennen bij adulten; de geheel gitzwarte staart bij adulten; en uitgebreider wit op de armpennen.

Voor het onderscheid van tweede-kalenderjaar en adulte *speculigera* met (vooral) tweede-kalenderjaar Withalsvliegenvanger *F albicollis* (en met hybriden) zijn de volgende kenmerken van belang: het patroon op de armpennen; de vorm van de voorhoofdsvlek; de lengte van de buitenste handpen (p1); de witte tekening op de basis van de handpennen (vorm, lengte en uitgebreidheid); de roep; en maten. Bij waarnemingen buiten de broedgebieden moet idealiter een geluidsopname van de roep worden gemaakt.

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Call identification of European Pied, Iberian Pied and Atlas Pied Flycatcher

Magnus Robb & The Sound Approach

In Portugal, European Pied Flycather *Ficedula hypoleuca* is a truly abundant autumn migrant. Its extraordinary migration sees a very large part of the world population flying south-west to northern and western Iberia before heading south into Africa. Of 1293 ringing recoveries in Iberia, 7.5% came from as far east as Russia (de Juana & Garcia 2015), and the real proportion must be much higher, considering the distribution of ringing stations across the species' range. This abundant supply of European Pied near where I (MR) live has given me a great opportunity to study their non-breeding calls, both while resting and during nocturnal migration flights.

The present note concentrates on calls given by migrant European Pied Flycatcher *F h hypoleuca* (hereafter *hypoleuca*) during the day, and compares them with what is known about equivalent calls of Iberian Pied Flycatcher *F h iberiae* (hereafter *iberiae*) and Atlas Pied Flycatcher *F speculigera* (hereafter *speculigera*). 'Iberian' is a generous name for *iberiae*, since it is not known to breed in Portugal. I suspect that I encounter a few migrant *iberiae* each autumn but much greater numbers of *hypoleuca*. When reviewing sonagrams of *hypoleuca* for the present note, I focussed primarily on recordings from outside Iberia, to avoid the risk of including weakly marked *iberiae*. For *hypoleuca*, The Sound Approach has recordings from spring, summer and autumn (95 made outside Iberia; 362 in total; more than 35 analysed for this note). For *speculigera*, I analysed 47 recordings from Tunisia and 22 from Morocco, and for *iberiae* I analysed 48 recordings from Spain. All recordings of the latter two taxa are from the breeding season and none concern migrants. The same applies to recordings available on the website www.xeno-canto.org and from other sources.

Calls used during autumn migration

During autumn migration, *hypoleuca* uses three main calls, two of which also serve as nocturnal flight calls. In the daytime, their commonest call is the well-known *wit*, often repeated in long sequences (figure 1). Nocturnal migrants also use it but generally in isolation. The second commonest call is a short, high-pitched buzzing call, somewhat similar to the best-known call of Spotted Flycatcher *Muscicapa striata*, here called the *bzz* call (figure 2). During the daytime, I hear *bzz* calls most often from birds defending feeding territories, while it is also the most common nocturnal flight call. The *bzz* call is similar to the juvenile begging call, from which it differs in being lower pitched. In *speculigera* and *iberiae*, *bzz* calls are also a prominent component of the territorial song. Thirdly, there is a very sharp *tak* (figure 3), like a Dusky Warbler *Phylloscopus fuscatus*. When three or more are strung into a short rattle, this can recall a Red-breasted Flycatcher *F parva*. *Tak* calls are not used during nocturnal migration flights.

On current knowledge, *wit* calls seem to offer the best hope of separating the three taxa, or at least *speculigera* from the other two. In addition, *speculigera* may string its *tak* calls into short rattles that are faster and used more persistently than in the other two taxa. There are few examples of *bzz* calls of *speculigera*, and most of those form part of song performances. Such *bzz* calls or song notes fall within the variation shown by *hypoleuca*. Before excluding the possibility of useful differences in *bzz* calls completely, however, we need to know how they are used during migration.

Wit calls

Wit calls consist of several frequency bands that are fairly close together (figure 1). These appear to include side bands, a phenomenon caused by very rapid modulation of a carrier frequency (Frommolt 1999). In the following section, the bands are numbered from the bottom up, starting with the first strong band (occasionally a much weaker band or two below this may also be present).

Speculigera has the first three bands all rising in pitch, resembling each other much more closely in shape than in the other two taxa. The bands look more or less parallel, and all three descend again at the end of the call. The second band usually rises smoothly and lacks the initial 'bump' so typical of the other two taxa. In the few instances where I have noted a bump, it was tiny. The third band also rises smoothly in pitch, until it reaches its peak, which may arrive slightly earlier than in the lower two bands. The first band generally peaks

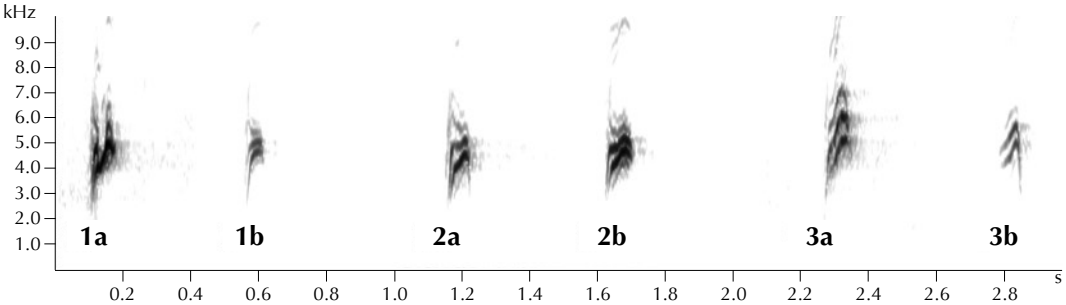

FIGURE 1 *Wit* calls of pied flycatchers *Ficedula*. **1** European Pied Flycatcher / Bonte Vliegenvanger *F hypoleuca hypoleuca*: **a** Kootwijkerzand, Gelderland, Netherlands, 12:14, 11 May 2000. Typical *wit* calls of male. 00.008.AB.00208; **b** Bloemendaal, Noord-Holland, Netherlands, 27 September 2001. *Wit* calls of first-winter migrant, unusually similar to *iberiae*. 01.039.MR.04111. **2** Iberian Pied Flycatcher / Iberische Bonte Vliegenvanger *F h iberiae*: **a** Sierra de Gredos, Extremadura, Spain, 08:52, 10 June 2002. *Wit* calls of breeding male. 02.017.AB.03612; **b** Sierra de Gredos, Extremadura, Spain, 13:03, 12 May 2004. *Wit* calls of breeding male. 04.009.AB.12757. **3** Atlas Pied Flycatcher / Atlasvliegenvanger *F speculigera*: **a** Beni M'tir, Jendouba, Tunisia, 09:47, 3 May 2005. *Wit* calls of breeding male. 05.007.AB.03416; **b** Ifrane, Western Middle-Atlas, Morocco, 16:56, 11 June 2010. *Wit* calls of breeding male. 100611.AB.165600. All sounds from The Sound Approach archives; AB recorded by Arnoud B van den Berg, MR by Magnus Robb.

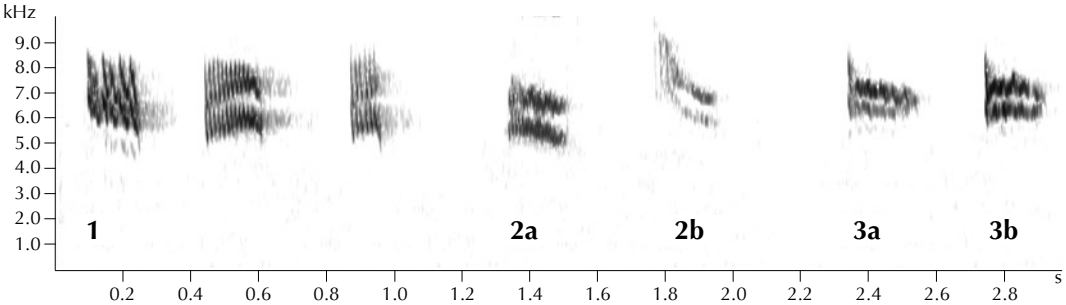

FIGURE 2 *Bzz* calls of pied flycatchers *Ficedula*. **1** European Pied Flycatcher / Bonte Vliegenvanger *F hypoleuca hypoleuca*, Cabo Espichel, Setúbal, Portugal, 09:22, 13 September 2009. *Bzz* calls recorded during territorial interaction between two migrants. 090913.MR.092244. **2** Iberian Pied Flycatcher / Iberische Bonte Vliegenvanger *F h iberiae*: **a** Sierra de Gredos, Extremadura, Spain, 09:27, 10 June 2002. *Bzz* calls of female interacting with male. 02.017.AB.05326; **b** Sierra de Gredos, Extremadura, Spain, 17:28, 1 June 2011. *Bzz* call of breeding male, given in isolation. 110601.MR.172826. **3** Atlas Pied Flycatcher / Atlasvliegenvanger *F speculigera*: **a, b** Beni M'tir, Jendouba, Tunisia, 06:05, 06:11, 3 May 2005. *Bzz* calls of breeding male. **a** 05.006.AB.15803, **b** 05.006.AB.20216. All sounds from The Sound Approach archives; AB recorded by Arnoud B van den Berg, MR by Magnus Robb.

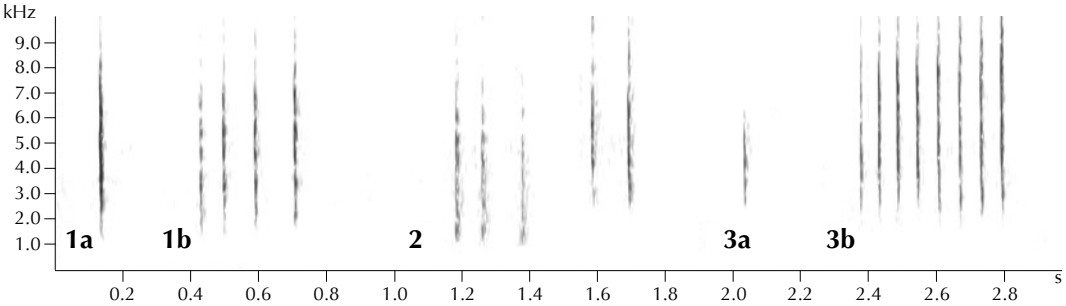

FIGURE 3 *Tak* calls and rattles of pied flycatchers *Ficedula*. **1** European Pied Flycatcher / Bonte Vliegenvanger *F hypoleuca hypoleuca*: **a** Hanko, Uusimaa, Finland, 06:20, 22 May 2005. Single *tak* call of female at nestbox. 05.003.DF.02105; **b** Sagres, Algarve, Portugal, 19:19, 15 May 2011. Rattle of migrant, consisting of four *tak* notes. 110915.MR.191954. **2** Iberian Pied Flycatcher / Iberische Bonte Vliegenvanger *F h iberiae*, Sierra de Gredos, Extremadura, Spain, 12:54, 12 May 2004. Rattle given by male as part of excited song, while female inspecting nest hole. Gap between first three and last two *tak* notes shortened. 04.009.AB.12216. **3** Atlas Pied Flycatcher / Atlasvliegenvanger *F speculigera*: **a** Ifrane, Western Middle-Atlas, Morocco, 17:34, 11 June 2010. Single *tak* call of breeding male. 100611.AB.173400; **b** Beni M'tir, Jendouba, Tunisia, 07:19, 3 May 2005. Rattles of breeding male. 05.007.AB.01822. All sounds from The Sound Approach archives; AB recorded by Arnoud B van den Berg, DF by Dick Forsman, MR by Magnus Robb.

at c 5 kHz (range 4.7-5.5 kHz in our recordings), making the call sound fairly high-pitched.

In *iberiae*, the first and second band have rising pitch (the second may occasionally be almost level), whereas the third reaches its highest pitch near the start of the call and then descends. There is nearly always a 'bump' at the start of the second and higher bands. The first and second band are nowhere close to being 'parallel' but do not differ enough to collide, which is usually the case in *hypoleuca*. The first band peaks at c 4.7 kHz (range 4.5-5 kHz), making the call sound slightly lower pitched than in *speculigera*.

A minority of *wit* calls of *hypoleuca* fit the above description for *iberiae* almost perfectly but typical calls look quite different in sonagrams. Most notably, the second band usually has such a prominent bump that the dip in its middle collides with the first band. This bump is also the strongest part of the second band, and the rest of it may be barely visible. The third band is similar in shape to the second, although the initial bump may descend much more sharply. The first band peaks at c 4.9-5 kHz, making its pitch sound slightly higher than in *iberiae* and similar to that of *speculigera*. Some migrants produce calls that deviate quite strongly from the typical calls described here, especially during nocturnal migration, but I have never encountered any individual that gave calls like *speculigera*.

Rattles consisting of tak calls

Jelmer Poelstra (in litt) drew my attention to a possible difference in the way that *tak* calls are used in *speculigera*. On a late April trip to Morocco, he found that the birds were not singing but calling, and was struck by some very Red-breasted Flycatcher-like rattles that he could not recall hearing from *hypoleuca*. However, I have four recordings of similar rattles in migrant *hypoleuca* in Portugal (figure 3). These rattles are essentially rapid strings of *tak* calls. In *speculigera*, the rattles are faster, with a distance between *tak* notes in the range of 50 ms (exceptionally much less), compared with an average of 86 ms (minimum: 67 ms) in studied recordings of *hypoleuca*. I found one recording of similar rattles in *iberiae*, given in the context of nest-showing by a male. The distance between *tak* notes in this recording was c 77 ms.

Conclusion

Wit calls of *speculigera* differ sufficiently from those of *hypoleuca* and *iberiae* to form a subtle but useful identification character, and with experience it may be possible to identify *wit* calls of *speculigera* by ear in the field. It is important to make recordings and sonagrams to confirm the differences. Secondly, based on a very limited set of recordings, *speculigera* produces short rattles that are faster and apparently used more prominently than in *hypoleuca*. The speed difference needs to be confirmed with a larger set of recordings. Finally, *bzz* calls of *hypoleuca* are extremely variable and the few examples available from the other two taxa fall within this variation.

It is entirely possible that *speculigera* or *iberiae* use call variations during autumn migration that *hypoleuca* never uses. Autumn sound recordings of these taxa would certainly be of great value. The problem is to be absolutely sure of what we are recording, since both taxa are swamped by *hypoleuca* during their autumn migration. There is much to be learned about the calls of migrant *Ficedula* flycatchers by day, and even more about how they call at night.

Samenvatting

Herkenning van roepen van Bonte Vliegenvanger, Iberische Bonte Vliegenvanger en Atlasvliegenvanger In dit artikel worden roepen van Bonte Vliegenvanger *F hypoleuca hypoleuca* (hierna *hypoleuca*), Iberische Bonte Vliegenvanger *F h iberiae* (hierna *iberiae*) en Atlasvliegenvanger *F speculigera* (hierna *speculigera*) besproken. De *wit*-roep van *speculigera* verschilt in sonagrammen subtiel van de overeenkomstige roep van *hypoleuca* en *iberiae* maar voldoende om *speculigera* op grond daarvan van de andere twee taxa te onderscheiden. Met enige ervaring is het misschien ook mogelijk om *speculigera* in het veld aan de *wit*-roep te herkennen. Het is van belang om geluidsopnamen en sonagrammen te maken om dit te bevestigen. Ten tweede lijkt het erop, op grond van een zeer beperkt aantal opnamen, dat *speculigera* korte ratels produceert die sneller zijn en vaker worden gebruikt dan door *hypoleuca*. Het verschil in snelheid dient echter door analyse van een groter aantal opnamen te worden bevestigd. De *bzz*-roep van *hypoleuca* is zeer variabel en de weinige opnamen van de *bzz*-roep van de andere twee taxa vallen binnen deze variatie.

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Presumed hybrid Eurasian Teal x Garganey in Valencia, Spain, in January-February 2014

Jörn Lehmhus, José Ignacio Dies & Hein van Grouw

From late January to early February 2014, an aberrant teal *Anas* was present among Eurasian Teal *A crecca* at the barrier island-lagoon complex of L'Albufera de Valencia, Valencia, Spain. It was observed on 27 and 29 January and 4 and 6 February at the Racó de l'Olla reserve (39°20' N, 00°20'W), a 64 ha area of brackish marshes located in the beach barrier, which are used as a diurnal roost by wintering ducks and waders, mostly Eurasian Teal and Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*. During the winter of 2013/14, the numbers of Eurasian Teal usually were below 1000 individuals during most observations but were sometimes higher, eventually accompanied by one or two female-type Garganeys *A querquedula*. The latter is a scarce migrant and rare winter visitor to the site.

On 27 January 2014, José Ignacio Dies noticed an odd teal roosting within a flock of 1300 Eurasian Teal and showing a dark-capped head with pale cheeks, a weak green iridescence behind the eye and greyish flanks. Its striking head pattern at first sight somewhat recalled a moulting male Baikal Teal *A formosa* but the general plumage features easily ruled out this option. Detailed observations soon revealed that it was a male in a fairly complete adult summer plumage and that hybridization was the best explanation for its unusual plumage. On 4 and 6 February, it briefly joined courting groups of Eurasian. It was observed to swim along females and to lift its head with raised crown and nape-feathers, but apparently silent and not performing the typical head-up-tail-up display of Eurasian (cf Cramp & Simmons 1977). The last observation on 6 February coincided with a two-third reduction in the number of Eurasian present at the site. Nothing indicated a captive origin. The plumage showed no damages indicating a possible captive origin. The bird was fully winged, not pinioned and be-

268 Presumed hybrid Eurasian Teal x Garganey / vermoedelijke hybride Wintertaling x Zomertaling *Anas crecca x querquedula* with Eurasian Teal / Wintertaling, L'Albufera de Valencia, Valencia, Spain, 27 January 2014 *(José Ignacio Dies)*. On head of hybrid, note similar size and similar shape of border between pale and dark colour to lower border of green head patch of Eurasian Teal.

