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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 2016, 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 5.4* 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 2016, 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 5.4* 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).

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# Geographical plumage variation in Lesser Kestrel

*Andrea Corso, Michele Viganò, Justin J F J Jansen & Lorenzo Starnini*

Lesser Kestrel *Falco naumanni* has a chequered taxonomic history. The species has generally been considered polytypic from the 19th century up to a few decades ago. Opinions began to change in the late 1970s, leading to the present general consensus to treat the species as monotypic. However, the reasons why it should be monotypic have not been clearly explained (cf Vaurie 1965, Cramp & Simmons 1980, Clark 1999, Corso 2000, 2001, Ferguson-Lees & Christie 2001, Forsman 2016). The geographical variation has been ignored in some recent publications (Rasmussen & Anderton 2005, 2012, Naoroji 2006, Dickinson & Remsen 2013, Forsman 2016, Gill & Donsker 2016). Corso et al (2015) re-instated the subspecies *F n pekinensis* ('Chinese Lesser Kestrel'; hereafter *pekinensis*), therefore (re)considering Lesser Kestrel a polytypic species with two subspecies, nominate *naumanni* and *pekinensis*. The nominate ('Western Lesser Kestrel'; hereafter *naumanni*) had been described by Johann Gottlieb Fleischer from a bird collected in either southern Germany or Switzerland (the whereabouts of the type specimen(s) are unknown) (Fleischer 1818), while *pekinensis* had been described on the basis of two males (one adult and one juvenile) collected by Robert Swinhoe near Beijing, China (Swinhoe 1870); both syntypes are stored at the Natural History Museum, Tring, England. A large area with intermediate birds showing clinal variation connects the breeding ranges of *naumanni* in the west and *pekinensis* in the east. These intermediate birds led previous authors to synonymise *pekinensis* with *naumanni* but without any quantitative and/or qualitative analysis. Populations of intermediate birds showing features of different subspecies occur regularly, usually clinally, in species with wide distributional ranges (Mayr & Ashlock 1991, Huggett 2004, McCarthy 2006, Corso et al 2015). For instance, many widespread falcon species, such as Merlin *F columbarius* and Lanner *F biarmicus*, Saker *F cherrug* and Peregrine Falcon *F peregrinus* show intermediates or clines in biometrics or morphology within the boundaries of various accepted subspecies, often across a vast area, making it impossible to objectively delimitate subspecies borders (Vaurie 1965, Cramp & Simmons 1980, Forsman 1999, 2016, Zuberogoita et al 2009, White et al 2013, Corso et al 2015). Even among raptor taxa often considered separate species, wide areas of intermediate populations exist, such as between Black Kite *Milvus migrans* and Black-eared Kite *M lineatus* and Peregrine Falcon and Barbary Falcon *F pelegrinoides* (Forsman 2016). Therefore, we regard a large clinal zone of birds showing features of both *naumanni* and *pekinensis* as insufficient reason to synonymise them and to regard the species as monotypic.

The aim of this paper is to document the plumage variability of Lesser Kestrel over its wide distribution range in Eurasia and to document the morphological differences between western and eastern populations, with special focus on *pekinensis* in China. For the validity of *pekinensis* and details about its distribution range, see Corso et al (2015). This paper focuses on the plumage variation and elaborates further on Corso et al (2015); several of the photographs and illustrations already published in Corso et al (2015) are repeated here and new ones are included to further document the geographical plumage variation.

**Material and methods**

For the research used to prepare Corso et al (2015) and this paper, we studied Lesser Kestrels in the field in 2003-15 (Andrea Corso studied the species in general since 1987), visiting Egypt, France, Georgia, Greece, Israel, Italy, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Morocco, Portugal, Spain, Tunisia and Turkey. In addition to field observations and study of photographs from these countries, we also studied photographs from Armenia, Azerbaijan, China, Eritrea, India, Kenya, Laos, Mongolia, Myanmar, Oman, Somalia, Sudan, Tanzania, Turkmenistan and Yemen. To better understand the plumage variation across the whole distribution area, we studied specimens in the following museums: Institute of Zoology, Almaty, Kazakhstan (IZA); Naturalis Biodiversity Center, Leiden, the Netherlands (NBC); Natural History Museum, Tring, England (NHMUK); National Museums Scotland, Edinburgh, Scotland (NMS); Naturhistorisches Museum Wien, Vienna, Austria (NMW); Naturhistoriska Riksmuseet, Stockholm, Sweden (NRS); Museo

FIGURE 1 Western Lesser Kestrel / Kleine Torenvalk *Falco naumanni naumanni* (upper two birds), Lesser Kestrel / Kleine Torenvalk *F naumanni* of intermediate population and Chinese Lesser Kestrel / Chinese Kleine Torenvalk *F n pekinensis* (lower two birds) *(Lorenzo Starnini)*. In upper two birds, note least grey extension on upperwing-coverts and tertials in left bird, with typical plumage for *naumanni* shown in right bird; note also plumage colour saturation of both birds compared with typical *pekinensis*. Lower two birds (*pekinensis*) show typical darker grey tones and more saturated plumage overall than nominate *naumanni*, upperwing-coverts are almost entirely grey (but in most birds with sparse rusty tinge on inner lesser and median wing-coverts and along leading edge on marginal wing-coverts). Central bird shows intermediate plumage, typical for birds from western Asia to Central Asia.

TABLE 1 Skins of Lesser Kestrel *Falco naumanni* studied for this research, divided to subspecies, sex, age and geographical area

| Taxon | Number of skins studied | Geographical area | Note |
|---|---|---|---|
| *F n pekinensis* | 20 adult males, 8 females | from *terra typica* in China | including one of two syntypes by Swinhoe |
| *F n 'pekinensis'* | 28 adult males, 25 females | India, Myanmar (Burma) and Laos | age of females combined; birds showing all characters referred to typical *pekinensis*; we report them as '*pekinensis*' being not directly from *terra typica* of breeding grounds |
| *F naumanni* | 87 adult males, 60 females | ***Asia/Middle East:*** Arabian Peninsula, Afghanistan, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Pakistan, Russia, eastern Turkey, Turkmenistan<br>***Africa:*** Eritrea, Kenya, Somalia, Tanzania | age of females combined; intermediate birds in various characters and therefore not assigned to subspecies |
| *F n naumanni* | 349 adult males, 172 females | ***Europe:*** Albania, Czechia, France, Greece, Italy, Macedonia, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain<br>***Asia/Middle East:*** Lebanon, Palestine, Syria, western central Turkey<br>***Africa:*** Algeria, Angola, Botswana, Egypt, Ethiopia, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Niger, Senegal, South Africa, Tanzania, Tunisia | age of females combined |
| **Total number of skins studied** | 749 (484 adult males, 265 females) | | only full adult males; age of females combined |

Civico di Scienze Naturali 'Angelo Priolo', Randazzo, Italy (MCR); Museo Civico di Storia Naturale di Milano, Milano, Italy (MCSM); Museo Civico dell'Università di Scienze Naturali di Catania, Cantania, Sicily, Italy (MCUCT); Museo Civico di Terrasini, Palermo, Sicily, Italy (MCT); Museo Civico di Zoologia di Roma, Rome, Italy (MCZR); Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle, Paris, France (MNHN); Museo Regionale di Scienze Naturali di Torino, Torino, Italy (MRSN); Museo di Storia Naturale 'La Specola', Firenze, Italy (MSNF); Museo di Storia Naturale 'Giacomo Doria', Genova, Italy (MSNGD); Museo Civico di Storia Naturale di Carmagnola, Torino, Italy (SNCa); and Museum für Naturkunde, Berlin, Germany (ZMB); in addition, specimens were studied in 13 private collections. We received additional information from: American Museum of Natural History, New York, USA (AMNH); World Museum, National Museums Liverpool, Liverpool, England (LIV); Museum of China, Beijing, China (NZMC); Manchester Museum, University, Manchester, England (MMUE); and Peabody Yale Museum of Natural History, New Haven, USA (PMNH).

The studied specimens, identified according to Corso et al (2015), are listed in table 1. To define the main plumage variation of Lesser Kestrel (sensu latu), we deal here chiefly with birds from group A and D as defined by Corso et al (2015). Figure 3 shows typical nominate *naumanni* and *pekinensis*, as well as the main intermediate plumage. For plumage descriptions and for the preparation of figure 1-3, we only considered fully developed fresh adult plumage, in order to avoid the influence on plumage colour of sun bleaching and abrasion. However, while the plumage may be influenced by these causes, the extent of grey on the wing-coverts does not change. Juveniles are not discussed here as we failed to find any obvious differences between *naumanni* and *pekinensis*. No immature males (second calendar-year) were considered because, although the post-juvenile partial

FIGURE 2 Western Lesser Kestrel / Kleine Torenvalk *Falco naumanni naumanni* (upper two birds), Lesser Kestrel / Kleine Torenvalk *F naumanni* of intermediate population and Chinese Lesser Kestrel / Chinese Kleine Torenvalk *F n pekinensis* (lower two birds) *(Lorenzo Starnini)*. Same birds as in figure 1. Upperwing-coverts differ in *naumanni* and *pekinensis*, with central right bird showing intermediate features.

moult starts as early as prior to the first pre-breeding migration north (Corso 2000, 2001), the complete adult plumage is not yet fully developed before the late second autumn/winter, after the end of the first complete moult (when in first adult plumage) (Corso 2000, 2001, Dernjatin & Vattulainen 2004, Forsman 2016). For further details on materials and methods, see Corso et al (2015).

**Breeding distribution and wintering areas**

Lesser Kestrel breeds in a broad zone stretching from the Iberian peninsula eastward via the Mediterranean region (southern Italy, the Balkan and patchily in northernmost Africa), and north and south of the Black Sea and Caspian Sea, and through Central Asia and Mongolia to a relatively small area in northern China (figure 4). The species mainly winters in sub-Saharan Africa, although some birds winter around the Mediterranean (Corso et al 2015). Corso et al (2015) divided the breeding range into four groups (A-D), with A representing *pekinensis* and D nominate *naumanni*. Group B and C included intermediate populations more closely resembling *pekinensis* and nominate *naumanni*, respectively. The dividing lines between B and C, and C and D are arbitrary (the limits of A are easier to define because of its geographical separation from B) and should be subject of further studies to establish whether this division is helpful to approach the variability of Lesser Kestrel across its wide range.

Due to the confusion surrounding Lesser Kestrel taxonomy, little is known about the distribution in winter, and much remains to be researched in this regard. According to older literature, the wintering grounds and migration areas of *pekinensis* include Laos and Myanmar and possibly Eritrea, Ethiopia, Somalia, Kenya and Tanzania (Hartert 1912-1921, Baker 1923, 1928, Hartert & Steinbacher 1932-38, Stanford 1937, Archer & Goodman 1937, Brown & Amadon 1968, Brown et al 1982). According to our specimens study, at least the birds collected in Laos and Myanmar show all characters associated with *pekinensis*. In addition, this subspecies apparently used to winter in small numbers in the Indian subcontinent and nearby countries (Hartert 1912-21, Baker 1923, 1928, Corso et al 2015). However, reliable data of wintering birds for those regions from recent years are limited or lacking (BirdLife International 2001). Possibly, *pekinensis* also winters in the Horn of Africa, where birds showing characters associated with this taxon (but also birds with intermediate characters) have been observed (Archer & Goodman 1937, Brown et al 1982, Corso et al 2015). Countries in Central Asia (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan) and the Altai region may also be part of the migration or breeding range but the presence of intermediate birds makes the situation in these areas complex (cf Corso et al 2015).

FIGURE 3 Chinese Lesser Kestrel / Chinese Kleine Torenvalk *Falco naumanni pekinensis*, female (left), and Western Lesser Kestrel / Kleine Torenvalk *F n naumanni*, female *(Lorenzo Starnini)*. Note differences mainly in colour of bare parts. Often, dark markings of eye-line and moustache mark of *pekinensis* are more defined and marked. However, variability in plumage traits of females and juveniles still needs study and may be larger than found here.

## Main characters and plumage variability

### Adult male

*General*

Overall, *pekinensis* is a darker, more colourful bird compared with *naumanni* (figure 1-2). Both the upperparts and underparts are warmer, more richly coloured. Caution should be taken in comparing a fresh plumaged *naumanni* with a faded *pekinensis*.

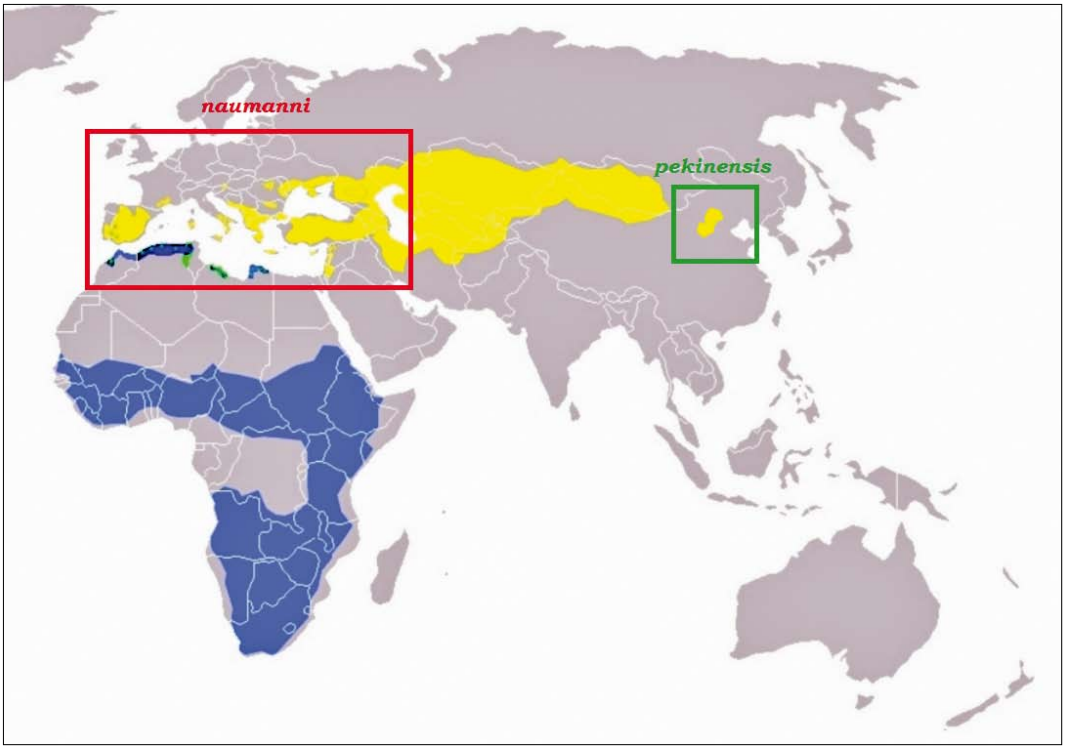


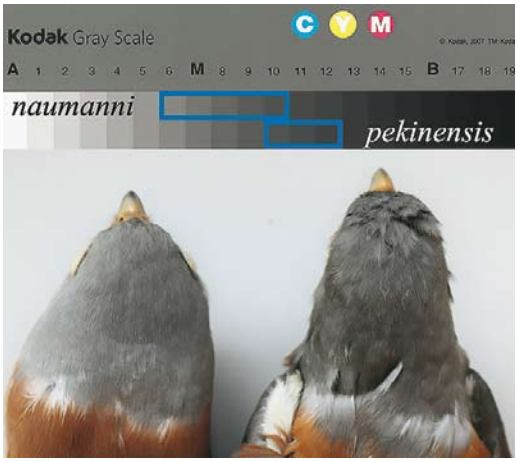

FIGURE 4 Distribution range of Lesser Kestrel / Kleine Torenvalk *Falco naumanni* (yellow = summer, blue = winter, green = year round). Area between approximate ranges (rectangles) of *F n naumanni* and *F n pekinensis* is the intermediate zone.

Indeed, fresh adult birds show richer colours than faded ones.

*Head*
The forehead, crown, nape, hind-neck, ear-coverts and neck-side are tinged sooty-bluish or bluish-lead in *pekinensis*. For 13 fresh adult males collected in the breeding area in northern China (group A in Corso et al 2015, including the adult male syntype by Swinhoe; plate 415-416), we found an average grey colour of 11.46 (range 10-12) on the Kodak Grey Scale (Kodak 2007). For 56 fresh adult male western birds (group D in Corso et al 2015), we found an average of 8.07 (range 6-10; plate 414). As shown in plate 414 and 433-435, this feature is obvious but as the shades of grey are often hard to establish in the field, it has to be used in combination with other features. Intermediate birds can be closer to *naumanni* in eastern Europe and the western part of the Asian range, or closer to *pekinensis* (though apparently never as dark) in the eastern part of the Asian range outside the *terra typica* of *pekinensis* in China.

*Upperparts*
Most notably, the orange-red mantle is more chestnut in *pekinensis* compared with *naumanni* (where often a pinkish hue can be perceivable). Intermediate birds show a variable richness and intensity of the upperparts, ranging from chestnut in *pekinensis* to a paler, less intense and more orange-brick red in *naumanni*. This variation occurs within the same breeding site. Corso et al (2015) gave more details about this character. Only fresh plumaged birds or birds at the same time of the year should be compared.

*Upperwing*
The upperwing-coverts are always more extensively grey and darker in *pekinensis*, with most birds studied showing the greater, median and most lesser coverts dark lead-grey, as well as the tertials (figure 1-2, plate 416-423, 435-440). Most adult males show a variable amount of rusty tinged (either fringed or with rusty tip) median and inner lesser coverts and chiefly the marginal coverts, all along the leading edge of the upperwing, best




**414** Chinese Lesser Kestrel / Chinese Kleine Torenvalk *Falco naumanni pekinensis* (right) and Western Lesser Kestrel / Kleine Torenvalk *F n naumanni*, NHMUK, Tring, England, 29 January 2009 *(Andrea Corso/NHMUK)*. Kodak Grey Scale value (Kodak 2007) of hood in adult males showing range encountered in specimens studied: range 10-12 in *pekinensis* (mean 10), range 6-10 in *naumanni* (mean 8). Grey hue and intensity on average deeper and darker in *pekinensis* compared with *naumanni*. Both birds are in fresh plumage and collected at same time of year.

visible on the open wing (figure 2, plate 423-424 and 429). Indeed, in most birds, the inner 'arm' appears strongly rusty tinged, while the most extreme *pekinensis* may have almost the entire upperwing-coverts slaty-grey (figure 1-2, plate 417-418 and 430). In typical *pekinensis*, when the bird is perched, almost the entire wing-coverts appear dark grey, with only a very limited rusty tinge or fringing on the 'shoulder', hardly visible or visible only at close range. In flight, the rusty coverts on the inner wing appear more obvious (figure 2, plate 423-424 and 429). All *naumanni* from European breeding grounds show grey only on the greater coverts. Among them, the most marked birds show a grey tinge also on some outermost median coverts, near the carpal joint or 'wrist' area, while the least marked *naumanni* may have the grey tinge limited to the outer or inner greater coverts and only partially on the tertials (mostly on the proximal part of the feathers; figure 1-2). Note that birds from eastern Asian populations (and partially from Central Asia too), such as from Afghanistan, Kazakhstan, Mongolia and Pakistan, have on average more extensively grey greater and median coverts than typical *naumanni*, with grey-tinged lesser coverts in a few birds (plate 425-428 and 441-442). Thus, these birds often appear intermediate between typical *naumanni* and *pekinensis* in wing pattern (figure 1-2; intermediate bird in the middle). The grey coverts are always darker and deeper coloured in *pekinensis*, more lead-grey than sooty grey compared with *naumanni*. Again, birds from central-eastern Asia show slightly darker or similar intensity of grey on the upperwing-coverts.

*Underparts*
The breast and underparts are richer peach-orange ochre in *pekinensis*, almost rusty or russet on the breast and more orange or apricot on the lower belly, flank and thigh compared with *naumanni*. However, very fresh adult males of the latter may appear almost as richly coloured, chiefly if compared with faded *pekinensis*.

*Underwing*
The underwing is bright white with sometimes a rich orange-buff or chestnut colour on the underwing-coverts and axillaries, these showing a variable amount of dark spotting (or being unmarked) in *pekinensis*. The wing-tip is extensively black and the secondaries are also extensively blackish on the distal part, in many birds giving a more defined dark trailing edge compared with typical *naumanni*. The dark wing-tip is said to be more extensive than in *naumanni* by several authors, including in the original description of the syntypes (Swinhoe 1870, 1871, Hartert 1912-1921, Brown et al 1982). However, we found strong variability in the underwing pattern. Furthermore, the stage of abrasion and sun bleaching highly influences the field appearance and boldness of the dark wing-tip and the trailing edge, with abraded birds giving a less obvious and less contrasting impression.

**Adult female**

*Head*
In adult female Lesser Kestrel (sensu latu), the dark eye-line is almost always absent or weak, unlike in Common Kestrel *F tinnunculus* (Cramp & Simmons 1980, Clark 1999, Forsman 2016). On average, *pekinensis* has a more marked dark eye-line, sometimes even approaching that of Common, as well as a bolder moustache than *naumanni* (Corso et al 2015). Corso (2000, 2001) reported a certain amount of variability in the plumage of *naumanni* in Europe, including the head and face pattern of females, so that a certain overlap between most marked *naumanni* and least marked *pekinensis* is found. In addition, juveniles (chiefly the darker,

**415-416** Chinese Lesser Kestrel / Chinese Kleine Torenvalk *Falco naumanni pekinensis*, adult male (collected near Ming Tombs, north of Beijing, China, on 18 September 1868), NHMUK, Tring, England, 11 June 2014 *(Hein van Grouw/NHMUK)*. Syntype of *pekinensis*, collected by Robert Swinhoe. In plate 415, note entirely lead-grey wing-coverts and tertials, much darker and more extensively grey than in any *naumanni*; note also dark sooty lead-grey hood and saturated colour of mantle. In plate 416, note richly coloured underparts, much richer than in any *naumanni*.

more patterned females) of all populations of Lesser show bolder dark markings than adult females, including moustache and eye-line (Corso 2000, 2001, Corso et al 2015). Therefore, the differences between typical adult female *naumanni* and *pekinensis* are only of use when precisely ageing a bird first.

*Upperparts*
Generally, the dark markings average bolder, wider and better marked in *pekinensis* compared with typical *naumanni*. However, the least marked birds are comparable and therefore overlapping with the most marked *naumanni*.

*Underwing*
On average, the dark wing-tip and trailing edge is bolder and wider in typical *pekinensis* compared with typical *naumanni*, thus better visible in flight in the field. However, juveniles of both taxa have a darker patterning (Corso 2000, 2001) and intermediate birds are widely overlapping, so this character should be used only as an additional feature and not as a relevant one.

