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# Dutch Birding

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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 2017, http://tinyurl.com/hfwra7b) (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 list 7.1* door F Gill & D Donsker (2017, 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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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 2017, http://tinyurl.com/hfwra7b) (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 list 7.1* by F Gill & D Donsker (2017, 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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JAARGANG 39 NUMMER 4 2017 *VOLUME 39 NUMBER 4 2017*

**Artikelen / papers**

223 Siberische Gierzwaluw bij Westkapelle in juni 2017 [PACIFIC SWIFT AT WESTKAPELLE IN JUNE 2017] *Thomas Luiten*
228 Pacific Loon at Silvaplanersee, Switzerland, in December 2015, with notes on genetics, identification and WP records *Niels Peter Ammitzboell, Stefan Werner, David A Marques & Manuel Schweizer*
238 Probable hybrids Little Egret x Indian Reef Heron in India and Sri Lanka *Pankaj Koparde & Pierre Yésou*

247 Breeding surveys of Western Osprey in Egypt in 2012-16 *Mohamed I Habib*
252 'Diluted' Red-crested Pochard in Morocco in 2015-16 *Abdeslam Rihane*
253 Stilt Sandpiper at Volvi lake, Greece, in September 2016 and WP records *Hristo Peshev*

**WP reports**

257 June to late July 2017 *Łukasz Ławicki & Arnoud B van den Berg*

**Recente meldingen / recent reports**

274 Mei-juni 2017 *Roy Slaterus, Martijn Renders, Hans Groot & Vincent van der Spek*

**Voorplaat / front cover**

Witkopgors / Pine Bunting *Emberiza leucocephalos*, mannetje, Terelj, Mongolië, 15 mei 2008 *(René Pop/The Sound Approach)*

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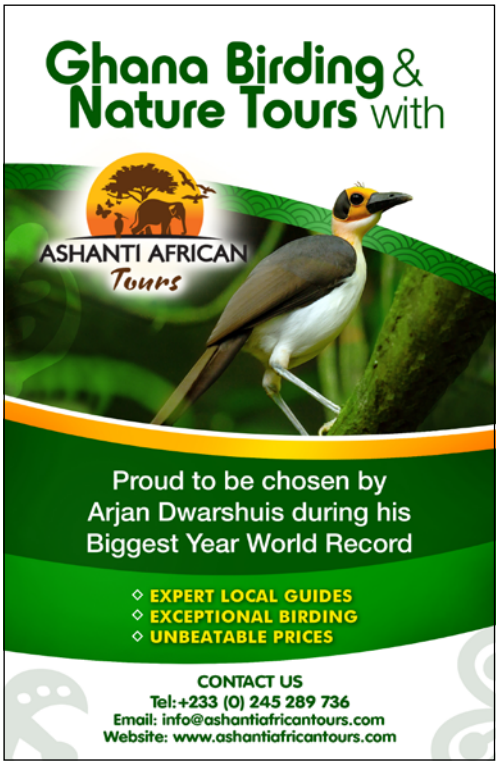
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# Siberische Gierzwaluw bij Westkapelle in juni 2017

*Thomas Luiten*

Op maandag 12 juni 2017 begon ik mijn dag op de zeedijk van Westkapelle, Zeeland. Er waaide een stevige wind uit west tot zuidwest (6 Bft) en ik hoopte een Noordse Pijlstormvogel *Puffinus puffinus* te zien. Nadat al snel duidelijk werd dat de zee 'leeg' was besloot ik de plassen aan de binnenkant van de zeedijk (het Noordervroon) te inspecteren. Toen ik om 10:15 mijn auto parkeerde langs de K de Vosweg, zag ik met het blote oog een gierzwaluw langs me heen vliegen die mijn hart even deed stilstaan: de vogel had een witte stuit! Ik greep mijn camera die naast me lag, stapte uit de auto en bekeek de c 20 Gierzwaluwen *Apus apus* die boven de plas foerageerden. Al snel vond ik de bewuste vogel terug, waarop ik direct begon te fotograferen. Na een flink aantal foto's te hebben gemaakt, pakte ik mijn verrekijker om hem beter te bekijken. Ik keek naar een *Apus*-gierzwaluw die qua kleur, formaat, structuur en vliegwijze sterk leek op Gierzwaluw maar een strak begrensde, ongetekende witte stuitvlek vertoonde. Ook opvallend waren de schubjes op de buik, die het beste waren te zien toen hij tegen een donkere achtergrond vloog. Dit kon niets anders zijn dan een Siberische Gierzwaluw *A pacificus*! Ik alarmeerde via WhatsApp de andere vogelaars van Walcheren, waarna Wietze Janse de melding via Dutch Bird Alerts aan de rest van vogelend Nederland doorgaf.

Ruim vijf minuten na de eerste waarneming verloor ik de vogel uit het oog. Omdat er licht verloop was onder de Gierzwaluwen – er kwamen vogels aan en er vertrokken vogels richting zuidwest – vermoedde ik dat hij in zuidwestelijke richting was doorgevlogen. Gelukkig had ik een flinke reeks foto's waarop hij van alle kanten en onder alle hoeken was vastgelegd. Aan de hand daarvan kon ik de determinatie 'afmaken'. De display van mijn camera toonde alle kenmerken die je van een Siberische Gierzwaluw wilt zien, inclusief

**305-310** Siberische Gierzwaluw / Pacific Swift *Apus pacificus*, Westkapelle, Zeeland, 12 juni 2017 *(Thomas Luiten)*

een relatief diep gevorkte staart. Ik realiseerde me dat dit de eerste Nederlandse waarneming was van deze extreme dwaalgast en dat veel vogelaars in het land zenuwachtig zouden reageren. De rest van de ochtend bleef ik bij de plas staan, hopend dat de vogel naar de 'oude plek' terug zou keren. Ondertussen ving ik de eerste toegesnelde vogelaars op. Dat waren er maar weinig; omstreeks 12:00 was slechts een handjevol mensen aan het zoeken. Kennelijk waren veel mensen aan het werk, of schatte men de kansen niet hoog in. Verschillende potentieel goede locaties in de omgeving werden bezocht en er werd gepost in de duinen langs de zuidwestrand van Walcheren. In de loop van de middag druppelden ook vogelaars van buiten Zeeland binnen. De hoop was dat de waarneming een vervolg zou krijgen zoals ook gebeurde met de Stekelstaartgierzwaluw *Hirundapus caudacutus* in mei 1996, die gedurende de dag op meerdere plaatsen boven Walcheren werd gezien (Sanders et al 1998). Ditmaal bleven alle zoekpogingen echter vruchteloos.

**Beschrijving**

De beschrijving is gebaseerd op de door mij in het veld waargenomen kenmerken en c 100 foto's.

ALGEMENE INDRUK Als Gierzwaluw, maar met opvallende, helderwitte stuitvlek. Algehele tint zeer donker, in direct zonlicht bruinzwart.

GROOTTE & BOUW In grootte, bouw en vleugelvorm sterk lijkend op Gierzwaluw. Kop relatief groot en iets meer vooruitstekend in vergelijking met Gierzwaluw. Snavel als Gierzwaluw. Staart relatief diep gevorkt.

KOP Bovenkop en nek egaal bruingrijs, contrasterend met iets donkerdere rug. Oogstreek donker, waardoor indruk van 'masker' aanwezig. Grote, lichtbruine en diffuus afgetekende keelvlek, op afstand niet opvallend.

BOVENDELEN Rug en mantel bruinzwart. Relatief brede, 'netjes' begrensde en ongetekend witte stuitvlek, enigszins doorlopend tot op achterste flankdeel.

ONDERDELEN Buik en anaalstreek bruinzwart. Buik geheel bedekt met subtiele maar opvallende lichte veerranden ('schubjes').

BOVENVLEUGEL Egaal bruinzwart.

ONDERVLEUGEL Bruinzwart. Zeer donkere kleine en middelste dekveren contrasterend met iets lichtere grote dekveren, armpennen en handpennen. Handpennen en armpennen licht bruingrijs kleurend in direct zonlicht. Smalle lichte top aan grote en middelste handdekveren.