269 Presumed hybrid Eurasian Teal x Garganey / vermoedelijke hybride Wintertaling x Zomertaling *Anas crecca x querquedula* with Eurasian Teal / Wintertaling, L'Albufera de Valencia, Valencia, Spain, 29 January 2014 *(José Ignacio Dies)*. Note size and shape of hybrid in comparison with Eurasian Teal. Note also pale yellow line on undertail-coverts.

270 Presumed hybrid Eurasian Teal x Garganey / vermoedelijke hybride Wintertaling x Zomertaling *Anas crecca x querquedula* with Eurasian Teal / Wintertaling, L'Albufera de Valencia, Valencia, Spain, 27 January 2014 *(José Ignacio Dies)*. In hybrid, note coarser pattern of flank, mantle and rump feathers and undertail-coverts. **271** Presumed hybrid Eurasian Teal x Garganey / vermoedelijke hybride Wintertaling x Zomertaling *Anas crecca x querquedula*, L'Albufera de Valencia, Valencia, Spain, 27 January 2014 *(José Ignacio Dies)*. Note upper scapulars showing washed-out pattern that is nevertheless still similar to Garganey, and partly obscured lower scapulars with creamy white coloration, pale-edged tertials and patterned undertail-coverts. **272** Presumed hybrid Eurasian Teal x Garganey / vermoedelijke hybride Wintertaling x Zomertaling *Anas crecca x querquedula*, L'Albufera de Valencia, Valencia, Spain, 27 January 2014 *(José Ignacio Dies)*. Note breast pattern and slight greenish iridescence behind eye. **273** Hybrid Blue-winged x Green-winged Teal / hybride Blauwvleugeltaling x Amerikaanse Wintertaling *Anas discors x carolinensis*, male, Huntsville, Alabama, USA, 2011 *(Mark Hall)*. Captive bird of known parentage.

haved similar to the Eurasian Teals it was associating with. The legs have been seen only briefly during preening but were without any obvious rings.

Description

SIZE & STRUCTURE Similar to Eurasian Teal. Short crest at rear of head, similar to Eurasian but slightly shorter.

HEAD Forehead, crown and nape dark brown with slight reddish hue, brown extending to side of crown and reaching and surrounding eye. Below, brown patch with pale creamy border to lower cheek; shape of border very similar to lower border of green head patch of Eurasian Teal (plate 268). Behind eye, some green iridescence on brown patch under certain light conditions (plate 272). Lower cheek with pale warm ochre coloration, divided by downward creamy-white stripe over cheek (plate 268-272). Whole rear part of cheek appearing slightly darker than frontal part. Frontal part becoming paler towards pale downward stripe.

UNDERPARTS Breast with pale brown ground coloration, darkest at side and paler to centre. Fairly dense dark spotting on centre of breast, reverting to more scaly pattern towards side of breast. Brown colour reaching further onto flank than pale ground coloration of breast

of Eurasian Teal (plate 271-272). Transition from breast to flank colour and pattern not extremely sharp but still well visible. Flank with black vermiculations on white, thicker and wider apart than in Eurasian (plate 268 and 271). Belly only seen partly but appearing whitish, paler than and sharply separated from breast. Undertail-coverts pale yellowish-beige with darker brown spotting, towards rear flank pattern becoming more scaly than spotty (plate 268, 271 and 272). Horizontal line of creamy-white feathers starting before tail base and reaching further towards back just below tail (plate 269).

UPPERPARTS Mantle and rump feathers plain brown with thin pale beige edge (plate 270). Upper scapulars slightly drooping, along upper side of shaft with washed-out white stripe, on lower side of shaft becoming paler from shaft to side into wider pale area (plate 270). Lower scapulars forming creamy longitudinal stripe, often partly covered by upper scapulars (plate 269-270).

WING Upper forewing not well seen but appearing pale grey in one photograph where just visible. Speculum not seen well but at least bordered by white rear line, wider than thin white line in Eurasian Teal. Tertials appearing straight, dark grey-brown with thin pale fringe, latter broader on lower side of each feather. Lowest tertial with washed-out whitish stripe alongside shaft (plate 270).

TAIL Tail-feathers greyish brown with thin whitish edge (plate 268).

BARE PARTS Bill dark grey to black, similar to Eurasian Teal (plate 268-272). Legs only seen very briefly in preening bird, therefore no exact colour noted.

Identification and comparison with other hybrids

The bird was obviously a small dabbling duck hybrid, similar in structure and size to Eurasian Teal, which can be assumed to be one parent. Characters indicating Eurasian as a likely parent were the small size, reddish-brown colour tones of the head, shape of the border between darker cap and pale cheek and creamy-white stripe on the lower scapulars. A horizontal paler unspotted line in the pale yellow-beige undertail-coverts just below the tail was at the same place as the upper border of the pale yellow triangle on the undertail-coverts of Eurasian. Furthermore, a slight greenish iridescence on the head (in the region of the green head patch of Eurasian) as well as the uniformly grey, vermiculated flanks may also hint to Eurasian as one parent.

The question remains: what species was the other parent? Due to the small size, the assumption appears justified that the second parent was most likely also a small species, comparable in size with Eurasian Teal. But the bird did not match the pattern and coloration of any other documented hybrid of Eurasian or Green-winged Teal *A carolinensis*, even when taking into consideration that many hybrids are more variable than pure species, as for example documented in Lehmhus (2011).

Cinnamon Teal *A cyanoptera* hybrids with Eurasian or Green-winged Teal (figure 1) could be excluded fairly easily, as they retain much of the reddish brown body coloration of Cinnamon combined with Eurasian or Green-winged head pattern and black undertail-coverts (Gillham & Gillham 2002, Lehmhus 2010; see also http://tinyurl.com/lq4kwpm).

Blue-winged Teal *A discors* hybrids with Eurasian or Green-winged Teal appear much closer to the mystery bird in general pattern (plate 273) but could also be excluded. These hybrid types in general show a markedly green iridescent head patch, similar to that of Eurasian or Green-winged, and bordered with pale lines below and above. The iridescence is not well visible in plate 273 but see http://tinyurl.com/pax2nbf. Additionally, the forehead and crown are dark in this hybrid. A pale bridle stripe over the cheek is present in most hybrids of this combination (plate 273), although none of the parent species show this. However, the cheek pattern and coloration with the pale bridle stripe in most individuals is quite close to the Valencia hybrid. Tertial and scapular

FIGURE 1 Hybrid Cinnamon Teal x Eurasian Teal / hybride Kaneeltaling x Wintertaling *Anas cyanoptera x crecca*, male *(Jörn Lehmhus)*. Drawing of escaped bird of captive origin in Braunschweig, Germany, in 2010.

FIGURE 2 Hybrid Eurasian Teal x Baikal Teal / hybride Wintertaling x Siberische Taling *Anas crecca x formosa*, male *(Jörn Lehmhus)*. Drawing of captive bird in northern Germany in 1990s.

pattern in Blue-winged x Green-winged hybrids are fairly uniform with some paler elements but without pale feather edges in the tertials. In contrast, the Valencia bird showed a thin pale edge to the tertials and drooping scapulars with a white striped pattern. The flank coloration in Blue-winged x Green-winged hybrids differs also from the Valencia bird. In the former, the stripes are broader and the ground coloration is browner towards the lower flank and breast and finer and whiter to the rear. In contrast, the Valencia bird had uniformly vermiculated flanks without any change of the white ground coloration to brown or beige colours. Additionally, Blue-winged x Green-winged hybrids or Eurasian Teal have at least partly (sometimes fully) black undertail-coverts. Images of Blue-winged x Green-winged hybrids are found on several websites (eg, http://tinyurl.com/pepxrgb and http://tinyurl.com/nxgavw6).

Baikal x Eurasian Teal hybrids also show a strongly iridescent green head patch surrounded by pale lines (figure 2; cf Kuroda & Kuroda 1964). The head pattern differs clearly from that of the Valencia bird although the pale bridle stripe over the cheek is similar. The undertail-coverts are black (barred and spotted in the Valencia bird). A photograph of this hybrid type on internet shows a bit more patterned and darker scapulars but it is otherwise very similar to the drawing in figure 2. Therefore this hybrid was also considered unlikely for the Valencia bird.

Garganey hybrids

The only species left when considering the smaller dabbling ducks of the Northern Hemisphere is Garganey. No well-documented Garganey x Eurasian Teal hybrid is known to us although, eg, Gray (1958) and Johnsgard (1960) mention this hybrid but without detailed documentation. McCarthy (2006) provides six further references concerning presumably this hybrid, stating that captive and natural hybridisation was reported, but Gillham & Gillham (1996, 2002) do not list this hybrid. Although Garganey characters like the head pattern with the distinctive white eyebrow and the long drooping scapulars are missing in the Valencia bird, there are several traits hinting to this parentage.

The mentioned typical Garganey head pattern seems to be suppressed in Garganey hybrids in general. Neither of the two breeding plumage Garganey hybrids from the Museum of Natural History (MNH) at Tring, England, examined by us shows any trace of this pattern (figure 3-4).

274 Hybrid Garganey x Northern Shoveler / hybride Zomertaling x Slobeend *Anas querquedula x clypeata*, male (Zoological Society London, 1855, most likely bred London Zoo), Natural History Museum, Tring, England, 22 April 2014 *(Hein van Grouw)*. Eclipse plumage but with some breeding plumage feathers.

Additionally, neither of the three Garganey hybrids documented photographically by Gillham & Gillham (1996, 2002) exhibit this pattern. These hybrids are Garganey x Falcated Duck *A falcata* (Gillham & Gillham 1996), Garganey x Hottentot Teal *A hottentota* (Gillham & Gillham 1996) and Garganey x Silver Teal *A versicolor* (Gillham & Gillham 2002). All three show a dark-capped head, which is not surprising in the latter two as the non-Garganey parent also shows this trait. But alternatively, a more uniform brown or reddish-brown coloration of the head can come through, eg, in Garganey x Red Shoveler *A platalea* and Garganey x Cinnamon Teal, as demonstrated by two museum specimens from MNH (figure 3-4). None of these Garganey hybrids showed a head pattern with creamy vertical cheek-stripe similar to the Valencia bird, a pattern that may be shown by moulting Baikal Teal but also by hybrids with (figure 2) or without (plate 273) Baikal parentage. However, the general head pattern may be considered as a variation of a capped head pattern as described for the first three hybrids.

The undertail-coverts of the Valencia bird appeared very unusual with their spotted and partly barred pattern. The only species showing similar undertail-coverts is again Garganey. Garganey hybrids also tend to have at least partly pale undertail-coverts with brown spotting or barring over the pale feathers, as shown by Garganey x Cinnamon Teal, Garganey x Red Shoveler and a mainly

FIGURE 3 Hybrid Garganey x Cinnamon Teal / hybride Zomertaling x Kaneeltaling *Anas querquedula x cyanoptera*, male (captive bird of known parentage, Collection B L Sage, 1964), Natural History Museum, Tring, England, 2 September 2011 *(Hein van Grouw)*

eclipse-plumaged Garganey x Northern Shoveler *A clypeata* hybrids (figure 3-4, plate 274). The breast colour of the Valencia bird, being darker and browner than in Eurasian Teal, was also a good fit for a hybrid with Garganey.

The upper scapulars of the Valencia bird were drooping but clearly shorter than in Garganey. They showed a washed-out Garganey-like scapular pattern. These relatively short upper scapulars are not an argument against Garganey parentage, as the other parent (Eurasian Teal) has short greyish scapulars. In other hybrids where one parent has long scapulars, for example some Baikal Teal hybrids (eg, Eurasian x Baikal Teal, figure 2; cf Kuroda & Kuroda 1964), these are also short. The tertials also were close to Garganey's in shape and pattern. The flank was slightly paler than in Eurasian Teal, which seemed at least in part due to

FIGURE 4 Hybrid Garganey x Red Shoveler / hybride Zomertaling x Argentijnse Slobeend *Anas querquedula x platalea*, probably male, incorrectly labeled as female (captive bird of known parentage, Collection B L Sage, 1964), Natural History Museum, Tring, England, 2 September 2011 *(Hein van Grouw)*

the slightly wider distances between the thin black vermiculation lines.

Conclusion

Several traits of the Valencia bird indicated that Garganey was most likely the second parent of this hybrid. Head pattern, scapular pattern and shape, tertial shape, flank coloration and pattern, undertail-coverts coloration and pattern, breast coloration and pattern as well as the greyish forewing all pointed to a hybrid Eurasian Teal x Garganey. While some of these characters occur in other hybrids, no other hybrid combination shows exactly this set of traits. The Valencia hybrid is, to our knowledge, the first detailed photographic documentation of a presumed hybrid Eurasian Teal x Garganey.

Samenvatting

VERMOEDELIJKE HYBRIDE WINTERTALING X ZOMERTALING IN VALENCIA, SPANJE, IN JANUARI-FEBRUARI 2014 Een vermoedelijke hybride Wintertaling x Zomertaling *Anas crecca x querquedula* werd op 27 en 29 januari en 4 en 6 februari waargenomen in L'Albufera de Valencia, Valencia, Spanje. Dat één van de ouders een Wintertaling was, was op grond van onder meer kleur en tekening van de kop snel duidelijk. Determinatie van Zomertaling als de vermoedelijke andere oudersoort is gebaseerd op het koppatroon, patroon en vorm van de schouderveren, vorm van de tertials, patroon en kleur van borst, flanken en onderstaartdekveren, en de grijzige voorvleugel. Dit is het eerste met foto's gedocumenteerde geval van een vermoedelijke hybride Wintertaling x Zomertaling.

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Vermoedelijke hybride Rode x Blauwe Rotslijster in Den Helder in april 2013

André J Boven, Hans Schekkerman & Enno B Ebels

Net als de voorgaande dagen was André Boven op 11 april 2013 aan het werk als grondwerker in Den Helder, Noord-Holland. Na aankomst op de bouwplaats in de vroege ochtend werden de werkzaamheden voor die dag nog even doorgenomen en om 07:00 begon de klus; het begon net licht te worden. Toen AB wat materiaal had gehaald van de opslagplaats zag hij op c 10 m afstand een vogel op een hekje zitten die hij herkende als rotslijster *Monticola*. AB kon de onrustige vogel een paar keer bekijken (zonder verrekijker) maar kreeg hem niet langdurig in beeld. Hij belde Bart-Jan Prak en vertelde hem wat hij had gezien. Na nog wat determinatiekenmerken van Rode Rotslijster *M saxatilis* (hierna *saxatilis*) te hebben doorgenomen werd de vogel, met een flinke slag om de arm, als 'mogelijk' via Dutch Bird Alerts doorgegeven. Dat leverde maar weinig reacties op. Pas om c 16:00 vond AB hem terug in een parkje tussen de Polderweg en de Prins Hendriklaan. Wederom werd een bericht op DB Alerts gezet, deze keer met een verzoek om assistentie. Eindelijk kwam er hulp en de rotslijster werd vrij snel gevonden. Die avond werd hij nog door c 30 vogelaars gezien. 's Avonds ging hij slapen op de kerk aan de Kerkgracht en was daar in de verlichting van het gebouw zichtbaar, zodat twitchers hem ook in het donker nog konden zien. Tot en met 15 april trok hij in totaal enkele 100en bezoekers. Meestal verbleef hij (onzichtbaar) op de daken om regelmatig naar de grond te komen en daar te foerageren op zandige plekken. Ook verbleef hij regelmatig op de steenhopen bij de dijk. In ieder geval van vrijdag op zaterdag sliep hij wederom op de kerk (Boven & Ebels 2013). Aanvankelijk namen veel waarnemers aan dat het om een Rode Rotslijster ging maar toen de vogel zich beter liet bekijken en fotograferen ontstond er twijfel en rees het vermoeden dat het ging om een hybride Rode x Blauwe Rotslijster *M solitarius* (hierna *solitarius*).

Beschrijving

De beschrijving is gebaseerd op foto's van vele fotografen (cf www.dutchbirding.nl, www.waarneming.nl; Dutch Birding 35: 213, plaat 265, 216, plaat 268-269, 217, plaat 270, 2013).

GROOTTE & BOUW Meest lijkend op Rode Rotslijster maar staartprojectie iets langer. In zijaanzicht vleugeltop ongeveer halverwege zijkant staart reikend, dus iets voorbij toppen van bovenstaartdekveren en ongeveer gelijk met toppen onderstaartdekveren. Op basis van vijf foto's verhouding tussen staartprojectie voorbij handpentoppen en handpenprojectie voorbij langste tertial 0.54 (sd 0.05). Vleugelformule (beoordeeld op basis van twee foto's van Mattias Hofstede (bovenzijde www.dutchbirding.nl/gallery.php.8911, onderzijde http://waarneming.nl/fotonew/5/4577855.jpg)): p1 3-4(5) mm korter dan top van handpendekveren, mogelijk iets langer; p2 c 2(1-3) mm korter dan p3 (= vleugeltop), niet direct vergelijkbaar met p4 maar op grond van geschatte afstand tot p3 met p4 samenvallend of iets langer; p4 c 3(2-4) mm korter dan p3. Snavellengte ongeveer gelijk aan afstand van mondhoek tot achterkant oog. Snavel dolkvormig met sterkste kromming op distaal deel van bovensnavel. Neusgat rond tot driehoekig van vorm, met punt richting snavelpunt.