**Adults of both sexes**

*Bare parts*
Adult *pekinensis* of both sexes show the cere and, to a lesser extent, the eye-ring yellow with an obvi-

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**417** Chinese Lesser Kestrel / Chinese Kleine Torenvalk *Falco naumanni pekinensis*, adult male, Beijing province, China, 10 May 2013 *(Zhangey Hu)*. Upperwing-coverts almost fully lead-grey but some sparse rusty fringes present to some feathers. Note ochre-orange eye-ring and cere as well as richly coloured underparts. **418** Chinese Lesser Kestrel / Chinese Kleine Torenvalk *Falco naumanni pekinensis*, adult male, Beijing province, China, 10 May 2013 *(Zhangey Hu)*. Same bird as plate 417. **419** Chinese Lesser Kestrel / Chinese Kleine Torenvalk *Falco naumanni pekinensis*, adult male, Beijing province, China, 10 May 2013 *(Zhangey Hu)* **420-421** Chinese Lesser Kestrel / Chinese Kleine Torenvalk *Falco naumanni pekinensis*, adult male, Beijing province, China, 25 April 2013 *(Yanxq Hei)*

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**422** Chinese Lesser Kestrel / Chinese Kleine Torenvalk *Falco naumanni pekinensis*, adult male, Beijing province, China, 25 April 2013 *(Yanxq Hei)*. Note intensely orange-tinged bare parts. **423** Chinese Lesser Kestrel / Chinese Kleine Torenvalk *Falco naumanni pekinensis*, adult male, Beijing province, China, 25 April 2013 *(Yanxq Hei)*. Same bird as plate 422. Note that, with open wing, some rusty lesser coverts are visible. **424** Chinese Lesser Kestrel / Chinese Kleine Torenvalk *Falco naumanni pekinensis*, adult male, Beijing province, China, 25 April 2013 *(Yanxq Hei)*. Same bird as plate 422. Note very intensely coloured underparts and extensive dark trailing edge and tip to underwing. **425** Lesser Kestrel / Kleine Torenvalk *Falco naumanni*, advanced second calendar-year male, Chokpak pass, Kazakhstan, 21 September 2003 *(Andrea Corso)*. Intermediate bird with plumage between *pekinensis* and *naumanni* but closer to *pekinensis*, due to amount of grey on upperwing-coverts. Plumage almost like full adult but for retained juvenile s1-2 and growing p10 (making the wing-formula closer to that of Common Kestrel *F tinnunculus*). **426** Lesser Kestrel / Kleine Torenvalk *Falco naumanni*, adult male, Chokpak pass, Kazakhstan, 21 September 2003 *(Andrea Corso)*. Intermediate bird, very similar to *pekinensis* but considered intermediate based on paler grey colours than typical *pekinensis* from breeding grounds in China, paler mantle and underparts and more yellow, less ochreous-orange bare parts. Bird has old p8-10 and s1-3.

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**427-428** Lesser Kestrel / Kleine Torenvalk *Falco naumanni*, adult male, Chokpak pass, Kazakhstan, 17 September 2015 *(James Kennerley)*. Intermediate birds, similar to *pekinensis* but considered intermediate based on paler grey colours than typical *pekinensis* from breeding grounds in China, less extensive grey on upperwing-coverts, paler breast and less extensive dark wing-tip. **429** Chinese Lesser Kestrel / Chinese Kleine Torenvalk *Falco naumanni pekinensis*, adult male, Beijing province, China, 25 April 2013 *(Yanxq Hei)*. Same bird as plate 420-421.

ous ochreous-orange tinge (figure 1 and 3, plate 417-424, 429 and 448). This tinge may become brighter and more conspicuous in adult birds during courtship, almost bright orange (approaching that of Amur Falcon *F amurensis*). Adult *naumanni* of both sexes always show paler yellow, more lemon-tinged bare parts, brighter during mating (Corso 2000, 2001), but according to our observations not as orangey as in *pekinensis*. Differences in the colour of the cere may be the most relevant field character to identify adult female *pekinensis* from *naumanni*.

**Conclusions**

Adult males in fresh plumage from the eastern and western end of the distribution area are easily separable. Adult male *pekinensis* differs from adult male *naumanni* in the intensity of grey in the hood, amount of grey in the upperwing-coverts, intensity of the colour on the underparts and coloration of the upperparts. It is always different from *naumanni* and is diagnosable in the field. Indeed, all birds studied fall into a well-defined cluster differing well over 75% from European *naumanni* (Corso et al 2015), thus according well with the so-called 75% rule, wherein at least three-quarters of all individuals of at least one sex must differ diagnosable from adjacent subspecies (eg, Amadon 1949, Mayr & Ashlock 1991, Svensson 2013, 2015). The characters noted in Lesser Kestrels from China are constant and we found no birds showing all the characters of *pekinensis* within western populations. Even those of the intermediate populations, although showing some overlapping features or characters closer to the one or other taxa, never showed the full set of characters combined for *pekinensis* or *naumanii*. Adult female *pekinensis* is almost identical to adult female *naumanni*, differing only when showing wider, bolder and well-defined dark markings on the head, mantle and underwing. However, due to apparently wide overlap in female plum-

**430** Presumed Chinese Lesser Kestrel / vermoedelijke Chinese Kleine Torenvalk *Falco naumanni pekinensis*, adult male (collected at Cachar, Assam, India, in March 1880), NHMUK, Tring, England, 29 January 2009 *(Andrea Corso/ NHMUK)*. All upperwing-coverts entirely dark grey; note also very deep grey hood (Kodak Grey Scale 11). **431** Presumed Chinese Lesser Kestrel / vermoedelijke Chinese Kleine Torenvalk *Falco naumanni pekinensis*, adult male (collected at Cachar, Assam, India, in March 1880), NHMUK, Tring, England, 29 January 2009 *(Andrea Corso/ NHMUK)*. Same bird as plate 430. Darker saturated and intense coloration is notable in *pekinensis*, with *naumanni* being paler. Typically, *pekinensis* shows saturated and intense coloration also on underparts, being richer and darker coloured than in any *naumanni* (see plate 454). **432** Western Lesser Kestrel / Kleine Torenvalk *Falco naumanni naumanni*, adult male (collected in Spain in April 1902), NHMUK, Tring, England, 29 January 2009 *(Andrea Corso/ NHMUK)*. Note that in many European birds (c 20%), grey on wing-coverts is very limited and hard to see in the field or even in the hand. Note that plumage is paler, less intense and less deep in both grey of hood and wing-coverts and of rufous on mantle and underparts compared with *pekinensis*.

**433** Presumed Chinese Lesser Kestrels / vermoedelijke Chinese Kleine Torenvalken *Falco naumanni pekinensis*, adult males (left and right; both collected in India, in March 1880) and Western Lesser Kestrel / Kleine Torenvalk *F n naumanni*, male (centre; collected at Famagusta, Cyprus, on 20 March 1938), NHMUK, Tring, England, 29 January 2009 *(Andrea Corso/NHMUK)*. Note much paler and less saturated grey hood and mantle less brick-red of *naumanni* compared with *pekinensis*.

age pattern, we tentatively suggest the best character to distinguish adult females is the different bare parts coloration. Further research by the authors, including genetic studies, will hopefully provide more clarity in the future.

Apart from any taxonomic point of view, the plumage differences between western and eastern birds should be acknowledged, eg, ***1*** to make it possible to identify the true breeding and wintering areas of the different populations; ***2*** to establish the correct number of breeding Chinese birds, and eventually take conservation measures; ***3*** to correctly illustrate birds breeding in China in future field guides and handbooks; ***4*** to gather data on genetics of the Chinese population; and ***5*** to further study differences among females of the two taxa. Further targets of future studies should also be to identify and better define: ***1*** to which taxon the intermediate populations belongs or if they deserve a name on their own; ***2*** the extent of the breeding area of *pekinensis*; ***3*** the eastern distribution of breeding range of *naumanni* and the western boundaries of distribution of *pekinensis*; and ***4*** the wintering areas of all populations.

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**434-435** Presumed Chinese Lesser Kestrel / vermoedelijke Chinese Kleine Torenvalk *Falco naumanni pekinensis*, adult male (left; collected in Laos in spring 1940), and Western Lesser Kestrel / Kleine Torenvalk *F n naumanni*, adult male (right; collected in eastern Morocco on 20 April 1954), MNHN, Paris, France, 18 February 2015 *(Andrea Corso/MNHN)*. **436-437** Chinese Lesser Kestrel / Chinese Kleine Torenvalk *Falco naumanni pekinensis*, adult male (collected at Hebei, China, on 27 April 1937), NZMC, Beijing, China, 3 December 2014 *(He Peng/NZMC)*. Fresh adult male showing very intense brick-red mantle and sooty-grey plumage areas typical for *pekinensis*.

**438-439** Chinese Lesser Kestrel / Chinese Kleine Torenvalk *Falco naumanni pekinensis*, adult male (collected at Beijing, China, on 4 April 1961), NZMC, Beijing, 3 December 2014 *(He Peng/NZMC)*. Note typical entirely grey upperwing-coverts and intensely coloured underparts. **440** Chinese Lesser Kestrel / Chinese Kleine Torenvalk *Falco naumanni pekinensis*, adult male (collected at Hebei, China, on 8 October 1965), NZMC, Beijing, 3 December 2014 *(He Peng/NZMC)*. All upperwing-coverts typically solidly dark sooty-grey, never shown by nominate *naumanni*.

**441-442** Presumed Chinese Lesser Kestrels / vermoedelijke Chinese Kleine Torenvalken *Falco naumanni pekinensis*, adult males (collected at Na Bou, Laos, on 18 January 1941), PMNH, New Haven, USA, 19 August 2014 *(Kristof Zyskowski/PMNH)*. Note very saturated and richly coloured plumage, chiefly dark mantle and intense and deep grey tones of hood and upperwing-coverts, latter being entirely grey in both specimens, never shown by nominate *naumanni*. Also note intense colour on underparts, chiefly on breast.

**443-445** Presumed Chinese Lesser Kestrel / vermoedelijke Chinese Kleine Torenvalk *Falco naumanni pekinensis*, adult male (collected in Laos in spring 1940), MNHN, Paris, France, 18 February 2015 *(Andrea Corso/MNHN)*. Note entirely grey upperwing-coverts and saturation of plumage colour.

**446-447** Presumed Chinese Lesser Kestrel / vermoedelijke Chinese Kleine Torenvalk *Falco naumanni pekinensis*, adult male (upper; collected in Laos in spring 1940), and Western Lesser Kestrel / Kleine Torenvalk *F n naumanni*, adult male (lower; collected in eastern Morocco on 20 April 1954), MNHN, Paris, France, 18 February 2015 *(Andrea Corso/MNHN)*. Same birds as plate 434-435 and 443-445.

Yanxq Hei, Zhangey Hu, James Kennerley, Peter Kennerley, Gerald Oreel, René Pop, Rick Roe, Manuel Schweizer, Brian J Small, Terry Townshend, Hua-wei Wang, Arend Wassink, Pim Wolf and Xu Ke Yang. Our thanks go to Paola Di Luzio (MCZR) for helping us with literature and to Ottavio Janni for assisting us in museum research and suggesting valuable improvements to our first manuscripts. AC's visit to MNHN and NHMUK was made possible by the Dutch Birding Fund. A visit by JJ to the NMS was made possible via a grant from the 'Stichting P.A. Hens Memorial Fund'.

**Samenvatting**

GEOGRAFISCHE KLEEDVARIATIE BIJ KLEINE TORENVALK Er is nog maar weinig bekend over de herkenning van Chinese Kleine Torenvalk *Falco naumanni pekinensis* en nominaat Kleine Torenvalk *F n naumanni*. De hier gepresenteerde kenmerken zijn eerder gepubliceerd in Corso et al (2015) maar worden verder uitgediept en geïllustreerd met (nieuwe) foto's en tekeningen. Hun onderzoek is gebaseerd op literatuuronderzoek, bestudering van balgen (zie tabel 1), verkregen informatie in musea, van foto's van internet en van vogels in het veld in Afrika, Azië en Europa. Bij het bestuderen van grote aantallen vogels kwamen alleen bruikbare kenmerken

**448** Chinese Lesser Kestrel / Chinese Kleine Torenvalk *Falco naumanni pekinensis*, adult female, Beijing province, China, 25 April 2013 *(Yanxq Hei)*. Note intense orange bare parts and very well marked and wide dark barring.

naar voren bij volwassen net geruide mannetjes en vrouwtjes uit het voorjaar voor de uitersten van het verspreidingsgebied. Deze verspreidingsgebieden be-

**449** Western Lesser Kestrel / Kleine Torenvalk *Falco naumanni naumanni*, adult male, Spain, 9 April 2016 *(Jyrki Normaja)*. Note that in typical adult western males, grey on upperwing-coverts is restricted mostly to greater coverts. Also note very pale grey colour of hood, upperwing-coverts and tail, not as dark grey as in *pekinensis*.

**450** Western Lesser Kestrel / Kleine Torenvalk *Falco naumanni naumanni*, adult female, Spain, 9 April 2016 *(Jyrki Normaja)*. Note chiefly yellow bare parts, eye-ring and cere.

**451** Lesser Kestrel / Kleine Torenvalk *Falco naumanni*, adult male, Spandarian reservoir, Gorayk, Armenia, 25 May 2015 *(Peter Adriaens)*. Intermediate bird; note extensive grey on upperwing-coverts but not comparable with *pekinensis*. Note also very richly coloured mantle.

helzen 'Europa' (*naumanni*) waar vogels een gelijke set kenmerken vertoonden met een geringe variatie en een geïsoleerde populatie in China (*pekinensis*) met eveneens een gelijke set kenmerken met geringe variatie. Hiertussen bevindt zich een groot gebied met intermediaire vogels met een grote variatie. Dit laatste fenomeen is bekend van andere roofvogelsoorten met een gelijk verspreidingsgebied zoals Zwarte Wouw *Milvus migrans* en Oostelijke Zwarte Wouw *M lineatus* en Slechtvalk *F peregrinus* en Barbarijse Valk *F pelegrinoides*, en bij ondersoorten van bijvoorbeeld Smelleken *F columbarius*, Lannervalk *F biarmicus*, Sakervalk *F cherrug* en Slechtvalk.

De koptekening van volwassen mannetjes *pekinensis* is donkerder grijs dan bij *naumanni*. De hoeveelheid grijs in de vleugeldekveren is in *pekinensis* aanzienlijk groter (bijna 100% van alle vleugeldekveren is grijs en 100% van alle tertails) tegen ongeveer eenderde van het totaal bij *naumanni*. Ook verschillend is de intensiviteit van de kleur van de onderdelen: *pekinensis* is donkerder op de onderdelen dan *naumanni*. De donkere oogstreep bij volwassen vrouwtjes *naumanni* is of afwezig of miniem ontwikkeld, terwijl deze in *pekinensis* duidelijker zichtbaar is. Ook zijn de naakte delen meer oranje in *pekinensis* dan bij *naumanni* (meer geel). De bandering op de mantel en schouder van *pekinensis* is zwarter en duidelijker dan in *naumanni*. Kanttekening is echter dat voor vrouwtjes en mannetjes *pekinensis* maar een klein aantal vogels kon worden onderzocht en met name voor vrouwtjes kunnen met het beschikbaar komen van meer foto's deze kenmerken in de toekomst wellicht meer gewicht krijgen of juist minder.

Veel aspecten van beide ondersoorten zijn nog onbekend, zoals waar de verschillende populaties overwinteren, wat het exacte broedgebied is van *pekinensis* en of de intermediaire populaties een eigen taxonomische status verdienen.

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**452** Lesser Kestrel / Kleine Torenvalk *Falco naumanni*, juvenile, Dhzabagly, Kazakhstan, September 2009 *(René Pop)*. Bird of unknown subspecies. Note pale yellow bare parts in juvenile. **453** Lesser Kestrel / Kleine Torenvalk *Falco naumanni*, adult male, Dhzabagly, Kazakhstan, September 2009 *(René Pop)*. Intermediate bird; note richly coloured plumage, intense grey hood and grey upperwing-coverts (though not as dark as in typical *pekinensis*), latter slightly more extensive than in Western Lesser Kestrel *F n naumanni* but still most of median and lesser coverts being rusty. **454** Western Lesser Kestrel / Kleine Torenvalk *Falco naumanni naumanni*, adult male, Tarifa, Spain, 6 May 2012 *(René Pop)*. Note very pale grey hood, rusty-orange mantle and very limited grey on upperwing-coverts, from some angles even being invisible in field. **455** Western Lesser Kestrel / Kleine Torenvalk *Falco naumanni naumanni*, adult male, Spain, spring *(Stephen Daly)*. Note very limited grey area on upperwing-coverts.

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**456** Lesser Kestrel / Kleine Torenvalk *Falco naumanni*, intermediate, adult female, Spandarian reservoir, Gorayk, Armenia, 25 May 2015 *(Peter Adriaens)*. Well-marked female with bright bare parts but not ochreous-orange as in *pekinensis*.

**457** Lesser Kestrel / Kleine Torenvalk *Falco naumanni*, adult male, Spandarian reservoir, Gorayk, Armenia, 25 May 2015 *(Peter Adriaens)*. Intermediate bird; note extensive grey on upperwing-coverts but not comparable with typical *pekinensis*.

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# Identification of first-year Oriental Turtle Dove

*Nils van Duivendijk*

The identification of Oriental Turtle Dove *Streptopelia orientalis* has already been well covered in the literature (eg, Cramp 1985, Hirschfeld 1986, 1992, Jännes 1995, van Duivendijk 2011) and focuses on both adults or well advanced first-winters and juveniles. Separating adults and well advanced first-winters (ie, birds in adult-type plumage) from European Turtle Dove *S turtur* is often straightforward but separating juvenile Oriental Turtle (especially Rufous Turtle Dove *S o meena*; hereafter *meena*) from juvenile European Turtle may still be problematic using the available literature. This paper focuses mainly on birds in (mainly) juvenile plumage and presents some new features not covered in the birding literature. Unless stated otherwise, the identification points presented here fit both *meena* and nominate *S o orientalis* (hereafter *orientalis*), as well as intergrades, which all have occurred in western Europe. Oriental Turtle Dove is a regular vagrant to north-western Europe from autumn to winter. Both first-years and older, adult-type birds are involved and a rather large proportion of records involve birds that stay to winter (cf Ebels et al 2010). European Turtle Dove is a widespread but strongly declining summer visitor to Europe with some birds remaining into late autumn and even winter. Any turtle dove in Europe from October to March should get extra attention from keen birders.

**Moult and ageing**

Similar to many doves and pigeons, all age groups of both European Turtle Dove and Oriental Turtle Dove moult completely in autumn and winter, so that after the complete first moult cycle first-year birds are inseparable from adults, once the last juvenile feather has been shed. The timing of post-juvenile moult is most likely linked with the hatching date, and due to the large variation in timing of breeding in this species, early hatched birds are likely much more advanced in their moult than birds hatched later in the season. Individual variation based on other aspects may also occur. Moult timing is thus extremely variable, and both full juveniles as well as birds already in mainly adult-like plumage can be found in late autumn. Normally, the central secondaries will be the last juvenile feathers to be retained. Moulting adults will show a mix of worn and fresh adult-type feathers. When judging the underparts, especially the breast, it is important to recognize the difference between juvenile-type and adult-type body-feathers. Juvenile-type body-feathers show neat pale fringes when seen well. The fringes wear off soon, and in most individuals the feathers are replaced by adult-type feathers before becoming very worn. Adult-type body-feathers are uniform, and first-winter birds in autumn can show a mix of both feather types to any extent.

**Identification**

Of the features outlined below, bill colour, eye colour and tail pattern apply to all ages. The other features refer specifically to first-year birds.

*Bill colour*

In the vast majority of Oriental Turtle Doves, the bill is at least partially paler than in European Turtle Dove. It is unclear whether this is age related, as some first-years have an already largely pale bill, while some adults have an all dark bill. In European Turtle, the bill is always dark (blackish). Paler parts of the bill in Oriental Turtle are most often present at the tip, and when present it is highly indicative for identification. However, beware of European Turtle with an aberrantly coloured bill or bill tip, which have been documented. If there is any colour difference detectable in European Turtle (mostly first-years), the tip of the bill is often the darkest part.

*Eye colour*

There is often an obvious but overlapping difference in eye colour between European Turtle Dove and Oriental Turtle Dove (cf plate 458-459 and 467). Eye colour is linked to age, and if the age of a bird is known, the overlap is only slight. In European Turtle, eye colour ranges from dark or dull brownish to dull orange in juveniles and to cleaner orange already in some first-winters and in all adults. In Oriental Turtle, the eye colour is generally brighter and less variable, ranging from yellowish to orangey in juveniles in September, seemingly rapidly changing to bright orange or

**458-459** Oriental Turtle Dove / Oosterse Tortel *Streptopelia orientalis*, most likely *S o meena*, first-year, on vessel at North Sea, 50 nautical miles north-west of Texel, Noord-Holland, Netherlands, 16 November 2010 *(Winfried Gottschling)*. Accepted as second for the Netherlands. Seemingly still completely juvenile, showing several typical features for Oriental Turtle in this plumage. Note very bright eye colour (perhaps accentuated by low sunlight) for bird in such 'young' plumage; well-defined and very broad edges to outer primaries; juvenile-type tertials with very dark centre (sunlight revealing darker shaft-streak, which would be 'gone' in duller light); and contrast between warm-washed, dark brown-grey juvenile-type breast and paler belly.

red-orange later in the autumn. The bright, almost fire-like eye colour already present in most first-year Oriental Turtle from October is often eye-catching and unlikely to be found in first-winter European Turtle. A bird with a very dull, dusky or dark eye is unlikely to be an Oriental Turtle. Some overlap can be found between adult European Turtle (and first-winter European Turtle with an extremely clean orange eye colour) on the one hand, and a relatively dull-eyed first-winter Oriental Turtle on the other.

*Pattern of outer tail-feather (t6)*

The difference in typical tail pattern between the species has been well covered (Hirschfield 1986, 1992, Jännes 1995). However, the black pattern appears to show quite some variation and the extremes in both species match each other but not in the shape of the white or grey tip.

In the vast majority of Oriental Turtle Doves, there is a rounded border between the black on the inner web and the white or grey tip, and with some dark patterning 'leaking' over the shaft onto the outer web, not interrupted by the shaft, a pattern not found in European Turtle Dove (figure 1). However, the pattern is quite variable and some (likely always) *meena* have a minimum amount of, or even lacking the dark smudge on the outer web. Some of these birds also show a straight border to the black pattern and are thus very similar to European Turtle in this respect (see plate 461). In the vast majority of European Turtle, the same border is straight and cuts off sharply at the shaft at an almost 90° angle. There is virtually never any dark 'leaking' over the shaft onto the outer web (I have found only one specimen of European Turtle with a minimum of pale grey next to the shaft on the outer web, impossible to see in the field).

The ratio between length and width of the white tip is an even better feature, and can be measured from good photographs taken from the right angle. For this ratio, I measured 32 specimens of Oriental Turtle Dove and 38 of European Turtle Dove (cf figure 1): ***1*** the width (B) of the inner web at the black border from the shaft to the feather edge, at an angle of 90° to the shaft; and ***2*** the length (A) from the black border to the tip. The highest ratio (A:B) for Oriental Turtle was 1.32; the lowest for European Turtle was 1.62. So it seems safe to use for Oriental Turtle a ratio of ≤1.4 (and often close to 1.0) and ≥1.6 for European Turtle (and often close to or beyond 2.0). However, beware of European Turtle with a very worn tip of t6.