STAART Zowel bovenstaart, bovenstaartdekveren als onderstaart egaal bruinzwart. Smalle lichte top aan onderstaartdekveren.

NAAKTE DELEN Snavel donkergrijs, oog zwart. Pootkleur niet vastgesteld.

VLUCHT Niet zichtbaar verschillend van die van Gierzwaluw.

**311** Siberische Gierzwaluw / Pacific Swift *Apus pacificus*, Westkapelle, Zeeland, 12 juni 2017 *(Thomas Luiten)*

**Determinatie**

De determinatie kwam reeds in het veld tot stand en de ruim 100 foto's die van de vogel gemaakt werden laten geen ruimte voor twijfel. De combinatie van witte stuitvlek, met Gierzwaluw vergelijkbare grootte en bouw, schubjes op de onderbuik en tamelijk diep gevorkte staart past uitsluitend op Siberische Gierzwaluw (cf Chantler 1993, Chantler & Driessens 1995, van Duivendijk 2011). De optie van een deels leucistische Gierzwaluw werd in het veld overwogen maar kon vanwege de 'nette' afgetekende, symmetrische witte stuitvlek, de tekening op de buik en de staartvorm snel worden uitgesloten. Het forse formaat en het ontbreken van een lichte armvleugelachterrand sluiten ook Kaffergierzwaluw *A caffer* uit.

In delen van Zuidoost-Azië komen drie *Apus*-soorten voor die wat betreft kleedkenmerken veel overeenkomsten vertonen met Siberische Gierzwaluw, namelijk Blyths Gierzwaluw *A leuconyx* (bergen van Pakistan, Nepal, Bhutan en Noordoost-India), Cooks Gierzwaluw *A cooki* (laagland van Myanmar, Noord-Thailand, Vietnam en Guangxi, China) en Sálim Ali's Gierzwaluw *A salimalii* (hoge bergen van Oost-Tibet en West-Sichuan, China).

TABEL 1 Gevallen van Siberische Gierzwaluw *Apus pacificus* in het West-Palearctische gebied (*nog niet aanvaard) / records of Pacific Swift *Apus pacificus* in the Western Palearctic (*not yet accepted) (Haas 2012, 2017, Birding Iceland 2017; http://tinyurl.com/y6wa6rug).

*Brittannië (8)*
19 juni 1981, Noordzee Shell gasplatform, Leman Bank, 53°6'N, 2°12'O, c 45 km ten noordoosten van Happisburgh, Norfolk, Engeland, levend gevangen en op 19 juni losgelaten in Beccles, Norfolk; 20 juni 1981, omgeving Shadingfield, Norfolk, Engeland
30 mei 1993, Cley, Norfolk, Engeland
16 juli 1995, Daventry Reservoir, Northamptonshire, Engeland
1 juli 2005, Spurn, East Yorkshire, Engeland
22 juni 2008, Beacon Ponds, Kilnsea, East Yorkshire, Engeland; 26 juni 2008, Spurn en Kilnsea, East Yorkshire, Engeland
9 juli 2011, Spurn, East Yorkshire, Engeland
29 mei 2013, Bawdsey, Suffolk, Engeland; 12 juni 2013, Spurn, East Yorkshire, Engeland; 12 juni 2013, Saltfleetby, Lincolnshire, Engeland; 15-16 juni 2013, Trimley Marshes, Suffolk, Engeland
*2 juli 2017, Longhaven, Aberdeenshire, Schotland

*Denemarken (4)*
15 juni 2010, Hejresøen, Vestamager, Sjælland
25 mei 2013, Præstesø, Værløse, København, Sjælland
27 mei 2014, Reservatet, Skagen, Nordtjylland
29 mei 2014, Mandø, Ribe

*Duitsland (1)*
28 mei 2014, Mellum, Niedersachsen

*IJsland (1)*
*24 juni 2017, Baulutjörn, Mýrar

*Nederland (1)*
12 juni 2017, Westkapelle, Zeeland

*Zweden (5)*
6 juli 1999, Getteröns natuurreservaat, Halland
30 juli 2005, Hoburgen, Gotland
19 augustus 2007, Krákenabben en Hällevik, Blekinge
15 mei 2013, Rysjön, Kvismaren, Närke; 10-11 en 30 mei 2014, Kvismaren, Närke; 7 juni 2015, Flinesjön, Dalarna[1]
29 augustus 2015, Helsingborg, Skåne

[1]Ondanks het feit dat deze waarnemingen in drie afzonderlijke jaren plaatsvonden, beschouwt de Zweedse zeldzaamhedencommissie dit als één geval van een terugkerende vogel / despite the fact that these observations took place in three separate years, the Swedish rarities committee considers this as one record of a returning bird (Raritetskommittén 2017).

Deze taxa werden lange tijd beschouwd als ondersoorten van Siberische Gierzwaluw maar zijn naar aanleiding van recent onderzoek gesplitst vanwege significante verschillen in uiterlijke kenmerken (Leader 2011, Dickinson & Christidis 2014). Naast kleine verschillen in formaat en structuur onderscheidt Siberische zich van deze drie soorten met name door de breedte van de stuitvlek. Deze bedraagt c 10 mm bij Blyths, Cooks en Sálims Ali's en c 15-20 mm bij Siberische (cf Chantler & Driessens 1995, Leader 2011). De vogel van Westkapelle toonde een relatief brede stuitvlek die overeenkomt met de door Leader onderzochte balgen van Siberische. Daarnaast is het, gelet op hun verspreidingsgebied en beperkte trekgedrag, zeer onwaarschijnlijk dat Blyths, Cooks en Sálim Ali's in West-Europa kunnen opduiken.

Vermoedelijk is het laatste woord over de taxonomie van dit complex nog niet gezegd, want Päckert et al (2012) concludeerden na moleculaire analyses dat Cooks Gierzwaluw nauwer verwant is met de in Bhutan en Noordoost-India voorkomende Zwartruggierzwaluw *A acuticauda* dan met Siberische Gierzwaluw.

**Verspreiding en voorkomen**

Na de hierboven genoemde taxonomische wijziging worden van Siberische Gierzwaluw nu twee ondersoorten onderscheiden, namelijk *A p pacificus* en *A p kanoi* (cf Dickinson & Christidis 2014, contra Leader 2011). Nominaat *A p pacificus* broedt van Siberië, Rusland, oostelijk tot Kamtsjatka en Noord-Japan en zuidelijk tot Noord-China en overwintert hoofdzakelijk in Indonesië, Melanesië en Australië. Het is een langeafstandstrekker, met overwinteraars tot in Tasmanië, Australië. *A p kanoi* broedt van Zuid-Japan en Taiwan westelijk tot Zuidoost-Tibet en is een middellangeafstandstrekker die hoofdzakelijk overwintert in Maleisië, Indonesië en de Filippijnen (Chantler et al 2017).

De broedgebieden in Siberië worden verlaten tussen begin augustus en half september; het gros van de broedvogels keert terug in mei. De voornaamste doortrekroutes liggen over Zuidoost-Azië, de Sunda-eilanden en de Filippijnen (Chantler & Driessens 1995).

Kenmerkend voor langeafstandstrekkers is dat ze geregeld ver buiten de normale broed- en overwinteringsgebieden kunnen opduiken. Zo ook bij

deze soort. Er zijn gevallen bekend van de Seychellen, de Malediven en van Nieuw-Zeeland en omliggende eilanden, zoals Macquarie-eiland (Chantler & Driessens 1995, Higgins 1999). Frappant is dat ondergetekende zelf in november 2016 het derde geval voor Oman waarnam nabij Salalah; hierbij dient te worden aangetekend dat Blyths Gierzwaluw, die in India overwintert, niet uitgesloten kon worden. In Noord-Amerika verschijnt de soort incidenteel op de Pribilofeilanden en de Aleoeten, Alaska, VS, en in Yukon, Canada (Chantler & Driessens 1995, Schonewille 2010, Howell et al 2014). Een waarneming op 26 augustus 2016 in de delta van de Colville River, Noord-Alaska, zou indien aanvaard pas het derde geval voor het vasteland van Noord-Amerika zijn (Swick 2016).