KOP Blauwgrijs met donkere schubtekening door aanwezigheid van bruine oudere veren met donker eindbandje. Verhoudingsgewijs minder schubtekening dan op onderdelen.

ONDERDELEN Vlekkerig getekend met blauw en oranje en met donkere subterminale en lichte terminale bandjes op veel lichaamsveren (resten winterkleed). Vrij uitgebreide partijen met grijsblauwe veren (veelal met bandering) op borst en flank, en minder duidelijk (iets grijzer) op middenbuik. C 30-40% van veren op onderdelen blauw, op flank ruim 50%.

BOVENDELEN Mantel, schouder en rug grijsblauw (deels gebandeerd) met lichtere maar niet geheel witte, veerbases op (vermoedelijk verse veren van) bovenst deel van rug. Stuit grijsblauw.

VLEUGEL Handpennen, armpennen, tertials, handpendekveren en alula dofbruin met smalle lichte rand en top. Binnenste grote dekveren donker grijsblauw. Middelste dekveren zwart met blauwe zweem en witte top; kleine dekveren blauw (vernieuwd). Ondervleugeldekveren overwegend oranje.

STAART Bovenstaartdekveren grijsblauw als stuit en mantel, met oranje top van enkele mm breed. T2-6 helder roestrood met buitenvlaggen bruin over hele lengte. Op t6 ook vaag begrensd bruin op distaal deel binnenvlag. T1 donker grijsbruin, met grijsblauw op buitenvlag. Gesloten staart bij nat weer geheel donker lijkend. Onderstaartdekveren lichtoranje met brede subterminale donkere bandering.

NAAKTE DELEN Iris donkerbruin. Snavel donkergrijs tot zwart met klein licht puntje aan bovensnavel. Poot grijs.

275 Rotslijster / rock thrush *Monticola*, Den Helder, Noord-Holland, 12 april 2013
(René van Rossum)

276 Rotslijster / rock thrush *Monticola*, Den Helder, Noord-Holland, 12 april 2013 *(René van Rossum)* **277** Rotslijster / rock thrush *Monticola*, Den Helder, Noord-Holland, 12 april 2013 *(Sjaak Schilperoort)* **278-279** Rotslijster / rock thrush *Monticola*, Den Helder, Noord-Holland, 13 april 2013 *(Jeroen Reneerkens)*

RUI & SLEET Handpennen, armpennen, tertials, handpendekveren en alula gesleten, toppen van hand- en staartpennen sterk gesleten. Grote dekveren deels geruid: links gd1-3 nieuw, 7-10 oud, rechts gd1-2 en 4 nieuw, 3 en 5-10 oud. Middelste en kleine dekveren vers.
GELUID Niet vastgesteld.
GEDRAG Foeragerend op daken, steenhopen en zandige stukken grond. Onrustig en vaak opvliegend maar niet erg schuw. Gedurende eerste twee nachten slapend in nis aan gevel van kerk.

Determinatie
Nadat de eerste goede foto's op internet verschenen – wat even duurde omdat het aanvankelijk somber en regenachtig weer was – barstte op diverse fora een discussie los over de identiteit van de vogel. De aanwezigheid van veel donkere schubtekening op de onderdelen, kenmerk van het juveniele kleed, gaf aan dat het een tweedekalenderjaar mannetje betrof. Het was echter duidelijk dat de vogel niet voldeed aan het standaardbeeld van een eerste-zomer mannetje Rode Rotslijster, met name door de mix van roodoranje en blauwgrijze tekening op de onderdelen, het (vrijwel) ontbreken van een lichte rugvlek en de relatief lange staart. De vogel was veel minder ver doorgeruid dan normaal bij Rode in deze tijd van het jaar. Dat zou wellicht de tekening van de onderdelen en het nog ontbreken van de witte rugvlek kunnen verklaren. Ook in de structuur leek niet alles te kloppen voor Rode. Wat verenkleed betreft had de vogel veel weg van een Aziatische

Blauwe Rotslijster *M s philippensis* (hierna *philippensis*; soms als aparte soort beschouwd). De duidelijke oranje tekening in de staart sloot echter *phillipensis* en ook *solitarius* uit; ook was de staart te kort voor deze taxa en is bij *philippensis* het rood op de onderdelen donkerder en minder oranje.

Daarom verschoof de discussie naar de vraag of de vogel een hybride *saxatilis x solitarius* kon zijn. Hans Schekkerman kwam op basis van een gedetailleerde analyse tot de conclusie dat een hybride inderdaad het meest waarschijnlijk was. In vergelijking met een tweede-kalenderjaar mannetje *saxatilis* vertoonde de vogel de volgende afwijkingen (cf, eg, Cramp 1988, Clement & Hathway 2000, van Duivendijk 2011, Svensson et al 2012): ***1*** Bouw en postuur: deze leken het meest op *saxatilis* maar de staartprojectie was iets te lang. De verhouding tussen de staartprojectie voorbij de handpentoppen en de handpenprojectie voorbij de langste tertial, bedroeg 0.54 (sd 0.05, op basis van vijf foto's) en verschilde van zowel *saxatilis* (gemiddeld 0.32, sd 0.06, 95%-interval 0.20-0.45, n=20) als *solitarius* (gemiddelde 1.20, sd 0.26, 95%-interval 0.78-1.87, n=20; metingen gebaseerd op geschikte profielfoto's op internet). Bij 'klassieke' *saxatilis* ligt de vleugelpunt dus wat dichter bij de staartpunt en bij *solitarius* reikt deze meestal tot minder dan de helft. ***2*** Vleugelformule: p1 was te lang voor *saxatilis* en viel binnen de spreiding van Blauwe (bij Rode is p1 sterk gereduceerd ('minute'; Svensson 1992) en 10-17 mm korter dan handpendekveren (Cramp 1988)); bij *solitarius* 7 mm korter tot 2 mm langer dan handpendekveren (Cramp 1988, Svensson 1992). De lengte van p4 (2-4 mm korter dan vleugeltop) lag dichter bij *saxatilis* dan bij *solitarius* maar viel waarschijnlijk net buiten de variatie van *saxatilis*: bij *saxatilis* 0-1.5 mm en bij Blauwe 3-6 mm korter (Cramp 1988). De lengte van p2 (1-3 mm korter dan p3) viel binnen het bereik van *saxatilis* en buiten het bereik van *solitarius* (bij *saxatilis* p2=3/4, 1-6 mm langer dan p4; bij *solitarius* p2=p4/5 (Svensson 1992) of p2=p5 (Cramp 1988), 3.5-8 mm korter dan p4). Samenvattend geldt voor de vleugelformule dat p1 goed was voor *solitarius*, p2 voor *saxatilis* en p4 intermediair of net passend voor *saxatilis*. ***3*** Aanwezigheid van vrij uitgebreide partijen met grijsblauwe veren op borst, flank en (iets grijzer) middenbuik. Het blauw kwam op veel foto's weliswaar te fel over maar was ook in het veld duidelijk zichtbaar en zeer vergelijkbaar met de blauwe kleur van de bovendelen. Sommige veren op de flank vertoonden zowel oranje (bij schacht) als blauw, dus het kleurverschil viel niet samen met veergeneraties. Foto's van *saxatilis* tonen geen blauw maar alleen oranje op de borst beneden een denkbeeldige lijn tussen de boeg van de gesloten vleugels, en op de flank. ***4*** Egaal (grijs)blauwe kleine dekveren. Deze veren zijn bij *saxatilis* zwartachtig en bij *solitarius* blauw. ***5*** Grijsblauwe bovenstaartdekveren (als stuit en mantel) met smalle oranje top. Bij *saxatilis* (tweede-kalenderjaar en adult) zijn de stuitveren ook grijsblauw maar de bovenstaartdekveren zijn oranjerood als de staartpennen. Bij *solitarius* zijn de bovenstaartdekveren grijsblauw. ***6*** Donkerbruine buitenvlaggen aan de overwegend helder roestrode staartpennen. Foto's van *saxatilis* tonen egaal roestrode t2-6; Cramp (1988) vermeldt dat een grijsbruine vlek/streep op de distale buitenvlag van t2 en t6 en soms op andere pennen mogelijk is. *Solitarius* heeft zwartachtige staartpennen met vaak een blauwe zweem op de bovenzijde. ***7*** Het ontbreken van de witte rugvlek. Foto's van tweede-kalenderjaar mannetjes *saxatilis* tonen meestal een goed ontwikkelde witte vlek, nagenoeg als bij adult.

Kenmerk 3-4 (en mogelijk 6) passen op *philippensis* met steenrode buik en onderstaartdekveren en overwegend blauwe flank en gebied tussen de poten maar deze soort is uit te sluiten op basis van andere kleedkenmerken (zie boven). Op basis van de structurele kenmerken 1 en 2 is het alternatief van een *saxatilis* met afwijkend verenkleed uiterst onwaarschijnlijk; er is immers geen plausibele reden waarom een dergelijke vogel ook in staartlengte en vleugelformule zou afwijken. Er zijn ook geen publicaties bekend waaruit blijkt dat een zuivere *saxatilis* een dergelijk afwijkend verenkleed en een dergelijke afwijkende biometrie kan hebben. Daarom en vanwege het intermediaire of gemengde karakter van kenmerk 1-3 en 5-6 blijft de optie van een hybride over als meest waarschijnlijke determinatie.

Eerdere gevallen van hybriden

(Vermoedelijke) hybriden *saxatilis x solitarius* zijn eerder beschreven (Suchetet 1897, Ackermann 1898, Moltoni 1937, cf McCarthy 2006), waaronder een exemplaar dat werd verzameld in de regio Posau, Imperia, Italië, op 29 maart 1929 (Moltoni 1937). De balg was opgenomen in de collectie Giribaldi di Bordighera; acht balgen van deze collectie zijn nu onderdeel van de collectie van het Istituto Superiore per la Protezione e la Ricerca Ambientale, Rome, Italië (ISPRA) maar de hybride rotslijster is daar niet bij (Baccetti et al 2012; Nicola Baccetti in litt). In het artikel over de Italiaanse hybride werd ook de opmerkelijke gelij-

kenis met *philppensis* genoemd: 'De vogel [veronderstelde hybride] verschilt van vogels van deze vorm [*philippensis*] vooral door de staartpennen met een roestrode kleur op de binnenvlaggen (behalve de middelste), door roestrode vlekken op de punten van de langste bovenstaartdekveren, doordat de eerste handpen zichtbaar korter is dan de grote handdekveren, doordat de tweede handpen langer is dan de vijfde, door een zweem van wit op de stuitveren, en tenslotte doordat de kleur van de rode veren (onderstaartdekveren en ondervleugeldekveren en andere delen van het onderlichaam) minder kastanjerood is en meer neigt naar roestrood.' Moltoni (1937) vermeldde ook dat enkele maten intermediair waren tussen *saxatilis* en *solitarius*. Er staan twee foto's in het artikel van de met gespreide vleugels opgezette vogel in zwart-wit, met dus slechts beperkte waarde. Er is echter wel iets op te zien. Op de rug is een licht doorschemerend gedeelte zichtbaar dat erg lijkt op sommige foto's van de vogel van Den Helder. De kop en onderdelen zijn aanzienlijk minder zwaar gebandeerd. Een tekening bij het artikel verhelderde de positionering van de roestrode kleur op de onderdelen: onderborst (rechts), flank, buik, kleine (en middelste?) ondervleugeldekveren en onderstaart. Het blauw zat bij deze vogel dus op kop en borst, aan de rechterzijde ongeveer even ver omlaag doorlopend als de blauwe vlekken op de borst van de vogel van Den Helder maar aan de linkerzijde een stuk verder, tot ruim op de bovenbuik maar niet op de flank. Moltoni (1937) vermeldde verder 'dat Salvadori had aangegeven dat hybriden tussen deze twee soorten niet zeer zeldzaam lijken'. Opmerkelijk is echter dat er geen recente gevallen van hybridisatie zijn beschreven. Er zijn ook geen gevallen waarbij een hybride herkomst onomstotelijk is bewezen (door observatie van een gemengd broedpaar of door DNA-analyse).

Beoordeling door CDNA

De Commissie Dwaalgasten Nederlandse Avifauna (CDNA) was van mening dat de determinatie als hybride *saxatilis x solitarius* goed paste op de vogel van Den Helder maar dat een afwijkende *saxatilis* als optie overeind bleef ('It was either an aberrant Common Rock Thrush or a hybrid Common Rock x Blue Rock Thrush; eastern (red-bellied) taxa of Blue Rock Thrush could be ruled out. Hopefully, future studies will be able to explain the puzzling appearance of this bird. For now, the CDNA could not reach a satisfying conclusion'; Haas et al 2014; Nils van Duivendijk in litt). De zeldzaamheid van dit type hybride heeft bijgedragen aan de beslissing om de vogel niet te aanvaarden als zekere hybride. Omdat de CDNA geen zeldzaamheden aanvaardt als 'soort A of hybride soort A x soort B' is het geval niet opgenomen in de Nederlandse avifaunistische lijst (cf Haas et al 2014). Wellicht dat toekomstig onderzoek alsnog een definitief antwoord kan bieden met betrekking tot de identiteit van de rotslijster van Den Helder.

Samenvatting

Presumed hybrid Common x Blue Rock Thrush at Den Helder in April 2013 On 11-15 April 2013, a first-summer male rock thrush *Monticola* (with many traces of juvenile plumage) stayed at Den Helder, Noord-Holland, the Netherlands. It mostly stayed on roof tops, coming down to forage on sandy patches or to perch on stone heaps. On at least the first two nights, the bird was observed roosting in a niche on a floodlit church. The bird was first reported as Common Rock Thrush *M saxatilis*, based on its small size, relatively short tail, blue upperparts, mostly orange underparts and rufous tail (except for the brown central tail-feathers). However, some characters were at odds with this species, such as the mix of orange and blue feathers on the underparts, wing-to-tail ratio, wing formula, bluish lesser coverts, bluish upper-tail-coverts with orange tips, brownish outer web to the tail-feathers and absence of white patch on the back. The possibility of Asian Blue Rock Thrush *M s philippensis* was considered but dismissed because of the tail length, rufous tail and orange instead of dark red belly coloration. This reduced the possibilities to either an aberrant Common or a hybrid Common x Blue Rock Thrush *M solitarius*. This hybrid type has been described before (most recently from 1929, collected) and could well explain the mix of characters, including structural ones, of the Den Helder bird. The Dutch rarities committee (CDNA) concluded that the hybrid option was a good explanation but that an aberrant Common could not be ruled out with certainty. This means that, at least up to now, the bird was not accepted as any taxon and has not been admitted to the Dutch avifaunal list.

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Baltsende Poelsnip te Broekhuizen in april 2015

Laat in de middag van 25 april 2015 fotografeerde Mariet Verbeek van dichtbij een Poelsnip *Gallinago media* in Broekhuizerweerd vanaf de Marsstraat langs de dijk van de Maas ten zuiden van Broekhuizen, Limburg. Ze plaatste haar foto's als 'Watersnip' *G gallinago* op waarneming.nl. De volgende ochtend, 26 april, kreeg ze argwaan en schreef er toen veelbetekenend bij dat hij een 'baltshouding als Poelsnip uit ANWB gids' had. Daarna stuurde ze een whatsappje naar Frank Meeuwissen, die pas 's avonds thuis zou zijn om haar foto's te bekijken. Omdat ze geen geduld meer had en er bijna zeker van was dat het een Poelsnip betrof stuurde ze nog een whatsappje naar Max Berlijn. Deze antwoordde ook pas laat op de dag (hij verbleef op de Bahama's) en bevestigde nadat hij de foto's op haar verzoek had bekeken dat het 'een dikke vette Poelsnip' was. Diezelfde avond werd de waarneming bekend gemaakt door MB en Teus Luijendijk; enkele waarnemers uit de nabije omgeving zagen de vogel nog net voor donker. Gedurende de volgende dag, 27 april, kwamen enkele 100en vogelaars de vo-

280 Poelsnip / Great Snipe *Gallinago media*, baltsend (zingend) / displaying (singing), Broekhuizen, Limburg, 25 april 2015 *(Mariet Verbeek)*

gel bekijken. Hij bleef meestal verscholen in de vegetatie van de dijk maar uiteindelijk kon iedereen de vogel zien, werd hij gefotografeerd en gefilmd (onder anderen door Frank Coenjaerts en Luuk Punt) en lukte het Dick Groenendijk een geluidsopname te maken (zie geluidengalerij op www.dutchbirding.nl). Hij baltste regelmatig, vaak eenmaal per minuut (Dick Groenendijk in litt). Op 28 april bleek hij nog steeds aanwezig en vloog toen na verstoring de Maas over waar hij op de oostoever bij Arcen, Limburg, werd teruggevonden en gefotografeerd; ook hier was hij geregeld aan het baltsen. Nog voor het middaguur vloog hij weer terug over de rivier naar het binnendijkse plasje langs de Marsstraat waar hij tijdens harde wind met buien de meeste tijd verborgen bleef. Vanaf 13:00 zong hij in 15 minuten vier keren onderaan het talud van de Marsstraat waarvan door Arnoud van den Berg vanuit de auto opnamen werden gemaakt. Hij kwam daar langzaam tevoorschijn waarna hij van zeer dichtbij vanuit twee auto's kon worden gefotografeerd. C 25 aanwezige vogelaars hadden de vogel toen al lange tijd niet gezien en kwamen enthousiast aanlopen waarna hij het plasje overvloog om weer voor lange tijd in de vegetatie van de rivierdijk te verdwijnen. Later die middag werd hij nog een aantal keren gezien. Om 20:50 maakte Julian Bosch de laatste filmbeelden van de slapende Poelsnip. De volgende dag, 29 april, bleek hij vertrokken.