*Pattern of first adult-type coverts*

Any suspiciously looking juvenile turtle dove should also be checked for the presence of new adult-type upperwing-coverts. Juvenile type coverts have pale tips and are normally less deep rufous than adult-type coverts and show a less blackish and more diffuse centre (especially in European Turtle Dove). Fresh adult-type (inner)

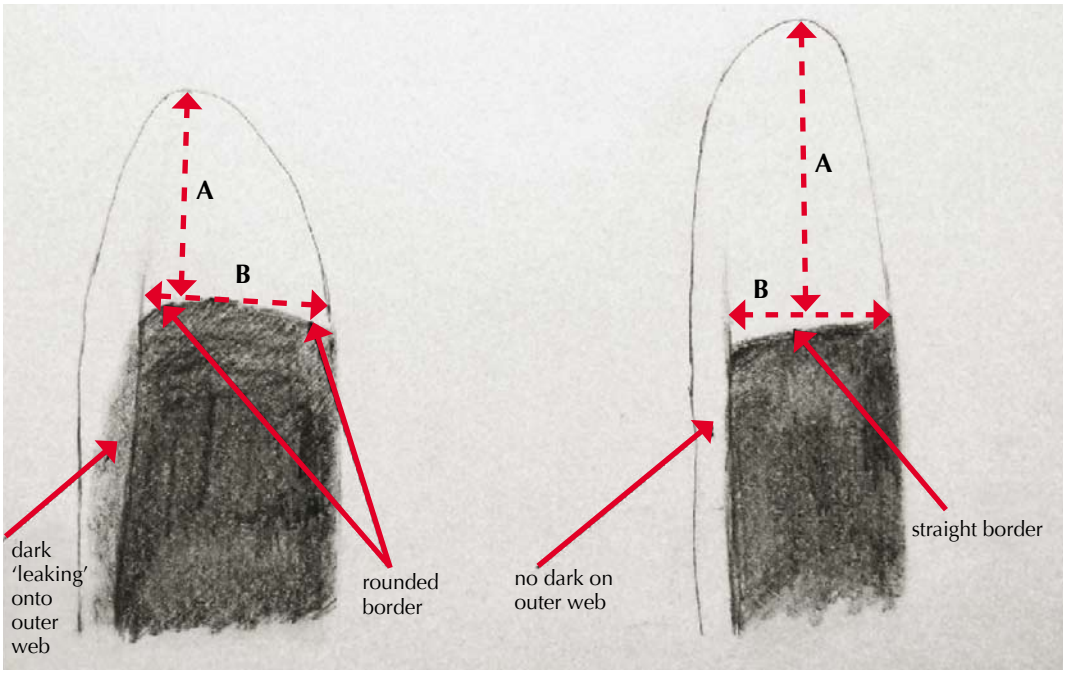
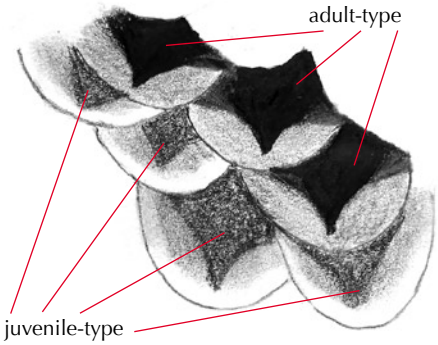


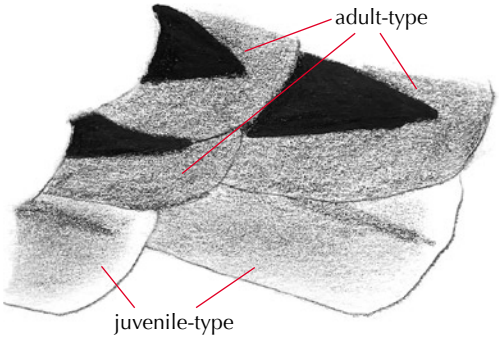

FIGURE 1 Typical pattern of outer tail-feather (t6) in Oriental Turtle Dove / Oosterse Tortel *Streptopelia orientalis* (left) and European Turtle Dove / Zomertortel *S turtur* (right) *(Nils van Duivendijk)*. **A** = length from black border to tip, **B** = width of inner web at black border. See main text for further explanation.

FIGURE 2 **A** Lesser covert pattern of first-winter Oriental Turtle Dove / Oosterse Tortelduif *Streptopelia orientalis*. In adult-type coverts, note black centre widening towards base and becoming slightly more diffuse, and lack of pale tip. Compared with European Turtle Dove *S turtur*, centre of juvenile-type coverts in Oriental Turtle darker and base colour often more rufous, thus more similar to adult-type; hence, first adult-type coverts are more difficult to detect in first-winter Oriental Turtle (see Vlieland bird in plate 468). **B** Lesser and median covert pattern of first-winter European Turtle Dove / Zomertortel *Streptopelia turtur*. In adult-type feathers, dark centre is well defined and parallel to rufous edge up to feather base; also note lack of pale tip. Centre of juvenile-type feathers is typically narrow and base colour is greyer than in juvenile-type coverts of Oriental Turtle Dove *S orientalis*, hence first adult-type coverts are easy to detect in first-winter European Turtle. *(Nils van Duivendijk)*

**A** Oriental Turtle Dove




**B** European Turtle Dove



**460** European Turtle Dove / Zomertortel *Streptopelia turtur* (left) and Oriental Turtle Dove / Oosterse Tortel *S orientalis* (right), Natural History Museum, Tring, England, 8 November 2012 *(Nils van Duivendijk/©NHM London)*. Typical patterns of outer tail-feather (t6). **461** Rufous Turtle Dove / Meenatortel *Streptopelia orientalis meena,* adult, Wergea (Warga), Friesland, Netherlands, 25 January 2010 (*Edwin Winkel)*. First record of Oriental Turtle Dove for the Netherlands, showing black pattern of outer tail-feather (t6) very similar to typical pattern of European Turtle Dove *S turtur*, as can be found in some *meena*. However, ratio between length and width of white tip (1.27) is well within range of Oriental Turtle and outside that of European Turtle.

coverts lack a pale tip. In many Oriental Turtle Doves, the juvenile-type coverts are already very similar to the adult-type and this alone is indicative. The adult-type coverts vary considerably between the species. In European Turtle, the rufous edge is evenly broad and parallel edged, following the shape of the black centre. In Oriental Turtle, the rufous edge narrows while the black centre widens towards the base of the feather. In Oriental Turtle, the black centre is often slightly less clear cut towards the base.

*Juvenile primary pattern*

The juvenile-type primaries of both European Turtle Dove and Oriental Turtle Dove have variable pale edges. The colour of the edges ranges from whitish to deep rufous, with both extremes especially found in Oriental Turtle rather than in European Turtle. The ground colour of the prima-

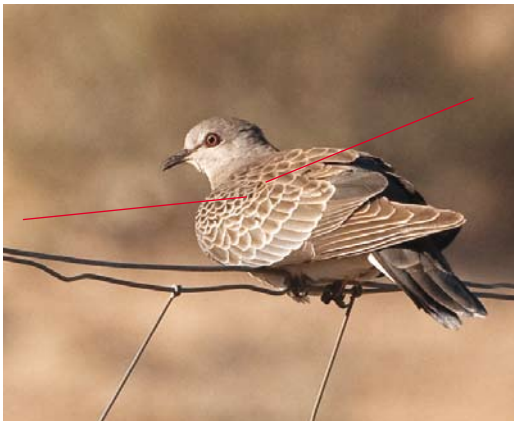
**462** European Turtle Dove / Zomertortel *Streptopelia turtur* (left) and Oriental Turtle Dove / Oosterse Tortel *S orientalis* (right), Natural History Museum, Tring, England, 8 November 2012 *(Nils van Duivendijk/©NHMUK)*. Difference in primary pattern and colour is obvious in series but usually also useful for individual birds. Also, note pattern of primary coverts, with pale tips slightly larger and more ill defined in European Turtle than in Oriental Turtle; however, pattern is highly variable, especially in European Turtle (as already visible in this small sample). **463** Oriental Turtle Dove / Oosterse Tortel *Streptopelia orientalis* (above) and European Turtle Dove / Zomertortel *S turtur* (below), Natural History Museum, Tring, England, 8 November 2012 *(Nils van Duivendijk/©NHMUK)*. Typical juvenile-type primary patterns. See also dark grey (European Turtle) versus blackish (Oriental Turtle) ground colour of primaries. In this case, tips of primary coverts are identical.

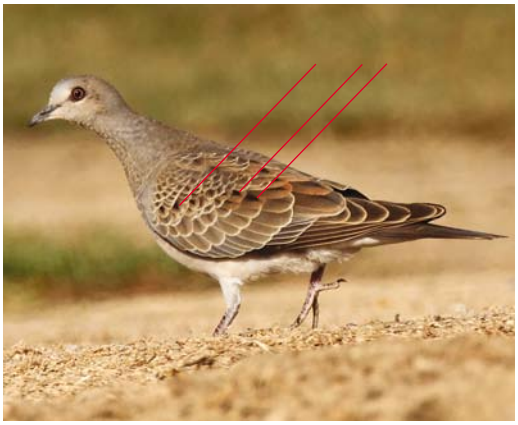
ries themselves is dark grey in European Turtle and blackish in Oriental Turtle. The most important difference, however, is that the edges of the primaries in Oriental Turtle are better defined and often broader. In European Turtle, the edges are typically more ill defined, rarely broad and seemingly less prone to colour variation (see plate 462-463).

*Juvenile primary covert pattern*

The juvenile-type primary coverts show a pale tip in both European Turtle Dove and Oriental Turtle Dove. In European Turtle, the tips are often larger and rather ill defined, while in Oriental Turtle the tips are typically small and well defined, and in some cases almost absent. This is more a one-way

**464** European Turtle Dove / Zomertortel *Streptopelia turtur* (left) and Oriental Turtle Dove / Oosterse Tortel *S orientalis* (right), Natural History Museum, Tring, England, 8 November 2012 *(Nils van Duivendijk/©NHMUK)*. Same specimens as in plate 460. Typical underparts (and tail patterns, cf figure 1). In Oriental Turtle with still juvenile body-feathers, breast is darker, contrasting more with rest of underparts, while in European Turtle there is little contrast. In adults, opposite is often true. Note that Oriental Turtle has already moulted some body-feathers (centre of breast) which are uniform purple-grey, lacking pale tip. Nevertheless, warm-toned juvenile-type feathers are still responsible for overall colour. European Turtle on left typically showing cold grey tone to juvenile-type breast. **465-466** Oriental Turtle Dove / Oosterse Tortel *Streptopelia orientalis*, first-year, Northern Negev, Israel, 20 November 2012 *(Rami Mizrachi)*. See main text for ageing and identification. Note diagnostic pattern of t6 en compare with plate 464. Arrows in plate 466 point to adult-type coverts. Note lack of pale tip, conspicuous rufous colour between strongly bleached juvenile-type feathers and – especially – wide-based dark centre, narrowing rufous edge towards feather base, typical for Oriental Turtle. **467** European Turtle Dove / Zomertortel *Streptopelia turtur*, first-year, El Gouna, Egypt, 1 October 2010 *(Edwin Winkel)*. See main text for ageing and identification. Arrows point to adult-type coverts. Similarity to Negev bird (plate 466) is obvious and shows how similar the two species can look in certain views, but note lack of pale tip, and dark centre parallel to rufous edge up to feather base, typical for European Turtle.





feature, as European Turtle can show a pattern perfectly matching Oriental Turtle, but Oriental Turtle does not show large and ill-defined tips.

**Difficult cases**

In plate 465-470, three difficult-to-identify individuals are shown.

*Northern Negev, Israel, November 2012 (plate 465-466)*

This bird is in many aspects quite similar to European Turtle Dove. Note the grey and not obviously dark breast and lack of distinctly warm colours. The mainly juvenile-type coverts and scapulars are centered grey with a hint of a dark shaft-streak as in normal European Turtle. Also, the eye and bill colour are not of any help. The worn aspect of the plumage in combination with harsh light in a desert-like environment may account for the seemingly bleached plumage.

The main clues are the first adult-type lesser coverts showing the typical pattern for Oriental Turtle Dove (although not very easy to see), the well-defined fringes to the primaries (although worn) and, moreover, the pattern of t6 (cf figure 1), showing a smooth, rounded edge between the black and white on the inner web, and the black continuing uninterrupted over the shaft onto the outer web, which is characteristic of Oriental Turtle.

*El Gouna, Egypt, 1 October 2010 (plate 467)*

This is a European Turtle Dove in mainly juvenile plumage with scattered first adult-type coverts and scapulars (deeper coloured and without pale tip). The pattern of the first adult-type covert with black centre parallel with evenly wide rufous edge, is unlike the pattern in Oriental Turtle Dove. The grey breast and whiter belly lack a warm wash and the pale edges along the outer primaries are ill defined. The triangular patch of bare skin in front and absence of bare skin behind the eye would be completely normal for Oriental Turtle, too. In many European Turtle, there is also a distinct patch of bare skin behind or around the eye, in contrast with many Oriental Turtle. The eye colour overlaps with the dullest-coloured Oriental Turtle (compare with plate 458-459). The sharp whitish fringe along the secondaries was mentioned as a feature for Oriental Turtle (Jännes 1995) but I found much overlap, especially in first-years with juvenile-type secondaries. In adults, it seems to be a more useful character.

*Vlieland, Friesland, Netherlands, October 2012 (plate 468-470)*

The bare parts around the eye in this bird are quite extensive for an Oriental Turtle Dove and the eye colour too seems to be at the duller end of the variation, together with the all dark bill creating a facial impression quite like European Turtle Dove. However, the photograph was taken late in the afternoon on a dull-weather day in October, possibly creating a misleading impression of the eye colour. Note the classic juvenile-type tertial pat-

**468-469** Oriental Turtle Dove / Oosterse Tortel *Streptopelia orientalis*, first-year, Vlieland, Friesland, Netherlands, 20 October 2012 *(Han Zevenhuizen)*. See main text for ageing and identification. Note that this bird has not yet been accepted by the Dutch rarities committee (CDNA). Arrow in plate 468 points to only adult-type covert present; although not easy to see, note lack of pale tip and wide-based dark centre, narrowing rufous edge towards feather base (cf figure 2), typical for Oriental Turtle.

**470** Oriental Turtle Dove / Oosterse Tortel *Streptopelia orientalis*, first-year, Vlieland, Friesland, Netherlands, 20 October 2012 *(Han Zevenhuizen)*. See main text for ageing and identification. Detail of tail, showing typical pattern of outer tail-feather of this species: rounded border between white and black and white not obviously longer than width (cf figure 1). Note that this bird has not yet been accepted by the Dutch rarities committee (CDNA).

tern, the well-defined fringes along the outer primaries, the pattern of first adult-type coverts and the tail and pattern of the underparts, all convincing for identification as Oriental Turtle (plate 469-470).

In plate 469-470, note the pattern of t6 typical of Oriental Turtle Dove, with the rounded border between the black and white on the inner web of t6 and dark 'leaking' over the shaft onto the outer web (just visible in plate 470). The white tip to the tail-feathers is relatively small and the length and width of the white tip on t6 seem to be about equal but impossible to measure properly from this angle (cf figure 1). The juvenile underparts are also typical of Oriental Turtle, with a warm wash over a rather sharp border between the dark greyish breast and paler belly. Taken all characters in account, this individual can be identified as an Oriental Turtle; if accepted, it will represent the third record for the Netherlands, chronologically.

**Acknowledgements**
Winfried Gottschling, Rami Mizrachi and Han Zevenhuizen are thanked for the use of their photographs and Mark Adams and Hein van Grouw for letting me study skins in the Natural History Museum (NHMUK) at Tring, England. The visit to Tring was financially supported by the Dutch Birding Fund (cf Dutch Birding 24: 125, 2002; www.dutchbirding.nl/page.php?page_id=38).

**Samenvatting**
Herkenning van eerstejaars Oosterse Tortel De herkenning van Oosterse Tortel *Streptopelia orientalis* en het onderscheid met Zomertortel *S turtur* is in de literatuur al goed besproken voor wat betreft adulte vogels en in rui vergevorderde juvenielen/eerste-winters (met adult-type veren), en is doorgaans eenduidig. Het onderscheiden van juveniele Oosterse Tortels en Zomertortels aan de hand van bestaande literatuur kan echter lastiger zijn. Dit artikel bespreekt voornamelijk de herkenning van beide in (grotendeels) juveniel kleed en geeft enkele nieuwe kenmerken.

Het kleed van eerstejaars Oosterse Tortel in het najaar varieert van volledig juveniel tot vergevorderd naar adult, vermoedelijk als gevolg van de sterk uiteenlopende broedperiode.

De snavel is bij Zomertortel in alle leeftijden en seizoenen volledig donker, terwijl bij Oosterse Tortel deze vaak gedeeltelijk licht is, vooral de snavelpunt.

De oogkleur is gedeeltelijk leeftijdgerelateerd en overlapt bij beide maar als de leeftijd van de vogel bepaald is kan het een goede indicatie geven. Eerstejaars Oosterse Tortel heeft vaak al een fel oranjerood oog, terwijl eerstejaars Zomertortel hooguit een doforanje maar meestal nog een donker, vrijwel kleurloos oog heeft.

Het witpatroon van de top van de buitenste staartpen is enigszins variabel in vooral de vorm van de scheiding met het zwarte deel. Bij Zomertortel is de buitenvlag volledig wit (de schacht vormt de scherpe grens) terwijl bij Oosterse Tortel er vaak zwart doorloopt 'over' de schacht naar de buitenvlag. Daarnaast is de scheiding op de binnenvlag tussen de witte top en het zwarte basale deel bij Zomertortel recht terwijl die bij Oosterse juist enigszins rond loopt; vooral bij Oosterse is echter variatie en de extremen zijn vrijwel identiek aan Zomertortel (zoals bijvoorbeeld bij het eerste Nederlandse geval). De verhouding tussen lengte en breedte van de witte top vertoont echter geen overlap: de lengte is bij Zomertortel vrijwel tweemaal zo groot als de breedte, terwijl bij Oosterse die verhouding ongeveer 1 is.

Het patroon van de eerste adult-type dekveren is een goede indicator. Deze verschillen bij beide soorten van juveniel-type door de diepere kleur, zwarter centrum en afwezigheid van een lichte top. Bij Oosterse Tortel komen de juveniel-type dekveren wel veel meer overeen met adult-type dan bij Zomertortel en dat op zich is al een goede indicatie. Bij Zomertortel is de oranje rand gelijkmatig breed en loopt parallel met de zijden van het driehoekige zwarte centrum; bij Oosterse is de rand donkerder oranjebruin en versmalt richting basis omdat het zwarte centrum verbreedt richting basis.

Hoewel de extremen van beide soorten dicht bij elkaar komen is het patroon van de juveniel-type handpennen in de meeste gevallen duidelijk verschillend. Oosterse Tortel heeft vaak brede, scherp begrensde oranjeachtige randen, terwijl bij Zomertortel de randen hooguit zwak gekleurd, smal en vaag begrensd zijn.

Het patroon van juveniel-type handdekveren overlapt volledig waardoor dit kenmerk alleen bij duidelijke gevallen bruikbaar is. Zomertortel heeft vaak vrij grote lichte, maar wel vaag begrensde toppen aan de hand-

dekveren, terwijl bij Oosterse Tortel de eventueel aanwezige toppen klein en scherp begrensd zijn. Veel Oosterse hebben helemaal geen zichtbare lichte toppen aan de handdekveren.

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# How common is albinism really? Colour aberrations in Indian birds reviewed

*Anil Mahabal, Hein van Grouw, Radheshyam Murlidhar Sharma & Sanjay Thakur*

People have always been intrigued by aberrantly coloured birds, and therefore sightings of these individuals are often reported in the literature. Contrary to popular belief, birds with a colour aberration do not necessarily fall victim to natural predators and often survive for a long time (van Grouw 2012). This also increases their chance of being seen and recorded by birders.

In general, plumage colour is the result of biological pigments (biochromes), structural colour (selective light reflection due to the structure of the feather), or a combination of the two. The two most common pigments that determine plumage colour in birds are melanins and carotenoids (Fox & Vevers 1960, van Grouw 2013). Another pigment, only found in parrots Psittacidae, is psittacin. Finally, there are the porphyrins which are relatively rare in birds.

Carotenoids are responsible for colours ranging from pale yellow to scarlet red. They cannot be synthesized by the birds themselves but have to be acquired from their food and transformed into colour pigments by enzymes. Psittacin is also responsible for yellow, orange and red but is not diet dependent. Porphyrins, which normally produce reddish brown colours, are formed by the breakdown of hemoglobin by the liver. They are sporadically found in a variety of bird groups including galliforms Galliformes, nightjars Caprimulgidae, bustards Otididae, owls Strigidae and turacos Musophagidae.

Melanins can be divided into two forms; eumelanin and phaeomelanin. Depending on concentration and distribution within the feather, eumelanin is responsible for black, grey and/or dark brown colours. Phaeomelanin is responsible for warm, reddish-brown to pale buff colours, depending on concentration and distribution. Both melanins together can give a wide range of greyish-brown colours. In skin and eyes, only eumelanin is present (Lubnow 1963, van Grouw 2006, 2013). The development of melanin is the result of a biochemical process in the melanin producing cells, called melanin synthesis. Genetic mutations affecting the presence and distribution of the pigment cells, melanin synthesis or melanin distribution, and resulting in an aberrant colour, are not uncommon in birds. Besides this, pigment disturbance can also be caused by non-heritable, external and often temporary factors like injury, disease, food deficiency (Law 1921, Sage 1962) or other environmental factors (van Grouw 2013). While mutations affecting carotenoid or psittacin are rare, there are many genetic mutations which cause changes in the melanins. In domesticated pigeons for example, more than 50 different in-

heritable melanin mutations are known, which cause c 10 distinguishable colour aberrations (van Grouw & de Jong 2009). The most commonly inheritable aberrations found in wild birds are albino, leucism, brown, dilution, ino and melanism (table 1; for a more detailed description of these see van Grouw 2013).

**Early records and terminology**

Since the 19th century, many scientific papers have dealt with the subjects of plumage coloration, aberration and/or their genetics (eg, M'Callum 1885, Rollin 1962, 1964, Sage 1962, Harrison 1963). There has also been a wealth of published observations on individual sightings of colour aberrant birds (see appendix, published online at www.dutchbirding.nl/indian_birds_albinism) and combined records of aberrant coloration in species of particular countries or regions (eg, Deane 1876, 1879, 1880, Sage 1963, Gross 1965ab, Li et al 2011). However, until now there was no such comprehensive compilation of colour aberrations recorded from India, a gap filled by this paper.

In all these publications, a variety of names is used to identify and classify the pigment abnormalities. Albinism, for example, is defined as total or pure, partial, incomplete and imperfect (see appendix). Terms used for other aberrations are melanistic (blackish), rutilistic (reddish), flavistic (yellowish), fawn, pale and dark morph, leucistic, isabelline etc. This terminology however, is often conflicting or incorrect and is therefore confusing. Most commonly, the term albino is widely used for all sorts of different colour aberrations but in only a tiny proportion of cases it is used correctly. Partial albino as a term is wrong, as albinos cannot produce melanin pigment at all and therefore being partial albino is simply impossible. The true albino aberration is far less often encountered than many would suppose. In fact, aberrant white feathers are hardly ever caused by albinism; usually, it is either a form of leucism or a non-heritable cause such as progressive greying.

The most obvious difference between albinism and leucism is in the colour of the eyes: in an albino these are red, while in leucism the eye

**471** Red-whiskered Bulbul / Roodoorbuulbuul *Pycnonotus jocosus*, Nawabganj Bird Sanctuary, Uttar Pradesh, India, 30 October 2012 *(Nandy Soumyajit)*. Number 89, partial leucism, in appendix. Progressive greying in early stage.

**472** Red-whiskered Bulbul / Roodoorbuulbuul *Pycnonotus jocosus,* Palakkad, Kerala, India, 23 March 2014 *(Unni Revi)*. Number 91, leucistic, in appendix. Mutation brown in moderately sun-bleached plumage. This bird was nesting with normally coloured individual.