De waarneming is door de Commissie Dwaalgasten Nederlandse Avifauna (CDNA) aanvaard als eerste geval voor Nederland. In het West-Palearctische gebied (WP) zijn tot begin juli 2017 20 gevallen bekend (Haas 2012, 2017; tabel 1). Op 24 juni 2017, 12 dagen na de vogel van Westkapelle, werd een exemplaar fraai gefotografeerd bij Holt, Mýrar, IJsland (Birding Iceland 2017; Dutch Birding 39: 260, 265, plaat 348, 2017) en op 2 juli 2017 was er een waarneming in Aberdeenshire, Schotland (http://tinyurl.com/y6wa6rug). Uitgaande van aanvaarding van de waarneming in IJsland, is de soort nu in zes WP-landen vastgesteld, in Brittannië (8), Zweden (5), Denemarken (4), Duitsland (1), IJsland (1) en Nederland (1). Het eerste WP-geval dateert uit 1981 en betrof een opmerkelijk geval: deze vogel probeerde te landen op de schouder van een medewerker van een in de Noordzee gelegen boorplatform, op c 45 km afstand van de Engelse kust. De vogel werd gevangen en per helikopter naar het vasteland gebracht, waar hij werd gedetermineerd en vervolgens vrijgelaten (Parker 1990). Een waarneming – met foto – op 25 mei 2014 bij Valdoviño, A Coruña, Spanje, werd vanwege gebrek aan nadere documentatie niet door de Spaanse zeldzaamhedencommissie beoordeeld (Espiñeira 2014).

Het aantal verschillende individuen dat in de WP is waargenomen, is waarschijnlijk lager dan het aantal gevallen dat in tabel 1 wordt getoond. Zo zouden de gevallen bij Spurn, Engeland, in 2005, 2008, 2011 en 2013 steeds betrekking kunnen hebben gehad op hetzelfde terugkerende individu (cf Smith 2013) en houden Horstkotte et al (2015) het voor mogelijk dat de waarnemingen in Denemarken, Duitsland en Zweden in mei 2014 steeds dezelfde vogel betroffen.

Met uitzondering van het geval op 29 augustus 2015 in Zweden beperken de waarnemingen zich tot de maanden mei, juni en juli, met de nadruk op de periode tussen eind mei en half juli. In Noord-Amerika waren de meeste gevallen echter in september en begin oktober (Howell et al 2014). Het patroon in de WP wijkt af van het voorkomen van andere dwaalgasten uit Centraal- en Oost-Azië die in Europa vastgesteld worden; de overgrote meerderheid daarvan duikt op in het najaar (vooral oktober en november). Opmerkelijk is de overeenkomst met het voorkomen van Stekelstaartgierzwaluw. Van de c 25 waarnemingen van Stekelstaartgierzwaluw in de WP in 1800-2017, stammen, op drie gevallen na, ook alle waarnemingen uit het late voorjaar en de zomer, met de nadruk op de periode tussen half mei en eind juni (cf Sanders et al 1998; www.tarsiger.com). Zowel het verspreidingsgebied als het trekgedrag van Stekelstaartgierzwaluw komen sterk overeen met die van Siberische Gierzwaluw (cf Chantler & Driessens 1995).

Wat betreft de gevallen van Siberische Gierzwaluw in Engeland is het opmerkelijk dat vier van de zeven waarnemingen afkomstig zijn van één locatie, namelijk Spurn Bird Observatory, East Yorkshire. Alle vier waarnemingen werden gedaan tijdens dagen met goede gierzwaluwentrek (Roadhouse 2016). Naast het feit dat deze locatie zeer strategisch is gelegen (op een in zee uitstekende landtong) kan dit wellicht verklaard worden doordat Spurn zich ook gedurende de zomermaanden kan verheugen in veel belangstelling van vogelaars/trektellers.

**Dankzegging**
Ik dank Willem-Jan Fontijn voor zijn waardevolle aanvullingen en assistentie bij het samenstellen van dit artikel.

**Summary**
Pacific Swift at Westkapelle in June 2017 On 12 June 2017, a Pacific Swift *Apus pacificus* was discovered at Westkapelle, Zeeland, the Netherlands, foraging amongst c 20 Common Swifts *A apus*. It was seen by a single observer, who managed to take a series of good photographs. After c 5 min, it disappeared, presumably in a south-westerly direction. Despite the efforts of a few 10s of birders, it could not be refound. The combination of the clear broad white rump patch, clear pale-fringed feathers on the belly, relatively deeply forked tail and size, structure and flight similar to Common Swift rules out all other *Apus* species, including the closely related Blyth's *A leuconyx*, Cook's *A cooki* and Salim Ali's Swift *A salimalii,* which occur in different parts of South Asia and East Asia. Pacific can be distinguished from these three species especially by its broader white rump patch, which is c 10 mm in Blyth's, Cook's and Salim Ali's and

c 15-20 mm in Pacific. Moreover, in view of their distribution and migratory behaviour, it is highly unlikely that these three species will ever occur in western Europe. Up to June 2017, there have been 19 other records in the Western Palearctic, including the first for Iceland on 24 June 2017 and first for Scotland on 2 July 2017 (table 1). The number of different individuals may be lower than the number of records, due to several follow-up sightings (eg, the records in May 2014 may concern one individual and it has been suggested that all four records at Spurn, England, in 2005, 2008, 2011 and 2013 may have involved the same returning individual). With one exception (late August), all sightings date from May, June and July, especially between late May and mid July. In North America, however, most of the records were in September and early October. The pattern in the WP differs from the occurrence of other Central Asian and East Asian vagrants in Europe, as most tend to occur in (late) autumn, but closely corresponds with the pattern of the c 25 sightings of White-throated Needletail *Hirundapus caudacutus* in Europe. That species is also a long-distance migrant which has a distribution range and migratory behaviour similar to Pacific.

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# Pacific Loon at Silvaplanersee, Switzerland, in December 2015, with notes on genetics, identification and WP records

*Niels Peter Ammitzboell, Stefan Werner, David A Marques & Manuel Schweizer*

On 14 December 2015, Niels Peter Ammitzboell observed a juvenile loon *Gavia* at 1791 m above sea level on the Silvaplanersee, Graubünden, Switzerland. He realized that the bird showed features of Pacific Loon *G pacifica,* and took some documentary photographs. This impression was corroborated by Stefan Werner when he was sent the photographs. Unfortunately, the bird could not be relocated the following days. The identification was further discussed with David Marques and Manuel Schweizer and, when the bird was relocated by NPA on 19 December, the observation was spread as a probable Pacific over different news platforms. The following days, it was observed by several 100s of birders and could be documented photographically in every detail (cf Dutch Birding 38: 103, plate 152, 2016). While the bird was quite active and observed feeding (diving) during the first days of observation, it became more and more passive in the course of the week and appeared increasingly exhausted. In the morning of 26 December, it was found dead, floating on the water, and was collected by local authorities. The specimen (BNM 016793) is now in the collection of the Bündner Naturmuseum, Chur, Graubünden. The identification as Pacific was confirmed by DNA analyses and the record was accepted by the Swiss rarities committee as the first for Switzerland (Martinez & Maumary 2016). Later, it was realized that the same bird had already been observed on 13 December by Jürg Cambensy.

The separation of Black-throated Loon *G arctica* and Pacific Loon is difficult in all plumages (eg, Birch & Lee 1995) and the identification of all previous records in the Western Palearctic (WP) has been widely discussed (Ahmad 2007, Astins & Brown 2007, Taylor et al 2007, Mullarney & Millington 2008, Lawlor 2010, Mather 2010, Velasco 2010). As the bird from Switzerland is the first record in the WP of which the identification was confirmed by DNA analysis, we discuss here the phenotypic features of juvenile Pacific in the light of the Swiss record, in addition to documenting this unusual observation.

## Description

The description is based on field notes, photographs and video-recordings of the living bird as well as of the specimen.