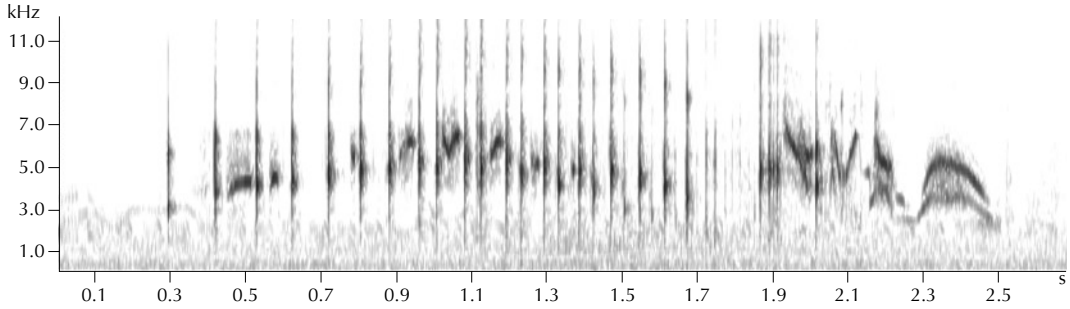
Determinatie

De determinatie is vanwege het snippenuiterlijk en de balts geen probleem. Het adulte kleed verschilt van het juveniele onder meer door de brede witte toppen aan grote en middelste vleugeldekveren, twee opvallende vleugelstrepen vormend, en de ongetekende brede witte staartomranding. Deze adulte kenmerken vormen samen met het wat forsere formaat met iets kortere snavel, de gebandeerde onderzijde, de donkere ondervleugels en de smalle witte vleugelachterrand ook de voornaamste verschillen in uiterlijk met Watersnip (eg, van Duivendijk 2011, Svensson et al 2012). Vanwege de balts kan de Broekhuizense vogel als mannetje worden gedetermineerd; de precieze leeftijd is niet vastgesteld.

Voorkomen

Het laatste (en enige) gedocumenteerde broedgeval in Nederland dateert van 1884 en in 1927 werd nog een legsel verzameld op 10 km van de grens in Duitsland bij Bourtange, Groningen (Jansen 2014). Sindsdien is de soort als broedvogel ook uit Duitsland verdwenen hoewel in 1992 nog twee baltsende exemplaren in Brandenburg werden ontdekt (Limicola 7: 87-92, 1993). De dichtstbijzijnde broedgebieden zijn in Noorwegen, Polen en Zweden. Tot 1977 werd de soort in Nederland als schaarse doortrekker beschouwd en zijn beeltenis prijkte op het bankbiljet van 100 gulden (Coldewey 1995). Sinds 1977 worden waarnemingen beoordeeld door de Commissie Dwaalgasten Nederlandse Avifauna (CDNA; van den Berg & Bosman 2001). In 1977-2013 werden 38 gevallen aanvaard waarvan 15 tussen 5 april en 17 juni, 22 tussen 24 juli en 25 oktober en één in januari (cf www.dutchavifauna.nl). Na 1996 was er maar een enkele vogel die drie dagen bleef in plaats van twee dagen of één dag en dat verklaart waarom de vogel van Broekhuizen veel belangstelling trok. De najaarsgevallen betroffen voor zover bekend juveniele. Dit stemt overeen met resultaten van onderzoek aan drie adulte mannetjes die in Europees broedgebied een geolocator kregen; ze bleken na het broedseizoen non-stop in 48-84 uren 4680-6800 km naar Afrika te vliegen. In het voorjaar vlogen ze echter minder snel terug naar

FIGUUR 1 Poelsnip / Great Snipe *Gallinago media*, zang / song, Broekhuizen, Limburg, 28 april 2015 *(Arnoud B van den Berg)*



281-282 Poelsnip / Great Snipe *Gallinago media*, Broekhuizen, Limburg, 28 april 2015
(Arnoud B van den Berg)

het gebied rond de Middellandse Zee om vandaar over korte afstanden verder noordwaarts te gaan (cf Dutch Birding 33: 263, 2011).

Balts tijdens trek
Bij geen van de 15 voorjaarsgevallen van Poelsnip sinds 1977 werd baltsgedrag vastgesteld en de zangopnamen te Broekhuizen zijn de eerste ooit van deze soort in Nederland. Er is echter een precedent van een dwaalgast te Cley, Norfolk, Engeland, die op 11-16 mei 2011 eveneens balts liet zien (Gantlett 2011). De opnamen van 27 en 28 april 2015 tonen een kortere en soberdere zang dan doorgaans is te horen op baltsplaatsen in Polen en Zweden; de zang te Broekhuizen bevat minder tonen aan begin en eind en duurt 2-3 sec in plaats van 4-6 sec (cf archief The Sound Approach). Het is de vraag of deze wat korte zang kenmerkend is voor voorjaarstrekkers die (nog) niet op de baltsplaats zijn aangekomen of dat het ook in de broedgebieden is te horen, bijvoorbeeld tijdens het foerageren overdag.

Summary
Displaying Great Snipe at Broekhuizen in April 2015
From 25 to 28 April 2015, a Great Snipe *Gallinago media* was regularly displaying while foraging at Broekhuizen, Limburg, the Netherlands. It was the first time the species' song was heard since at least 1884, when it became extinct as a breeding bird. Each of the songs lasted 2-3 sec and they were slightly shorter with fewer notes at start and finish than what is usually heard at breeding sites in Poland and Sweden. In the Netherlands, the species became rare on passage in the 20th century with 38 records in 1977-2013, of which 15 in April-June, 22 in July-October and one in January.

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Gull-billed Terns breeding at Qarun lake, Egypt, in 2013-14

Gull-billed Tern *Gelochelidon nilotica* has a more or less cosmopolitan range, regularly breeding in five continents: North America, South America, Europe, Asia and Australia (note that the subspecies in Australia is sometimes considered a full species; del Hoyo & Collar 2014). In southern Europe, it breeds around the Mediterranean Sea and Black Sea and there is a very small isolated population in northern Germany and Denmark; Conradt & Ebels 2014). It further breeds in temperate and eastern Asia, along both coasts of central and southern North America, along the northwestern and eastern coasts of South America, and in Australia. Post-breeding dispersal expands its range to include much of southern Asia, Central America, New Zealand and parts of central Africa (del Hoyo et al 1996, BirdLife International 2014). In north-western Africa, breeding is known from Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco, Mauritania and Senegal (Sanchez et al 2004). East of Tunisia, the species is virtually absent as a breeder. The only breeding record for Libya was in June 2010 at Wadi Kaam dam, where 12 active nests were found on an islet together with six nests of Black-winged Stilt *Himantopus himantopus* (EGA-RAC/SPA Waterbirds Census Team 2010). The Arabian population is probably no more than 1000 pairs, most of which breed in Kuwait (Jennings 2010). In Israel, it is an uncommon migrant and winter visitor mainly to the Mediterranean Sea coast and Gulf of Aqaba (Perlman & Meyrav 2009).

In Egypt, the species is a scarce passage visitor in autumn from late August to mid-October and in spring from early March to mid-May. It is a rare winter visitor to the Nile delta and Nile valley. At El Faiyum oasis, the only recent observations are of small numbers during migration on 6 May 1978 with one record at Qarun lake in El Faiyum (Goodman & Meininger 1989). The discovery of a

283 Gull-billed Tern / Lachstern *Gelochelidon nilotica*, adult, with Little Tern / Dwergstern *Sternula albifrons*, El Qaren El Zahaby, Qarun lake, Faiyum Governorate, Egypt, 23 June 2014 *(Mohamed I Habib)*. Adult with injured leg. **284** Gull-billed Tern / Lachstern *Gelochelidon nilotica*, adult, El Qaren El Zahaby, Qarun lake, Faiyum Governorate, Egypt, 25 June 2014 *(Mohamed I Habib)*. Parent bringing food to chick. **285** Gull-billed Terns / Lachsterns *Gelochelidon nilotica*, adult and juvenile, with Slender-billed Gulls / Dunbekmeeuwen *Chroicocephalus genei*, El Qaren El Zahaby, Qarun lake, Faiyum Governorate, Egypt, 25 June 2014 *(Mohamed I Habib)*. Almost three week old chick with parent within colony of Slender-billed Gulls. **286** Gull-billed Tern / Lachstern *Gelochelidon nilotica*, juvenile, with Slender-billed Gulls / Dunbekmeeuwen *Chroicocephalus genei*, El Qaren El Zahaby, Qarun lake, Faiyum Governorate, Egypt, 25 June 2014 *(Mohamed I Habib)*. Almost three week old chick within colony of Slender-billed Gulls.

small number of breeding pairs in Egypt in 2013-14, described here, therefore came as a surprise.

Discovery of breeding site at El Faiyum in 2013

In May 2013, Gaby Michael and Mohamed Habib visited El Qaren El Zahaby at Qarun lake (29°28'N, 30°40'E), in the western part of Faiyum Governorate. El Qaren El Zahaby is a small island which looked promising for breeding seabirds. We discovered nine Gull-billed Terns, including at least two birds 'hidden' within a Slender-billed Gull *Chroicocephalus genei* colony. I took some photographs of the terns, which showed behaviour indicative of breeding (eg, attacking and mobbing intruders) and we suspected that the birds were breeding on the island. Therefore, I revisited the site in June 2014 with Mohamed Abd-el Ghany and Mostafa Ali and a team from Qarun protected area. I managed to find a nest and photograph two chicks of almost three weeks old. The parent birds were easily identified by their relatively short stout and totally black bill (about the same length as the black cap), while the juveniles had a slimmer bill than the adults and less black on the head, with a

faint dark mask (Olsen & Larsson 1995, Porter & Aspinall 2010). The identification of the juveniles was confirmed by Pierre-André Crochet and Klaus Malling Olsen (in litt).

Status and conservation
The records in 2013 and 2014 represent the first breeding of Gull-billed Tern in Egypt and only the second breeding record for north-eastern Africa. There is no immediate threat to this colony because it is not allowed for fishermen to visit the islands because of the ban on fishing at Qarun lake during the breeding season. However, the species may be threatened by the deterioration and loss of habitat, eg, through wetland drainage, agricultural intensification, pesticide pollution and fluctuating water levels (del Hoyo et al 1996). The species may also suffer from shooting ducks and other waders during the hunting seasons, as may have been the cause for the adult observed with a damaged leg (plate 283). Further study is necessary to elucidate the breeding ecology of Gull-billed Terns at El Qaren El Zahaby. Access to the breeding area is restricted and can only be arranged after approval has been granted.

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I would like to thank Ali Metrash, director of Qarun protected area, for his guiding and hospitality during the trip and for using the protected area patrolling boat and for working with his team, especially Abu Sreea; Gaby Michael for introducing me to this area and supporting me during the first trip; Mohamed Abd-el Ghany and Mostafa Ali for their help during the trip; Mostafa Fouda and Hala Rahmy for their support; and Pierre-André Crochet and Klaus Malling Olsen for their confirmation of the identification.

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Yellow-browed Bunting at Dąbkowice, Poland, in October 2014

On 5 October 2014 at c 09:00, an unusual bunting *Emberiza* was trapped at ringing station 'Bukowo' of the Operation Baltic (organised by the Bird Migration Research Station, University of Gdańsk) near Dąbkowice, West Pomerania, Poland (54°20′15″N, 16°14′40″E). It was found in a mist-net placed in broad-leaf shrub on the edge of forest and grey dunes. After a brief study of accessible literature (Svensson 1992, Svensson et al 2009), it was identified as Yellow-browed Bunting *E chrysophrys*. After ringing, measuring, collecting a blood sample and taking photographs, the bird was released. It was not seen again.

Description
SIZE & SHAPE As Common Reed Bunting *E schoeniclus*. Bill typical for bunting: solid, triangular and with high base and pointed tip.
HEAD Broad white supercilium turning to yellow above eye and to bill; on back of head, reaching grey-brown neck, surrounding brown ear-coverts with blackish edges. Small white aurical spot. Paler buffish curve below eye. Crown dark with prominent white median crown-stripe. Malar stripe dark.
UPPERPARTS Mantle pattern resembling Dunnock *Prunella modularis*, with broad blackish streaks over grey-buff background, becoming weaker towards brownish uppertail-coverts. Centre of back rusty with dark streaks.
UNDERPARTS White with dense blackish streaking on breast and flank.
WING Wing-coverts grey-buff. Median coverts with

287-288 Yellow-browed Bunting / Geelbrauwgors *Emberiza chrysophrys*, first-year female, Dąbkowice, West Pomerania, Poland, 5 October 2014 *(Michał Polakowski)*

white tip; greater coverts with pale buff edges. Tertials similar to Common Reed Bunting, with dark centre and broad rusty edges; outer web showing typical pattern of most Eurasian *Emberiza* buntings, with rusty edge strongly widening, creating rusty wedge into dark feather centre. Primaries and secondaries narrowly edged rusty-buff, becoming more yellowish towards distal part of wing.

TAIL Rectrices blackish-brown except for (moulted on both sides) innermost buffish feather (t1); two outermost feathers (t5-6) showing white, similar to Common Reed Bunting.

BARE PARTS Lower mandible and base part of upper mandible pinkish. Rest of bill dark grey. Iris dull-grey. Leg pinkish.

BIOMETRY Measurements taken according to Busse (2000) and Svensson (1992). Wing length 75 mm. Tail length 64 mm. Tarsus length (measured with ruler) 20 mm. Wing formula (primaries numbered from outside): p3=p4 (wing tip), p2 2 mm shorter, p5 1 mm, p6 4 mm, p7 9 mm and p8 13 mm shorter. Outer web of p3-6 emarginated. Fat score 2 (cf Busse 2000).

Identification

Yellow-browed Bunting is distinctive but may be confused with some other Palearctic bunting species: Rustic *E rustica*, Little *E pusilla* and Common Reed Bunting. Characteristic features are the pattern of the head, mantle and underparts (cf Svensson 1992, Byers et al 1995, Svensson et al 2009, van Duivendijk 2010). The most prominent features are listed in table 1. Superficially, Yellow-browed could also be confused with some Nearctic sparrows, such as White-throated Sparrow *Zonotrichia albicollis*, which shows a similar but much 'cleaner' head pattern (cf Byers et al 1995).

The wing length of 75 mm may suggest a female but just falls in the overlap between male and female (males 75-84 mm, females 70-78 mm; cf Svensson 1992, Cramp & Perrins 1994); tail length of 64 mm may even suggest a male. However, the DNA study conducted on a blood sample taken from the trapped bird using PCR method with P2/P8 primers (Griffiths et al 1998) allowed to identify the bird as a female. Based on the iris colour together with the worn, pointed rectrices (except for the moulted innermost pair) and not fully ossified skull (the border was visible on the lower part of an occiput), the bird was aged a first calendar-year (cf Svensson 1992).

Distribution and previous WP records

Yellow-browed Bunting breeds in south-eastern Siberia, Russia, from Irkutsk to the Barguzin river and the Stanovoy mountain range. It winters in central and south-eastern China (Cramp & Perrins 1994). It is a rare vagrant to the Western Palearctic

TABLE 1 Diagnostic characters of Yellow-browed *Emberiza chrysophrys*, Rustic *E rustica*, Little *E pusilla* and Common Reed Bunting *E schoeniclus* in immature/female plumage / diagnostische kenmerken van Geelbrauwgors *Emberiza chrysophrys*, Bosgors *E rustica*, Dwerggors *E pusilla* en Rietgors *E schoeniclus* in onvolwassen kleed of vrouwtjeskleed

	Yellow-browed Bunting	**Rustic Bunting**	**Little Bunting**	**Common Reed Bunting**
side of head	broad yellow-white supercilium, yellow mainy in frontal part, no eye-ring	off-white to white supercilium, brownish to blackish cheek, no eye-ring	brown with black hind and lower edge, white eye-ring	buff supercilium, brown-grey or rusty cheek
crown	dark with white median crown-stripe	buffish to blackish with narrow, pale median crown-stripe	dark with rusty median crown-stripe	grey-brown, paler in centre
whitish aurical spot	present	present	present	absent
bill	pinkish, mainly on base of mandible	pinkish, mainly on mandible	grey	grey
wing-bars	whitish or pale buff	whitish	whitish, often indistinct	yellow-buff
uppertail-coverts	rusty-buff	rusty-buff	greyish	greyish or brownish
mantle	grey-buff with rusty center	brown-buff	greyish	grey-buff
underparts streaking	blackish	rusty	blackish	dark buff
leg	pinkish	pink-brown	pink	brown-grey

TABLE 2 Records of Yellow-browed Bunting *Emberiza chrysophrys* in the Western Palearctic / gevallen van Geelbrauwgors *Emberiza chrysophrys* in het West-Palearctische gebied (cf De Smet 1996, Haas 2010; Marcel Haas in litt)

Belgium (1)
20 October 1966, Tongeren, Limburg, first-winter male, trapped (kept in captivity until winter 1969/70 when it died; skin lost) (De Smet 1996, De Smet et al 1996, Dufourny 1997)

Britain (5)
19 October 1975, Holkham Meals, Norfolk, England, immature/female (Rogers & Rarities Committee 1989, Holman 1990, British Ornithologists' Union 1991)
12-23 October 1980, Fair Isle, Shetland, Scotland, male, ringed on 12 October (Rogers & Rarities Committee 1982, Kitson & Robertson 1983, British Ornithologists' Union 1984)
22-23 September 1992, North Ronaldsay, Orkney, Scotland (Donnelly 1993, Rogers & Rarities Committee 1993)
19-22 October 1994, St Agnes, Scilly, England (Wright 1994, Rogers & Rarities Committee 1995)
4-5 May 1998, Hoy, Orkney, Scotland (Rogers & Rarities Committee 1999)

France (1)
autumn 1827, Lille, Nord, first-winter male, trapped, collected (Jiguet 2007, Jiguet et al 2007)

Netherlands (1)
19 October 1982, Schiermonnikoog, Friesland, first-winter male, ringed (Scharringa & Winkelman 1984, Blankert et al 1987, Vonk & van IJzendoorn 1988, van den Berg & Bosman 2001)

Poland (1)
5 October 2014, Dąbkowice, West Pomerania, first-winter female, ringed (this paper)

Sweden (1)
3 January to 27 February 2009, Matningen, Säbysjön, Uppland, male (www.sofnet.org/sveriges-ornitologiska-forening/raritetskatalogen/sparvar-finkar-faltsparvar/gulbrynad-sparv; Dutch Birding 31: 58, plate 41, 2009)

(WP), with only nine previous records, of which five in Britain and singles in Belgium, France, the Netherlands and Sweden (table 2). Seven records were in autumn, one was in spring and one was in winter. A report in Ukraine in January 1983 (cf Davydovich & Gorban 1990) is currently considered unsufficiently documented (Geert Groot Koerkamp in litt; cf Haas 2012) and a German record from April 2004 was classified as Category D/E (Deutsche Seltenheitenkommission 2008). The bird, therefore, concerns the first for Poland and 10th for the WP. The record has been accepted by the Polish rarities committee (Komisja Faunistyczna 2015).