TABLE 1 Identification key for naming colour aberrations in birds

| Aberration | Effect on melanins | Effect on plumage colour | Remarks |
|---|---|---|---|
| **albino** | total lack of both melanins in feathers, eyes and skin due to heritable absence of enzyme tyrosinase in pigment cells | all-white plumage, red eyes and pink feet and bill | albinos are rarely seen in wild as their survival chances are limited due to poor eyesight; most die soon after fledging |
| **leucism** | total lack of both melanins in all or parts of plumage and skin due to heritable absence of pigment cells in all or parts of skin | all-white plumage ***or*** all-white feathers next to normal-coloured ones (partial leucism); pink bill and feet in the all-white birds and possibly normal-coloured bill and feet in partial leucism depending on where pigment cells are missing; always normal-coloured eyes | white pattern in partial leucism is often patchy and bilaterally symmetrical; pattern is already present in juvenile plumage and does not change with age |
| **progressive greying** | total lack of both melanins in all or parts of plumage (and skin) due to progressive loss of pigment cells in all or parts of skin with age | all-white plumage ***or*** all-white feathers mixed with normal-coloured ones; bill and feet may be affected depending on form of progressive greying; always normal-coloured eyes | white feathers not present in juvenile plumage; from onset of this condition, the bird will get increasing number of white feathers after every moult |
| **brown** | qualitative reduction of eumelanin due to incomplete synthesis of eumelanin; phaeomelanin unaffected | normally black parts are brown; originally reddish/yellowish brown unaffected | plumage with incompletely oxidized eumelanin is very sensitive to sunlight and therefore bleaches further rapidly to almost (dirty) white |
| **dilution** | quantitative reduction of both melanins or eumelanin only | normally black parts are silvery grey; originally reddish/yellowish brown is buff/cream or unaffected | plumage looks like pale version of their normal counterparts |
| **ino** | strong qualitative reduction of both melanins due to incomplete synthesis of both melanins | normally black parts are very pale brown/cream; originally reddish/yellowish brown hardly visible; eyes pinkish, feet and bill pink | eyesight in ino birds is much better than in albino birds and, therefore, any adult bird in the wild with 'white' plumage and reddish eyes is thus ino and not albino |
| **melanism** | abnormal deposit of melanin (not necessarily an increase of pigment) | increase of black and/or reddish brown or altered pattern | in this mutation, there is no loss of pigment (quantitative reduction) or change in shape and size of melanin granules (qualitative reduction); hence, plumage of melanistic birds is, therefore, not obviously aberrant: plumage looks 'natural' but different from that of known species |

Melanin aberrations do not affect carotenoid pigments (yellow, orange and red) which, if present in the relevant species, remain present.

colour is unaffected (note that in many species 'red' is the normal eye colour but this is the colour of the iris only as the pupil is 'black'; in albinos, the original eye pigmentation is absent and the red colour of their eyes, including the pupil, is caused by blood that is visible through the colourless tissue). This seemingly minor difference between albino and leucism is related to the underlying causes of the two aberrations, which are actually completely different. An albino has pigment cells but is lacking the necessary enzyme to start melanin synthesis, whereas a leucistic bird lacks pigment cells altogether and is therefore unable to provide its feathers with melanin.

True leucism is congenital (present from birth) but a far more common cause for pigmentless feathers is 'progressive greying', a progressive loss of pigment cells that accumulates with each successive moult. In the early stages, these are usually randomly spread all over the bird but finally the entire plumage can become white. The causes for progressive greying are still unknown and it may or may not be heritable. Some forms may be related solely to age while in others the progressive loss of pigment cells may be due to (heritable) disorders such as vitiligo (pigment disease) or related to habitat. Progressive greying is the most common cause of white feathers in birds (van Grouw 2012, 2013).

Although the final appearance in albinism, leucism and progressive greying is roughly the same – white plumage – the nature and genetic background is totally different. Therefore, the terminology to distinguish them should be different, too.

**Importance of correct terminology**

Different aberrations may result in superficially similar plumage, or the same aberration may appear radically different, depending on taxon, sex, age, extent of plumage wear and the species' original pigmentation. The nature and genetic background of each aberration, however, is different. Therefore, to be able to correctly explore the plumage irregularities, their causes and their occurrences, it is necessary to distinguish them by their causes and not their appearance. Only by adopting a terminology that reflects the nature and causes of each abnormality is it possible to effectively document their distribution and frequency.

The recognition and naming of colour aberrations in birds, however, still causes widespread difficulties and confusion (van Grouw 2013, Koparde et al 2014). Identifying colour mutations in the field can be extremely difficult and is by no means always possible. The views of the bird may be less than ideal: the bird in the field may be too far away or is moving too quickly to distinguish the aberration in sufficient detail, or the plumage may already be strongly bleached and no longer shows the original coloration. When trying to identify a mutation correctly, it is important to know exactly how the original plumage colour of the relevant species should look! Next, try to see parts of the feathering that are not strongly exposed to sunlight in order to determine whether the plumage appears to have been bleached differentially by light. Having done that, and with the original coloration in mind, the identification key for the seven most common plumage aberrations in table 1 should make it easier to name the mutation correctly.

**Methods**

For this paper, we have reviewed 180 published historical records, notes and photographs of colour aberrations in Indian birds in an attempt to determine which of the aberrations named in table 1 were responsible. The original descriptions of the aberrations in each record were carefully interpreted, based on extensive personal research by Hein van Grouw spanning 18 years. For the majority of records, a more accurate definition for each aberration could be assigned.

Some descriptions lacked detail to determine the actual aberration involved but albinism could almost always be ruled out (eg, number 46; 'A pure white bird, bill and iris black…'). Many descriptions, however (eg, number 93; '… ventral side sandy-brown; all feathers tipped with whitish….'), gave sufficient clues to make a positive identification. Also most of the records with a photograph could be re-named accurately.

The following facts were taken in account whilst reviewing the historical records: ***1*** often a plumage described as 'white' by an author is actually not white (lacking the pigment), but only paler than normal; ***2*** a secondary effect of aberrant pigmentation, especially in plumage with qualitative melanin reduction, is that colours bleach unusually quickly and feathers can become almost white; ***3*** albino birds do not survive for long after fledging; however, this is due to poor eyesight rather than their white plumage, so any record of a 'white' bird which is past the fledgling stage is not likely to be an albino; and ***4*** certain aberrations have a higher incidence within certain taxa, eg, progressive greying in coots Fulicidae, and leucism in waterfowl and Galliformes.

**473** Red-wattled Lapwing / Indische Kievit *Vanellus indicus*, Pithora, Chhattisgarh, India, 28 February 2014 *(Ajmani Charandeep)*. Number 38, leucistic, in appendix. Mutation brown but plumages strongly bleached further by sunlight. **474** Black-tailed Godwit / Grutto *Limosa limosa*, Mangalajodi wetlands, Odisha, India, 18 November 2012 *(Ukil Panchami Manoo)*. Number 44, leucistic, in appendix. Mutation brown in sun-bleached plumage but with some new, fresh feathers in wings (tertials). **475** Common Hawk-Cuckoo / Indische Sperwerkoekoek *Hierococcyx varius*, Chandrapur, Maharashtra, India, 21 November 2014 *(Sakhare Sumedh)*. Number 55, leucistic, in appendix. Mutation ino in fresh plumage and therefore original pattern still visible. **476** Red-tailed/Daurian/Chinese Shrike / Turkestaanse/Daurische/Chinese Klauwier *Lanius phoenicuroides/isabellinus/arenarius*, Mumbai, Maharashtra, India, 8 January 2012 *(Ketkar Girish)*. Number 95, leucistic, in appendix. Progressive greying in advanced stage.

**Results**

Altogether, 180 records of colour aberrations reported in 72 different Indian bird species over a period of 129 years have been reviewed (see appendix, published online at www.dutchbirding.nl/indian_birds_albinism). Our review showed that a variety of names is (still) used seemingly randomly to identify and classify the mutations. The names which are most often applied are albino, partial albino and leucism. These names, however, are used for many different colour aberrations and in the majority of the cases have been used incorrectly.

In 85 cases (47%), the aberration involved was termed albino (albinism, albinoism) by the original author but in 84% of these cases (71 records: 39% of all records) albinism was definitely *not* the cause of the aberrant colour. Of the remaining 14 records, four were confirmed albino, while 10 remained uncertain. The aberrations involved in the 71 records that were found to be non-albino were identified as: brown (15 records), progressive greying (10), leucism (eight), ino (10), dilution (two) and unknown but not albino (26).

The incorrect term 'partial albino' (incomplete albinism/albinoism, albino effect) was used 25

**477** Eastern Jungle Crow / Oostelijke Junglekraai *Corvus (macrorhynchos) levaillantii*, Overa-Aru Wildlife Sanctuary, Kashmir, India, 25 May 2014 *(Suhail Intesar)*. Number 169, leucistic, in appendix. Form of dilution, resulting in grey plumage.

**478** Indian Jungle Crow / Indiase Junglekraai *Corvus (macrorhynchos) culminatus*, Kuttampura, Kottayam, Kerala, India, 28 October 2012 *(P S Jinesh)*. Number 168, albino, in appendix. Dark form of ino but bleached by sunlight.

times (14%). The aberrations involved could, however, be identified as brown (five), progressive greying (eight), leucism (four), dilution (three), food deficiency (one) and unknown (four).

In 30 cases (17%), leucism was the assumed cause of the recorded aberrant plumage but in only one case was leucism confirmed to be responsible. The other aberrations involved were brown (eight), progressive greying (12), dilution (seven) and ino (two).

Melanism is clearly easier to identify, as all nine records (5%) concerned birds darker coloured than normal. However, in two cases the darkening was most likely to be artificial and not heritable, and in one case almost certainly the result of food deficiency in captivity.

In total, we were able to re-assign 136 records (76%), which could be divided into brown (41), progressive greying (36), leucism (15), ino (13), dilution (14), melanism (nine), albino (four) and food deficiency (four). Even though 44 records could not be re-assigned, it is clear that, compared with the initial high frequency of records of albinism, albino is not the most common aberration in Indian birds. Instead, it is brown and progressive greying. Whereas progressive greying may or may not be heritable, brown is caused by a single genetic mutation common to all bird groups (see table 1 for definition). In at least 23% of the reviewed records, brown was the aberration involved. However, this percentage was probably higher, accounting for a proportion of the records counted as 'not albino', eg, numbers 39 and 41 in appendix.

**Discussion**

We are confident in stating that at least a quarter of the recorded aberrations in Indian birds are the result of the mutation brown. This percentage also agrees with the results found in other studies (van Grouw 2012), so we assume that brown accounts for c 25% of all aberrations encountered in birds in general.

The mutation brown is widespread amongst all bird species but given that this is the result of a single recessive mutation, the occurrence of so many 'brown' birds seems remarkable. However, the fact that brown is also sex-linked may provide

an explanation. 'Sex-linked' means that the gene that harbours the mutation is located on the Z-chromosome, which is the avian equivalent of the mammalian X-chromosome (in birds, males have two Z-chromosomes and females have a Z and W). Therefore, when a male that is heterozygous for brown but normal-coloured, breeds with a normal female, half of his daughters (=25% of his total offspring) will be brown. And, in addition to this, half of the male offspring from a heterozygous father will also be heterozygous for brown. So, to get 25% brown offspring, only one parent, the father, needs to be a carrier of the gene for brown. By comparison, for recessive mutations that are not sex-linked, both parents need to be heterozygous in order to get 25% aberrant offspring.

The above also explains why only brown females are seen in the wild as the mutation will always be exhibited in females that carry it, since they only have a single Z chromosome.

In many species, brown females have been recorded to successfully breed in the wild (eg, number 91 in appendix).

In spite of being the most common colour mutation, brown is clearly the most difficult aberration to identify. The main reason is that plumage affected by the mutation brown (= incompletely oxidised eumelanin) is very sensitive to sunlight and will bleach quickly. Consequently, older plumage becomes almost white and is hard to distinguish in the field.

Besides being named albino (15), partial albino (five) and leucism (eight), other terms used for brown were unusual plumage (one), hypochromatism (one), isabelline (two), brown and white (one), colour variety (three), brown variety/tertiary albinism (two) and, actually, brown (three).

As shown above, albino birds are rarely seen in the wild. The mutation, however, is not uncommon and occurs quite frequently in most populations (van Grouw 2012). The inheritance of albinism is recessive and therefore the proportion of birds that carry the gene is probably far higher than expected. Young birds need to receive the recessive mutation from both parents (carriers) to be an albino. However, for every albino that is hatched, two carriers are also hatched. And half of the offspring of a carrier mated with a non-carrier

**479** House Crow / Huiskraai *Corvus splendens*, Bhubaneshwar, Odisha, India, 20 August 2013 *(Patnaik Manindra)*. Number 153, albino, in appendix. Mutation brown in medium stage of further bleaching by sunlight.

**480** House Crow / Huiskraai *Corvus splendens*, Kayamkylam, Kerala, India, 14 December 2013 *(Mash Asokan)*. Number 156, leucistic, in appendix. Mutation brown in rather fresh plumage with not much further bleaching by sunlight yet.

**481** House Crow / Huiskraai *Corvus splendens*, Thengumarahada, Nilgiris district, Tamil Nadu, India, 3 February 2010 *(P J Vasanthan)*. Number 149, partial albino, in appendix. Leucism in typical pattern, pigmentless feathers in face and wing, found in many species.

**482** Crow / kraai *Corvus*, RS Pura, near Jammu, Jammu and Kashmir, India, 14 October 2012 *(R Das)*. Number 177, albino, in appendix. Juvenile bird with light form of ino. This fresh juvenile plumage still shows cream colour typical for ino. In few weeks' time, plumage will be bleached further by sunlight to visually white.

will also be carriers. One would therefore expect rather more albinos than are actually encountered – so why do we see so few in the wild?

The reason for their apparent scarcity in the wild is that the absence of melanin in the eyes makes them highly sensitive to light, with a poor depth of vision. It is really their poor eyesight, rather than their white plumage, that makes albinos vulnerable, and most die soon after fledging. The four real albino birds found in this review, and the 10 possible albinos, were all fledglings or birds kept in captivity. Also, most of these cases involved corvids, large birds which frequently live and breed close to human settlements and are therefore more likely to be noticed in the few days they remain alive after fledging.

To summarise, our review showed that brown and progressive greying are the most common colour aberrations in Indian birds, while albinos were very seldom encountered in the wild. These findings agree with results found in European birds (van Grouw 2012, 2013). The term albino, however, was used frequently, and therefore often wrongly, to name colour aberrations seen in wild birds. As explained above, in order to study the causes and occurrences of colour irregularities, it is necessary to correctly identify the different aberrations. Where this cannot be done with certainty, it is preferable for observers not to attempt to name the aberration but just carefully describe and, if possible, photograph the bird. By doing so, the visible information will be on record for future research and the record cannot be misinterpreted as a result of an incorrect name.

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**Samenvatting**

HOE ALGEMEEN IS ALBINISME WERKELIJK? HERZIENING VAN KLEURAFWIJKINGEN BIJ INDIASE VOGELS Afwijkend gekleurde vogels spreken tot de verbeelding en waarnemingen van zulke individuen worden dikwijls gerapporteerd in de literatuur, nu en in het verleden. De terminologie die wordt gebruikt voor het benoemen en identificeren van kleurafwijkingen is verwarrend en spreekt elkaar vaak tegen. In dit artikel worden 180 kleurafwijkingen bij Indiase vogels, gepubliceerd over een periode van 125 jaar, tegen het licht gehouden en worden indien mogelijk de werkelijke kleurafwijkingen vastgesteld (zie de appendix die alleen online wordt gepubliceerd op www.dutchbirding.nl/indian_birds_albinism). 'Albinisme' was de vaakst gebezigde term maar slechts in een zeer klein

deel van de gevallen werd die term correct gebruikt. Na herziening en heridentificatie waren de 180 gevallen als volgt verdeeld: bruin (41), 'progressive greying' (36), leucisme (15), ino (13), dilutie (14), melanisme (negen), albino (vier), gebrekkig voedsel (vier), onbekend maar niet albino (34) en onbekend en mogelijk albino (10). Voor onderzoek naar en begrip van kleurafwijkingen, hun oorzaken en het voorkomen is het noodzakelijk dat de verschillende afwijkingen worden ingedeeld en benoemd naar hun fysiologische achtergrond en niet naar hun uiterlijk.

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## Long-tailed Duck on Lanzarote, Canary Islands, in November 2015

In the afternoon of 7 November 2015, while counting a flock of Black-necked Grebes *Podiceps nigricollis* on the salt lake of Janubio salt pans, along the south-western coast of Lanzarote, Canary Islands, I found another bird swimming near the volcanic rocks on the opposite shore of the lake. At first glance and because of the distance, I thought that it was another grebe isolated from the main group. On examining it through my binoculars, however, I was immediately able to identify it as a Long-tailed Duck *Clangula hyemalis*. I took a few very distant record shots and then attempted to approach the bird, concealing myself behind the walls of volcanic rock. Despite my efforts not to flush it, the Ruddy Shelducks *Tadorna ferruginea* and Black-winged Stilts *Himantopus himantopus* present in the area started to make a disturbance while I was still some distance away from where the duck was swimming, and it flew off. Luckily, it flew closely past me and I was able to see it well. The flight was fast and direct and the bird looked small and stocky, showing strong contrast between the dark upperside and pure white belly. It finally landed, again close to the shore but this time near one of the old buildings near the salt pans. I used this building as concealment to get closer, after which I was able to see the bird from close by. I noticed a dark crown, a dark patch on the lower cheek and a dark and diffuse upper breast-band, showing the white neck like a collar. The bill was broad and short, entirely grey with a slightly darker tip. These characters enabled me to identify it as a female (eg, Svensson et al 2009, Reeber 2015). When not scared away by other birds, it turned out to be very tame, sometimes diving with partially open wings. It did not utter any sound.

Long-tailed Duck is a circumpolar species, breeding along the Arctic coasts of North America (Canada, Alaska, USA, and Greenland), Europe (Iceland and Norway and also in Finland and Sweden) and Asia (Russia). It winters at sea as far south as Britain, South Carolina and Washington, USA, Korea on the Asian Pacific coast, and other areas including the Caspian Sea (del Hoyo et al 1992, Reeber 2015). The species was previously recorded as a vagrant in Macaronesia in the Azores and on Madeira (García-del-Rey 2011).

**483** Long-tailed Duck / IJseend *Clangula hyemalis*, female, Janubio salt pans, Lanzarote, Canary Islands, 7 November 2015 *(Francisco Javier García Vargas)*

In June 2014, a female Long-tailed Duck was photographed on the lagoons north-east of Oualidia, Morocco (Brieffies 2015), which, at the time, was the southernmost record of the species and the first for the African continent. The second for Morocco was slightly further south and concerned a female at Essouira from 20 December 2015 to 4 January 2016 (Naima Mars in litt, Brahim Bakass in litt). The Lanzarote observation is the first record for the Canary Islands (cf García-del-Rey & García Vargas 2013) and the southernmost observation of the species on the Western Palearctic side of its distribution range (in the Nearctic, birds sometimes reach as far south as southern Florida, USA, and northern Mexico).

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## Woestijngrasmus op Terschelling in november 2015

Op vrijdag 13 november 2015 waren Sipke Booi, Age Hulder en Jacob Jan de Vries op Terschelling, Friesland, om ringen af te lezen bij ganzen, meeuwen en steltlopers. In de loop van de middag besloten zij naar West-Terschelling te gaan om te kijken of er vanwege het slechte weer meeuwen in de haven zaten. In de werkhaven aangekomen zagen ze om 15:45 een bleek vogeltje rond een graspol bij een hek schuifelen; ze stelden vast dat het een zandkleurige grasmus *Sylvia* met een gele iris was en beseften dat het iets bijzonders betrof. Het lukte om één duidelijke foto te maken. Met hulp van Arie Ouwerkerk werd hij aan de hand van die foto gedetermineerd als Woestijngrasmus *S nana* (hierna *nana*) en even later werd het nieuws verspreid. De volgende dag werd de vogel al vroeg teruggevonden en door meer dan 150 vogelaars bekeken en gefotografeerd. Hij foerageerde hoofdzakelijk op de grond op zoek naar insecten en verplaatste zich onverstoorbaar tussen de waarnemers en hun camera's en smartphones door. Op zondag 15 november liet hij zich ondanks het zeer slechte weer opnieuw van zeer nabij bekijken; die dag en de dagen daarna bezochten wederom enkele 10-tallen vogelaars het eiland. Op 19 november werd de vogel voor het laatst gezien (de Vries & Bakker 2015).

*Beschrijving*

De beschrijving is gebaseerd op grote aantallen foto's en videobeelden op www.dutchbirding.nl en www.waarneming.nl.

GROOTTE & BOUW Kleine grasmus, ongeveer ter grootte van Tjiftjaf *Phylloscopus collybita*, met relatief korte vleugels en lange staart.

KOP Kruin en achterhoofd bleek zandkleurig tot grijsbruin, naar voorhoofd toe iets donkerder/warmer bruin. Witte oogring boven en onder oog, aan achterzijde net onderbroken.

BOVENDELEN Mantel en bovenvleugel bleek zandkleurig tot grijsbruin, als kop. Stuit bij staartbasis en bovenstaartdekveren roodbruin. Ter hoogte van schouderveren vage lichte vlek, afhankelijk van belichting meer of minder opvallend.

ONDERDELEN Keel, borst, buik en flank grijswit, op flank en zijborst met rossig bruin waas.

VLEUGEL Handpennen duidelijk donkerder dan rest van vleugel, vrij donkerbruin, met lichte zoom. Armpennen voornamelijk bedekt door tertials, lichter dan handpennen, iets donkerder dan bovenvleugeldekveren, met

**484** Woestijngrasmus / Asian Desert Warbler *Sylvia nana*, eerstejaars, West-Terschelling, Terschelling, Friesland, 14 november 2015 *(Jaap Denee)*

**485** Woestijngrasmus / Asian Desert Warbler *Sylvia nana*, eerstejaars, West-Terschelling, Terschelling, Friesland, 16 november 2015 *(Martin van der Schalk)*

**486** Woestijngrasmus / Asian Desert Warbler *Sylvia nana*, eerstejaars, West-Terschelling, Terschelling, Friesland, 17 november 2015 *(Arie Ouwerkerk)*

**487** Woestijngrasmus / Asian Desert Warbler *Sylvia nana*, eerstejaars, West-Terschelling, Terschelling, Friesland, 16 november 2015 *(John van der Graaf)*

**488** Woestijngrasmus / Asian Desert Warbler *Sylvia nana*, eerstejaars, West-Terschelling, Terschelling, Friesland, 16 november 2015 *(Martin van der Schalk)*

lichte zoom. Tertials met donkerbruin centrum en lichte zoom (centrum iets breder dan schacht en bijna net zo donker als centrum staartpennen), geleidelijk overgaand in brede licht zandkleurige tot licht roodbruine zoom. Zichtbaar deel van duimvleugel zwartachtig met smalle lichte zoom. Handpennen zonder lichte top.
STAART Staartpennen met zeer donkere schachten en omgeving van schachten, naar zijden toe roodbruin wordend tot zeer lichte veerrand. Onderstaart vuilwit met donker centraal deel van staartuiteinde tot ongeveer halverwege staart.
NAAKTE DELEN Iris diepgeel. Oogrand roodbruin. Snavel lichtgeel; bovensnavel met donker culmen over volle lengte; ondersnavel met alleen donkere punt. Poot en tenen bleekgeel.
RUI & SLEET Meeste staartpennen in meer of mindere mate gesleten aan top. Onregelmatige rui in staartpennen. Handpennen gesleten aan top, handdekveren rafelig. Langste tertial in rechtervleugel puntiger en meer sleet vertonend dan langste tertial aan linkerzijde.
GEDRAG Vaak op geringe afstand waar te nemen, sluipend door vegetatie als Winterkoning *Troglodytes troglodytes*. Soms kort zittend op hoger punt van struik of in hekwerk. Extreem tam en onverstoorbaar, soms over schoenen van waarnemers lopend.

*Determinatie en leeftijd*
De combinatie van kenmerken duidt op *nana* en sluit alle andere soorten (inclusief mogelijke escapes) uit. De enige soort waarmee *nana* kan worden verward is Afrikaanse Woestijngrasmus *S deserti* (hierna *deserti*), die ook enkele malen in Europa als dwaalgast is vastgesteld (waaronder in Nederland in november-december 2014; Zaal & Ottens 2015). Belangrijke verschillen zijn onder meer: ***1*** het donkere centrum van de tertials (tertials effen bij *deserti*); ***2*** het kleurcontrast tussen grijsbruine bovendelen en roodbruine bovenstaart (meer eenkleurig bij *deserti*); ***3*** het duidelijke donkere centrum van de centrale staartpennen (afwezig bij *deserti*); ***4*** het grijsbruine verenkleed (meer 'blond' en naar geeloranje neigend bij *deserti*); ***5*** de grijswitte onderdelen (witter bij *deserti*); ***6*** de grijze lichte zijkop (lichter/witter bij *deserti*); en ***7*** de contrasterende donkere duimvleugel (minder contrasterend bij *deserti*) (cf Shirihai et al 2001, Svensson et al 2010, van Duivendijk 2011, Zaal & Ottens 2015). Veel dwaalgasten van deze soort kenmerken zich door zeer tam gedrag (cf Remeeus 1995).