SIZE & STRUCTURE No size comparison with other loons possible when alive, but appearing only slightly larger than Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*. Rather short and slim dagger-like bill with no obvious gonys, usually held horizontally. Crown rounded with highest point immediately behind eye. Between dives when actively feeding however, crown appearing sleekly rounded or rather flat and hindcrown more square shaped. In relaxed posture, crown seemingly 'puffed up' and rounded and head appearing large. Nape conspicuously 'inflated' in relaxed posture.

HEAD & NECK Diffuse transition between greyish and whitish part on head-side, with sharp demarcation limited to loral region; ear-coverts washed out greyish; thin whitish eye-ring usually well visible. Sharp border between greyish hindneck and white foreneck; hint of dark and incomplete throat strap present but hardly noticeable in field (plate 312). Neck-side noticeably darker than nape, sometimes almost appearing as dark line. Nape-feathers with white base, visible in field when bird preening.

UPPERPARTS Mainly dark greyish, clearly darker than nape. Pale fringes particularly broad on scapulars (up to 5 mm broad), connected on most scapulars with two longitudinally oval whitish patches (up to 7 mm long) on both inner and outer web (plate 317). Remaining upperpart feathers dark grey with paler fringes.

UNDERPARTS Breast-side with some dark streaks. Flank chiefly dark grey including anterior tibial part. Consequently, no white 'thigh patch' visible while swimming (plate 312). Dark grey thigh connected by rather thin but complete dark band (plate 316), also sometimes visible in the field before diving or while preening. Underparts otherwise chiefly white, except for rear undertail-coverts with greyish feather base.

WING Remiges and primary coverts dark grey. Wing-coverts dark grey with paler fringes. Underwing-coverts



[*Dutch Birding 39: 228-238, 2017*]

**312** Pacific Loon / Pacifische Parelduiker *Gavia pacifica*, juvenile, Silvaplanersee, Graubünden, Switzerland, 23 December 2015 *(Ralph Martin/visual-nature.de)*. In this photo, both faint throat-strap and absence of white thigh patch are well visible. **313** Pacific Loon / Pacifische Parelduiker *Gavia pacifica*, juvenile, Silvaplanersee, Graubünden, Switzerland, 23 December 2015 *(Ralph Martin/visual-nature.de)*. Bird in relaxed pose.

TABLE 1 Measurements of Pacific Loon *Gavia pacifica* from Silvaplanersee, Graubünden, Switzerland, taken from specimen on 12 January 2016 by Gieri Derungs, David Jenny and Hannes Jenny, compared with measurements in literature from Pacific Loon and Black-throated Loon *G arctica arctica*. *Methods of measuring and abbreviations according to Deutsche Ornithologen-Gesellschaft (2011). Measurements from literature taken with different technique than in bird from Silvaplanersee are indicated: Tar2 (tarsus length from intertarsal joint to lower front edge of last undivided scale before toes diverge), Wflat (wing length with primaries flattened against ruler). [1]Alaska, USA, adult (Dunning 2008); [2]Russell (2002); [3]Alaska and Canada, adult (Palmer 1962); [4]Russia (methods of measurement not mentioned, Flint 1985); [5]North America, adult; midpoints of ranges approximate means (Pyle 2008); [6]Canada, adult (Godfrey 1986); [7]adult (Cramp & Simmons 1977).

| measurement | Pacific Loon Silvaplanersee* | Pacific Loon | Black-throated Loon |
|---|---|---|---|
| **body mass** | 1280 g | ♂ 1830 (1135-2450, n=8)[1]<br>♀ 1507 (990-2038, n=8)[1] | ♂♀ 1300-3400[7] |
| **total length (TL1)**<br>(tip of bill to tip of tail) | 66.0 cm | 58-74[2] | – |
| **wing span (WSp)** | 115.8 cm | 110-128[2] | – |
| **wing length:**<br>maximum chord (Wmax) **a**<br>(bird's head pointing away from examiner) | 295 mm | **Wflat** ♂ 299.6 (285-307, n=10)[3]<br>**Wflat** ♀ 295.7 (281-307, n=10)[3] | ♂ 324 (294-343, n=10)[7]<br>♀ 309 (282-337, n=10)[7] |
| maximum chord (Wmax) **b**<br>(bird's head pointing towards examiner) | 294 mm | ♂ 303 (295-307)[4]<br>♀ 291 (282-310)[4] | ♂ 312 (296-338)[4]<br>♀ 299 (275-325)[4] |
| **length of p8**<br>(third outermost primary) | 152 mm | – | – |
| **tail length (T1)** | 51.3 mm | ♂ 55-62, n=73[5]<br>♀ 52-58, n=49[5] | ♂ 58.7 (53-67, n=10)[7]<br>♀ 57.8 (51-61, n=8)[7] |
| **tarsus length (Tar1)** | 75.3 mm | ♂ 69-79, n=73[5]<br>♀ 65-76, n=49[5]<br>**Tar2** ♂ 74.3 (70.2-78.5, n=10)[6]<br>**Tar2** ♀ 71.9 (67.2-75.0, n=10)[6]<br>♂ 72.9 (69.7-75.0)[4]<br>♀ 69.9 (66.8-71.5)[4] | ♂ 82.2 (72-89, n=11)[7]<br>♀ 78.8 (71-87, n=10)[7]<br>♂77.8 (69.7-85.2)[4]<br>♀73.5 (63.2-83.1)[4] |
| **head + bill length (HL)**<br>(from hindmost point of head to tip of bill) | 135.0 mm | – | – |
| **bill length to feathering (BF)**<br>(length of exposed culmen) | 48.4 mm | ♂ 48-61, n=73[5]<br>♀ 44-56, n=49[5]<br>♂ 51.9 (49.5-55.0, n=10)[6]<br>♀ 50.8 (49.0-54.0, n=10)[6]<br>♂ 49.2 (47.0-50.6)[4]<br>♀ 49.5 (47.2-52.1)[4] | ♂ 60.7 (52-68, n=9)[7]<br>♀ 60.2 (52-68, n=10)[7]<br>♂ 60.7 (50.2-68.0)[4]<br>♀ 56.3 (49.6-64.0)[4] |
| **bill length to skull (BSK)** | 73.8 mm | – | – |
| **bill depth (Bd)**<br>(at distal edge of nostril) | 12.9 mm | ♂ 12.0-14.2, n=73[5]<br>♀ 10.9-12.6, n=49[5] | – |
| **bill width (BWd)**<br>(at distal edge of nostril) | 9.1 mm | – | – |

white but inner greater underwing-coverts with dark marking along shaft, particularly extending onto outer web. Axillaries white with dark shaft-streaks.

TAIL Rectrices dark grey with pointed white tip.

BARE PARTS Iris reddish brown. Bill pale grey including tip and cutting edges, culmen darker. Tarsus and digits pale grey, paler on inner side. Webs between digits flesh-coloured.

BIOMETRICS Measurements taken from dead specimen (cf table 1).