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Varia

Gouldian Finch

Gouldian Finch *Erythrura gouldiae* is a well-known passerine species from Australia. It is rare and threatened (IUCN status 'Endangered'). The aim of the Save the Gouldian Fund (STGF), founded by Mike Fidler, is to save the last remaining Gouldian living in the wild from extinction. To this end, the fund finances two research centers, one for the study of wild birds in their natural habitat and one for the study of birds in captivity. The former is situated in the eastern Kimberley region in Western Australia, in which the last remaining groups of Gouldian still find refuge. Through studies in the wild and in captivity, the STGF and its associated researchers are trying to determine the main causes for the decline in the number of finches. In recent years, the wild population counted a mere 2500 individuals whereas, in the past, birds were observed in their 100s to 1000s simultaneously, with a geographic range previously encompassing a majority of the Australian tropical savannah.

Morphology en ecology

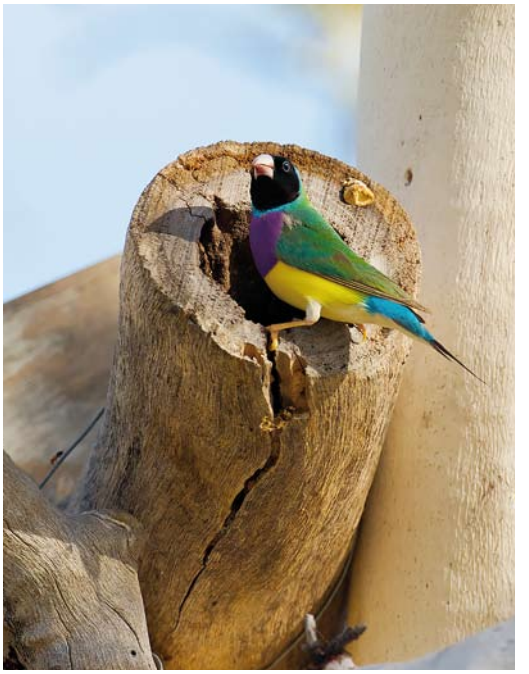
Gouldian Finch is a very colourful species and individuals of both sexes exhibit genetic colour polymorphism where red, black and yellow (orange) head-colour morphs coexist at relatively stable frequencies: black (c 70%), red (c 30%) and yellow (only occasionally; Southern 1945, Clement et al 1993, Franklin & Dostine 2000, Gilby et al 2009). The adult male is mainly emerald green on the back, with a pale blue uppertail and a large black, red or yellow-orange mask (depending on the morph), bordered by a pale blue band. The body consists of a purple breast and yellow below with a cream-coloured undertail. The adult female shows colours similar to the adult male but is much duller and paler. Both sexes have a ring of pale skin around the eye, pinkish-orange legs and a bill that varies in colour from white with a red tip in non-breeding season to pearl (in males) or dark grey (in females) in breeding season. In aviculture (in captivity), many usually less colourful mutations exist. The relative ease with which colour mutations can be achieved is one reason why Gouldian is one of the most popular birds in aviculture around the world. Most birders will know Gouldian as a common species in aviaries or from the aviculturalist literature but many will not be aware that this species is very rare and severely threatened in the wild.

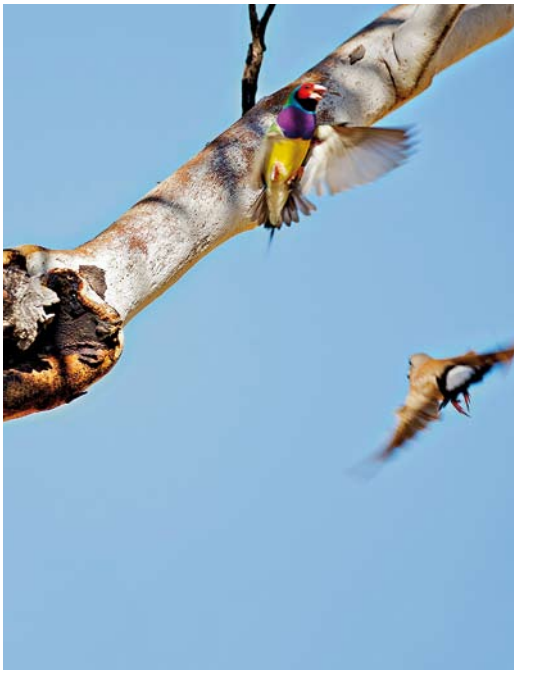
Unlike other Australian finches, Gouldian Finches gain little of their required protein from insects, relying instead exclusively on seeds from grasses such as spear grass *Sorghum* in the dry season, and a small number of grasses including Cockatoo Grass *Alloteropsis semialata*, Ribbon Grass *Chrysopogon fallax* and Curly Spinifex

289 Gouldian Finches / Goulds Amadines *Erythrura gouldiae*, Kimberley region, Western Australia, Australia, 3 September 2008 *(Mike Fidler)*. Flock of females and black-headed males with one red-headed and one yellow-headed male (center). **290** Gouldian Finches / Goulds Amadines *Erythrura gouldiae*, black-headed male and female, Kimberley region, Western Australia, Australia, April 2008 *(Mike Fidler)*

291 Breeding habitat of Gouldian Finch *Erythrura gouldiae*, Kimberley region, Western Australia, Australia, 7 July 2003 *(Mike Fidler)*

292 Forest fire, Kimberley region, Western Australia, Australia, 15 August 2008 *(Mike Fidler)*. Forest fires are a great threat for Gouldian Finch *Erythrura gouldiae* nesting habitat.





293 Gouldian Finch / Goulds Amadine *Erythrura gouldiae*, black-headed male, Kimberley region, Western Australia, Australia, 8 April 2008 *(Mike Fidler)* **294** Gouldian Finches / Goulds Amadines *Erythrura gouldiae*, red-headed male and female, Kimberley region, Western Australia, Australia, 6 April 2008 *(Mike Fidler)* **295** Gouldian Finch / Goulds Amadine *Erythrura gouldiae*, black-headed male, Kimberley region, Western Australia, Australia, 13 April 2008 *(Mike Fidler)*

Triodia bitextura in the wet season. Their restricted diet makes them quite vulnerable to seed shortages. Late in the wet season, birds seek out hollows for nesting, preferring those formed in eucalyptus species like Northern White Gum *Eucalyptus brevifolia* and Salmon Gum *E tintinnans* to raise their chicks. A clutch can consist of four or more chicks. Up to three clutches of eggs can be laid in a season but commonly this would be restricted to one or one and half clutch on average, depending on the timing of the dry season which affects the availability of grass seeds.

Causes of decline

The main reason why Gouldian Finches (and other birds and animals) disappear at such a frightening pace is obviously human influence. In the habitat of the finches (northern Australian savannah and hilly woodlands), a major increase in human activity has occurred, particularly in livestock farming and mining activity (O'Malley 2005). Strangely enough, Gouldian appears to have been much more affected than for instance Longtail Finch *Poephila acuticauda*, a comparable bird species also occurring in the region. This seems to be, at least partially, caused by Gouldian being a rather picky species. Not only is the diet of Gouldian quite limited, the investigators also discovered that Gouldian in the wild only breed in hollow trees with cavities of very specific size and configuration. They generally prefer trees with deep, dark cavities. Exactly those trees are hard to find, because their favorite eucalyptus trees have to be up to 80-120 years old before forming a cavity useful for the species. Moreover, once the tree has holes in it, it becomes susceptible to fire. It was also noted that there were very few saplings in the Gouldian habitat. Research then showed that it took nine years for a sapling to become fire resistant (Brazill-Boast et al 2010).

So, fire is the crux of the problem. Every year, huge wild fires rage through northern Australia, killing the saplings and burning the older trees with holes, creating a shortage of suitable nesting sites. These fires are often lit by ranchers for grassland management but are more often caused by careless tourists and the indigenous population. These fire regimes are often characterised by frequent, extensive, hot, late dry-season wildfires. This affects not only the availability of tree hollows for nesting but also grass seed availability. However, some grass seed production is actually promoted by fires - and so excluding fire completely would not be beneficial. In key Gouldian habitats, fire management regimes have been introduced, based on a complex mosaic of burnt and unburnt patches of country. The key current research programme is aimed at measuring precisely the impact of fire regularity on the availability of each of the food source grasses.

Visit to STGF research center

In October 2013, I (Jos Lemmens) visited the STGF research centre in New South Wales, right in the Australian 'bush'. The plot is quite large, with a house located on a slope, a lawn with a large natural lake and woodlands. Captive Gouldian Finches were present in large numbers, as the research facility was still on MF's property but the research complex was in the middle of moving to Canberra, as Sarah Pryke, the leading scientist, transfered from the Macquarie University in Sydney to the Australian National University in Canberra. Originally, there had been over 400 cages and aviaries of various types and sizes, housing over 2500 individuals on MF's property. At the time of my visit, about half of the cages and aviaries had already been moved. The Gouldian that were still present were residing in a number of indoor aviaries of c 10 x 3 x 3 m. For reasons described below, they were divided into aviaries by head colour. Note that Gouldian do not naturally reside in colonies, although in the wild they can be observed to forage in mixed flocks during the dry season.

Hierarchy, frequency and stress

It appears that a very clear hierarchy prevails in the Gouldian Finch world. The red-headed males are the most dominant; the black-headed are next and the occasional yellow-headed make up the rear. This hierarchy has been observed in the wild, as Gouldian compete for high quality nesting sites; red-headed males defended higher quality nest sites, and overcame greater levels of nest-site competition (against competitors from their own and other species) than black-headed. It was shown that birds breeding in high quality nests produce more offspring than birds with lower quality nests. Red-headed males also produced more fledglings (especially with red-headed females) than black-headed, independent of the quality of the nesting site. Research has indicated that the blood of red-headed birds contains more testosterone hormone than the blood of black-headed (Pryke & Griffith 2006, Pryke 2007, 2010, Brazill-Boast et al 2013).

Stress is, according to MF, one of the biggest killers of Gouldian Finches in captivity. With young birds that have not yet gone through their

first moult, it remains somewhat benign but in his experience the maximum number of young birds that can co-exist in a cage of 1 x 0.6 x 0.6 m is six. If you put in eight, two will not make it. Therefore, everywhere in the aviaries, 'stress perches' are available. These are short thin poles (two to three times the thickness of a broomstick), in which crosswise normal aviary perches are inserted, hanging from the ceiling at different heights. These perches ensure that the birds lower in the hierarchy have a safe place to sit or sleep. On the doors to the aviaries, MF kept a record of which individuals reside in the aviaries, each one being tagged with an electronic foot ring. Some ring numbers were crossed out, showing that even among same colour head-morphs, stress still takes its toll and occasionally some specimens die.

Given the clear dominance and apparent higher breeding success rate of red-headed birds, it is quite unusual that the three morphs co-exist in such a (both geographically and temporally) stable frequency. Theoretically, the most successful birds should dominate and gradually displace the less competitive ones. One reason why this does not happen is, again, stress. In high stress situations the red-headed suffer from reduced immune function and compromised health. In experimental set-ups, red-headed birds appeared highly sensitive to dietary changes while black-headed birds remained largely unaffected by diet manipulation. The red-headed birds delayed breeding and produced fewer offspring. Also, red-headed males reduced parental care in such circumstances, while black-headeds increased the feeding of the chicks (Griffith et al 2011). Another reason why the red-headed morph does not appear in a higher frequency is a genetic incompatibility between the morphs. Pryke & Rolllins (2012) showed that, when a red-headed and black-headed breed together, the number of chicks dying is significantly higher. This is particularly the case with female young (sons produced by mixed pairings suffer about 40% higher mortality, daughters up to 80%).

It also appears that the females of a mixed couple in some way can determine the sex of their offspring and thus produce relatively more males, causing an even more skewed frequency of red-headed males and females. This has been tested by dying red-headed males temporarily black, thus fooling the females. However, the mechanism by which mothers skew offspring sex ratios remain unknown. The influence of stress on the induced sex bias has been demonstrated by administering stress hormones or stress hormone inhibitors during egg production (Pryke & Rollins 2012, Pryke et al 2014).

By measuring electronically which birds go in and out a nest box, the research team has learned even more about the behaviour of the Gouldian Finches. Dominant females very often enter the nest boxes of other couples and dump eggs like a cuckoo. Conversely, subordinate females often try to mate with the dominant males. There are even more remarkable studies; how about the fact that Gouldian apparently choose their partner with their right eye (Templeton et al 2012)? I can recommend anyone interested in Gouldian to read the website of Sarah Pryke (see below) or the Facebook page of the STGF.

Research into the behaviour of Gouldian Finches has produced important insights. However, the main goal of the STGF was to find a remedy to counteract their steep decline in the wild. It now seems that the main reason has been found, allowing a short-term remedy.

Remedy for decline: artificial nest boxes

The lack of suitable nest hollows is exacerbated by competition for the few remaining suitable nesting sites. It was noticed that, in the wild, fierce competition for nesting holes between Longtail Finches and Gouldian Finches exists. In the research centre, an experiment was set up to measure the effect of this phenomenon; 50 pairs of Longtail and 50 of Gouldian were placed in 1.2 m square cages which were divided down the middle. Through diet and light manipulation, birds were brought into breeding condition, all at the same time. Each pair of birds was given a nest box and just before they were to lay their first egg, one nest box and the divider were removed. The aim was to see which bird won the fight for the remaining nest box. Sadly, the Longtail won on every occasion (Brazill-Boast et al 2010, Brazill-Boast 2013).

Another experiment, this one conducted in the wild, involved mounted taxidermic models of various nest-site competitors (black-headed and red-headed Gouldian Finch morphs and Long-tailed Finch models), as well as control non-competitor models like Black-chinned Honeyeater *Melithreptus gularis*, that were presented to Gouldian and Long-tailed Finches. It appeared that Long-tailed reacted more quickly to models and were more likely to attack models than Gouldian, which suggests that Long-tailed are intrinsically more aggressive (Brazill-Boast et al 2011, Pearce et al 2011). By contrast, Gouldian were more aggressive to models of their own

species, especially the red-headed morphs, and avoided approaching Long-tailed models.

To preserve Gouldian Finches, it was decided to conduct an experiment by supplying artificial nest boxes made from a hollow branch and a wooden nest box. The hollow branches for the nest boxes were mainly derived from the work on the nearby Ord River irrigation project. This large-scale project had enlisted the help of STGF to investigate how they could include nature conservation research projects in their work. When the work on the project destroyed nesting trees, then artificial ones were erected in an out-of-the-way site. Also, if a water hole was eliminated, then an artificial one was created elsewhere and so forth. A number of mining projects also enlisted the help of the research team. This project triggered a veritable population explosion. Where previously only 40% of the adult Gouldian reared chicks, this jumped to 90%! In total, the population in the research area increased by nearly 400% (Brazill-Boast et al 2012). Also, females produced larger clutches in nest boxes than natural hollows, and breeding pairs using nest boxes produced more offspring compared with those using natural hollows.

Nest-box provisioning is unlikely to be the single long-term solution for Gouldian Finch, however. The availability of food is another restricting factor in population growth. Of the two resources (nest sites and food), nest sites are easier to supplement and STGF has now even succeeded in recolonizing wild populations of Gouldian back to suitable areas from where they had disappeared. Still, many more nesting boxes remain necessary. Sustainable fire regimes practiced on cattle ranches to preserve food availability would be another pillar of a successful conservation strategy.

Via the site of STGF (see below) or its Facebook page, it is possible to donate a nest box. I call on all readers, aviculture enthusiasts, birders and bird and animal lovers in general to donate one or more nest boxes.

Useful websites

The following websites provide more information about Gouldian Finch research and conservation: http://tinyurl.com/8rucxm6; http://savethegouldian.net; and http://sarahpryke.com.

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WP reports

This review lists rare and interesting birds reported in the Western Palearctic mainly from **April to late May 2015**. The reports are largely unchecked and their publication here does not imply future acceptance by a rarities committee. Observers are requested to submit their records to each country's rarities committee. Corrections are welcome and will be published.