Op foto's is te zien dat de langste tertial in de rechtervleugel puntiger was en meer sleet vertoonde dan de langste tertial aan de linkerzijde. Als deze tertial rechts een adulte veer was geweest (en dus was overgeslagen in de laatste rui na de broedperiode), dan zou ze breder zijn geweest en (waarschijnlijk) minder sleet hebben vertoond. Daarnaast hadden de handpennen geen zilverachtige, witte top zoals een adulte vogel in het late najaar zou hebben. Op basis van deze kenmerken werd de vogel op leeftijd gebracht als eerstejaars.

*Verspreiding en voorkomen*
Het broedgebied van *nana* ligt in Centraal-Azië ten oosten van de Kaspische Zee. De populatie in het zuidelijke deel van het broedgebied (Turkmenistan) bestaat voor een deel uit standvogels; het overige deel van de populaties bestaat uit trekvogels die overwinteren in de woestijnen van (van oost naar west) India, Pakistan, Iran, Oman en Saoedi-Arabië en in mindere mate in Israël en Egypte (vooral in de Sinaï en westelijk tot de Nijlvallei), incidenteel ook verder westelijk in Egypte (Libyan Desert en White Desert) en in het uiterste oosten van Libië (Goodman & Meininger 1989, Hering 2012).

*Nana* is een zeldzaamheid in Europa. Buiten Nederland is hij als dwaalgast vastgesteld in Brittannië (12 gevallen), Bulgarije (één), Cyprus (16), Denemarken (vier), Duitsland (twee), Estland (één), Finland (11), Frankrijk (één), Letland (één), Noorwegen (één), Roemenië (één), Spanje (één), Tsjechië (één) en Zweden (14). Een overzicht van alle 70 gevallen in Europa is opgenomen in tabel 1. Late najaarsgevallen zijn min of meer de norm als het gaat om West-Europa; er zijn ook enkele winter- en voorjaarsgevallen. Op Cyprus komen 11 van de 16 gevallen uit maart (vijf) en april (zes), wat op een vorm van 'terugtrek' zou kunnen duiden. Het geval op Terschelling stond niet op zichzelf; op 12-14 november 2015 werd het eerste exemplaar voor Noorwegen vastgesteld (Dutch Birding 37: 411, plaat 639, 2015).

De waarneming op Terschelling betrof de derde Woestijngrasmus voor Nederland. Eerdere gevallen waren in de Amsterdamse Waterleidingduinen bij Zandvoort, Noord-Holland, van 30 oktober tot 3 november 1988 (Hieselaar 1989) en op de boulevard van Scheveningen, Den Haag, Zuid-Holland, op 8 en 9 oktober 1994 (Remeeus 1995).

*Dankzegging*
Łukasz Ławicki, Gert Ottens en Colin Richardson waren behulpzaam bij het samenstellen van het overzicht van gevallen in Europa. Christian Brinkman leverde informatie over de leeftijdsbepaling.

**Summary**
ASIAN DESERT WARBLER ON TERSCHELLING IN NOVEMBER 2015 On 13-19 November 2015, a first-year Asian Desert Warbler *Sylvia nana* stayed at West-Terschelling, Terschelling, Friesland, the Netherlands. The bird was

TABEL 1 Gevallen van Woestijngrasmus *Sylvia nana* in Europa (n=70) / records of Asian Desert Warbler *Sylvia nana* in Europe (n=70) (Gert Ottens in litt, Łukasz Ławicki in litt, Colin Richardson in litt; www.tarsiger.com, www.birdguides.com)

*Brittannië (12)*
16 december 1970 tot 2 januari 1971, Portland, Dorset, Engeland (ringvangst op 16 december)
20-24 oktober 1975, Spurn, Yorkshire, Engeland (ringvangst op 20 oktober)
20-21 november 1975, Frinton-on-Sea, Essex, Engeland
28 oktober tot 22 november 1979, Meols, Wirral, Cheshire, Engeland
30 oktober 1988, Bembridge Pools, Isle of Wight, Engeland
13 oktober tot 5 november 1991, Flamborough Head, Yorkshire, Engeland (ringvangst op 13 oktober)
27 oktober tot 9 november 1991, Bembridge, Isle of Wight, Engeland
5 november 1991, Seasalter, Kent, Engeland
19-26 oktober 1992, Mount Gould, Plymouth, Devon, Engeland
27 mei tot 1 juni 1993, Blakeney Point, Norfolk, Engeland (zingend en nestbouwend)
7-11 mei 2000, Sammy's Point, Easington, Yorkshire, Engeland
18 november 2012, Samphire Hoe Country Park, Kent, Engeland

*Bulgarije (1)*
7 november 1998, Totleben, Pleven (op basis van de compacte beschrijving is *deserti* niet met zekerheid uitgesloten; cf Shurulinkov 2004)

*Cyprus (16)*
12 maart 1958, Akrotiri cliffs
2 april 1961, Larnaca
10 maart 1979, Agios Georgios
16 november 1994, Amathus
29 maart 1995, Akamas
12-13 april 1999, Paphos lighthouse
13 april 2001, Cape Greco
18 april 2001, Paphos lighthouse
29 januari tot 14 februari 2003, Mandria
3 maart 2003, Mandria
7 april 2005, Mazotos
28 december 2007 tot 2 januari 2008, Oroklini marsh
2-19 januari 2009, Larnaca airport pools south
14 april 2009, Paphos lighthouse area
9 maart 2010, Akrotiri base hospital
23 november 2011, Larnaca sewage works

*Denemarken (4)*
11-12 november 1989, Langli, Ho Bugt, Ribe
13 november 1994, Stængehus, Tisvilde Hegn, Sjælland
10 mei 1998, Saltholm, Øresund, Sjælland
20 mei 2012, Grenen, Skagen, Nordjylland

*Duitsland (2)*
21 juni tot 7 juli 1981, Bottsand, Plön, Schleswig-Holstein (nestbouwend)
24-27 mei 2002, Düne, Helgoland, Schleswig-Holstein

*Estland (1)*
20 oktober 2005, Loode, Jämaja, Saaremaa

*Finland (11)*
26 oktober 1963,Turku
10-16 november 1974, Kotka
10-13 oktober 1975, Helsinki (ringvangst)
16 oktober 1981, Kemiö
30 oktober tot 3 november 1987, Turku (ringvangst)
17-20 oktober 1988, Porvoo (ringvangst)
23 mei 1992, Närpiö (zingend)
19 oktober 1994, Lågskär Bird Observatory (ringvangst)
6 november 1994, Porvoo
22 oktober 2005, Hanko Bird Observatory
11-13 november 2011, Pori

*Frankrijk (1)*
24 maart tot 1 april 2015, Pointe du Devin, île de Noirmoutier, Vendée

*Letland (1)*
30 december 2003, Akmenrags, Saka

*Nederland (3)*
30 oktober tot 3 november 1988, Amsterdamse Waterleidingduinen, Zandvoort, Noord-Holland
8-9 oktober 1994, Scheveningen, Den Haag, Zuid-Holland
13-19 november 2015, West-Terschelling, Terschelling, Friesland

*Noorwegen (1)*
12-14 november 2015, Larvik, Vestfold

*Roemenië (1)*
23 oktober 1997, Grindul Chituc, Constanţa (ringvangst)

*Spanje (1)*
16 november 2013, Cabo de Ajo, Bareyo, Cantabria

*Tsjechië (1)*
16 november 2013, Hradecký rybník, Tovačov

*Zweden (14)*
20 oktober 1961, Södra udden, Ottenby, Öland (verzameld)
19-21 oktober 1980, Hartsö-Enskär, Södermanland
2 november 1980, Hallands Väderö, Skåne
4-11 november 1980, Ottenby, Öland
21 mei 1982, Stora Nassa, Värmdö, Uppland (zingend)
20-24 oktober 1986, Stenåsabadet, Öland
19-22 oktober 1987, Stenåsabadet, Öland
20-21 oktober 1987, Bröttorpsören, Öland
21-22 oktober 1988, Torhamns udde, Blekinge (ringvangst)
16-20 oktober 1991, Bröttorpsören, Öland
22 oktober tot 1 november 1994, Näsbybadet, Öland
29 mei 2000, Ledskärsviken, Uppland
8 november 2002, Södra udden, Ottenby, Öland (ringvangst)
6 november 2013, Suderudd, Furilden, Gotland

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extremely confiding and entertained many birders who came over to the island. African Desert Warbler *S deserti* was ruled out based on, eg, the dark central part of the tertials (plain tertials in *deserti*), overall greyish brown plumage (more golden sandy brown in *deserti*), contrast between greyish brown upperparts and rufous tail (more concolorous in *deserti*) and greyish-white underparts (purer white in *deserti*). This was the species' third record for the Netherlands. Previous ones were from 30 October to 3 November 1988 and on 8-9 October 1994. Table 1 gives an overview of all 70 records in Europe.

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# Varia

## Pander's Ground Jay

The four species of ground jay *Podoces* from Central and East Asia occupy a particular place within the Corvidae (crows and jays). They are mainly terrestrial and pale (buff) plumaged, whereas most crows and jays are dark coloured, arboreal and more aerial in behaviour. In shape, plumage and behaviour, ground jays are more reminiscent of typical desert species like Cream-colored Courser *Cursorius cursor* and Greater Hoopoe-Lark *Alaemon alaudipes*. The four species are Pleske's Ground Jay *P pleskei*, which is (near-)endemic to Iran; Pander's Ground Jay *P panderi*, which occurs in western Central Asia; Henderson's Ground Jay *P hendersoni*, which occurs (only) in Mongolia; and Biddulph's Ground Jay *P biddulphi*, which is endemic to north-western China. They have restricted and hardly overlapping ranges and are, therefore, quite a challenge to add to a birder's list and even form a special quest for some birders (see, eg, Bakker 2011). In addition, they occur in barren and hot to very hot desert areas which may be difficult to reach and where birding can be arduous (Goodwin 1986, Madge & Burn 1994, del Hoyo et al 2009). Formerly, a fifth and much smaller species (the size and shape of a wheatear *Oenanthe*) was recognized, Hume's Ground Jay, but this species is now considered to be a 'terrestrial tit' rather than a ground jay, and is currently known as Ground Tit *Pseudopodoces humilis* (Borecky 1978, Hope 1989, Londei 1998, Gebauer et al 2004, Johansson et al 2013).

The typical habitat of ground jays is barren ground with scattered scrubs. They need some vegetation for the seeds and small animals they feed on, as well as for shelter and nesting. Their long, curved and strong bills are adapted for digging and probing and they have obviously specialised to living on desert ground (see, eg, Londei 2004). Londei (2004) described that ground jays enhance their cryptic appearance by 'expanding' the scapular feathers and feathers of the ventral tracts to cover the conspicuous black and white feathers of the closed wing. To advertise their presence, birds simply reverse this procedure.

Ground jays are generally poorly studied; for instance, their conservation status is poorly known, although del Hoyo et al (2009) assume a general decrease in numbers owing to habitat degradation. Population assessments of ground jays have been mainly based on roadside counts. The attraction of

**490** Pander's Ground Jay / Turkestaanse Steppegaai *Podoces panderi*, Kyzyl Kum desert, Uzbekistan, 3 July 2015 *(Enno B Ebels)*

ground jays to roads is probably of ancient origin, at least since the various routes of the Silk Road across Asia were established. Scully (1876) already noticed the habit of Henderson's Ground Jays to come down to the path along which the horses had gone, to feed on the dung, probably to obtain both grains and beetles. He also reported on a local name of this species: 'the Turki name is *Kil yurgha*, which has reference to the bird running in the trail of horses; it is also, though rarely, called *Kum sagUzgliani*, or 'sand magpie'' (cf Sharpe 1891). A preference for caravan paths was also reported for Henderson's feeding on dung, garbage and dropped grains (Dementiev & Gladkov 1954), while Pleske's Ground Jays have been observed in the early morning and late afternoon running in search of spilt grains on roads between villages (Hamedanian 1997, cf Londei 2011). The positive effects of roads on bird abundance may more easily be detected in deserts than in other habitats because birds may find important resources along roads that are scarce elsewhere in the desert, such as food and water aimed at human use (Londei 2000, 2011). As a result, roads may affect the abundance of animal populations and roadside counts may bias the regional status. Fahrig & Rytwinski (2009) reviewed 79 quantitative studies of the effects of roads on animal abundance across various taxa and concluded that the documented negative effects (mainly habitat loss and traffic mortality) outnumbered the documented positive effects (eg, increased resources and decreased predation), by a factor of five (cf Londei 2011). The authors, however, acknowledged that researchers may have purposely selected study species and situations in which they expected a negative effect, which may have biased their estimate. Li Zhongqiu et al (2010) described an opposite example for ground-dwelling birds that benefit by roads in desolate regions.

*Pander's Ground Jay*

Pander's Ground Jay breeds locally in Kazakhstan and in large parts of Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. Two subspecies are recognized. Nominate *P p panderi* occurs rather commonly in suitable habitat in the Kyzyl Kum desert and Karakum desert in Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan and in very small numbers in neighbouring parts of Kazakhstan. *P p ilensis* has a restricted and isolated range in southeastern Kazakhstan, south of lake Balkash, and is very rare; it has not been reported for several years, despite visits to the known area (Wassink & Oreel 2007, Wassink 2015; www.birds.kz). *Ilensis* is larger and darker than nominate *panderi* and the black spotting on the breast is larger (Madge & Burn 1994, Ayé et al 2012). Pander's is named after Heinrich Christian von Pander (1794-1865), a

**491** Pander's Ground Jay / Turkestaanse Steppegaai *Podoces panderi*, Kyzyl Kum desert, Uzbekistan, 3 July 2015 *(Enno B Ebels)*

German/Latvian geologist and palaeontologist; in 1820, he took part in a scientific expedition to Bukhara in Uzbekistan, close to Pander's current breeding areas. Pander's is closely related to Pleske's Ground Jay, which occurs in Iran (and probably in bordering areas in Afghanistan and Pakistan; Goodwin 1986, Hamedanian 1997, Cowan 2000, Rasmussen & Anderton 2005). Both differ from the other two ground jay species in lacking black on the crown and in having relatively short uppertail-coverts, pale legs and a blackish breast patch.

Pander's Ground Jay is a bird of sandy desert with dunes and strong coverage of shrubs. It forages along sandy tracks, digging at animal droppings and searching at the base of bushes. It buries food in the sand to create food caches. It mainly eats seeds but becomes insectivorous in spring and summer, when prey items include beetles and small lizards (Madge & Burn 1994, Cowan 2008). The song is a clear ringing sound, delivered from bush tops, especially in early morning or evening. The species also utters chattering contact notes (Ayé et al 2012). Usually, birds are observed in pairs or family parties. There is no plumage difference between the sexes in adult plumage but young birds lack the black breast-patch and blackish lore and are more buffy (less grey) on the upperparts (Madge & Burn 1994).

The spherical nest is built in saxaul or *Calligonum* bushes at 0.15-2.5 m above the ground. Both partners build the nest for c two weeks from late February to late March. Eggs are laid from mid-March (or even late February) to late May. Females incubate the clutch of three to six eggs for 16-19 days, with food being provided by the male. Both parents feed the juveniles, which fledge when 18-20 days old. Fledglings are mostly recorded in early June to the first half of July but the first fledglings probably appear much earlier. Pairs commonly nest again after the loss of the first clutch (Madge & Burn 1994, Gavrilov & Gavrilov 2005, Cowan 2008; www.birds.kz).

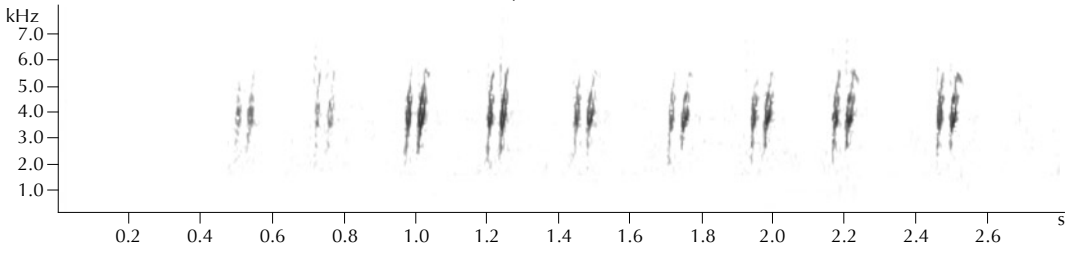
*Finding Pander's Ground Jay*

One of the best places to observe Pander's Ground Jay is the Kyzyl Kum desert in north-western Uzbekistan (which extends across the border in eastern Turkmenistan). Birds can usually be found on both sides of the main road from Bukhara to Nukus, the best areas being between c 160 km and 180 km north-west of Bukhara (plate 492-493). Early morning is the best period, because later on the day the heat may become too much and traffic increases on the road. In early morning, birds can be seen foraging close to the road or even on the asphalt. On 3 July 2015, during a private birding and culture trip to Uzbekistan – following a stretch of the former Silk Road – I managed to observe c 10 birds within a stretch of c 20 km, including a group of at least three, among which at least one young bird (plate 490-491 and 496-497). I managed to make some recordings of the chattering double note (figure 1); this call differs from the only call present in the online library Xeno-canto (www.xeno-canto.org/148565), which consists of quickly repeated single notes. The behaviour to forage close to the road is not without risk, because birds may be hit by passing cars or blown onto the road by the winds created by passing lorries. Plate 494-495 show a wounded young that had apparently just been hit, being attended by its parent.

*How to get there and when to go?*

Bukhara can be reached directly by airplane from Tashkent, the capital of Uzbekistan, and also from Moscow, Russia. International flights go to Tashkent mainly from Istanbul, Turkey, or Moscow. Overland, Bukhara can be reached by train or car from Tashkent (distance almost 600 km, a full day's drive by car). The regular train ride takes 6 h and 40 min; the first stretch (Tashkent to Samarkand, just over 300 km) can also be covered by high-speed train (the 'Afrosiyob') in little over 2 h. Private car rental is complicated in Uzbekistan but hiring a car with a driver for one or more days is no prob-

FIGURE 1 Pander's Ground Jay / Turkestaanse Steppegaai *Podoces panderi*, chatter call, Kyzyl Kum desert, Uzbekistan, 3 July 2015 *(Enno B Ebels)*



**492-493** Habitat of Pander's Ground Jay *Podoces panderi* along road from Bukhara to Nukus, Kyzyl Kum desert, Uzbekistan, 3 July 2015 *(Enno B Ebels)* **494-495** Pander's Ground Jays / Turkestaanse Steppegaaien *Podoces panderi*, Kyzyl Kum desert, Uzbekistan, 3 July 2015 *(Enno B Ebels)*. Moribund young, apparently just hit by car, attended by parent. **496-497** Pander's Ground Jay / Turkestaanse Steppegaai *Podoces panderi*, Kyzyl Kum desert, Uzbekistan, 3 July 2015 *(Enno B Ebels)*. Plate 497 shows young bird.

lem. The ground jays can probably be observed all-year round but winters are cold in Uzbekistan (with temperatures around freezing point and often below) and it may be hard to find birds then. In spring and autumn, temperatures are better for birding, whereas in mid-summer, temperatures can easily reach 45°C or more around mid-day.

*Other interesting bird species*

During my visit to the Kyzyl Kum desert, I observed two males Saxaul Sparrow *P ammodendri* (an uncommon species in Uzbekistan) near a drinking spot where several Indian Sparrows *P (domesticus) indicus* and Desert Finches *Rhodopechys obsoletus* were present. While observing the ground jays, Asian Desert Warbler *Sylvia nana* and Scrub Warbler *Scotocerca inquieta platyura* were found.

Zarudnyi's Sparrow *P zarudnyi* could potentially be another target species for birders in this area (especially since its upgrading to species level; Kirwan et al 2009) but has not been observed in Uzbekistan in recent years (last report in 2007; Kirwan et al 2009) despite having been searched for regularly by local ornithologists, so the chances to encounter one appear to be very low. From Bukhara, Repetek nature reserve in Turkmenistan, probably the most reliable place to see Zarudnyi's Sparrow (cf Kirwan et al 2009), is 'only' c 170 km by car. If one would arrange a visa in advance and could change taxis at the border, a visit to Repetek can be an option from Uzbekistan. Note, however, that the species has also become hard to find in Repetek in recent decades (Kirwan et al 2009).

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# CDNA-mededelingen

**Recente CDNA-besluiten** Op zondag 10 juli 2016 hield de Commissie Dwaalgasten Nederlandse Avifauna (CDNA) haar zomervergadering te Woerden, waarin onder meer de volgende punten aan de orde kwamen en de volgende besluiten werden genomen.

Garry Bakker is verwelkomd als nieuw stemmend lid, een functie die hij sinds 1 mei heeft overgenomen van Ruud van Beusekom.

Er is gewerkt aan beleid hoe om te gaan met Lammergier *Gypaetus barbatus*. Op hoofdlijnen is een standpunt geformuleerd, maar met betrekking tot 'vagrancy potential' van wilde vogels uit de Pyreneeën wil de CDNA toch nog enkele zaken nader uitzoeken. Door de recente waarnemingen van Lammergier in Nederland komt de CDNA tot de conclusie dat de huidige herintroductieregel in het CDNA-handboek geactualiseerd dient te worden. Een nieuw concept zal door een CDNA-werkgroep in het komende halfjaar uitgewerkt worden. Daarbij zal ook expertise van buiten de CDNA worden gezocht.

Alle gevallen van vrouwtjes Witkopgors *Emberiza leucocephalos* gaan herrouleren in verband met nieuwe inzichten in de determinatie van hybriden met Geelgors *E citrinella* en van bleke Geelgorzen. Dit proces wordt komende periode voorbereid. De meeste gevallen moeten nog worden gedigitaliseerd en de balgen opnieuw gefotografeerd.

Het wordt nog onderzocht of oude gevallen van Bastaardarend *Aquila clanga* en Schreeuwarend *A pomarina* opnieuw moeten worden beoordeeld om hybriden uit te sluiten; komende intervergadering wordt hierover besloten. SANDER BOT & CDNA

# WP reports

This review lists rare and interesting birds reported in the Western Palearctic mainly from **late May to late July 2016**. 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.

SWANS TO DUCKS In Poland, **Whooper Swan** *Cygnus cygnus* continues to show a strong increase as 120 pairs were counted in 2015. In France, female **White-headed Ducks** *Oxyura leucocephala* were seen at Rochefort, Charente-Maritime, on 8 May, and at Lac de Grand-Lieu, Loire-Atlantique, on 20 May; both probably concerned returning birds. At Sumba, Suðuroy, Faeroes, the long-staying **Steller's Eider** *Polysticta stelleri* from October 2015 was seen again on 23 May. If accepted, a male **American White-winged Scoter** *Melanitta deglandi deglandi* at Skogholmen, Porsanger, Finnmark, from 25 June to 2 July will be the first for Norway. The second for Britain was an adult male photographed at Blackdog, Aberdeenshire, Scotland, from 25 June through mid-July (the first was at the same site in 2011). At least three males **Asian White-winged Scoter** *M d stejnegeri* were reported in Norway: at Tautra, Nord-Trøndelag, from 11 March to 12 June; at Langesund, Telemark, on 26 May (possibly the same at Ravn, Vestfold, on 26 June); and at Berlevåg, Finnmark, from 30 May to 13 June. An adult male was again present at Keflavík, Iceland, from 16 May to 4 June. In Finland, after a well-twitched male **Black Scoter** *M americana* inland at Isohiekka, Keuruu, on 9 May, another one reportedly flew past at Söderskär, Porvoo, on 17 May. In June 2015, the first breeding of **Smew** *Mergellus albellus* for Germany was documented at Krickenbecker Seen, Kreis Viersen, Nordrhein-Westfalen; already in 2012-14, several individuals were summering here (Charadrius 51: 57-62, 2015/16). Since 2010, the species also breeds successfully in Friesland, the Netherlands. A pair of **Common Shelducks** *Tadorna tadorna* with nine chicks at Kmehin, Nizzana, on 21 June constituted the first breeding record for Israel. Two adult males **Ring-necked Duck** *Aythya collaris* at Vatnsoyrar, Vágar, on 12 May concerned the first multiple record for the Faeroes.