## Identification by DNA barcoding

*Material and methods*

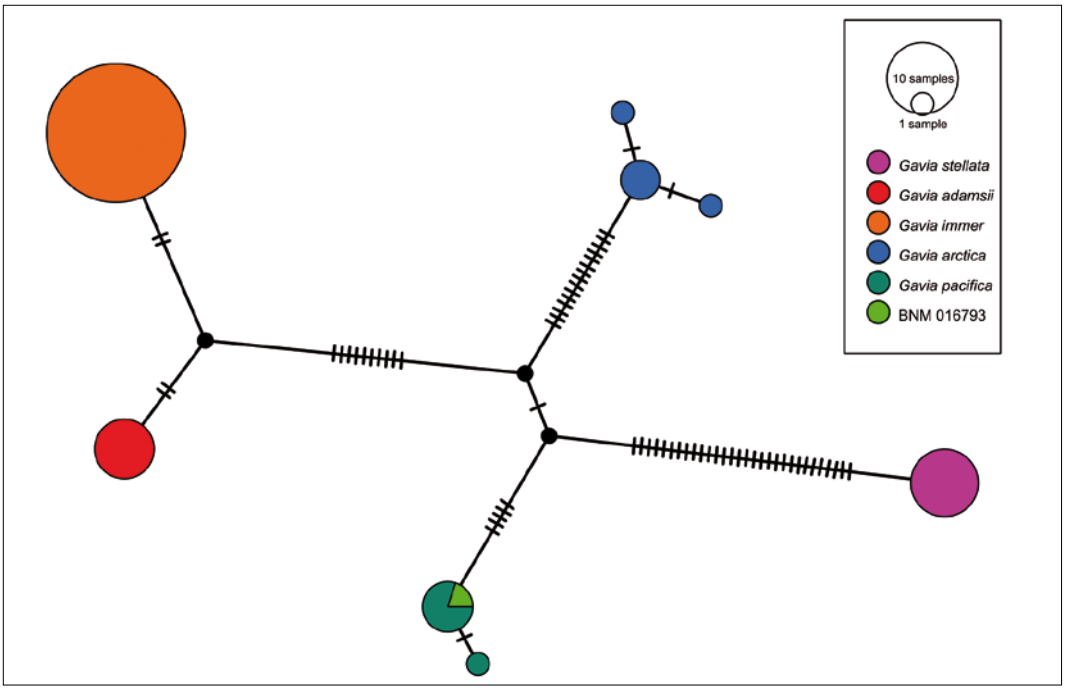
A partial sequence of the mitochondrial gene Cytochrome Oxidase subunit 1 (COI) was chosen for species identification because COI gene sequences for all species in the genus *Gavia* were available for comparison on GenBank (www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/genbank). See appendix 1 for laboratory protocols for DNA sequence generation.

For species identification, a gene tree was reconstructed using all available COI sequences of *Gavia* species present on GenBank. Emperor Penguin *Aptenodytes forsteri* was used as outgroup (Jarvis et al 2014). Sequences were aligned using the MAFFT algorithm (Katoh et al 2002) implemented as a plugin in Geneious Pro, using default settings. A maximum-likelihood search was then employed using RAxML v 7.2.8 (Stamatakis 2006) in Geneious Pro v 8.1.6 (Drummond et al 2013) with 500 rapid bootstrap inferences (Stamatakis et al 2008), with all free model parameters – substitution rates, gamma shape parameter and base frequencies – estimated by the software. The resulting tree was visualized in FigTree v 1.4.2 (Rambaut 2008). Moreover, a median joining network (Bandelt et al 1999) was calculated in PopART (http://popart.otago.ac.nz).

*Results*

The resulting alignment consisted of 662 base pairs (GenBank accession number MF457896). The bird from Silvaplanersee showed an identical sequence to five Pacific Loons available on GenBank with the exception of one Pacific with accession number DQ43666, which differed by a single substitution of a C with a T at position 130 of the alignment (figure 1). The Swiss bird differed from Black-throated Loon by a minimum genetic distance of 5.7% (corrected) based on the best-fitting maximum-likelihood reconstruction (see below). Sequences DQ433670 (Pacific) and DQ137167 (Common Loon *G immer*) were not included in phylogenetic reconstruction due to a lot of missing data in those sequences. In the maximum-likelihood reconstruction, the bird from Silvaplanersee clustered with the other Pacific samples and was clearly separated from Black-throated samples (fig-

FIGURE 1 Mitochondrial COI gene median joining network of different *Gavia* species. Black dashes represent mutation steps and circles different haplotypes with size of circles proportional to haplotype frequencies. As suggested by phenotype, bird from Silvaplanersee, Graubünden, Switzerland (BNM 016793) carries haplotype identical to most common haplotype among Pacific Loon *G pacifica*.



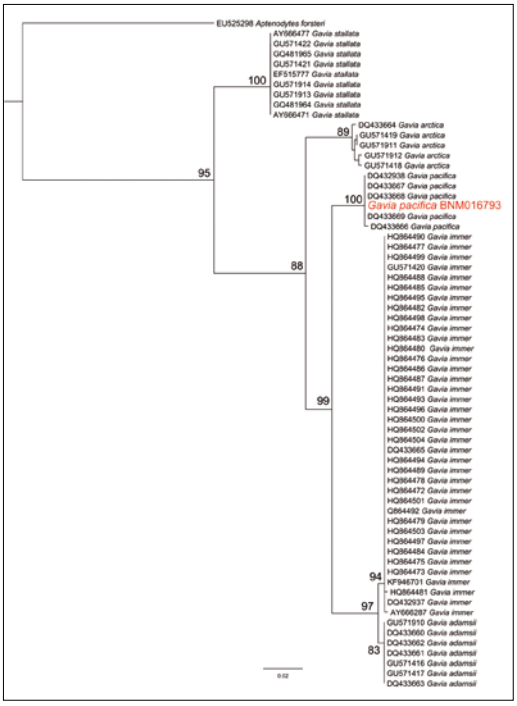



FIGURE 2 Mitochondrial COI gene maximum-likelihood phylogeny of five loon *Gavia* species, including bird from Silvaplanersee, Graubünden, Switzerland, highlighted in red, which falls into well-supported clade of Pacific Loon *G pacifica*. Node labels indicate bootstrap support for each node in percent.

ure 2). All species clades were supported by high bootstrap values above 70, a value frequently referred to for well-supported clades (Hillis & Bull 1993). Note that the phylogenetic tree presented is just a gene tree based on one mitochondrial marker, hence the branching pattern does not necessarily indicate true relationships among the *Gavia* loons (for which see Sprengelmeyer 2014).

**Field identification**

The separation of both juvenile and adult winter Pacific Loon and Black-throated Loon based on plumage features is challenging and has been dealt with in several papers from recent years (Birch & Lee 1995, 1997, Astins & Brown 2007, Taylor et al 2007, Mullarney & Millington 2008, Mather 2010, Velasco 2010). The most reliable features for the identification of an out-of-range Pacific are the lack of a white 'thigh patch' and different structural characters – features usually first noticed when confronted with a suspicious individual in the field, as was the case with the Swiss bird. We were able to judge the absence of a white thigh patch after careful examination in the field, on photographic series, and later on the specimen itself. It is important to ensure that the lack of a white 'thigh patch' is not caused by the activity and posture of the bird. The white 'thigh patch' of Black-throated is usually conspicuous in relaxed and normally swimming birds but can be concealed in birds lying deeply in the water, eg, during periods of active foraging between dives.

Pacific Loon is on average smaller sized than Black-throated Loon (eg, Birch & Lee 1995, 1997). In a Pacific region context, a Black-throated swimming with Pacific will usually look like a bigger bird (eg, Flint 1985, Kaufman 2011). To what extent this holds true in a European region context is less clear, as nominate Black-throated *G a arctica* averages smaller and shorter-billed than the Eastern Palearctic subspecies *G a viridigularis* (Walsh 1988, Birch & Lee 1995, 1997). The Pacific in Cornwall, England, was described as considerably smaller than an accompanying Black-throated (Ahmad 2007). Judging body size of lone individuals such as the Swiss bird is difficult, however. Comparisons with accompanying Great Crested Grebes made the Swiss Pacific appear only slightly bigger. Very useful structural differences from Black-throated are the Pacific's 'inflated' hindneck in combination with a short, more delicate bill and a rounded head shape in relaxed pose, leading to a quite distinct 'jizz'. The inflated hindneck, small and rather slender bill and head shape of the Swiss bird were eye-catching (plate 314). However, these structural features critically depend on the posture of the bird: the bill of the Swiss bird appeared much longer with flattened head and neck feathers during frequent diving (plate 315) but much shorter in relaxed posture (cf also plate 313).

Bill length measurements of the Swiss bird fell slightly short of the reported range for adult Black-throated Loon (table 1). As juvenile Black-throated apparently often have shorter bills than adults (Barthel & Mullarney 1988, Jonsson & Tysse 1991, Mather 2010), this difference should be interpreted with caution. It has been suggested that bill structure might only be useful in the field when dealing with particularly small- or large-billed birds (Astins & Brown 2007). It is thus not surprising that the Swiss bird, with its (for Pacific Loon) average-sized bill, did not seem particularly small billed in active posture.