GEESE TO DUCKS A **Ross's Goose** *Anser rossii* at Vík, Lón, on 14 April was the second for Iceland. The fourth **Red-breasted Goose** *Branta ruficollis* for Iceland at Arabær, Flói, on 12 April was regarded as the same individual that stayed at Aðaldalur from 24 April into May. Also in Iceland, the adult male **American White-winged Scoter** *Melanitta deglandi deglandi* was still at Gerðhamrar, Dýrafjörður, in May. The adult male **Black Scoter** *M americana* at Rossbeigh, Kerry, Ireland, remained into April. Two of the four unringed **Buffleheads** *Bucephala albeola* wintering in the Netherlands remained into May. In Iceland, the adult male **Hooded Merganser** *Lophodytes cucullatus* near Reykjavík from 18 November 2014 was still present on 23 April; it was regarded as the same individual as last winter's immature. In Scotland, the first-winter male **Harlequin Duck** *Histrionicus histrionicus* at Donmouth, Aberdeenshire, from 4 January stayed into May while the female off Brora, Highland, was still present on 30 April. The **American Black Ducks** *Anas rubripes* in Scilly, England, and Strontian, Highland, Scotland, remained through April.

GROUSE The first **Red Grouse** *Lagopus scotica* for Isle of May, Fife, Scotland, was seen on 5 May. The last surviving **Black Grouse** *Tetrao tetrix* of the original population in the Netherlands concerns a female that hatched already back in 2008 (the last year that fledglings survived) or longer ago, and was colour-ringed (blue) in 2012 at Sallandse Heuvelrug, Overijssel; nowadays, it has been joined by a handful of introduced birds from Sweden. In its introduction range in central England and northern Wales, numbers of **Lady Amherst's Pheasant** *Chrysolophus amherstiae* gradually went down from the late 1980s onwards (there were still up to 73 present in 1996; Birding World 9: 108-111, 1996). By the mid-2000s, it was regarded as extinct; however, in April, the presence of the last surviving male in Bedfordshire became known, and this bird was widely twitched.

GREBES TO BUSTARDS In England, a **Pied-billed Grebe** *Podilymbus podiceps* was first seen at Berkeley, Gloucestershire, on 24 April and then at Leighton Moss, Lancashire, from 25 April to at least 4 May. In southern Turkey, a **Namaqua Dove** *Oena capensis* was found at Göksu delta on 11 May. A male **Golden Nightjar** *Caprimulgus eximius* along the road between Dakhla and Aousserd on 3 May was the first for Western Sahara and the WP; the bird was first seen alive and then picked up dead. A **Little Swift** *Apus affinis* was reported at Barbâtre, Vendée, France, on 14 May. The breeding record of **Allen's Gallinule** *Porphyrio alleni* in Malta has not been accepted by the Maltese rarities committee (cf Dutch Birding 36: 327-330, 2014). The **American Coot** *Fulica americana* on North Uist, Outer Hebrides, Scotland, stayed until 4 April. Single migrant **Demoiselle Cranes** *Grus virgo* were present on Lesvos, Greece, from 24 April to at least 8 May, and at Tyrnävä and Revonlahti from 17 April to at least 12 May (15th for Finland). In northern Europe, **Little Bustards** *Tetrax tetrax* stayed on Jomfruland, Telemark, on 24-26 April (male; seventh for Norway), at Ullvättern, Storfors, Värmland, on 29 April (27th for Sweden) and at Ylikylä, Rovaniemi, on 6 May (23rd for Finland).

LOONS TO CORMORANTS The adult-summer **Pacific Loon** *Gavia pacifica* was back at Marazion, Cornwall, England, from 30 April to 4 May; it had last been seen in mid-March. One was filmed at Stenshuved, Skåne, Sweden, on 9 May. The now annual boat trips by the MV Gemini Explorer off Portsoy, Aberdeenshire, Scotland, produced more than 10 **Yellow-billed Loons** *G adamsii* on 4 April. An unseasonal **Wilson's Storm Petrel** *Oceanites oceanicus* was seen out at sea from the RV Celtic Explorer c 70 nautical miles west-south-west of Slyne Head, Galway, Ireland, on 21 April. In Germany, last year's **Black-browed Albatross** *Thalassarche melanophris* returned to the sea near Helgoland, Schleswig-Holstein, on 19 April and landed on the island on 21-23 April, 4-5 May and 14 May. On 7 May, it visited Hirtshals, Nordjylland, Denmark, as it did last year (cf Dutch Birding 36: 232-241, 2014). In Cape Verde Islands, **Fea's Petrel** *Pterodroma feae* has been shown to breed on Santiago. In Egypt, a **Streaked Shearwater** *Calonectris leucomelas* was seen 20 km south of Safaga on 30 April (fifth for the WP). In the Netherlands, a wintering **Black Stork** *Ciconia nigra* near Schiphol airport, Noord-Holland, was infrequently seen until 20 April. A **Green Heron** *Butorides virescens* photographed at Sestri Levante, Liguria, on 20 April was the first for Italy. A first-winter **Great Blue Heron** *Ardea herodias* in Scilly from 13 April into May was the second for England (the first was a first-winter briefly present in Scilly in December 2007). In Spain, a (pure) **Western Reef Heron** *Egretta gularis gularis* was seen inland at Embalse de la Sotonera, Huesca, on 22 April. An adult **Masked Booby** *Sula dactylatra* at Jahra pools on 1 April was the first for Kuwait. The first **Pygmy Cormorant** *Phalacrocorax pygmeus* for Spain at La Massona, Aiguamolls de l'Empordà, Girona, from 13 December 2014 stayed until 26 April.

WADERS A **Eurasian Oystercatcher** *Haematopus ostralegus* ringed as a first-year at Nieuwpoort, West-Vlaanderen, Belgium, on 1 November 1982 still survived after c 33 years as it was seen at its breeding area in Gent, Oost-Vlaanderen, Belgium, on 13 March. A **Spur-winged Lapwing** *Vanellus spinosus* at Chorokhi delta on 6 May was probably the third for Georgia. An adult **White-tail-**

296 Black-browed Albatross / Wenkbrauwalbatros *Thalassarche melanophris*, adult, with Northern Gannets / Jan-van-genten *Morus bassanus*, Helgoland, Schleswig-Holstein, Germany, 5 May 2015 *(Vincent Legrand)*

297 Black-browed Albatross / Wenkbrauwalbatros *Thalassarche melanophris*, adult, Helgoland, Schleswig-Holstein, Germany, 5 May 2015 *(Roy Slaterus)*

ed Lapwing *V leucurus* at Żukowo, Wielkopolska, on 8-10 May was the seventh for Poland. In Denmark, one stayed at Ølundgård, Nordfyn, from 21 May onwards. A **Killdeer** *Charadrius vociferus* at Aldover, Tarragona, on 7 April was the first for Catalunya (and c sixth for Spain). Also in Spain, a **Sharp-tailed Sandpiper** *Calidris acuminata* stayed at Tancat de Milia, Sollana, Albufera de Valencia, on 11-13 May. An adult-summer **Stilt Sandpiper** *C himantopus* photographed at Pals, Girona, on 18 April was the first for Catalunya (and second or third for Spain). A **Wilson's Phalarope** *Phalaropus tricolor* was present at Salinas de San Pedro del Pinatar, Murcia, Spain, on 15-21 April. The fourth **Spotted Sandpiper** *Actitis macularius* for the Netherlands at Medemblik, Noord-Holland, stayed from 19 January to 2 May, meanwhile moulting from winter to summer plumage. The first for Llobregat delta, Catalunya, was photographed on 14 May but not seen the next days. In the Azores, a **Hudsonian Whimbrel** *Numenius hudsonicus* stayed on Faial until at least 13 April, together with a **Spotted Sandpiper**. The first-winter **Short-billed Dowitcher** *Limnodromus griseus* at Cabo da Praia, Terceira, Azores, remained into May. A female **Hudsonian Godwit** *Limosa haemastica* at Meare Heath, Somerset, from 24 April to 3 May was the third for Britain (and the seventh for the WP); the most recent one in Britain had been in September 1988. After three months, the **Greater Yellowlegs** *Tringa melanoleuca* returned to Titchfield Haven, Hampshire, England, on 11 April and was still present on 15 May. It is remarkable that a **Lesser Yellowlegs** *T flavipes* at the Yzer mouth, Nieuwpoort, West-Vlaanderen, from 8 May was only the first to be twitchable in Belgium since 1986 (for instance, a handful occurred in the Netherlands in March-April 2015 alone). A **Great Snipe** *Gallinago media* at Broekhuizen, Limburg, on 25-28 April was the first displaying since more than 140 years and the first to be sound-recorded in the Netherlands. One in France in March was followed by an influx of 17 more in April; also in April, up to 13 were seen in Spain and a handful in Belgium. The first **Collared Pratincole** *Glareola pratincola* for mainland South America was an adult photographed at Caucaia, Ceará, Brazil, on 21 April. In Italy, a **Cream-colored Courser** *Cursorius cursor* stayed at Capo Murro di Porco, Siracusa, Sicily, on 17 April.

GULLS In Iceland, an **Ivory Gull** *Pagophila eburnea* was seen at Tálknafjörður on 30 April. A handful of **Bonaparte's Gulls** *Chroicocephalus philadelphia* were still present in Britain and Ireland in early April; the last ones were an adult at Cardiff Bay, Glamorgan, Wales, on 10 April and a first-summer at Southampton, Hampshire, from 3 May onwards. The immature at Plouhinec, Finistère, France, stayed until 6 April. A first-summer **Ross's Gull** *Rhodostethia rosea* turned up at Stokkseyri, Iceland, on 16 May. First-winter **Laughing Gulls** *Larus atricilla* were present at El Hondo, Alicante, Spain, on 15-19 April and at Tjæreborg, Syddanmark, Denmark, on 14 May (when it died). Others were a long-staying second-winter at Ballycotton, Cork, Ireland until at least 30 April and a first-winter in Lancashire and North Merseyside, England, until at least 17 April. If accepted, a first-summer **Franklin's Gull** *L pipixcan* at Nador on 15 April will be the eighth for Morocco. In China, no less than 10 405 **Relict Gulls** *L relictus* were counted at Hangu, Tianjin, on 26 March. A fourth calendar-year **Cape Gull** *L dominicanus vetula* at Almada from 27 April into May was the fourth for Portugal (the previous three having occurred in June-August 2013). The first **Thayer's Gull** *L thayeri* for the Netherlands was a juvenile on 11-27 April at the North Sea beach of Egmond and Bergen, Noord-Holland, staying with 10 000s of gulls attracted by extensive sand suppletion activities. The numbers of **Iceland Gull** *L glaucoides* in Britain varied between 75 and 91 each week during April, with up to a handful **Kumlien's Gulls** *L g kumlieni*; by the first week of May, 45 Iceland and just one Kumlien's were reported. The c fourth Kumlien's for the Netherlands was an adult ('type B/C') at Bergen aan Zee, Noord-Holland, on 14-19 April. The subadult **Glaucous-winged Gull** *L glaucescens* at Reykjavík from 30 January was not seen after 12 March.

RAPTORS TO OWLS In north-western Europe, **Black-winged Kites** *Elanus caeruleus* flew over Hennef-Stadt Blankenberg, Nordrhein-Westfalen, Germany, on 27 March; Rheinland-Pfalz, Germany, on 13 April; Bødkermosen, Møn, on 23 April (seventh for Denmark); Elst, Utrecht, the Netherlands, on 4 May; and Thommen, Liège, Belgium, on 5 May. In Israel, three **Crested Honey Buzzards**

298 White-tailed Lapwing / Witstaartkievit *Vanellus leucurus*, adult, Żukowo, Wielkopolska, Poland, 9 May 2015 *(Tomasz Skorupka)*

299 Lesser Yellowlegs / Kleine Geelpootruiter *Tringa flavipes*, IJzermonding, Nieuwpoort, West-Vlaanderen, Belgium, 10 May 2015 *(Filip De Ruwe)*

300 Great Snipe / Poelsnip *Gallinago media*, Sigean, Aude, France, 13 April 2015 *(Antoine Joris)*

301 Hudsonian Godwit / Rode Grutto *Limosa haemastica*, adult, with Black-tailed Godwits / Grutto's *L limosa*, Meare Heath, Somerset, England, 2 May 2015 *(Richard Stonier)*

302 Hudsonian Godwit / Rode Grutto *Limosa haemastica*, adult, Meare Heath, Somerset, England, 1 May 2015 *(Vincent Legrand)*

303 Great Blue Heron / Amerikaanse Blauwe Reiger *Ardea herodias*, Bryher, Scilly, England, 17 April 2015 *(Josh Jones)* **304** Bearded Vulture / Lammergier *Gypaetus barbatus*, immature, Sallandse Heuvelrug, Overijssel, Netherlands, 5 May 2015 *(Arno ten Hoeve)* **305** Demoiselle Crane / Jufferkraanvogel *Grus virgo*, adult, with Hooded Crows / Bonte Kraaien *Corvus cornix*, Lesvos, Greece, 28 April 2015 *(Killian Mullarney)*

306 Yellow-billed Kite / Geelsnavelwouw *Milvus aegyptius* (found weakened at Rahat, Israel, on 5 April 2015), Tel Tsafit, Israel, 3 May 2015 *(Oren Bengigi)*

307 Thayer's Gull / Thayers Meeuw *Larus thayeri*, second calendar-year, Egmond aan Zee, Noord-Holland, Netherlands, 12 April 2015 *(Vincent Legrand)*

308 Plain Leaf Warbler / Dwergtjiftjaf *Phylloscopus neglectus*, Al Mutla, Kuwait, 18 April 2014 *(Aurélien Audevard)*

309 Bimaculated Lark / Bergkalanderleeuwerik *Melanocorypha bimaculata*, Salins des Pesquiers, Hyères, Var, France, 11 April 2015 *(Aurélien Audevard)*

310 Grey Hypocolius / Zijdestaart *Hypocolius ampelinus*, female, Ashkelon, Israel, 2 April, 2015 *(Oded Lewy)*

311 Black-crowned Sparrow-Lark / Zwartkruinvinkleeuwerik *Eremopterix nigriceps*, male, Meisbar Sei'Fim, Negev, Israel, 5 April 2015 *(Frank Moffatt)*

Pernis ptilorhynchus were noted over Eilat and southern Arava between 14 and 27 April. The 12th **Bateleur** *Terathopius ecaudatus* for Israel was a first-winter at Kisra, western Galilee, on 31 March. The same individual at the European side of Istanbul on 2 May constituted the first for Turkey. A second calendar-year **Bearded Vulture** *Gypaetus barbatus* at Haarlerberg, Overijssel, for a couple of hours on 5 May was the c seventh for the Netherlands (previous ones were not accepted on the Dutch list because of concerns about their provenance). Probably the same bird flew over Ewiges Meer, Aurich, Niedersachsen, Germany, on 7 May, over Dokkumer Nieuwe Zijlen, Friesland, the Netherlands, on 8 May, over Zoutkamp, Groningen, the Netherlands, on 9 May and over Langeoog, Niedersachsen, on 12 May. An adult **Egyptian Vulture** *Neophron percnopterus* at Ogrodniczki, Podlaskie, on 28 April was the ninth for Poland. A **Rüppell's Vulture** *Gyps rueppelli* was found injured at Domancy, Haute-Savoie, France, on 24 April. In northern Morocco, singles were found at Djebel Moussa on 10 and 14 May. A second calendar-year **Golden Eagle** *Aquila chrysaetos* migrating over Vierves-sur-Viroin, Namur, on 17 May was (only) the first since 1988 for Belgium (in the Netherlands, an immature had been photographed at Stadskanaal, Groningen, on 15 March). In Ireland, a six-year-old female **White-tailed Eagle** *Haliaeetus albicilla* released at Killarney National Park, Kerry, as part of a reintroduction programme was found poisoned on its nest at Connemara on 1 April. Over the five years of the release phase of the project, 31 out of 100 young eagles collected from nests in Norway have been recovered dead in Ireland, many of them poisoned, rendering 14 pairs surviving in the wild by 2014. A second calendar-year **Yellow-billed Kite** *Milvus aegyptius* picked up injured near Rahat, northern Negev, and taken into care on 5 April and released a month later was the fourth for Israel.

OWLS TO FALCONS **Eurasian Scops Owls** *Otus scops* turned up, eg, on Great Saltee, Wexford, Ireland, on 10 April (photographed) and on St Kilda, Outer Hebrides, on 1 May (dead). Three **Snowy Owls** *Bubo scandiacus* were recorded in Ireland: a female in Clare on 11 April, a male on The Mullet, Mayo, on 26 April and another female or immature male at Cuilcagh Mountain, Fermanagh, on 7 May. A second **Pied Kingfisher** *Ceryle rudis* for southern Italy was reported at Le Cesine, Lecce, on 11 April (the first was found in late 2014). In Canary Islands (some 10s), western Morocco and Portugal (at least 84), an unprecedented influx of **Red-footed Falcons** *Falco vespertinus* occurred in mid-May; subsequently, the eighth and the ninth for the Azores were found on 19 May and high numbers were seen in southern France. If accepted, a **Sooty Falcon** *F concolor* on Linosa on 18 May would be the third for Italy.