GREBES TO TROPICBIRDS On Gran Canaria, Canary Islands, two **Pied-billed Grebes** *Podylimbus podiceps* found this winter at Estanques de Aldea Blanca, San Bartolome de Tirajana, remained until early June, with one at Estanque del Matorral until at least 2 July. An adult was sometimes singing at Gravera de Grulleros, Castilla y León, Spain, from 23 May through mid-July. In France, one was found at Saint-Martin-de-Crau, Bouches-du-Rhône, on 6 July. The Breeding Bird Survey report in Britain revealed that numbers of **European Turtle Dove** *Streptopelia turtur* have been declining by 93% since 1994. This trend is mirrored across Europe, with a decline of 78% between 1980 and 2013. In mid-May, two males, two females and one juvenile **Namaqua Dove** *Oena capensis* at Mijk near Dakhla, Western Sahara, constituted the first breeding for Morocco (Go-South Bull 13: 82-89, 2016, cf Dutch Birding 38: 240, 2016). One male and two females photographed at Makhachkala, Dagestan, on 12 May were the first for Russia. Two **Red-billed Tropicbirds** *Phaethon aethereus* were seen off North Beach, Eilat, Israel, on 20 May.

NIGHTJARS TO CUCKOOS In France, a **Red-necked Nightjar** *Caprimulgus ruficollis* was trapped on Porquerolles, Var, on 18 April. Five **Egyptian Nightjars** *C aegyptius* at

Kalya, northern Dead Sea, Israel, on 18 June included at least one juvenile constituting the first successful breeding for many years. Also at Kalya, a juvenile **Nubian Nightjar** *C nubicus* photographed on 18 June documented the first breeding in this area for decades, and from 18 June two, probably adults, were regularly seen in a small restored saltmarsh near Eilat. If accepted, a **White-throated Needletail** *Hirundapus caudacutus* at Haapasalmi, Rääkkylä, on 20 May will be the fifth for Finland. The third for Norway was reported at Kjerkevågen, Lindesnes, Vest-Agder, on 30 June. A **Pallid Swift** *Apus pallidus* at Skagen on 11 June was the 10th for Denmark. A **Black-billed Cuckoo** *Coccyzus erythropthalmus* at Bayhead, North Uist, Outer Hebrides, Scotland, on 22-31 May constituted the first spring record for the WP. A male **Oriental Cuckoo** *Cuculus optatus* at Teerijärvi, Sotkamo, on 20 May had been ringed here in June 2015 as the first for Finland (cf Dutch Birding 37: 262, 272, 2015, 38: 186, 2016). Canwei Xia et al (in PeerJ PrePrints 3: e1509, http://tinyurl.com/j3vjk5z) found significant differences in song duration and frequencies between **Oriental Cuckoo** and **Himalayan Cuckoo** *C saturatus* (eg, Oriental having two notes while Himalayan more than two notes); with these data, the areas of distribution of these two species can be refined, with Oriental occurring generally north and east of Himalayan.

RAILS TO BUSTARDS An **African Crake** *Crex egregia* photographed near Guadalquivir river, Cantillana, Sevilla, Spain, on 6 April was the ninth for the WP, the first in spring, and the first for mainland Europe; previous ones were in November-February in the Canary Islands (2001, 2006 (two), 2007, 2011 and 2015), Cape Verde Islands (2004) and Morocco (2009). After the population of **Western Swamphen** *Porphyrio porphyrio* in south-eastern France collapsed during the winter of 2011/12 from up to 119 pairs in 2011 to c 29 in 2012, the species made a speedy recovery to up to 184 pairs in 2014, showing it to be quite dynamic (Ornithos 23: 83, 2016); on 20 July, one was found as far north-west as Guidel, Morbihan, Bretagne. In England, an adult **Demoiselle Crane** *Grus virgo* 'of unknown origin' stayed in Cumbria and Northumberland from late March to at least mid-July. Others were seen on Norderney, Niedersachsen, Germany, on 12 May and at Börängen, Maalahti, on 24 May (16th for Finland). Based on surveys in 2001-08, Gubin (in Russian J Ornithol 25: 515-517, 2016) estimated the population of **Macqueen's Bustard** *Chlamydotis macqueenii* in the most important sites in Kazakhstan at 7500-10 500 individuals in Mangghystau province; up to 5300 at Kyzyl Kum desert; c 3440 at Betpak-Dala desert; and from 100 to 600 at Syrdarya and Arys region.

LOONS TO PELICANS An adult **Black-throated Loon** *Gavia arctica* at Fljót on 8-16 July was (only) the first for Iceland. The fourth **Yellow-billed Loon** *G adamsii* for the Faroes was photographed on Borðoy on 17 May. An adult **Black-browed Albatross** *Thalassarche melanophris* was seen on Sylt and Helgoland, Germany, irregularly between 25 April and 18 June; on Fair Isle, Scotland, on 28 May;

**498** Sulphur-bellied Warbler / Steenboszanger *Phylloscopus griseolus*, Christiansø, Bornholm, Denmark, 31 May 2016 *(Christian Leth)*

**499** Slender-billed Gull / Dunbekmeeuw *Chroicocephalus genei*, adult, with Black-headed Gulls / Kokmeeuwen *C ridibundus*, Przeczycki reservoir, Silesia, Poland, 24 May 2016 *(Radosław Gwóźdź)* **500** Elegant Tern / Sierlijke Stern *Sterna elegans*, adult, with Sandwich Terns / Grote Sterns *S sandvicensis* and Mediterranean Gulls / Zwartkopmeeuwen *Larus melanocephalus*, Polder Sebastopol, Barbâtre, Vendée, France, 12 June 2016 *(Joachim Bertrands)*

**501** Cape Gull / Afrikaanse Kelpmeeuw *Larus dominicanus vetula*, adult, Quinta de Marim, Algarve, Portugal, 8 July 2016 *(Thijs Valkenburg)*

**502** Black Scoter / Amerikaanse Zwarte Zee-eend *Melanitta americana*, adult male, with Common Scoters / Zwarte Zee-eenden *M nigra*, Isohiekka, Keuruu, Finland, 9 May 2016 *(Markku Saarinen)*

**503** Wilson's Snipe / Amerikaanse Watersnip *Gallinago delicata*, Búrfellshraun, Mývatnsöræfi, Iceland, 20 May 2016 *(Yann Kolbeinsson)* **504** Chinese Pond Heron / Chinese Ralreiger *Ardeola bacchus*, adult summer, Ronekilen, Mandal, Vest-Agder, Norway, 23 June 2016 *(Morten Helberg)* **505** Semipalmated Plover / Amerikaanse Bontbekplevier *Charadrius semipalmatus*, first-summer, Tacumshin, Wexford, Ireland, 7 June 2016 *(Paul Archer)*

**505** Black-billed Cuckoo / Zwartsnavelkoekoek *Coccyzus erythropthalmus*, Bayhead, North Uist, Outer Hebrides, Scotland, 23 May 2016 *(Graham Jepson)* **506** Black-billed Cuckoo / Zwartsnavelkoekoek *Coccyzus erythropthalmus*, Bayhead, North Uist, Outer Hebrides, Scotland, 29 May 2016 *(Steven Lane)* **507** Great Knot / Grote Kanoet *Calidris tenuirostris*, adult summer, with Red Knots / Kanoeten *C canutus*, Titchwell, Norfolk, England, 27 June 2016 *(John Richardson)*

at Lakolk, Rømø, Denmark, on 2 June; and at the bird cliff on Hornøya, Vardø, Finnmark, on 13 July (22nd record for Norway). Five **White Storks** *Ciconia ciconia* were present at Paúl da Serra, Madeira, on 22 June and two on 25 June (remarkably, there have been only four records on Madeira until 2011). The semi-captive population of **Pink-backed Pelicans** *Pelecanus rufescens* at Sigean, Aude, France, numbered up to nine breeding pairs in 2015 with in total 70 individuals, of which 40 apparently free-flying (Ornithos 23: 138, 2016). The long-staying immature **Dalmatian Pelican** *P crispus* was seen in Wielkopolska and Lubuskie, Poland, until 2 June. Probably the same adult was first present in western Poland on 6-11 April after which it stayed at a few places in Brandenburg, Thüringen and Rheinland-Pfalz, Germany, between 14 April and 1 May, then at Aspach-le-Bas, Haut-Rhin, France, on 3-4 May, and finally in Cornwall and Devon, England, from 7 May to at least 16 July.

HERONS A large influx of **Squacco Herons** *Ardeola ralloides* was reported between May and July with, eg, up to individuals 17 in the Netherlands, 12 in Germany, six in Belgium, two in Poland and singles in Czechia and Wales. The British Ornithologists' Union Records Committee (BOURC) has added **Chinese Pond Heron** *A bacchus* to the British list on the basis of a bird (first- or second-winter) at Hythe and Saltwood, Kent, England, from 17 January to 13 March 2014, when found dead (cf Dutch Birding 36: 125, 2014). The second for Norway was seen at Ronekilen, Mandal, Vest-Agder, on 23 June (the first was shot in autumn 1973, and is currently listed in 'category D'). Other European records from Finland (July 2007 and August 2012), Hungary (August 2000) and England (October 2004) are still placed in 'category D or E'; the first accepted for Alaska, USA, stayed on St Paul, Pribilof Islands, on 4-9 August 1996, the second was collected on Attu, Aleutian Islands, on 20 May 2009 and the third was on St Lawrence on 14-15 July 2011. A **Western Great Egret** *Ardea alba* at Djúpivogur on 12 June was the fourth for Iceland.

FRIGATEBIRDS TO BOOBIES The second **Lesser Frigatebird** *Fregata ariel* for Saudi Arabia was seen at Thuwal on 14 May. From 30 June onwards, a gps-tagged **Northern Gannet** *Morus bassanus* ('Cosmo') from a breeding colony on Alderney, Channel Islands, made a record foraging flight of nearly a week covering 2700 km into the North Sea all the way north to the Scandinavian coast and back. Photographs of an adult swimming and flying at Pirangi river, Ceará, Brazil, on 13 February 2016 have been published in Bull Br Ornithol Club 136: 151-152, 2016, documenting the species' first record in the Southern Hemisphere. Four adults and three juveniles **Red-footed Boobies** *Sula sula* photographed on Raso, Cape Verde Islands, on 6 June confirmed the first breeding for the WP (cf Dutch Birding 38: 244-245, 2016). An adult **Brown Booby** *S leucogaster* at Sisargas islands, Malpica, A Coruña, on 2 July was the 11th for Spain.

WADERS In the Azores, three **Semipalmated Plovers** *Charadrius semipalmatus* were reported at Cabo da Praia, Terceira, between 27 May and 5 July. A first-summer photographed at Tacumshin, Wexford, on 11 May and 3-9 June was the third for Ireland. A **Greater Sand Plover** *Anarhynchus leschenaultii* showing characters of **Anatolian Sand Plover** *A l columbinus* stayed at Emmapolder, Groningen, the Netherlands, on 20-29 May. The fifth **Greater** for Denmark was seen at Skagen on 25 May. Males at the Vistula mouth, Pomerania, on 30-31 May and 5-15 July (trapped on 5 July) were the seventh and eighth for Poland, respectively. The 10th for Finland was seen at Virkkula on 15 June. An adult male at Kvassheim, Rogaland, on 30 June was the seventh for Norway. The fourth for Ukraine was an adult at Tiligulskiy, Koblevo, on 8 July. The first for Ireland was discovered at Tacumshin, on 20 July. In England, the long-staying **Hudsonian Whimbrel** *Numenius hudsonicus* was again seen at Perranuthnoe, Cornwall, from 30 June through mid-July. An adult **Great Knot** *Calidris tenuirostris* at Titchwell, Norfolk, England, from 15 June to 4 July was the fifth for Britain (previous ones were in 1989, 1996, 2004 and 2014). A **Stilt Sandpiper** *C himantopus* was seen at Pennington marshes, Hampshire, England, on 22 May. The sixth for Norway stayed at Grudavatnet, Rogaland, on 19-21 June. Winter surveys of **Spoon-billed Sandpiper** *C pygmaea* in 2005-13 resulted in 242-378 individuals at 19 sites, including five in Myanmar, four in China and Bangladesh, three in Vietnam, two in Thailand and one in Malaysia. The most important wintering sites were at Gulf of Mottama, Myanmar (160-200 individuals); Sonadia, Bangladesh (12-27); Nan Thar, Myanmar (20-25); Nijhum Dweep, Bangladesh (2-23); Inner Gulf, Thailand (10-15) and Min Jiang, China (6-12) (Zöckler et al in Bird Conserv Int 2016). In June, seven eggs were laid at the species' reintroduction center at Slimbridge, Gloucestershire, England; only two eggs were fertile and the first chicks ever bred in captivity hatched on 2-3 July but did not survive for more than three days. Then, in Russia, 30 chicks hatched in July from eggs taken from the wild in a Birds Russia program parallel to that at Slimbridge; these birds were due to be released in the wild within three weeks. On 3 July, a previously unknown breeding area with eight individuals was located in the Russian Far East. A **Greater Yellowlegs** *Tringa melanoleuca* (not a Lesser Yellowlegs *T flavipes*; contra Dutch Birding 38: 245, 2016) photographed at Vatnsoyrar on 7 May was the first for the Faeroes. The first **Lesser Yellowlegs** for Svalbard was seen in Adventfjorden, Spitsbergen, on 3-4 June. Oswald et al (2016) published genetic, morphological, ecological and behavioral evidence of the vocally distinct **Eastern Willet** *T semipalmata semipalmata* and **Western Willet** *T s inornata* that may merit treating them as separate species (Auk 133: 593-614, 2016). The **Asian Dowitcher** *Limnodromus semipalmatus* at Al Ansab lagoons, Muscat, from 3 November 2015 to 5 January 2016 has recently been accepted as the first for Oman and the 'greater' WP. A displaying **Wilson's Snipe** *Gallinago delicata* at Búrfellshraun, Mývatnsöræfi, on 19-30 May was the second for Iceland (the first was in 2010). Monitoring of **Great Snipes** *G media* in the Biebrza marshes, Poland, showed a decline by c 30% in 2010-15. A **Black-winged Pratin-**

**508** Lesser Kestrel / Kleine Torenvalk *Falco naumanni*, second-year male, Eching am Ammersee, Bayern, Germany, 13 May 2016 *(Ingo Weiß)* **509** Blue-cheeked Bee-eater / Groene Bijeneter *Merops persicus*, Sankt Andrä am Zicksee, Seewinkel, Austria, 22 May 2016 *(Leander Khil)* **510** Lesser Crested Tern / Bengaalse Stern *Sterna bengalensis*, with Black-headed Gull / Kokmeeuw *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*, Karrendorfer-Wiesen, Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, Germany, 13 June 2016 *(Christine Jacob)* **511** Great Knot / Grote Kanoet *Calidris tenuirostris*, adult summer, Titchwell, Norfolk, England, 30 June 2016 *(Robert Wilson)* **512** African Crake / Afrikaanse Kwartelkoning *Crex egregia*, near Guadalquivir, Cantillana, Sevilla, Spain, 6 April 2016 *(Rafael Jiménez Moreno)* **513** White Stork / Ooievaar *Ciconia ciconia*, first-summer, Paúl da Serra, Madeira, 25 June 2016 *(Sander Bot)*

**cole** *Glareola nordmanni* on Smøla, Møre og Romsdal, on 6-11 June was the sixth for Norway.

AUKS TO GULLS If accepted, a **Tufted Puffin** *Fratercula cirrhata* photographed from the deck of the Scillonian III, off Lands End, between Cornwall and Scilly, on 20 May will be the second for England and the third for the WP (previous ones were in Sweden in 1994 and in Kent in 2009). An adult **Slender-billed Gull** *Chroicocephalus genei* at Przeczycki reservoir, Silesia, on 24 May was the fourth for Poland (previous ones were in 2008 (two) and 2011). For the breeding population in France, 2014 was the best year ever with 913-978 pairs (Ornithos 23: 86, 2016). In Italy, the long-staying adult **Grey-headed Gull** *C cirrocephalus* from June 2013 was again found at Molfetta, Apulia, on 8 June. The first breeding pair of **Little Gull** *Hydrocoloeus minutus* for Scotland was found at Loch of Strathbeg near Aberdeen in June; also, it concerned only the sixth breeding record for Britain and the first successful one. The second **Franklin's Gull** *Larus pipixcan* for Switzerland was photographed at Chablais de Cudrefin, Vaud, on 4 May (the first was in 2006). In France, second calendar-year birds were seen in Pas-de-Calais on 5 May and Vendée on 10 May. An adult at Hortobagy on 4 June was the third for Hungary. A first-summer photographed and sound-recorded inland at Broekhuizen, Limburg, on 14 July was the 10th for the Netherlands. An adult **Cape Gull** *L dominicanus vetula* photographed at Quinta de Marim, Algarve, on 5-9 July was the fifth for Portugal. On 28 May, an adult **Thayer's Gull** *L thayeri* was photographed on the pack ice between eastern Greenland and Svalbard. An adult or near-adult **Slaty-backed Gull** *L schistisagus* at Rainham, London, and Pitsea and Hanningfield, Essex, between 13 January and 26 February 2011 has recently been added to the British list (cf Dutch Birding 33: 134, 2011). A first-winter photographed at Ampenan beach, Lombok, West Nusa Tenggara, on 8-12 February was the first for Indonesia and the southernmost ever (Marine Ornithol 44: 135-136, 2016).

TERNS A **Little Tern** *Sternula albifrons* at Horta harbour, Faial, on 7 July was (only) the fifth for the Azores. In France, 739-833 pairs of **Gull-billed Tern** *Gelochelidon nilotica* were counted in nine colonies in 2014, the highest number ever (Ornithos 23: 88, 2016). If accepted, an adult **Whiskered Tern** *Chlidonias hybrida* at Estancia La Graciela, Misiones, on 14 January will be the first for Paraguay and South America (Neotropical Birding 18: 45-52, 2016). A pair of **Roseate Tern** *Sterna dougallii* laying eggs at Torrevieja saltpans, Alicante, in April constituted the second or third breeding record for Mediterranean Spain (the first was at Ebre delta, Tarragona, in 1961, while there was also a mixed pair with a Common Tern *S hirundo* in 2002). In Israel, a pair of **White-cheeked Tern** *S repressa* bred again at North Beach, Eilat, on 28 June (at the same location where it nested in 2015); up to 10 individuals were present daily at this site throughout June. In 2015, a gps-tagged **Arctic Tern** *S paradisaea* completed a 96 000 km round trip from its nest on the Farne Islands, Northumberland, to its wintering area in the Weddell Sea, Antarctica, which is the longest migration route of any bird ever recorded. It started on 25 July to reach the tip of South Africa on 25 August; it then moved into the Indian Ocean where it spent nearly all of October; after this it continued its journey ending up at the Weddell Sea on 3 February 2016; its return journey started on 23 March and it arrived on the Farne Islands on 4 May (for previous findings by geolocators on long-distance migration of this species, see Ardea 101: 3-12, 2013). Two individuals photographed at Spandarian reservoir on 26 May were the first for Armenia. An adult **Forster's Tern** *S forsteri* was seen again in Galway, Ireland, on 28 May. If accepted, a **Lesser Crested Tern** *S bengalensis* photographed at Karrendorfer-Wiesen, Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, on 13 June will be the third for Germany (previous ones were in 1995 and 2008). In France, adult **Elegant Terns** *S elegans* were once again breeding with Sandwich Terns *S sandvicensis* on Noirmoutier, Vendée (where it was first present in 2006), and at Banc d'Arguin, Arcachon, Gironde. At the Noirmoutier colony, the male was paired with a female Sandwich and had two chicks of which one was still alive on 12 June. Genetic analyses of these adults and another one in France confirmed that all were indeed pure Elegant, not hybrids. In Spain, an adult was photographed at l'Albufera de València between 23 June and 4 July. A **Royal Tern** *S maxima* photographed on São Miguel on 30 June was the fourth for the Azores.

RAPTORS After several attempts, one of two pairs of **Western Osprey** *Pandion haliaetus* at De Biesbosch national park, Noord-Brabant, was successful this spring constituting (only) the first breeding record for the Netherlands (the male had been ringed as a chick in Germany in 2012). In Germany, an increasing number of more than 600 pairs is breeding, while in Poland numbers have gone down to c 30 pairs. Recently, a juvenile **American Osprey** *P h carolinensis* photographed at Santa Cruz, Flores, from 13 October to 4 November 2011 has been accepted as the first for the Azores and the second for the WP (cf Dutch Birding 35: 69-87, 2013). As in previous years, several **Black-winged Kites** *Elanus caeruleus* turned up in northern Europe: at Geel-Mosselgoren, Antwerpen, Belgium, from 24 May to 14 June; at Zichow, Brandenburg, Germany, from 2 June through mid-July; at Hulst, Zeeland, the Netherlands, on 10 June; at Skagen, Denmark, on 10 June; and at Gedser Odde, Sjælland, Denmark, on 22 July (cf Dutch Birding 38: 245, 2016). In France, the breeding population has grown rapidly to 130-150 pairs in 2014, with the largest populations in Pyrénées-Atlantiques and Landes (Ornithos 23: 74, 2016). A **Crested Honey Buzzard** *Pernis ptilorhynchus* was photographed at Elba national park, Egypt, on 11 May. An adult male photographed at Falsterbo on 25 June will be the first for Sweden; it remains to be seen though whether it will be accepted as a pure individual, not a hybrid with European Honey Buzzard *P apivorus* (cf Dutch Birding 33: 149-162, 2011). Photographs of the first for East Africa, a female in Kenya on 26 September 2014, have been published in Bull Br Ornithol Club 136: 145-146, 2016. An immature **Bearded Vulture** *Gypaetus*

*barbatus* was first seen at Sudbrook, Gwent, Wales, on 9-15 May and then at Dartmoor, Devon, England, from 17 May to 3 June; if accepted as a wild bird, it will be the first for Britain. A subadult was seen near Hamburg, Germany, on 21 May and probably the same individual was photographed on Møn, Denmark, on 23 May and then at Bredstedt, Schleswig-Holstein, Germany, on 31 May. Two individuals with satellite transmitters from a reintroduction project in Grands Causses, France, went on different journeys. One, a third-year male ('Adonis'), went east to visit Austria, Slovakia, Poland, Belarus, Ukraine and Romania between 11 June and 10 July. The other, a second-year male ('Larzac'), stayed in Belgium, the Netherlands and Germany (north up to Schleswig-Holstein) between 16 June and 4 July. This year, 43 wild-origin pairs bred on the French side of the Pyrenees producing only 13 fledglings; on the Spanish side of the Pyrenees, there were more than 135 pairs (cf Dutch Birding 38: 246, 2016). In Israel, the long-staying **Bateleur** *Terathopius ecaudatus* from May 2015 was still present at Lakhish, Judean Plains, on 10 July. A second-year **White-backed Vulture** *Gyps africanus* photographed at Puente de Montañana, Huesca, on 17 June was the c fifth for Spain and the northernmost in Europe. An immature **Rüppell's Vulture** *G rueppellii* crossed the Straits of Gibraltar from Africa to Tarifa, Cádiz, Spain, on 9 June. A total of four juveniles were recorded at different sites in Gibraltar on 25 June. Remarkably, a **Griffon Vulture** *G fulvus* (colour-ringed 'yellow-R04') at several locations along the North Sea coast in the Netherlands between 18 May and 3 June was not only the same bird taken into care near Madrid, Spain, on 13 August 2014 and ringed and released on 11 January 2015 but also it had been seen a year ago, from 31 July to 8 August 2015, at a number of the same locations in the Netherlands. A few migratory flocks included, eg, 34 at Ålborg, Denmark, on 24 June (including a colour-ringed individual from Aragón, Spain); eight at Libin, Luxembourg, and four at Celles, Namur, Belgium, on 26 June; and 13 at Schinkel, Schleswig-Holstein, on 3 July. Green et al (J Appl Ecol 2016) estimated the potential number of Griffon deaths caused by diclofenac in Spain at 715 to 6 389 per year, indicating a potential annual decline of 0.9-7.7% of the Spanish population (which consists of more than 95% of the c 26 000 pairs in the whole of Europe). A second-year **Lesser Spotted Eagle** *Aquila pomarina* at Jbel Moussa on 21 May was the fourth for Morocco (previous ones were in 1996, 2007 and 2010). In 2015, the breeding population of **Greater Spotted Eagle** *A clanga* at Biebrza marshes, Poland, consisted of 13 pairs of which only up to nine were pure pairs (the others were mixed pairs with Lesser Spotted Eagle). A **Tawny Eagle** *A rapax* at Tse'elim, northwestern Negev, on 14-15 July was the sixth for Israel. An **Eastern Imperial Eagle** *A heliaca* at Lubans on 18 June was the fourth for Latvia and the first that was actually seen (previous ones were traced by gps transmitters). The sixth for Lithuania was a second-year observed between Tjlšiù and Šiauliù on 4 July. In Belgium, two adult pale-morph **Booted Eagles** *A pennata* performed display flights at Marais d'Harchies, Hainaut, between 17 May and 14 June. A nest with chicks of **Red Kite** *Milvus milvus* in central Latvia on 4 July concerned Latvia's second confirmed breeding in 50 years (the previous one was in 2010). An adult **Brahminy Kite** *Haliastur indus* at Wadi Darbat on 20 November 2015 has recently been accepted as the first for Oman and the 'greater' WP.