All measurements taken from the specimen are within the range of published data for adult Pacific Loon with the exception of the tail length. Only body mass and bill length (bill to feathering) were

**314** Pacific Loon / Pacifische Parelduiker *Gavia pacifica*, juvenile, Silvaplanersee, Graubünden, Switzerland, 23 December 2015 *(Ralph Martin/visual-nature.de)*. Note typical head shape and rather short-necked appearance in relaxed pose. Note also dark thigh without white patch. **315** Pacific Loon / Pacifische Parelduiker *Gavia pacifica*, juvenile, Silvaplanersee, Graubünden, Switzerland, 23 December 2015 *(Ralph Martin/visual-nature.de)*. In active pose between dives, crown seemingly flatter, leading to stronger-billed appearance, similar to Black-throated Loon *G arctica*.

**316** Pacific Loon / Pacifische Parelduiker *Gavia pacifica*, juvenile (found dead at Silvaplanersee, Graubünden, Switzerland, on 26 December 2015), Bündner Naturmuseum, Chur, Graubünden, Switzerland (BNM 016793) *(David Jenny)*. Note complete vent-strap. **317** Pacific Loon / Pacifische Parelduiker *Gavia pacifica*, juvenile (found dead at Silvaplanersee, Graubünden, Switzerland, on 26 December 2015), Bündner Naturmuseum, Chur, Graubünden, Switzerland (BNM 016793) *(David Jenny)*. Typical pattern of scapulars with white spots. **318** Black-throated Loon / Parelduiker *Gavia arctica*, juvenile (found dead at IJmuiden, Noord-Holland, Netherlands, on 5 February 2013), Hoofddorp, Noord-Holland, Netherlands, 14 March 2013 *(Roy Slaterus)*. Some Black-throated Loons may also have complete vent-strap. **319** Black-throated Loon / Parelduiker *Gavia arctica*, juvenile (found dead at IJmuiden, Noord-Holland, Netherlands, on 5 February 2013), Hoofddorp, Noord-Holland, Netherlands, 14 March 2013 *(Roy Slaterus)*. Scapulars of Black-throated Loons can be rather 'scaly' too but they probably never show conspicuous large oval white patches as in some Pacific Loons *G pacifica*.

outside the ranges of adult nominate Black-throated Loon (table 1). As the bird was severely emaciated (as revealed by examination of the dead specimen), body mass should be treated with caution. Note that the specimen has not been dissected yet, so sex and stomach contents are still unknown.

Additional supporting plumage features published for Pacific Loon include the coloration of the hindneck and rear cheek, the presence of a throat-strap and vent-strap and the scapular pattern. The hindneck is supposed to be paler grey compared with Black-throated Loon, with a stronger contrast with a prominent darker stripe on the neck-side, features shown by the Swiss bird. Variable light conditions, however, did limit the visibility of this trait, which became apparent on photographs taken under different lighting, and a direct comparison with a same-aged Black-throated would have been desirable. A dusky washed-out face pattern with a darker and more sullied rear cheek is characteristic for juvenile Pacific, whereas the cheeks are usually whiter in Black-throated (eg, Birch & Lee 1995). This feature was striking in the Swiss bird and led to a quite distinct 'jizz' in combination with the rounded crown. However, the rear cheek can also appear more sullied in some juvenile Black-throated (Pyle 2008, Velasco 2010), calling for

caution with odd birds showing 'dirty' cheeks.

The throat-strap is often cited as another important identification feature of Pacific Loon but can be absent in some and might rarely be shown by Black-throated Loon (Littlewood 1996, Birch & Lee 1997, Astins & Brown 2007, Mather 2010). Moreover, the throat-strap presence is age-dependent and it is lacking in around half of juvenile Pacific (Reinking & Howell 1993). The Swiss bird showed a very faint, incomplete throat-strap which was hardly discernible in the field and even hard to see on the specimen (plate 312). Another feature, a complete vent-strap, was formerly considered as diagnostic, with few Pacific showing an incomplete vent-strap (Birch & Lee 1995). Recent studies of the nominate subspecies of Black-throated Loon revealed that a complete vent-strap is also shown by some, with some individuals of the latter species even showing a broader strap than some Pacific (Astins & Brown 2007, Mather 2010), making this feature unreliable for identification (plate 318). The Swiss bird showed a complete vent strap as expected for an average Pacific. The scapular tips in juvenile Pacific are supposed to be very pale and broad. At close range, they can appear as distinct as in juvenile Common Loon or even Yellow-billed Loon *G adamsii*. This feature was striking in the Swiss bird (plate 317) but caution is warranted as juvenile Black-throated can appear rather 'scaly' too (plate 319). We further noticed the presence of large oval white patches to the scapulars, both on photographs from the field and from the specimen. Although this trait has been mentioned earlier for Pacific Loon by Jonsson (1996), its variation in both species is currently unknown and it is not clear whether it might be of any value for identification. However, even rather 'scaly' juvenile Black-throated Loons might never show as contrastingly patterned scapulars as the Swiss bird (Lars Jonsson in litt).

**Distribution and WP records**

Pacific Loon breeds at freshwater lakes on arctic tundra of east Siberia, Russia, and on arctic and subarctic tundra and taiga of the Nearctic, in terrain ranging from lowlands to foothills; it winters in marine habitats along both sides of the Pacific, south to north-western Mexico and southern Japan (Russell 2002). On migration and east of their normal wintering range, a large number of scattered records can be found across the entire North American continent, both inland and along the east coast south to Florida, the Bahamas and east to Newfoundland (www.ebird.com). By the end of 2016, there were 16 records in the WP, plus two well-documented reports from England in January-February 2017; 13 of the records are from Britain (including Channel Islands), Ireland and Northern Ireland, three from Scandinavia and one from the Spanish Atlantic shore. The Swiss record thus was the first inland record for the WP. Eight birds were identified as adult and eight as juvenile upon their first appearance (table 2). Most observations in the WP fall in the winter months, with the majority referring to birds that have stayed for multiple weeks or months. Five birds have returned to the same overwintering location for several years (cf table 2). Most dates of first appearance lie between November and February, a period in which also the Swiss bird was discovered. A number of observations occurred during spring migration, with the notable exception of a summering bird from Norway (table 2). Although the Swiss record is unusual among WP records by involving a landlocked, high-altitude freshwater lake, similar habitats are used by Pacific in their native range during migration.

**Conclusion**

The genetic analysis of a mitochondrial marker confirmed that the bird from Silvaplanersee carried the mitochondrial genome of a Pacific Loon. As mitochondria are strictly maternally inherited in birds, there is no doubt that the mother of the bird also had the mtDNA genome of Pacific. However, it can theoretically not be excluded that the father was a Black-throated Loon. Although specimens with apparent intermediate characters between the two species have been reported and hybridization suggested (Bailey 1943, 1948, Storer 1978), and despite the observation of a mixed pair in their area of sympatry in north-eastern Siberia (Soloviev et al 1993), successful hybridization has never been proven (cf Roselaar et al 2006). As outlined above, the bird from Silvaplanersee did not show any mixed or untypical characters and all plumage and structural features noted in the field and measured on the specimen clearly point towards a typical juvenile Pacific. Hence, we can be confident that the bird indeed belonged to this species. In conclusion, the identification of the first Pacific recorded in Switzerland is supported by mitochondrial genetic evidence and a complete suite of typical phenotypic characteristics, making this the first WP record confirmed by DNA barcoding. Ongoing scrutiny in testing identification features in a vagrancy context and increasing familiarity of observers with Pacific will in the years to come reveal how many more Pacific hide among Black-throated in the WP.

TABLE 2 Records of Pacific Loon *Gavia pacifica* in the Western Palearctic; records marked with asterisk (*) await acceptance by relevant rarities committee (Hudson & the Rarities Committee 2009, 2010, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, Fahy 2010, 2011, Lehikoinen et al 2010, Díes et al 2011, Lawlor & the Bailiwick of Guernsey Rarities Committee 2011, 2012, Carmody & Hobbs 2015, Northern Ireland Rare Birds Committee 2015, Martinez & Maumary 2016; Anders Eriksson in litt, Nigel Hudson in litt, Joe Hobbs in litt, Tor Olsen in litt).