SHRIKES TO LARKS In Spain, the first-year **Brown Shrike** *Lanius cristatus* at Ebro delta, Tarragona, from 31 December 2014 remained until 17 April. In a flock of Eurasian Penduline Tits *Remiz pendulinus* at Wondelgem, Oost-Vlaanderen, Belgium, one **Caspian Penduline Tit** *R p caspius* was seen from 9 March to 6 April. The **Azure Tit** *Cyanistes cyanus* at Kolari, Finland, from 8 November 2014 stayed until 6 April. At Se'ifim plains, Eilat mountains, Israel, a male **Black-crowned Sparrow-Lark** *Eremopterix nigriceps* was present on 5-13 April and five **Arabian Dunn's Larks** *Eremalauda dunni eremodites* on 6-10 April (there had been at least four Arabian Dunn's along the Mediterranean coast from 28 March). One Arabian Dunn's turned up at KM20, Eilat, on 5 April. A **White-winged Lark** *Alauda leucoptera* photographed on Askøy, Hordaland, on 20 May was the third for Norway. A **Bimaculated Lark** *Melanocorypha bimaculata* photographed by a single observer at Salins des Pesquiers, Hyères, Var, on 11 April was the first for France. A **Calandra Lark** *M calandra* was present at Schlehdorf, Bayern, Germany, from 30 March to 7 April.

WARBLERS TO WALLCREEPER In April, the first **Plain Leaf Warbler** *Phylloscopus neglectus* for Kuwait was seen at Mutla. In Spain, a **Marmora's Warbler** *Sylvia sarda* was found at Ebro delta on 30 April. A male and a female **Moltoni's Warbler** *S subalpina* were seen (and heard) at Blakeney Point, Norfolk, England, on 11 May. On 15 May, a male was trapped (and later calling) on Fair Isle, Shetland, Scotland. The first **Asian Desert Warbler** *S nana* for France at Pointe du Devin, Vendée, on 24 March stayed until 4 April. A **Sykes's Warbler** *Iduna rama* photographed at Yüksekova, Hakkari, on 18 May was the first for Turkey. A female **Grey Hypocolius** *Hypocolius ampelinus* remained at Ashkelon, Israel, from 26 March to 14 April. On 18 May, a female-type was photographed at KM20, Eilat. A nesting pair of **Armenian Rock Nuthatches** *Sitta tephronota obscura* photographed at Vadzia on 7 May concerned the first record for Georgia. In Belgium, the **Wallcreeper** *Tichodroma muraria* at Dinant, Namur, from 30 December 2014 was last seen on 7 April.

THRUSHES A handful of **Black Scrub Robins** *Cercotrichas podobe* was present in Israel during March-April and the first successful breeding was reported in mid-May. The third for Kuwait was found at Aldhahar on 25 April. A second calendar-year male **White-throated Robin** *Irania gutturalis* trapped at Utklippan, Blekinge, on 18 May was the eighth for Sweden. In north-western Europe, **Red-flanked Bluetails** *Tarsiger cyanurus* turned up on Öland, Sweden, on 28 March, on Spiekeroog, Niedersachsen, on 9 April, and at Noordwijk, Zuid-Holland, on 10 April (25th for the Netherlands). In France, an **Eastern Black Redstart** *Phoenicurus ochruros phoenicuroides* was identified at Vauvert, Gard, on 26-30 March. An adult male **Moussier's Redstart** *P moussieri* at L'Aufacada, Ebro delta, Tarragona, from 30 April to 2 May was the ninth for Spain. On Helgoland, a male **Common Rock Thrush** *Monticola saxatilis* turned up on 6 May. In France, the second calendar-year male **Desert Wheatear** *Oenanthe deserti* wintering at Tarnos, Landes, was last seen on 15 March. A first-summer male on St Agnes, Scilly, from 21 March into April was the eighth in spring for Britain, all being males. A female at IJmuiden, Noord-Holland, on 24-27 April was the fourth in spring

312 Caspian Penduline Tit / Kaspische Buidelmees *Remiz pendulinus caspius*, Wondelgem, Oost-Vlaanderen, Belgium, 3 April 2015 *(Garry Bakker)* **313** White-crowned Wheatear / Witkruintapuit *Oenanthe leucopyga*, second calendar-year, Palavas-les-Flots, Montpellier, Hérault, France, 5 May 2015 *(Antoine Joris)* **314** White-crowned Wheatear / Witkruintapuit *Oenanthe leucopyga*, second calendar-year, Winduga, Kujawsko-Pomorskie, Poland, 16 May 2015 *(Mateusz Matysiak)*

315-316 Kurdish Wheatear / Westelijke Roodstaarttapuit *Oenanthe xanthoprymna*, Puy de Dôme, Puy-de-Dôme, France, 19 May 2015 *(Antoine Joris)*

for the Netherlands, of which three were females. If accepted, a **Hooded Wheatear** *O monacha* at Karadayı, Antalya, on 14 April will be the second for Turkey (the first for Greece was in May 2012; cf Dutch Birding 35: 384, 2013). A **Western Black-eared Wheatear** *O hispanica* photographed at Xrobb l-Ghagi on 1 May was a very rare find for Malta. A male **Eastern Black-eared Wheatear** *O melanoleuca* was photographed near Völpke between Braunschweig and Magdeburg, Sachsen-Anhalt, Germany, on 30 April. In France, a second calendar-year **White-crowned Wheatear** *O leucopyga* was singing at Palavas-les-Flots, Hérault, from 1 to at least 5 May. A second calendar-year at Winduga, Kujawsko-Pomorskie, from 12 to at least 18 May was the first for Poland. A **Kurdish Wheatear** *O xanthoprymna* photographed at the top of Puy de Dôme, Puy-de-Dôme, Auvergne, on 18-19 May was the first for France and Europe.

ACCENTORS TO AMERICAN WARBLERS The **Black-throated Accentor** *Prunella atrogularis* at Marjaniemi, Hailuoto, Finland, remained from 8 December 2014 to 1 April. The seventh for Sweden was photographed at Halmstad, Halland, on 15-18 April. A **Citril Finch** *Carduelis citrinella* at Holkham Pines, Norfolk, on 10-11 May was the second for Britain (the first was on Fair Isle, Shetland, on 6-11 June 2008). The first-winter **Dark-eyed Junco** *Junco hyemalis* at Beijum, Groningen, the Netherlands, from 1 February was last seen on 10 April. On 11 May, a male was photographed at Toab, Mainland, Shetland. By gps research, it has been revealed that **Blackpoll Warblers** *Setophaga striata* migrate non-stop 2200-2700 km across the ocean in just two or three days from north-eastern Canada to their winter quarters in South America (W V DeLuca et al in Biology Letters 2015; http://rsbl.royalsocietypublishing.org/content/11/4/20141045).

RARITIES COMMITTEES On 1 January 2015, the two Belgian rarities committees, the 'BAHC' for Dutch-speaking and the 'CH' for French-speaking birders, have combined forces into a new committee with an English name, Belgian Rare Birds Committee (BRBC); the BRBC has 10 members, resorts under Koninklijk Belgisch Instituut voor Natuurwetenschappen, Natuurpunt Studie and Aves-Natagora, and annual reports will be published in English but also in Dutch and French (Natuur.Oriolus 81 (1): 19-25, 2015; www.belgianrbc.be).

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Recente meldingen

Dit overzicht van recente meldingen van zeldzame en interessante vogels in Nederland beslaat voornamelijk de periode **maart-april 2015**. De vermelde gevallen zijn merendeels niet geverifieerd en het overzicht is niet volledig. Alle vogelaars die de moeite namen om hun waarnemingen aan ons door te geven worden hartelijk bedankt. Waarnemers van soorten in Nederland die worden beoordeeld door de Commissie Dwaalgasten Nederlandse Avifauna (CDNA) wordt verzocht hun waarnemingen zo spoedig mogelijk in te dienen via www.dutchavifauna.nl.

Het voorjaar verliep traag. Letterlijk, omdat veel zomervogels pas vrij laat terugkeerden, maar ook figuurlijk: trektellers noteerden zelden zo weinig vogels en veel klassieke 'voorjaarskrenten' waren opvallend schaars. Gelukkig zorgde de sensationele ontdekking van een Thayers Meeuw *Larus thayeri*, indien aanvaard een nieuwe soort voor Nederland, voor de nodige voorjaarsvreugde.

EENDEN Op diverse plekken langs de kust werden **Witbuikrotganzen** *Branta hrota* waargenomen, met als maximum zes zowel op Texel, Noord-Holland, als bij Den Haag, Zuid-Holland. Van de c 20 **Zwarte Rotganzen** *B nigricans* verbleef het merendeel in het Waddengebied en de rest in de Delta. Waarnemingen van **Roodhalsganzen** *B ruficollis* kwamen van c 15 locaties, met onder meer acht op 3 april op Ameland, Friesland. Op 1 maart werd een **Groenlandse Kolgans** *Anser albifrons flavirostris* gefotografeerd bij Vlaardingen, Zuid-Holland. Twee exemplaren van 6 tot 15 maart bij Hippolytushoef, Noord-Holland, gaven veel vogelaars de mogelijkheid dit taxon eens goed te bestuderen. Bij Strijen, Zuid-Holland, werden tot 9 maart nog **Dwergganzen** *A erythropus* gezien (maximaal negen) en bij Camperduin, Noord-Holland, tot 16 maart (maximaal 37). Daarnaast werden slechts enkele solitaire vogels gemeld. Trektellers noteerden in totaal 14 **IJseenden** *Clangula hyemalis*. Twee mannetjes **Brilzee-eend** *Melanitta perspicillata* zwommen op 13 maart voor de Noordzeekust van Vlieland, Friesland. Het mannetje **Buffelkopeend** *Bucephala albeola* van de Gaatkensplas bij Barendrecht, Zuid-Holland, bleef de gehele periode. Andere (ongeringde) exemplaren trokken bekijks tot 6 maart op het Vossemeer bij Ketelhaven, Flevoland, tot 3 mei bij Den Oever, Noord-Holland, en tot 17 april bij Heel, Limburg. Er werden c acht **Witoogeenden** *Aythya nyroca* waargenomen. Van een paartje dat van 12 tot 15 april bij Eibergen, Gelderland, verbleef, droeg het mannetje een kleurring van een Duits herintroductieprogramma. Mannetjes **Ringsnaveleend** *A collaris* verbleven tot 10 maart bij Vlaardingen, op ten minste 25 en 28 maart bij de Krammersluizen, Zeeland, en van 11 tot 30 april bij

317 Korhoen / Black Grouse *Tetrao tetrix*, vrouwtje, Sallandse Heuvelrug, Overijssel, 23 april 2015 *(Edwin Winkel)*. Vermoedelijk laatste exemplaar van wilde herkomst in Nederland / presumably last surviving individual of wild origin in the Netherlands.

318 Kleine Geelpootruiter / Lesser Yellowlegs *Tringa flavipes*, adult-winter, Haamstede, Zeeland, 11 maart 2015 *(Tobi Koppejan)* **319** Steenarend / Golden Eagle *Aquila chrysaetos*, eerste-winter, Veenhuizerstukken, Groningen, 15 maart 2015 *(Jos de Vries)* **320** Amerikaanse Oeverloper / Spotted Sandpiper *Actitis macularius*, Medemblik, Noord-Holland, 17 april 2015 *(Martin van der Schalk)*

Middenmeer, Noord-Holland. Het mannetje **Amerikaanse Smient** *Anas americana* zwom tot 7 maart op het Valkenburgse Meer bij Katwijk, Zuid-Holland. Een ander exemplaar verbleef van 29 april tot 4 mei bij Kampen, Overijssel. Mannetjes **Amerikaanse Wintertaling** *A carolinensis* zwommen op 11 april bij Zevenaar, Gelderland, en op 21 en 24 april weer eens in de Brabantse Biesbosch, Noord-Brabant.

FLAMINGO'S TOT IBISSEN De bekende vijf en vanaf 15 maart vier ongeringde **Flamingo's** *Phoenicopterus roseus* bleven de gehele periode bij Durgerdam, Noord-Holland; de vier maakten op 14 maart een uitstapje naar Vogelplas Starrevaart bij Leidschendam, Zuid-Holland. Elders werd de soort onder meer waargenomen bij Battenoord, Zuid-Holland (begin maart nog maximaal 12), en op de randmeren van Flevoland (maximaal 14), op beide locaties met Chileense Flamingo's *P chilensis*. Een **Porseleinhoen** *Porzana porzana* werd op 3 april geringd bij Overdinkel, Overijssel. **Kraanvogels** *Grus grus* hielden het met ruim 2500 over trektelposten dit voorjaar eens vrij bescheiden. Er werden door trektellers 188 **Parelduikers** *Gavia arctica* doorgegeven, waarvan bijna de helft (92) langs Camperduin. Van de drie **IJsduikers** *G immer* op het Volkerak, Zuid-Holland, bleven er twee – inmiddels in zomerkleed – tot in mei. Een **Noordse Stormvogel** *Fulmarus glacialis* die op 29 april dood werd gevonden bij Opheusden, Gelderland, was waarschijnlijk een nieuwe soort voor deze provincie. De overwinterende **Zwarte Ooievaar** *Ciconia nigra* in de omgeving van Schiphol, Noord-Holland, werd op 20 april voor het laatst gemeld. Daarnaast was er in april een 10-tal waarnemingen elders van voornamelijk overvliegende vogels. De ongeringde **Roze Pelikaan** *Pelecanus onocrotalus* bleef ook deze periode trouw aan een vijvertje midden in Callantsoog, Noord-Holland, waar hij regelmatig werd gevoerd. Er waren c 10 **Koereigers** *Bubulcus ibis* aanwezig, waarvan zeker vier overblijvers uit de vorige periode. Er werden c 25 **Zwarte Ibissen** *Plegadis falcinellus* waargenomen, voornamelijk in het Groene Hart, Noord-Holland/Zuid-Holland/Utrecht. Daarbuiten verbleven ze onder meer op 24 april in de Weerribben, Overijssel (vier), en op 30 april op Texel.

GRIELEN TOT STRANDLOPERS Een **Griel** *Burhinus oedicnemus* bij Hierden, Gelderland, trok in de middag van 26 april en de ochtend van 27 april aardig wat bekijks. De eerste **Steltkluten** *Himantopus himantopus* verschenen op 10 april bij Westdorpe, Zeeland (drie). Daarna ging het hard met in de rest van de maand ten minste 150 verspreid over alle provincies en paarvorming op verschillende locaties. Na een vroege **Morinelplevier** *Charadrius morinellus* op 3 april op Texel, werden er vanaf 17 april nog eens 14 doorgegeven. De enige **Gestreepte Strandloper** *Calidris melanotos* was van 21 tot 27 april te bewonderen bij Zierikzee, Zeeland. Eerste-winter **Rosse Franjepoten** *Phalaropus fulicarius* verbleven van 29 tot 31 maart bij Callantsoog en van 3 tot 5 april op een verrassende binnenlandlocatie, bij Maren, Noord-Brabant. De **Amerikaanse Oeverloper** *Actitis macularius* van de Vooroever bij Medemblik, Noord-Holland, raakte steeds meer gevlekt en bleef tot 2 mei. De **Kleine Geelpootruiter** *Tringa flavipes* van Everdingen, Utrecht, maakte van 8 maart tot 9 april een uitstapje naar Tricht, Gelderland (eerste geval voor deze provincie) en bleef vervolgens tot in mei weer bij Everdingen. Andere exemplaren vertoefden van 11 tot 18 maart bij Serooskerke, Zeeland; van 2 tot 11 april (mogelijk dezelfde) in de Prunjepolder, Zeeland; en van 18 tot 25 april in de Sophiapolder, Zeeland. Vanaf 14 april werden alweer negen **Poelruiters** *T stagnatilis* waargenomen. Een vroege **Bosruiter** *T glareola* werd op 18 maart gefotografeerd in de Blauwe Kamer bij Wageningen, Gelderland; vermoedelijk dezelfde verbleef vanaf 19 maart bij Kesteren, Gelderland. Spectaculair en populair was de baltsende **Poelsnip** *Gallinago media* van 25 tot 28 april langs de Maas bij Broekhuizen, Limburg.

ALKEN TOT STERNS De adulte **Zwarte Zeekoet** *Cepphus grylle* van de Brouwersdam, Zuid-Holland, bleef de gehele periode en ruide vrijwel geheel door naar zomerkleed. Op 19 april was er bovendien een melding bij West-Terschelling, Friesland. Trektellers meldden 100 **Kleine** *Stercorarius parasiticus*, negen **Middelste** *S pomarinus* en twee **Grote Jagers** *S skua*. Een langsvliegende tweede-kalenderjaar **Vorkstaartmeeuw** *Xema sabini* werd op 1 april gemeld bij Camperduin. Een tweede-kalenderjaar **Thayers Meeuw** werd op 11 april gefotografeerd bij de zandsuppletie op het strand van Egmond aan Zee, Noord-Holland: een schitterende beloning voor de ontdekker die al jaren systematisch zoekt naar bijzondere meeuwen. Een dag later kon de vogel hier door velen uitgebreid worden bestudeerd. Tussen 14 en 27 april verbleef hij bij de – inmiddels verplaatste – zandsuppletie bij Bergen aan Zee, Noord-Holland. Indien aanvaard betreft het een nieuwe soort voor Nederland. Het exacte aantal **Kleine Burgemeesters** *L glaucoides* laat zich moeilijk bepalen, maar het ging ten minste om 15 vogels. Ook buiten de Noordzeekust (onder meer enkele bij Bergen aan Zee) werden verschillende waarnemingen gedaan, zoals van 5 tot 19 maart in Utrecht, Utrecht (vierde-kalenderjaar), en van 30 maart tot 1 april in Leeuwarden, Friesland (tweede-kalenderjaar). Een adulte **Kumliens Meeuw** *L g kumlieni* ('type B/C') bij Bergen aan Zee van 14 tot 19 april gaf vogelaars de unieke mogelijkheid om alle drie de taxa binnen het complex van Kleine Burgemeester en Thayers Meeuw op één dag en één plek waar te nemen. Op 15 april werd deze vogel overigens vergezeld door een niet nader gedetermineerde adulte Kleine Burgemeester. Er waren vijf meldingen van **Grote Burgemeesters** *L hyperboreus*. Op 24 april was een **Witwangstern** *Chlidonias hybrida* aanwezig bij Westdorpe en op 30 april verbleven er twee in de Ezumakeeg, Friesland.