OWLS TO FALCONS In the Sobibór and Włodawa forests, Poland, six to eight pairs of **Lapland Owl** *Strix lapponica* have been breeding this year. In Scotland, a **Snowy Owl** *Bubo scandiacus* was found dead on Lewis, Outer Hebrides, on 27 May. In Ireland, one stayed at Gleninagh, Clare, from 28 May to 7 June. The first **Blue-cheeked Bee-eater** *Merops persicus* for Austria was photographed at Sankt Andrä am Zicksee, Seewinkel, Burgenland, on 22-23 May. In 2015, only 26-31 pairs of **European Roller** *Coracias garrulus* were breeding in Poland, in two areas in the east; in 1980, the population still numbered c 1000 pairs and, in the early 1990s, c 400 pairs. A huge decline is noted also in the Baltic countries, Belarus, Ukraine and European Russia. A second-year male **Lesser Kestrel** *Falco naumanni* was photographed at Ammersee, Bayern, Germany, on 13-14 May. An **Eleonora's Falcon** *F eleonorae* was seen at Grönhögen, Öland, Sweden, on 21 May. A female **Saker Falcon** *F cherrug* wearing a gps device from Hungary stayed at Böhlitz, Sachsen, Germany, from 6 July onwards.

PARROTS TO SWALLOWS In 2015, the population of **Rose-ringed Parakeets** *Psittacula krameri* in Europe comprised c 90 breeding populations in 10 countries, with a total population size of at least 85 000 individuals; the highest numbers have been estimated in Britain (c 31 000) with 10 000 or more also in Germany, Belgium and the Netherlands (Open Ornithol J 9: 1-13, 2016). Within the WP, a **Long-tailed Shrike** *Lanius schach* was photographed at Atyrau, Kazakhstan, on 14-25 June. A female **Masked Shrike** *L nubicus* on Helgoland from 13 July onwards was the first for Germany. An **Alpine Chough** *Pyrrhocorax graculus* at Tlumacov, Plzensky, on 8 June was the fifth for Czechia. The first breeding of **Hooded Crow** *Corvus cornix* for Spain concerned a pair building a nest at Riu Vell, Barcelona, Catalunya, in May. A **Bar-tailed Lark** *Ammomanes cinctura* at Gruissan, Aude, from 21 May to 2 June was the first for France and the northernmost for Europe. A singing **Shore Lark** *Eremophila flava* at Llobregat delta, Barcelona, on 29 June was the c fifth for Spain. If accepted, a **Banded Martin** *Phedina cincta* photographed near Green Mubazzarah on 22 June will be the first for the United Arab Emirates.

WARBLERS DNA analyses confirmed the identification of the second **Green Warbler** *Phylloscopus nitidus* for Britain trapped in Shetland in May (cf Dutch Birding 38: 247, 251, 2016). The third **Arctic Warbler** *P borealis* for Lithuania was reported at Juodkrantė, Curonian spit, on 18 June. A singing **Sulphur-bellied Warbler** *P griseolus* on Christiansø, Bornholm, from 30 May to 4 June was the first for Denmark and the WP; the species breeds in rocky and mountainous areas in central Asia (eg, eastern Kazakhstan), is a medium-distance migrant and winters south to central India. A female **Sardinian Warbler** *Sylvia*

**514** Red-headed Bunting / Bruinkopgors *Emberiza bruniceps*, male, Marsa Alam, Red Sea coast, Egypt, 7 May 2016 *(Kris De Rouck)* cf Dutch Birding 38: 253, 2016 **515** Masked Shrike / Maskerklauwier *Lanius nubicus*, female, Helgoland, Schleswig-Holstein, Germany, 14 July 2016 *(Stefan Pfützke/Green-Lens.de)* **516** Pied Crow / Schildraaf *Corvus albus*, adult, Wadi Lahami, Red Sea coast, Egypt, 5 May 2016 *(Kris De Rouck)* cf Dutch Birding 38: 250, 2016

**517** Tristram's Warbler / Atlasgrasmus *Sylvia deserticola*, Montpellier, Hérault, France, 7 May 2016 *(Damien Gailly)*
cf Dutch Birding 38: 251, 2016

**518** Bar-tailed Lark / Rosse Woestijnleeuwerik *Ammomanes cinctura*, Gruissan, Aude, France, 21 May 2016 *(Antoine Joris)*

**519** Rufous-tailed Scrub Robin / Rosse Waaierstaart *Cercotrichas galactotes*, Kylmäpihlajan, Rauma, Finland, 4 July 2016 *(Mika Bruun)* **520** Taiga Flycatcher / Taigavliegenvanger *Ficedula albicilla*, Blåvand, Syddanmark, Denmark, 22 May 2016 *(Henrik Knudsen)* **521** White-backed Vulture / Witruggier *Gyps africanus*, second calendar-year (left), with Griffon Vulture *G fulvus*, immature, Puente de Montañana, Huesca, Spain, 17 June 2016 *(Juan Carlos Albero Perez)*

*melanocephala* trapped at Krynica Morska, Pomerania, on 22 May was the third for Poland (previous ones were in 2001 and 2005). The fifth for Norway was also a female trapped on Store Færder, Vestfold, on 23 May (and re-trapped on 27 May). A second-year male **Moltoni's Warbler** *S subalpina* ringed at Ghadira on 21 May was the third for Malta. An **Eastern Olivaceous Warbler** *Iduna pallida* at Jurmo, Korppoo, on 27 May was the fifth for Finland. In Shetland, one was reported from Scatness, Mainland, between 27 May and 11 June. A singing male **Melodious Warbler** *Hippolais polyglotta* at Dobramyśl, Wielkopolska, on 22 May was the third for Poland. A singing male **Blyth's Reed Warbler** *Acrocephalus dumetorum* at Enns on 22 June was the first for Austria. In Poland, c 35 individuals (including five trapped at Krynica Morska) were reported between 14 May and 9 July. A molecular study on **Eurasian Reed Warbler** *A scirpaceus* and **African Reed Warbler** *A baeticatus* revealed eight distinct lineages showing that the current knowledge of distribution and taxonomy is in need of revision (Olsson et al in Mol Phyl Evol 102: 30-44, 2016); eight taxa have been proposed, from north to south in the WP *scirpaceus*, *fuscus*, *ambiguus* and *avicenniae* and from north to south in tropical Africa *minor*, *cinnamomeus*, *hallae* and *baeticatus*. Notably, the breeding population of Iberia and Morocco is treated as taxonomically distinct, **Ambiguous Reed Warbler** *A s ambiguus* (cf Jiguet et al in Dutch Birding 32: 29-36, 2010). It is not clear whether the newly described, sedentary and very small subspecies *A s ammon* at the border of Egypt and Libya (Hering et al in Bull Br Ornithol Club 136: 101-128, 2016) was taken into account. For the time being, pending studies of gene flow and assortative mating in contact zones, the authors recommend to treat these eight taxa as one polytypic species, *A scirpaceus*.

THRUSHES A **Rufous-tailed Scrub Robin** *Cercotrichas galactotes* at Kylmäpihlajan, Rauma, on 4-10 July was the second for Finland (the first was in 1995). The first for South Africa was a western nominate *C g galactotes* at Zeekoeivlei, Cape Town, on 17 July. A female **White-throated Robin** *Irania gutturalis* photographed at Horssten, Uppland, on 19 June was the ninth for Sweden. If accepted, a male **Common Nightingale** *Luscinia megarhynchos* at Pärnu on 29 May will be the first for Estonia. Between 4 May and 4 July, 108 territories of **Red-flanked Bluetail** *Tarsiger cyanurus* were found in the east and north-east of Finland. If accepted, a **Taiga Flycatcher** *Ficedula albicilla* trapped at Blåvand on 22 May was the first for Denmark. Recently, BOURC decided that a first-winter male **Mugimaki Flycatcher** *F mugimaki* at Stone Creek, Humberside, England, on 16-17 November 1991 should be regarded as an escaped cagebird ('category E'); elsewhere in the WP, there are records in Russia (August 2007) and Italy (October 2011), while a bird collected in Italy in October 1957 is placed in 'category D' (cf Dutch Birding 34: 41-44, 109-110, 2012). In Italy, an **Atlas Pied Flycatcher** *F speculigera* was found on Linosa on 18 May. DNA analyses of **Atlas Pied** and **Iberian Pied Flycatcher** *F h iberiae* found them to be distinct from both each other and from nominate **European Pied Flycatcher** *F h hypoleuca*, and therefore worthy of species status (BirdGuides 8 June 2016; Lehtonen et al in Mol Ecol 18: 4463-4476, 2009). In addition to features recently discussed by Corso et al (Dutch Birding 37: 141-160, 2015) and Robb & The Sound Approach (Dutch Birding 161-163, 2015), Potti et al (2016) found significant biometric differences between Atlas Pied and Iberian Pied consistent with proposals to classify the two into separate species; in both sexes, Atlas Pied has longer tarsi, longer wings, and wider and shallower bill than Iberian Pied, with female Atlas Pied having shorter beak than female Iberian Pied, and females of both sometimes have a white forehead patch unlike European (Bird Study 2016, http://tinyurl.com/zur7hwg). Based on photographs of a putative **Ehrenberg's Redstart** *Phoenicurus phoenicurus samamisicus* in Kazakhstan in April 2016, it was concluded that the identification is uncertain (cf Dutch Birding 38: 253, 2016); this turned out to be the case with a bird collected on 15 April 1963 as well (Arend Wassink in litt) and, as a consequence, there are now no records of this subspecies in Kazakhstan. A male **Common Rock Thrush** *Monticola saxatilis* at Zelhem, Gelderland, on 19-22 May was the 13th for the Netherlands.

ACCENTORS TO BUNTINGS The unprecedented influx of **Alpine Accentors** *Prunella collaris* and **White-winged Snowfinches** *Montifringilla nivalis* out of their breeding ranges in Germany in April-May comprised 140 and 36 individuals, respectively (Der Falke 6, 2016; cf Dutch Birding 38: 252-253, 2016). An adult male **Spanish Sparrow** *Passer hispaniolensis* at Szaporca, Baranya, on 20 May was (only) the third for Hungary. On 19-20 May onwards, up to two **Trumpeter Finches** *Bucanetes githagineus* were reported at Llagostera, Girona, Spain. The fourth for Finland was photographed at Myrans, Siuntio, on 23 May. A male at Sfantu Gheorghe, Tulcea, on 7 June was the fourth for Romania. A second-year **Citril Finch** *Carduelis citrinella* photographed at Gąsienicowa Glade, Tatry mountains, on 27 May was the third for Poland (previous ones were in 1975 and 2001). A ship-assisted **Seaside Sparrow** *Ammodramus maritimus* (not recorded in the WP) travelled on the deck of the MV Balmoral cruise liner across the Atlantic and back while staying aboard. The ship had toured eastern North America until 13 May and had docked respectively at Ringaskiddy, Cork, Ireland, on 18 May, at Southampton, Hampshire, on 20 May, and then back north at Royal Quays, Northumberland, on 21, 26 and 31 May, while touring Norway on 22-25 and again on 27-30 May. The bird was still on board when the ship was in Iceland from 3 June. A singing male **White-crowned Sparrow** *Zonotrichia leucophrys* at South Dell, Lewis, Outer Hebrides, on 31 May was the seventh for Britain; the sixth was trapped a month earlier in England (cf Dutch Birding 38: 250, 253, 2016). A **White-throated Sparrow** *Z albicollis* was photographed on Tiree, Argyll, Scotland, on 10 June. If accepted, a **Dark-eyed Junco** *Junco hyemalis* at Algeciras, Cádiz, on 15 June may be the first for Spain. After releases of 376 hand-reared **Cirl Buntings** *Emberiza cirlus* in Cornwall in 2006-11, this project is now concluded to be the only successful passerine reintroduction to have

**522** White-crowned Sparrow / Witkruingors *Zonotrichia leucophrys,* South Dell, Lewis, Outer Hebrides, Scotland, 31 May 2016 *(Colin Bushell)* **523** White-throated Sparrow / Witkeelgors *Zonotrichia albicollis*, Tiree, Argyll, Scotland, 10 June 2016 *(John Bowler)* **524** Citril Finch / Citroensijs *Carduelis citrinella*, second-year, Gąsienicowa Glade, Tatry mountains, Poland, 27 May 2016 *(Dawid Kilon)* **525** Alpine Chough / Alpenkauw *Pyrrhocorax graculus*, Tlumacov, Plzensky, Czechia, 8 June 2016 *(Eva Bednářová)*

been undertaken in Europe since, by 2015, 52 pairs were counted (Br Birds 109: 374-388, 2016).

INDIA CHECKLIST In Indian Birds (11: 113-172), a new checklist of the bird of India has been published containing 1263 species of which 61 endemic to India (Praveen et al 2016). For taxonomy, sequence and nomenclature, it follows the fourth edition of *The Howard and Moore complete checklist of the birds of the world* 1 & 2 (Dickinson & Remsen Jr 2013, Dickinson & Christidis 2014). The list is available at http://tinyurl.com/h6jadms.

For a number of reports Birdwatch, British Birds, Go-South Bulletin, Sovon-Nieuws, www.birdguides.com, www.netfugl.dk, www.rarebirdalert.co.uk, www.tarsiger.com and www.waarneming.nl were consulted. We wish to thank Peter Adriaens, Mohamed Amezian, Eva Bednářová, Patrick Bergier, Joachim Bertrands, Sander Bot, John Bowler, Mika Bruun, Colin Bushell, José Luis Copete, Kris De Rouck, Philippe Dubois, Enno Ebels, Martin Elliott, Javier Elorriaga, Tobias Epple, Wouter Faveyts, Bela Fortes, Damien Gailly, Raymond Galea, Eduardo Garcia-del-Rey, Martin Gottschling, Geert Groot Koerkamp, Ricard Gutiérrez, Radosław Gwóźdź, Axel Halley, Morten Bentzon Hansen, Trevor Hardaker, Morten Helberg, Christine Jacob, Graham Jepson, Josh Jones, Antoine Joris, Leander Khil, Dawid Kilon, Henrik Knudsen, Yann Kolbeinsson, Christopher König, Bence Kókay, Steven Lane, Petteri Lehikoinen, Christian Leth, André van Loon, Jip Louwe Kooijmans, Gerby Michielsen, Geir Mobakken, Rafael Jiménez Moreno, José David Muñoz, Milan Olekšák, Gerard Ouweneel, Juan Carlos Albero Perez, Yoav Perlman, Stefan Pfützke, Gwenaël Quaintenne, John Richardson, Roger Riddington, Magnus Robb, Markku Saarinen, Jiri Sirek, Roy Slaterus, Thys Valkenburg, Mariet Verbeek, Peter de Vries, Arend Wassink, Ingo Weiß and Christoph Zöckler for their help in compiling this review.

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# Recente meldingen

Dit overzicht van recente meldingen van zeldzame en interessante vogels in Nederland beslaat voornamelijk de periode **mei-juni 2016**. 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 was een prachtig voorjaar! Door een aanhoudende oostelijke stroming aan het begin van deze periode was er mooie (roof)vogeltrek en net als in april doken ook in mei de nodige dwaalgasten op.

EENDEN TOT HOENDERS Tot begin juni werden nog kleine aantallen **Witbuikrotganzen** *Branta hrota* en **Zwarte Rotganzen** *B nigricans* gemeld, vrijwel allemaal in het Waddengebied. **Roodhalsganzen** *B ruficollis* werden van c zes locaties gemeld, met maximaal drie op Schiermonnikoog, Friesland. Bij Nijkerk, Gelderland, bleef een exemplaar de gehele periode. Her en der werd nog een enkele **Dwerggans** *Anser erythropus* waargenomen, veelal van dubieuze afkomst. Er waren relatief veel late **IJseenden** *Clangula hyemalis*: van 13 tot 29 mei op Texel, Noord-Holland; van 18 mei tot 16 juni in het Lauwersmeer, Friesland; van 23 mei tot 4 juli bij Stellendam, Zuid-Holland (twee); en van 25 mei tot 4 juni op een ongebruikelijk binnenlandlocatie bij IJsselstein, Utrecht (twee). Een mannetje **Buffelkopeend** *Bucephala albeola* verbleef vanaf 19 juni in de Brabantse Biesbosch, Noord-Brabant. Van c 12 locaties werden **Witoogeenden** *Aythya nyroca* gemeld, waaronder nog altijd twee op de Kralingse Plas in Rotterdam, Zuid-Holland. Het mannetje **Ringsnaveleend** *A collaris* dat op 13 maart werd ontdekt bij Wijdewormer, Noord-Holland, bleef tot ten minste 2 mei. Een mannetje **Amerikaanse Smient** *Anas americana* in eclipskleed verbleef op 30 juni en 1 juli langs de IJssel bij Deventer, Overijssel, al was de determinatie in dit lastige kleed niet onomstreden. Net als op 29 maart zwom op 4 mei een mannetje **Amerikaanse Wintertaling** *A carolinensis* in De Onlanden, Drenthe. Er werden 33 **Kwartels** *Coturnix coturnix* geringd, waarvan 11 bij Castricum, Noord-Holland, en 10 in Meijendel, Zuid-Holland.

DUIVEN TOT IBISSEN Het voorjaarstotaal (april-juni) van langstrekkende **Zomertortels** *Streptopelia turtur* over

**526** Lammergier / Bearded Vulture *Gypaetus barbatus*, tweede-kalenderjaar mannetje ('Larzac'), Hulshorster Zand, Gelderland, 25 juni 2016 *(Jaap Denee)*

**527** Steltstrandloper / Stilt Sandpiper *Calidris himantopus*, eerste-zomer, Terschelling, Friesland, 19 mei 2016 *(Hans van Stijn)*

**528** Steltstrandloper / Stilt Sandpiper *Calidris himantopus*, eerste-zomer, Terschelling, Friesland, 19 mei 2016 *(Arie Ouwerkerk)*

**529** Dougalls Stern / Roseate Tern *Sterna dougallii*, met Grote Sterns / Sandwich Terns *S sandvicensis*, Utopia, Texel, Noord-Holland, 2 mei 2016 *(Luuk Punt)*

**530** Ralreiger / Squacco Heron *Ardeola ralloides*, Noorden, Zuid-Holland, 9 juni 2016 *(Peter van der Meer)*

trektelposten viel met 136 ruim tweemaal zo hoog uit als een jaar eerder; het beeld wordt echter vertekend doordat de hoogste aantallen afkomstig waren van twee dicht bij elkaar gelegen telposten (48 langs Breskens en 34 langs Nieuwvliet in Zeeuws-Vlaanderen, Zeeland). Het landelijke dagrecord van 41 365 **Gierzwaluwen** *Apus apus* langs Breskens op 26 mei 2012 kwam geen moment in gevaar maar de 24 257 exemplaren die hier op 5 mei passeerden zorgden wel voor de tweede dag ooit. Ook 10 413 exemplaren op 20 juni langs Kamperhoek, Flevoland, mochten er wezen. In de Weerribben, Overijssel, bevonden zich minimaal twee **Kleine Waterhoenders** *Zapornia parva* – één daarvan liet zich tot in juli regelmatig horen. Op c zeven locaties werden in totaal c 13 **Kleinste Waterhoenders** *Z pusilla* gehoord. Bijzonder was het verblijf vanaf eind mei van maximaal drie zingende **Kwartelkoningen** *Crex crex* op braakliggende percelen op een bedrijventerrein binnen de bebouwde kom van Utrecht, Utrecht. **IJsduikers** *Gavia immer* verbleven onder andere tot 27 mei op het IJmeer, Noord-Holland; tot 16 mei op het Volkerak, Zuid-Holland (twee adulte in zomerkleed); van 9 tot 13 mei op de Reeuwijkse Plassen, Zuid-Holland; en tot 4 mei bij Bemmel, Gelderland. Zeetrektellers zagen 22 **Parelduikers** *G arctica*, een **Vaal Stormvogeltje** *Oceanodroma leucorhoa* (op 14 mei langs Camperduin, Noord-Holland), 12 **Noordse Stormvogels** *Fulmarus glacialis* en een **Noordse Pijlstormvogel** *Puffinus puffinus* (op 18 juni langs Castricum) passeren. Het was een uitzonderlijk voorjaar voor **Ralreiger** *Ardeola ralloides*. De eerste verbleef van 16 tot 19 mei bij Afferden, Gelderland, en later in mei en vooral in juni werden er nog eens 14 waargenomen, waaronder vogels van 8 tot ten minste 18 juni bij Noorden, Zuid-Holland, van 11 tot 14 juni op het Dwingelderveld, Drenthe, en vanaf 30 juni bij Lelystad, Flevoland. Het vorige topjaar was 2007, met 10 gevallen (11 exemplaren). Er werden c 25 **Koereigers** *Bubulcus ibis* gemeld, waaronder drie vanaf 13 juni in de Oostvaardersplassen, Flevoland, en eveneens drie van 22 tot 27 juni in de Weerribben. In totaal werden c 30 **Zwarte Ibissen** *Plegadis falcinellus* waargenomen, waaronder begin mei nog drie bij Haastrecht, Zuid-Holland, en drie bij Leidschendam, Zuid-Holland.