*Britain (7+)*

12 January to 4 February 2007, Farnham, Yorkshire, England, second-year

2 February to 20 March 2007, Llys-y-Fran Reservoir, Pembrokeshire, Wales, second-year; 16 January to 11 February 2008, same place; 25-26 February 2009, same place (same returning individual)

17 February to 10 March 2007, Mount's Bay, Penzance, Cornwall, England, adult; 23-29 November 2007, Marazion, Cornwall (same returning individual)

2 November 2009, Long Rock Beach, Marazion, Cornwall; 19 November to 9 December 2009, Carnsew Pool, Hayle, Cornwall; 21 December 2010 to 3 March 2011, Marazion and Newlyn, Cornwall; 5 December 2012 to 25 March 2013, Marazion and Mount's Bay, Cornwall; 22 November 2014 to 22 February 2017, Marazion and Newlyn to Perranuthnoe, Cornwall (same returning individual)

18-19 November 2009, Slimbridge to Sharpness, Severn Estuary, Gloucestershire, England, adult; 27 November 2009, Severn Beach, Avon, England (same returning individual)

16 May 2013, Grutness, Mainland, Shetland, Scotland, adult

10-27 November 2013, Dodman Point and Pendower Beach, Cornwall, England, adult; 18-19 February 2015, Dodman Point and Pendower, Cornwall; 30-31 December 2015, Maenporth, Cornwall (same returning individual)

*18 January to 17 March 2017, Blyth Estuary, East Chevington and Druridge Bay, Northumberland, England, first-year

*16 February to 7 March 2017, Broadsands, Devon, England, first-year

*Channel Islands (1)*

2-14 January 2010, Grandes Havres, Guernsey, first-year; 28 March 2010, Perelle Bay, Guernsey; 8 January to 8 February 2011, Grandes Havres, Guernsey (same returning individual)

*Finland (1)*

10-11 November 2010, Järvenpää, Tuusulanjärvi, first-year

*Ireland (2)*

12 January 2009, Tawin, Galway, adult; 30 January 2010, Oranmore, Galway; 6-28 March and 2-23 May 2010, Finvarra Point, Clare (same individual)

5 April 2014, Tawin, Galway, adult; *5 January 2016 to at least January 2017, same place (probably same returning individual)

*Northern Ireland (1)*

16 January to 28 February 2014, Lough Fea, Tyrone, adult

*Norway (1)*

12 July 2015 to 25 March 2016, Kviljoodden, Lista, second-year

*Spain (1)*

7 December 2009, Santoña, Cantabria, first-year

*Sweden (1)*

8 May 2015, Stenshuvud, Skåne, adult

*Switzerland (1)*

13-26 December 2015, Silvaplanersee, Graubünden, first-year (found dead on 26 December)

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**Samenvatting**

PACIFISCHE PARELDUIKER OP SILVAPLANAMEER, ZWITSERLAND, IN DECEMBER 2015, MET INFORMATIE OVER GENETICA, HERKENNING EN WP-GEVALLEN Een juveniele Pacifische Parelduiker *Gavia pacifica* werd op 14 december 2015 gevonden op het Silvaplanameer in Graubünden, Zwitserland, op 1791 m hoogte. De daaropvolgende dagen werd de vogel door vele vogelaars waargenomen, tot hij op 26 december dood werd gevonden; naderhand bleek hij al op 13 december te zijn gezien. Dit betreft het eerste geval van deze soort in het binnenland van de WP en het eerste dat op basis van DNA kon worden bevestigd. De vogel vertoonde alle typische veldkenmerken van de soort, zoals het ontbreken van een witte dijvlek, de typische 'jizz' in ontspannen houding met 'opgeblazen' achternek contrasterend met de rug, een dunne snavel, prominente donkere streping op de zijhals, een complete band die de onderstaartdekveren scheidt van de anaalstreek,

een donker gezicht en 'vuile' wangen. De 'keelband' was nauwelijks waarneembaar en niet compleet, terwijl lichte toppen aan de schouderveren de vogel een opvallend geschubd uiterlijk gaven.

Deze waarneming is aanvaard als het eerste geval van deze soort voor Zwitserland en het 16e voor de WP. De bruikbaarheid van diverse veldkenmerken wordt in dit artikel besproken, de biometrie van de vogel wordt vergeleken met wat er bekend is uit literatuur, de genetische analyse wordt toegelicht en voorgaande WP-gevallen worden besproken en samengevat.

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APPENDIX 1 Laboratory protocols for DNA sequence generation

Total genomic DNA from the muscle tissue of the bird from Silvaplanersee was isolated with the DNeasy Blood & Tissue Kit (Qiagen) following the manufacturer's instructions. A partial sequence of the COI gene was amplified with polymerase chain reaction using published primers BirdF1: TTCTCCAACCACAAAGACATTGGCAC and BirdR1: ACGTGGGAGATAATTCCAAATCCTG (Hebert et al 2004). Total PCR reaction volume was 25 µl containing 12.5 µl GoTaq Hot Start Green Master Mix (Promega), 2 µl genomic DNA, 2 µl of each primer with a concentration of 10 µM and 6.5 µl $ddH_2O$. A negative control was used to check for potential contamination. PCR was performed on a TC-512 thermo-cycler (Techne) and amplification was performed with an initial denaturation at 94°C for three minutes, followed by 40 cycles of denaturation at 95°C for 30 seconds, annealing for 30 seconds at 55°C, and extension at 72°C for one minute, with a final extension at 72°C for seven minutes. The PCR product was examined by gel electrophoresis to confirm amplification of the target fragment. PCR purification and sequencing in both directions were carried out by LGC Genomics (Berlin, Germany). The resulting sequences were trimmed with Geneious Pro and checked for quality by searching for apparent stop codons after the translation of sequences into amino acids.

# Probable hybrids Little Egret x Indian Reef Heron in India and Sri Lanka

*Pankaj Koparde & Pierre Yésou*

Egrets of the genus *Egretta* are considered among the most confusing bird groups to identify (eg, Dubois & Yésou 1995). Three species occur in India, namely Little Egret *E garzetta*, Indian Reef Heron *E gularis schistacea* (the eastern subspecies of Reef Heron *E gularis*; from coastal north-eastern Africa to the Indian subcontinent), and Pacific Reef Heron *E sacra* (cf van den Berg 2017). Several taxa of Ardeidae have been reported to interbreed (McCarthy 2006), including Little Egret and the western subspecies of the polymorphic Reef Heron, Western Reef Heron *E g gularis* (from coastal tropical western Africa). This had led to dark phenotypes within the range of the widespread Little Egret which can be difficult to identify in the field (eg, Dubois & Yésou 1995, van den Berg 1999), complicating the assessment of their taxonomic status.

Clements et al (2016) list three subspecies of Little Egret and two subspecies of Reef Heron. BirdLife International (2016) treats Little and Reef as separate species, with three subspecies each, while IOC (Gill & Donsker 2017) treats both with two subspecies. Little Egret is a widespread species, occupying most biogeographic zones, where it frequents

both coastal and inland wetlands. Reef Heron (Western and Indian) is native to the North Ethiopian and parts of African, Oriental and Palearctic zones, mostly occurring at estuaries and seashores (BirdLife International 2016). In contrast with the above mentioned world lists of birds, the IUCN-SSC Heron Specialist Group (www.heronconservation.org) and Turner (2014) cautiously lumped Little Egret and Reef Heron in a single polymorphic species (*E garzetta*), claiming that the different taxa or forms could be populations of a single widespread species and that further molecular evidence may clarify their taxonomic affinities and solve the question of dark-morph Little Egret (but see Collinson et al 2016). Here, however, we follow the taxonomy proposed by BirdLife International (2016) and Dutch Birding (van den Berg 2017).