SPERWERS Het was voor doortrekkende roofvogels een vrij karige periode, met langs telposten in totaal 82 **Visarenden** *Pandion haliaetus*, 982 **Bruine** *Circus aeruginosus*, 94 **Blauwe** *C cyaneus* en slechts vier **Grauwe Kiekendieven** *C pygargus,* 23 **Zeearenden** *Haliaeetus albicilla*, 141 **Rode Wouwen** *Milvus milvus* (40 over de Eemshaven, Groningen, waarvan 16 op 16 maart), 45 **Zwarte Wouwen** *M migrans* en negen **Velduilen** *Asio*

321 Ringsnaveleend / Ring-necked Duck *Aythya collaris*, mannetje, Flevoweg, Opperdoes, Noord-Holland, 14 april 2015 *(Fred Visscher)* **322** Groenlandse Kolganzen / Greenland White-fronted Geese *Anser albifrons flavirostris*, Hippolytushoef, Noord-Holland, 6 maart 2015 *(Fred Visscher)*

flammeus. Een tweede-kalenderjaar **Steenarend** *Aquila chrysaetos* werd op 15 maart gefotografeerd bij Stadskanaal, Groningen (de laatste twitchbare was in 2002). Een vierde-kalenderjaar mannetje **Steppekiekendief** *C macrourus* werd op 24 april gefotografeerd vanaf telpost Noordkaap, Groningen. Van een 10-tal andere locaties kwamen ook meldingen, voornamelijk van langsvliegende vogels. Opvallend waren meldingen van **Zeearenden** uit de duinstreek van Noord- en Zuid-Holland, met daarbij zeker drie verschillende vierde-kalenderjaar vogels.

HOPPEN TOT ZWALUWEN Vanaf 14 april werd een 10-tal **Hoppen** *Upupa epops* waargenomen, waaronder twee samen op 19 april op de Strabrechtse Heide, Noord-Brabant, en een drukbezochte vogel van 24 tot 27 april in Gennep, Limburg. Op 24 april vloog een **Bijeneter** *Merops apiaster* over Katwijk en op 26 april hielden er vijf zich kortstondig op bij Usquert, Groningen. Trektellers noteerden 165 **Smellekens** *F columbarius,* 107 **Boomvalken** *F subbuteo* en 122 **Slechtvalken** *F peregrinus*. Er werden vanaf telposten ook drie overtrekkende **Buidelmezen** *Remiz pendulinus* gemeld. Vangsten vonden plaats op 12 april in de Eemshaven en op 18 april bij Kamperhoek, Flevoland (twee). Eén van de vogels van Kamperhoek droeg een Franse ring. Op 13 maart bleek toch nog altijd een **Kuifleeuwerik** *Galerida cristata* aanwezig in Haverleij bij Den Bosch, Noord-Brabant; deze zong hier tot 7 april. Op 8 april was er een melding van een langsvliegende bij Breskens, Zeeland. Een **Roodstuitzwaluw** *Cecropis daurica* pleisterde op 14 april de gehele dag boven de Horsmeertjes op Texel en op 24 april vloog er één langs Breskens.

BOSZANGERS TOT VLIEGENVANGERS Een **Pallas' Boszanger** *Phylloscopus proregulus* zong van ten minste 22 maart tot 10 april in Voorburg, Zuid-Holland. Van 13 tot 20 april was er bovendien een zeldzaam voorjaarsgeval van een zingende **Bladkoning** *P inornatus* in Hoorn, Noord-Holland. Er waren vangsten van **Siberische Tjif-**

323 Zwarte Ooievaar / Black Stork *Ciconia nigra*, Schiphol, Noord-Holland, 22 maart 2015 *(Pieter Hilgeman)* **324** Griel / Eurasian Stone-curlew *Burhinus eudicnemus*, Hierden, Gelderland, 26 april 2015 *(Alex Bos)* **325** Bladkoning / Yellow-browed Warbler *Phylloscopus inornatus*, zingend / singing, Hoorn, Noord-Holland, 14 april 2015 *(Arnoud B van den Berg)* **326** Pallas' Boszanger / Pallas's Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus proregulus*, Voorburg, Zuid-Holland, 23 maart 2015 *(René van Rossum)*

tjaffen *P tristis* op 15 en 27 maart bij Overdinkel. Een zingende **Iberische Tjiftjaf** *P ibericus* verbleef vanaf 21 april aan de rand van Leeuwarden, Friesland. Een vroege **Fitis** *P trochilus* werd al op 10 maart gefotografeerd in Enschede, Overijssel, maar de 'bulk' arriveerde vrij laat. De waarschijnlijke **Siberische Braamsluiper** *Sylvia althaea blythi* die vanaf 27 januari in Callantsoog verbleef, werd voor het laatst gemeld op 1 april. Er werden nog c 100 **Pestvogels** *Bombycilla garrulus* gezien. De grootste groep verbleef van 22 maart tot 19 april op de Sallandse Heuvelrug, Overijssel (maximaal 19). De overwinterende **Roze Spreeuwen** *Pastor roseus* bleven tot 11 maart in Vlissingen, Zeeland, en tot 12 maart in Vlaardingen. Van 31 maart tot 2 april was een **Zwartbuikwaterspreeuw** *Cinclus cinclus cinclus* aanwezig bij de Berkenplas op Schiermonnikoog, Friesland. Van 23 tot 26 april verbleef een Waterspreeuw *C cinclus* bij De Cocksdorp op Texel; het bepalen van de ondersoort van deze vogel, die een duidelijke roodbruine buik vertoonde onder de witte borst, bleek (te) lastig. Een tweedekalenderjaar **Blauwstaart** *Tarsiger cyanurus* op 10 april in Coepelduynen bij Noordwijk, Zuid-Holland, betekende het eerste voorjaarsgeval; hij trok de hele dag veel bekijks. Een vrouwtje **Woestijntapuit** *Oenanthe deserti* verbleef van 24 tot 27 april aan de voet van de Zuidpier bij IJmuiden, Noord-Holland; het betrof het derde geval op deze plek en het vierde voorjaarsgeval (waarvan drie betrekking hadden op vrouwtjes).

KWIKSTAARTEN TOT GORZEN Een mannetje **Italiaanse Kwikstaart** *Motacilla cinereocapilla cinereocapilla* bevond zich op 18 april kortstondig in het Noordervroon bij Westkapelle, Zeeland (vijfde geval van Witkeelkwikstaart *M cinereocapilla* indien aanvaard). Een dag later liet een vrouwtje **Citroenkwikstaart** *M citreola* zich hier uitvoerig bewonderen. De enige **Grote Pieper**

327 Kleine Burgemeester / Iceland Gull *Larus glaucoides*, derde-winter, Utrecht, Utrecht, 6 januari 2015 *(Rob Halff)*
328-329 Kumliens Meeuw / Kumlien's Gull *Larus glaucoides kumlieni*, adult, Bergen aan Zee, 17 april 2015 *(Frank Dröge)*

330 Woestijntapuit / Desert Wheatear *Oenanthe deserti*, vrouwtje, IJmuiden, Noord-Holland, 27 april 2015
(Marten Miske)

331 Waterspreeuw / White-throated Dipper *Cinclus cinclus*, De Cocksdorp, Texel, Noord-Holland, 24 april 2015
(Eric Menkveld)

332 Grijze Junco / Dark-eyed Junco *Junco hyemalis*, eerste-winter, Beijum, Groningen, Groningen, 9 april 2015 *(Martijn Bot)* **333** Citroenkwikstaart / Citrine Wagtail *Motacilla citreola*, vrouwtje, Noordervroon, Westkapelle, Zeeland, 19 april 2015 *(Tobi Koppejan)* **334** Blauwstaart / Red-flanked Bluetail *Tarsiger cyanurus*, Coepelduynen, Noordwijk, Zuid-Holland, 10 april 2015 *(René van Rossum)*

Anthus richardi werd op 22 april gefotografeerd bij Emmen, Drenthe. Trektellers meldden slechts vijf **Duinpiepers** *A campestris*. Waarschijnlijk de vroegste **Roodkeelpieper** *A cervinus* ooit werd op 16 maart gefotografeerd bij Ferwert, Friesland; een andere maartwaarneming is bekend van de Maasvlakte, Zuid-Holland (31 maart 1991). Daarnaast waren er exemplaren ter plaatse op 21 en 23 april op Vlieland en op 24 april in Meijendel, Zuid-Holland, en vloog er één op 25 april langs de Vulkaan bij Den Haag. Trektellers noteerden 50 **Fraters** *Linaria flavirostris,* 28 **Europese Kanaries** *Serinus serinus,* 14 **Sneeuwgorzen** *Plectrophenax nivalis* en 22 **IJsgorzen** *Calcarius lapponicus*. De **Grijze Junco** *Junco hyemalis* die vanaf 1 februari in Beijum, Groningen, Groningen, verbleef, werd voor het laatst gemeld op 10 april. Er werd slechts een handvol **Ortolanen** *Emberiza hortulana* gemeld. De **Dwerggors** *E pusilla* die zich vanaf 27 januari ophield bij Callantsoog werd voor het laatst op 13 maart gezien. Op laatstgenoemde datum was er ook een melding bij Zuidland, Zuid-Holland. Een **Grauwe Gors** *E calandra* die van 12 tot 16 april op Amsterdam Science Park, Noord-Holland, verbleef, trok veel bekijks. Voorts werd op 15 april een vogel bij Amerongen, Utrecht, gefotografeerd en zong er op 30 april één bij Noordwijk. Overvliegende vogels werden op 11 maart en 16 april opgemerkt bij Breskens en op 5 april in de Eemshaven.

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DB Actueel

Thayers Meeuw bij Egmond en Bergen Al jarenlang bezoek ik (Leon Edelaar) in het winterseizoen gemiddeld twee keer per week de stranden van Noord-Holland, op zoek naar zeldzame meeuwen. Omdat er begin april 2015 zandsuppletie bij Egmond aan Zee, Noord-Holland, plaatsvond had ik mijn 'werkgebied' tijdelijk geconcentreerd in mijn spreekwoordelijke achtertuin (ik woon in Egmond aan den Hoef). Een zandsuppletie biedt garantie voor grote aantallen meeuwen. Op zaterdagochtend 11 april had ik al een paar uur vele 1000en meeuwen bekeken totdat ik wegregende en naar huis ging. 's Avonds klaarde het echter op en ging de wind liggen. Ik ging terug naar het strand want ik had niet het gevoel dat ik al 'klaar' was. De suppletiewerkzaamheden waren vrijwel afgerond en je kon weer langs de vloedlijn lopen. Het aantal meeuwen was ten opzichte van de ochtend flink afgenomen en dit maakte, samen met de zon in de rug, de zaak een stuk overzichtelijker. Na de nodige vogels afgekeken te hebben scande ik op c 100 m een groepje meeuwen. Hier stond een spannende meeuw tussen met geheel egale onderdelen en bleekgrijze handpennen. 'Wow, paniek!', zei een stem in mijn hoofd. Ik liep dichterbij en maakte wat bewijsplaatjes. Omdat ik wandelaars richting de groep zag lopen was het enige dat ik kon doen de groep ook benaderen. De vogels vlogen op maar landden gelukkig weer dichtbij. In deze korte vlucht zag ik een ongetekende brede staartband en behoorlijke tekening op de bovenstaartdekveren. Direct wist ik: dit is minimaal een Kumliens Meeuw *Larus glaucoides kumlieni* en wellicht een Thayers Meeuw *L thayeri* – dit kon gewoonweg geen afwijkende Zilvermeeuw *L argentatus* zijn! Het was zaak snel te handelen want overal liepen mensen en honden en er reden de nodige shovels. De vogel was op een buis geland en ik kon nu goed de tertials zien. Deze deden wel heel erg aan Thayers denken. De meeuwen vlogen weer verder en ik kon wat vluchtplaatjes maken. Snel bekeek ik de foto's en stuurde een whatsapp ('Kumliens of Thayers te Egmond. Komen') naar lokale vogelaars. Omdat ik in het veld niet direct de scheidslijn tussen Kumliens en Thayers scherp voor ogen had, hield ik een slag om de arm. Op mijn bericht volgde gek genoeg geen reactie... Ik ging naar huis om snel de foto's op mijn computer te laden en er een boek bij te pakken. Ik was er snel uit: voor mij was het een Thayers! Ik stuurde Peter Adriaens en Mars Muusse een aantal foto's. Een half uur later reageerde PA met de bevestiging dat het een Thayers moest zijn.

De volgende ochtend verzamelden zich bij het eerste licht (slechts) enkele 10-tallen twitchers op het strand; met langs de vloedlijn enorme groepen van in totaal 10 000-en meeuwen leek het een zware opgave te worden. Rond 08:20 zag Vincent van der Spek de Thayers Meeuw echter vliegen boven de branding en konden de meeste aanwezigen hem gedurende c 10 min zien. Hierna werd hij om de 2-3 uur gezien, zowel op het strand als zwemmend of in vlucht, in totaal door zeker 200 vogelaars en het laatst om c 16:00. De volgende dag werd tevergeefs gezocht maar op dinsdagavond 14 april vond Eric Menkveld hem terug op het strand van Bergen aan Zee, Noord-Holland (waar de suppletiewerkzaamheden naar toe waren opgeschoven). Hier werd hij vrijwel dagelijks gezien tot en met 27 april, vooral tijdens de opspuitwerkzaamheden. Het afspeuren van de

335 Thayers Meeuw / Thayer's Gull *Larus thayeri*, tweede-kalenderjaar, Egmond aan Zee, Noord-Holland, 12 april 2015 *(Vincent Legrand)*

336 Thayers Meeuw / Thayer's Gull *Larus thayeri*, tweede-kalenderjaar, Egmond aan Zee, Noord-Holland, 12 april 2015 *(Marten Miske)*

grote groepen meeuwen leverde als bijvangsten onder meer een adulte Kumliens Meeuw (op 14-19 april, van het lastige 'type B/C', dus met beperkte donkere tekening op de buitenste handpennen), enkele Kleine Burgemeesters en vele 10-tallen Pontische Meeuwen *L cachinnans* op.

Thayers Meeuw is een broedvogel van arctisch Canada en een wintergast langs met name de Amerikaanse westkust. Het is een zeldzame dwaalgast in Europa met c 20 gevallen in Brittannië, Denemarken, Ierland, IJsland, Noorwegen en Spanje. Indien aanvaard is het een nieuwe soort voor Nederland. De herkenning van Thayers kan lastig zijn vanwege overeenkomsten met vooral Zilvermeeuw, Amerikaanse Zilvermeeuw *L smithsonianus*, Beringmeeuw *L glaucescens* en Kumliens Meeuw. Daarnaast vormen sterke individuele variatie en hybridisatie complicerende factoren. De volgende kenmerken gaven de doorslag: ***1*** totale indruk als koud grijsbruine 'zilvermeeuw', te donker voor een 'burgemeester', in overwegend juveniel kleed; ***2*** bovenvleugel met kenmerkend patroon: donkerbruine armpennen, groot licht venster op binnenste handpennen en buitenste (zes) handpennen met donkere buitenvlag en lichte binnenvlag ('Venetian blinds') en met donkere top van buitenste handpennen 'ombuigend' naar binnenvlag; ***3*** scherpe lichte randjes aan top van bruine (niet zwarte) handpennen; ***4*** egaal bruine onderdelen, vooral op de buik (niet vlekkerig zoals bij Zilvermeeuw) en doorlopend tot tussen de poten; ***5*** bovenstaart egaal bruingrijs, met alleen lichte bandering op de basis van de buitenste drie staartpennen (niet zwart/donkerbruin als bij Zilvermeeuw of Amerikaanse Zilvermeeuw); ***6*** zwaar gebandeerde boven- en onderstaartdekveren; ***7*** overwegend donkere en ongebandeerde okselveren; ***8*** bleekbruine tertials met egaal donker centrum en alleen aan de top wat karteltekening; ***9*** (binnenste) grote vleugeldekveren met beperkte tekening aan de basis en hierdoor een 'baan' vormend; ***10*** schouder- en mantelveren met lichte zoom, donkere subterminale U en donkere schachtstreep, op afstand geschubde indruk gevend; ***11*** overwegend donkere snavel (bij invloed van bijvoorbeeld Grote Burgemeester *L hyperboreus* zou de snavelbasis lichter zijn); en ***12*** dieper (paars)roze pootkleur dan vleeskleurige poten van bijvoorbeeld Zilvermeeuw, met name zichtbaar bij de voeten. Deze combinatie van kenmerken sluit elke andere meeuwensoort of hybride uit. De determinatie als Thayers leverde dan ook weinig discussie op. Wel bleek dat veel waarnemers bij Thayers het (zoek)beeld van een 'hele donkere Kleine Burgemeester' hadden. De afmetingen (ook van de snavel) van een mannetje Thayers overlappen echter met die van bijvoorbeeld Zilvermeeuw. Leon Edelaar & Enno B Ebels

Thayer's Gull On 11-27 April 2015, a second calendar-year Thayer's Gull *Larus thayeri*, still mostly in juvenile plumage, stayed with 10 000s of large gulls near Egmond aan Zee and Bergen aan Zee, Noord-Holland, the Netherlands. If accepted, this is the first record. There are c 20 previous records in Europe (Britain, Denmark, Iceland, Ireland, Norway and Spain).