GRIELEN TOT STRANDLOPERS Net als vorig jaar werden er aardig wat **Grielen** *Burhinus oedicnemus* opgemerkt, namelijk op 4 mei bij Borgharen, Limburg; op 8 mei op de Strabrechtse Heide, Noord-Brabant; van 10 tot 13 mei in de Eemshaven, Groningen; op 11 mei op Schiermonnikoog; en op 21 mei in het Hunzedal, Drenthe. Het hoogste aantal **Steltkluten** *Himantopus himantopus* bijeen bedroeg 14, zowel op 1 mei in de Oostvaardersplassen als op 3 mei bij het Dannemeer bij Slochteren, Groningen. Op enkele plekken werd ook weer gebroed. Een zomerkleed **Amerikaanse Goudplevier** *Pluvialis dominica* verbleef van 17 tot 26 mei op Schiermonnikoog. **Morinelplevieren** *C morinellus* werden vooral in het noorden en westen gezien, met op verschillende locaties groepen, bijvoorbeeld tot 15 mei op Texel (maximaal 12 op 14 mei); op 10 mei in de Emmapolder bij Uithuizen, Groningen (13); van 12 tot 17 mei bij Zeewolde, Flevoland (maximaal 13); en van 14 tot 16 mei bij Finsterwolde, Groningen (11). Een **Woestijnplevier** *Anarhynchus leschenaultii* bevond zich van 20 tot 29 mei in de Emmapolder; indien aanvaard, betreft dit het 17e geval; deze vogel vertoonde kenmerken van Anatolische Woestijnplevier *A l columbinus*. Een (geringde) **Strandplevier** *A alexandrinus* op 6 mei bij Itteren, Limburg, was een provinciale zeldzaamheid. Spectaculair was de zomerkleed **Grote Kanoet** *Calidris tenuirostris* die zich van 13 tot 17 (met moeite) op het wad bij De Cocksdorp op Texel liet bekijken. Het enige eerdere geval stamt uit het najaar van 1991. Tussen 7 mei en 10 juni werden c 26 **Breedbekstrandlopers** *C falcinellus* gevonden. Behalve vogels op 15 en 16 mei op de Krammersche Slikken, Zuid-Holland, op 19 mei op de Hooge Platen, Zeeland, en van 30 mei tot 4 juni op Texel, kwamen alle waarnemingen uit Friesland en Groningen. Groepjes van vier verbleven op 14 mei langs de Dollard, Groningen, en op 20 mei op Schiermonnikoog. Spectaculair was de reeks ontdekkingen van steeds dezelfde eerste-zomer **Steltstrandloper** *C himantopus*. In de late avond van 11 mei werd hij voor het eerst gezien bij Neer, Limburg, waar hij tot blijdschap van veel vogelaars de gehele volgende dag bleef. Vervolgens dook hij op 14 mei verrassenderwijs op bij Borculo, Gelderland (c 105 km noordnoordoostelijk), en bleef daar tot de avond van 18 mei. Nog verrassender was vervolgens de ontdekking één dag later op Terschelling, Friesland (nog eens c 165 km noordwestelijk). Het gaat om het vierde geval en het eerste sinds 2004. Op 13 mei passeerden 2463 **Drieteenstrandlopers** *C alba* Camperduin – een nieuw landelijk trekrecord. Een **Bonapartes Strandloper** *C fuscicollis* werd op 29 mei gefotografeerd op de Dijkgatsweide in de Wieringermeer, Noord-Holland, maar verdween kort daarna uit beeld. Op 18 mei werd een **Blonde Ruiter** *C subruficollis* kortstondig gezien bij Den Bosch, Noord-Brabant, en op 25 en 26 mei vergezelde er één de Woestijnplevier in de Emmapolder. **Gestreepte Strandlopers** *C melanotos* waren opnieuw schaars, met waarnemingen op 12 mei in de Bantpolder, Lauwersmeer, op 21 mei bij Den Oever, Noord-Holland, en op 22 en 23 mei in de Sophiapolder bij Oostburg, Zeeland. Er werden c 15 **Grauwe Franjepoten** *Phalaropus lobatus* doorgegeven, waaronder populaire vogels van 12 tot 16 mei op Texel (twee) en van 14 tot 17 mei bij Delfgauw, Zuid-Holland. Een zomerkleed vrouwtje **Rosse Franjepoot** *P fulicarius* zwom op 20 mei in de Scherpenissepolder, Zeeland. Een **Terekruiter** *Xenus cinereus* werd op 17 mei gefotografeerd in Polder Breebaart, Groningen, en op 22 mei nogmaals gezien. In de Brabantse Biesbosch, Noord-Brabant, waren begin mei nog twee en tot 19 mei ten minste één **Kleine Geelpootruiter** *Tringa flavipes* aanwezig. Andere waarnemingen werden gedaan van 5 tot 8 mei bij Oegstgeest, Zuid-Holland, van 25 mei tot 26 juni bij Haastrecht en op 29 mei in de Beningerwaard, Zuid-Holland. Er waren negen meldingen van **Poelruiters** *T stagnatilis*. De meeste aandacht kregen vogels vanaf 16 juni op Tholen, Zeeland, en van 17 tot 22 juni bij Twisk, Noord-Holland. Een adult zomerkleed **Grote Grijze Snip** *Limnodromus scolopaceus* verbleef in de

**531** Vale Gieren / Griffon Vultures *Gyps fulvus*, Giessendam, Zuid-Holland, 8 mei 2016 *(Alex Bos)* **532** Steppekiekendief / Pallid Harrier *Circus macrourus*, tweede-kalenderjaar mannetje, Noordkaap, Groningen, 6 mei 2016 *(Rudy Offereins)*

middag van 22 mei en de ochtend van 23 mei in de Brabantse Biesbosch en werd vervolgens van 25 tot 31 mei waargenomen bij Bleskensgraaf, Zuid-Holland.

ALKEN TOT STERNS De eerste-zomer **Zwarte Zeekoet** *Cepphus grylle* van Neeltje Jans, Zeeland, werd op 16 mei voor het laatst gemeld. Een adulte **Kleinste Jager** *Stercorarius longicaudus* vloog op 12 juni langs Camperduin. Zeetrektellers zagen voorts 54 **Kleine Jagers** *S parasiticus* en drie **Middelste Jagers** *S pomarinus*. Tweede-kalenderjaar **Baltische Mantelmeeuwen** *Larus fuscus fuscus* werden gemeld op 13 mei op Texel en op 2 juni in de Wieringermeer. Onvolwassen **Kleine Burgemeesters** *L glaucoides* werden nog waargenomen op 1 mei bij Bloemendaal, Noord-Holland, en op 5 mei (weer) in Amsterdam, Noord-Holland. In de eerste dagen van mei werden nog verschillende **Grote Burgemeesters** *L hyperboreus* waargenomen en op 3 en 9 juni volgden meldingen in Amsterdam en op 17 juni in Den Helder, Noord-Holland. Naast een handvol langstrekkende **Lachsterns** *Gelochelidon nilotica*, waren er pleisteraars op 17 mei in De Groote Peel, Limburg, en op 20 mei op Ameland, Friesland. Op diverse plekken werden mooie aantallen **Witwangsterns** *Chlidonias hybrida* gezien, bijvoorbeeld maximaal 30 bij het Dannemeer, 10 op 10 mei bij Leeuwarden, Friesland, en maximaal negen tussen 19 en 26 mei in de Brabantse Biesbosch. Op eerstgenoemde locatie werd tot broeden overgegaan. Ook werden ruim 80 **Witvleugelsterns** *C leucopterus* doorgegeven. Een **Dougalls Stern** *Sterna dougallii* op 2 en 3 mei op het wad bij De Cocksdorp en in Utopia op Texel betrof pas het eerste geval voor de Waddeneilanden.

VISARENDEN TOT SPERWERS Het paar **Visarenden** *Pandion haliaetus* in de Brabantse Biesbosch, waarvan het mannetje in 2012 als nestjong in Duitsland was geringd, kreeg twee jongen. Voor trektellers was er vooral in de eerste helft van mei veel roofvogeltrek te zien. Ze noteerden in totaal 104 **Visarenden**, 193 **Wespendieven**

**533** Kleine Geelpootruiter / Lesser Yellowlegs *Tringa flavipes*, Oegstgeest, Zuid-Holland, 8 mei 2016 *(Rein Genuït)* **534** Grote Kanoet / Great Knot *Calidris tenuirostris*, met Kanoet / Red Knot *C canutus*, De Cocksdorp, Texel, Noord-Holland, 16 mei 2016 *(Ipe Weeber)* **535** Woestijnplevier / Greater Sand Plover *Anarhynchus leschenaultii*, Emmapolder, Groningen, 28 mei 2016 *(Enno B Ebels)* **536** Kleine Geelpootruiter / Lesser Yellowlegs *Tringa flavipes*, Doove Gat, Haastrecht, Zuid-Holland, 11 juni 2016 *(Julian Bosch)*

*Pernis apivorus*, 79 **Rode Wouwen** *Milvus milvus* en maar liefst 279 **Zwarte Wouwen** *M migrans*. Van laatstgenoemde vlogen er alleen al 56 over Kamperhoek, met een nieuw landelijk dagrecord van 23 op 8 mei (was 16 op zowel deze plek als de Eemshaven). In het oosten van het land waren minimaal vier broedpogingen van **Rode Wouwen**, naast twee territoriale paren die niet tot nestelen overgingen (vorig jaar acht tot negen paren). De soort broedt sinds 2010 jaarlijks in Nederland, terwijl van voor die tijd maar iets meer dan een handvol broedgevallen bekend is. Van **Zwarte Wouw** werden dit voorjaar nog geen broedgevallen gemeld. Een **Grijze Wouw** *Elanus caeruleus* werd op 10 juni gefotografeerd nabij Hulst, Zeeland. In de tweede helft van juni vloog er weer eens een **Lammergier** *Gypaetus barbatus* een rondje door (bijna heel) Nederland, maar ditmaal veelal ongezien. Het betrof een gezenderde tweede-kalenderjaar, genaamd 'Larzac', afkomstig van een herintroductieproject uit het zuiden van Frankrijk. Er werden weer diverse **Slangenarenden** *Circaetus gallicus* waargenomen: op 13 mei vermoedelijk dezelfde over de Strabrechtse Heide en De Groote Peel; van 4 tot 12 juni in het Fochteloërveen, Drenthe/Friesland; op 20 juni over de Meinweg, Limburg; vanaf 19 juni op het Dwingelderveld, Drenthe; en op 29 en 30 juni in Nationaal Park De Hoge Veluwe, Gelderland. Een groep van 11 **Vale Gieren** *Gyps fulvus* (waaronder een waarschijnlijk in Spanje geringd exemplaar) vloog op 7 mei van Breskens via Zwijndrecht, Zuid-Holland, naar de Alblasserwaard, Zuid-Holland. De volgende dag vertrok de groep rond het middaguur weer in zuidelijke richting. Opmerkelijk was verder de terugkeer van een geringd exemplaar (Geel R04) naar exact hetzelfde gebied op Texel als vorige zomer: de vogel werd onder meer gemeld van 19 tot 21 mei in de omgeving van IJmuiden, Noord-Holland; van 21 tot 28 mei op Texel; van 28 tot 31 mei

**537** IJseenden / Long-tailed Ducks *Clangula hyemalis*, mannetje en vrouwtje, Bossenwaard, Nieuwegein, Utrecht, 4 juni 2016 *(Alex Bos)* **538** Struikrietzanger / Blyth's Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus dumetorum*, Robbenjager, Texel, Noord-Holland, 8 juni 2016 *(Jos van den Berg)* **539** Balkankwikstaart / Black-headed Wagtail *Motacilla feldegg*, De Nederlanden, Texel, Noord-Holland, 2 mei 2016 *(Co van der Wardt)* **540** Kortteenleeuwerik / Greater Short-toed Lark *Calandrella brachydactyla*, Vlieland, Friesland, 12 juni 2016 *(Jaap Eerdmans)*

bij Den Helder; en van 31 mei tot 3 juni bij Melissant, Zuid-Holland. **Schreeuwarenden** *Aquila pomarina* werden gefotografeerd op 5 mei bij Breda, Noord-Brabant, en op 11 mei bij Kootstertille, Friesland. Een **Bastaardarend** *A clanga* werd op 6 mei gefotografeerd vliegend langs de Lek bij Houten, Utrecht. Indien aanvaard, betreft dit het eerste geval voor de provincie Utrecht. Vanaf telposten werden in totaal 1543 **Bruine** *Circus aeruginosus*, 100 **Blauwe** *C cyaneus* en 128 **Grauwe Kiekendieven** *C pygargus* (waaronder negen op 7 mei langs telpost Noordkaap, Groningen) waargenomen. Er waren enkele 10-tallen meldingen van **Steppekiekendieven** *C macrourus*, waarvan er c 20 werden gefotografeerd, de meeste in de eerste helft van mei. Alleen al langs telpost Noordkaap vlogen er zeven.

HOPPEN TOT ZWALUWEN Er werden c 15 **Hoppen** *Upupa epops* waargenomen, waarvan verreweg de meeste in de eerste helft van mei. De oostelijke stroming bracht vooral in de eerste helft van mei veel **Bijeneters** *Merops apiaster* naar ons land: ten minste 150 exemplaren werden doorgegeven, waaronder ook enkele grote groepen, bijvoorbeeld op 9 mei op Terschelling (17), op 10 mei op Texel (19), en op 11 mei in de Amsterdamse Waterleidingduinen, Noord-Holland (15). Ook werd op enkele plaatsen gebroed. Vanaf trektelposten werd een hoog aantal van 1239 **Torenvalken** *Falco tinnunculus* gemeld, met onder andere 240 over de Eemshaven. De aanhoudende oostenwind in de eerste helft van mei zorgde voor een prachtige influx van **Roodpootvalken** *F vespertinus*, met waarnemingen van 10-tallen locaties uit alle provincies. Alleen vanaf trektelposten werden er al 63 gemeld. Twitchbare groepjes verbleven onder andere op het Bargerveen, Drente (maximaal zeven), het Fochteloërveen (maximaal 12) en in de Amsterdamse Waterleidingduinen (maximaal zeven). Een **Eleonora's**

**541** Roodpootvalk / Red-footed Falcon *Falco vespertinus*, eerste-zomer mannetje, Berkheide, Zuid-Holland, 10 mei 2016 *(René van Rossum)* **542** Roodpootvalk / Red-footed Falcon *Falco vespertinus*, eerste-zomer vrouwtje, Amsterdamse Waterleidingduinen, Noord-Holland, 16 mei 2016 *(Alex Bos)* **543** Roodpootvalk / Red-footed Falcon *Falco vespertinus*, eerste-zomer mannetje, Amsterdamse Waterleidingduinen, Noord-Holland, 16 mei 2016 *(Alex Bos)*

**544** Schreeuwarend / Lesser Spotted Eagle *Aquila pomarina*, subadult (vierde kalenderjaar-type), met Buizerd / Common Buzzard *Buteo buteo*, Galdersche Heide, Noord-Brabant, 5 mei 2016 *(David Janssens)* **545** Schreeuwarend / Lesser Spotted Eagle *Aquila pomarina*, subadult (vierde kalenderjaar-type), Galdersche Heide, Noord-Brabant, 5 mei 2016 *(David Janssens)* **546** Steppekiekendief / Pallid Harrier *Circus macrourus*, tweede-kalenderjaar mannetje, Breskens, Zeeland, 9 mei 2016 *(Thomas Luiten)* **547** Vale Gier / Griffon Vulture *Gyps fulvus*, Ploegelanden, Texel, Noord-Holland, 21 mei 2016 *(René Pop)*

**548** Steltstrandloper / Stilt Sandpiper *Calidris himantopus*, eerste-zomer, Borculo, Gelderland, 16 mei 2016 *(Phil Koken)* **549** Rode Rotslijster / Common Rock Thrush *Monticola saxatilis*, eerste-zomer mannetje, Zelhem, Gelderland, 22 mei 2016 *(Alex Bos)* **550** Kwartelkoning / Corn Crake *Crex crex*, Utrecht, Utrecht, 5 juni 2016 *(Julian Bosch)*

**Valk** *F eleonorae* werd op 29 mei gemeld over Katwijk aan den Rijn, Zuid-Holland; helaas zat het maken van een bewijsfoto er niet in… Trektellers noteerden verder nog 345 **Smellekens** *F columbarius,* 241 **Boomvalken** *F subbuteo* en 66 **Slechtvalken** *F peregrinus*. Met maar liefst negen meldingen was het een goed voorjaar voor **Roodkopklauwier** *Lanius senator.* Alle waarnemingen werden gedaan tussen 1 mei en 8 juni. Het best bezocht waren exemplaren op 6 mei bij Monster, Zuid-Holland; op 10 en 11 mei in het Noordhollands Duinreservaat bij Heemskerk, Noord-Holland; op 12 mei bij Purmerend, Noord-Holland; en op 8 juni in de Kennemerduinen, Bloemendaal, Noord-Holland. Op 1 mei was er een melding van een **Kuifleeuwerik** *Galerida cristata* op de Boschplaat op Terschelling. **Kortteenleeuweriken** *Calandrella brachydactyla* waren bijzonder goed vertegenwoordigd met meldingen op 6, 7 en 8 mei (twee) langs telpost Noordkaap; op 6 (twee) en 8 mei langs telpost Ruidhorn, Groningen; op 6 (twee) en 7 mei langs Ouddorp, Zuid-Holland; op 7 mei bij Ruinen, Drenthe; op 10 mei over de Eemshaven; op 19 mei over de Afsluitdijk, Noord-Holland; en op 12 juni op Vlieland, Friesland. Tussen 3 en 12 mei werden ten minste 12 langsvliegende **Roodstuitzwaluwen** *Cecropis daurica* gemeld. Alleen een vogel op 10 mei op de noordpunt van Texel vloog niet direct door maar bleef een kwartiertje ter plaatse. Op 22 mei vloog er één over de Brabantse Biesbosch.

STRUIKZANGERS TOT GRASZANGERS Een in Frankrijk geringde **Cetti's Zanger** *Cettia cetti* werd in mei gefotografeerd bij Kessel-Eik, Limburg. Zingende **Grauwe Fitissen** *Phylloscopus trochiloides* werden gemeld op 8 mei in Nationaal Park De Hoge Veluwe en op 26 mei in Hoogwoud, Noord-Holland. Nadat eind mei een eerste broedsel bleek te zijn gepredeerd, werd eind juni waargenomen dat een mannetje **Iberische Tjiftjaf** *P ibericus* jongen voerde in een nest op een stil gehouden locatie in Twente, Overijssel. De zingende vogel die op 11 april werd ontdekt in Den Haag, Zuid-Holland, bleef tot ten minste 25 juni. Daarnaast waren er onder meer meldingen op 5 mei bij Hattum, Gelderland, en op 5, 8 en 9 mei op de noordpunt van Texel. Een tweede-kalenderjaar mannetje **Balkanbaardgrasmus** *Sylvia cantillans* bevond zich op 3 en 4 mei bij de Kooiplas op Schiermonnikoog. Andere baardgrasmussen *S inornata/subalpina/cantillans* betroffen een vrouwtje op 8 mei in het Zwanenwater, Noord-Holland (vangst), en een zingend exemplaar op 17 mei bij Julianadorp, Noord-Holland. Spectaculair voor de tijd van het jaar was de vangst van een tweede-kalenderjaar mannetje **Sperwergrasmus** *S nisoria* op 29 mei bij Castricum: vorig jaar werd hier op 4 juni ook al een exemplaar geringd. Verrassend was een zingende **Krekelzanger** *Locustella fluviatilis* op 21 mei op de oostpunt van Ameland; het aantal waarnemingen op de Waddeneilanden is op één hand te tellen. Andere exemplaren zongen op 23 mei bij Schiedam, Zuid-Holland, en van 24 mei tot 1 juni bij Vlaardingen,

**551** Sperwergrasmus / Barred Warbler *Sylvia nisoria*, eerste-zomer mannetje, Noordhollands Duinreservaat, Castricum, Noord-Holland, 29 mei 2016 *(Leo P Heemskerk)*

Zuid-Holland. Al op 12 mei werd een **Orpheusspotvogel** *Hippolais polyglotta* geringd bij Castricum en naast een handvol zingende vogels in Limburg, werd vooral een vogel vanaf 6 juni tot in juli bij Mill, Noord-Brabant, goed bezocht. Een **Veldrietzanger** *Acrocephalus agricola* werd op 8 juni geringd in de Amsterdamse Waterleidingduinen. Een **Struikrietzanger** *A dumetorum* zong van 6 tot 11 juni op de noordpunt van Texel. Vanaf 20 mei werden twee zingende **Graszangers** *Cisticola juncidis* gemeld in het Verdronken Land van Saeftinghe, Zeeland.

SPREEUWEN TOT GORZEN (Sub)adulte **Roze Spreeuwen** *Pastor roseus* verbleven op 29 mei bij Egmond aan Zee, Noord-Holland, en kortstondig bij Den Oever. **Noordse Nachtegalen** *Luscinia luscinia* zongen op 11 mei bij Ommen, Overijssel, van 15 tot 17 mei nabij Duiven, Gelderland, en op 22 mei bij Oosterhaar, Groningen. Hoewel een vogel die op 9 mei bij Castricum werd geringd alweer de zevende voor deze ringbaan was, was dit pas de eerste in het voorjaar. Een zingend mannetje **Roodsterblauwborst** *L svecica svecica* werd op 12 juni gemeld bij Oosterend op Terschelling. Een mannetje **Rode Rotslijster** *Monticola saxatilis* van 19 tot 22 mei bij Zelhem, Gelderland, betrof het 13e geval. Een tweedekalenderjaar **Kleine Vliegenvanger** *Ficedula parva* op Texel op 8 mei trok dankzij het Dutch Birding Vogelweekend de nodige bezoekers. Andere meldingen kwamen onder meer van Rottumerplaat, Groningen, op 23 (vrouwtjestype) en 25 mei (mannetje) en een zingende vogel bij de Loonse en Drunense Duinen, Noord-Brabant, op 29 mei. De derde **Alpenheggenmus** *Prunella collaris* van dit voorjaar en de 12e ooit verbleef op 5 en 6 mei op hetzelfde erf van een vogelaar op Vlieland als een exemplaar van 10 tot 19 mei 2008. Trektellers registreerden in mei in totaal 19 186 **Noordse Kwikstaarten** *Motacilla thunbergi* (waaronder 2590 op 8 mei langs Kamperhoek), twee **Grote Piepers** *Anthus richardi*, 10 **Duinpiepers** *A campestris* en maar liefst 29 **Roodkeelpiepers** *A cervinus*. Het mannetje **Balkankwikstaart** *M feldegg* dat op 30 april werd ontdekt in De Nederlanden bij De Koog op Texel bleef tot 4 mei; indien aanvaard, betreft dit het eerste geval. Van ruim 40 locaties kwamen meldingen van **Roodmussen** *Erythrina erythrina*, de meeste langs de kust. De grootste concentratie bevond zich rond het Oostvoornse Meer, Zuid-Holland (ten minste vijf zingende vogels, maar vermoedelijk meer). Leuk was een mannetje **IJsgors** *Calcarius lapponicus* op 16 mei op Marken, Noord-Holland. Tot half mei werd slechts een handvol **Ortolanen** *Emberiza hortulana* gemeld. Het voorjaarstotaal (april-mei) over trektelposten bleef steken op één; noemenswaardige aantallen werden voor het laatst genoteerd in de voorjaren van 2008 (19) en 2011 (14). Een zingende **Grauwe Gors** *E calandra* van 3 tot 14 mei bij Oss, Noord-Brabant, trok aardig wat bekijks. Van een vijftal andere plaatsen werden doortrekkers gemeld.

Voor het samenstellen van deze rubriek is dankbaar gebruikgemaakt van de websites dutchbirdalerts.nl, waarneming.nl, trektellen.nl en sovon.nl.

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# DBA-nieuws

**Wijziging in bestuur** Per 1 juli 2016 hebben voorzitter Arjan van Egmond en bestuurslid strategie en commercie Han Zevenhuizen afscheid genomen van het bestuur van de Dutch Birding Association. Wij danken hen hartelijk voor hun inzet, die mede heeft geleid tot een eigentijdse, toekomstbestendige DBA. Remco Hofland heeft op 1 juli 2016 de spreekwoordelijke voorzittershamer overgenomen. Met de invulling door Remco van deze functie is het nieuwe bestuur – Remco Hofland, Toy Janssen, Marten Miske, Pieter van Veelen, Jorrit Vlot en Kees de Vries – compleet. Garry Bakker completeert het bestuur als vertegenwoordiger van de redactie. REMCO HOFLAND & BESTUUR DUTCH BIRDING ASSOCIATION