**Hybridization**

Hybridization of Little Egret and Western Reef Heron has been recorded in the Mediterranean Sea region, into which the latter occasionally disperses, with proven or suspected breeding of mixed pairs in France (Kayser et al 2000, Reeber & CHN 2010), Spain (Dies et al 2001), Tunisia (Grussu et al 2008), possibly Italy (Grussu et al 2008) and also on the Atlantic coast of Morocco (van den Berg 1999, Qninba et al 2011). The occurrence of hybrids in south-western Europe and north-western Africa suggests that hybridization may occur more frequently than proven by direct observation of mixed pairs (eg, Dies et al 2001, Qninba et al 2011, and rarities committee reports). Such hybrids have often been initially misidentified as rare dark morphs of Little Egret, while

FIGURE 1 **A-C** Putative hybrid Little Egret x Indian Reef Heron / vermoedelijke hybride Kleine Zilverreiger x Rode-Zeerifreiger *Egretta garzetta* x *gularis schistacea*, Pashan Lake, Pune, Maharashtra, India, 20 June 2012 *(Rohan Kamath)*; **D** Indian Reef Heron / Rode-Zeerifreiger *E gularis schistacea*, dark morph in breeding plumage, Murud, Maharashtra, India, 25 February 2015 *(Abhijeet Awte)*; **E** Little Egret / Kleine Zilverreiger *E garzetta,* non-breeding adult, Siddhapur, Gujarat, India, 18 August 2014 *(Avinash Sant)*. Diagnostic characters, such as bill shape, size and colour, lore colour, plumage and extent of black-yellow on legs clearly visible in these photographs.

records of undoubted dark-plumaged Little Egrets are extremely uncommon (eg, Yésou & CHN 1986, Dubois & Yésou 1995, Grimmett et al 1998, Magyar & Yésou 2000, Borrow & Demsey 2001).

This paper is the first to document hybrids involving Indian Reef Heron. Following the observation of a slaty-grey egret in Pune, India, in March 2012 (initially thought to be a dark-morph *garzetta* and re-identified as a hybrid *garzetta x schistacea*), a literature survey and data mining revealed more sightings of variably dark individuals, most of them not previously reported in print. We provide a field description of the 2012 sighting and compile 30 other records, collected across India and Sri Lanka, of putative hybrids showing mixed characters of Little Egret and Indian Reef Heron and discuss their biological significance.

**Little Egret and Indian Reef Heron in India**

Little Egret (hereafter *garzetta*) and Indian Reef Heron (hereafter *schistacea*) are widely distributed in India. In a process to identify hybrids, it is useful to summarize their respective phenotypic characters. Non-breeding *garzetta* are snowy white, with yellow feet, black tarsi usually right to the tarsal joint, and black lower mandible. Breeding *garzetta* develops two long narrow plumes on the nape, which often are apparent for most of the year (and are never shown by *schistacea*), and dorsal chest-plumes (Ali & Ripley 1978, Rasmussen & Anderton 2012). Non-breeding dark-morph adult *schistacea* is slaty-grey, with a heavier bill than *garzetta* with a pale lower mandible, yellow feet and variably dark legs, and often showing a distinctive long S-shaped neck. Breeding dark-morph *schistacea* usually has blacker legs compared with breeding white-morph *schistacea* and a distinct white throat (Rasmussen & Anderton 2012). White-morph *schistacea* shows the same distinctive silhouette, bill shape and bill and leg colour as dark morph. Another distinct trait is the colour of the naked skin on the lore, which differs during breeding, becoming yellow in *schistacea*. For more details on the identification of these species and information on individual *schistacea* showing plumage characters intermediate between dark and white morph, see

FIGURE 2 Distribution of Indian Reef Heron *Egretta gularis schistacea* and Little Egret *E garzetta* and records of putative hybrids retrieved from public domain. Shape files of distribution obtained from http://iucnredlist.org. Throughout India and Sri Lanka, *E g schistacea* and *E garzetta* have overlapping distribution in coastal areas. Shape file of Asia map obtained from DIVA spatial-data portal (www.diva-gis.org/Data) and annotated in Q-GIS v2.2 (www.qgis.org/en/site).

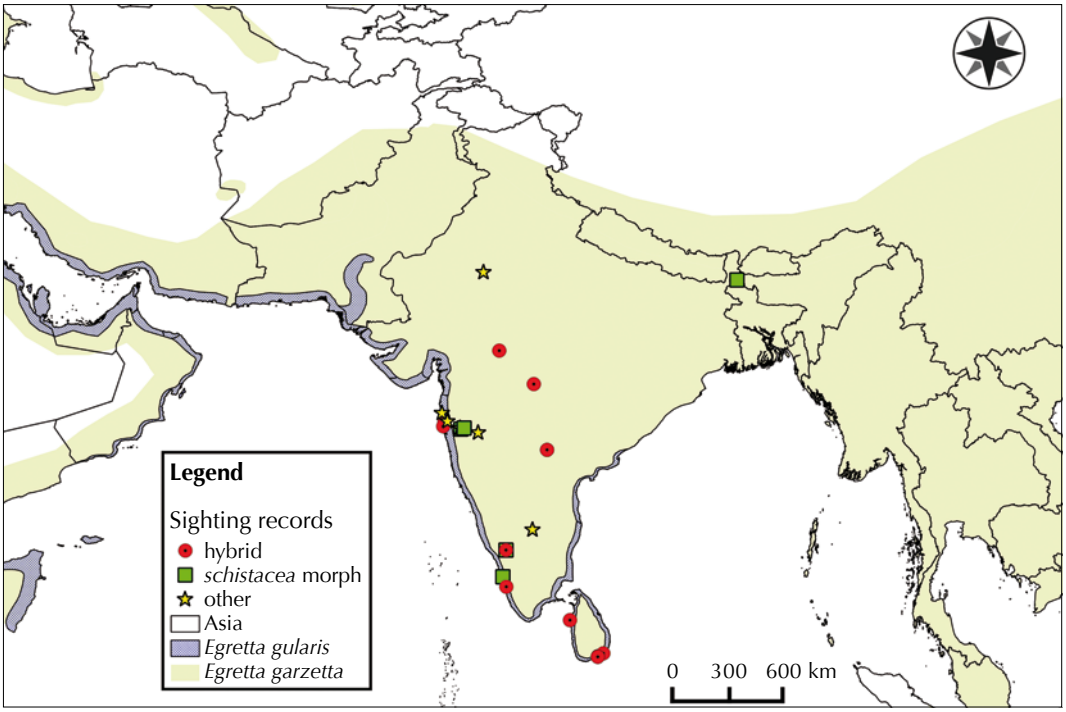

TABLE 1 Descriptive comparison of nominate Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*, Reef Heron *E gularis* and presumed hybrid observed in Pune, India, in March 2012. Description of *garzetta* and *gularis* from Ali & Ripley (1978), Dubois & Yésou (1995) and Rasmussen & Anderton (2012).

| character | Pune, India, March 2012 | Little Egret | Reef Heron |
|---|---|---|---|
| **size** | > *E garzetta* | 63 cm | 65 cm |
| **habitat** | freshwater marsh | lakes, rivers, marshes, paddyfields, estuaries, rocky shores | estuaries, mangroves, seashores, lagoons, occasionally freshwater wetlands |
| **habit** | solitary | often observed as singles or in group of 2-3 individuals | often solitary and somewhat crepuscular but can be gregarious; general behaviour not different from *E garzetta* |
| **overall coloration** | greyish | snowy-white; dark birds, most often identified as hybrids between *E garzetta* and *E gularis*, have been reported | polymorphic; pure white in white morph; otherwise, slaty grey to slaty blue-black with white throat, some showing patchy distribution of white |
| **upper mandible** | black | black | yellow with brown anterior tip, sometimes darker |
| **lower mandible** | black with greyish posterior half | black with greyish yellow posterior half | pale greyish posterior half, yellowish to dark brown anterior tip |
| **bill shape** | long and slender | long and slender | long and heavy, with more downcurved mandibles |
| **bill length** | – | 7.9-9.1 cm | 9.4-10.1 cm |
| **orbital skin** | greenish-yellow | usually bluish grey, can be yellow for short time during breeding | greyish outside breeding, usually yellow when breeding |
| **tibia and tarsus** | black; posterior third of tarsus yellow | black | dark to black; posterior third of tarsus yellow and upper leg often paler grey |
| **toe** | greenish-yellow | yellow to orange-yellow | yellow |
| **iris** | yellow | yellow | yellow |

particularly Dubois & Yésou (1995). It must be noted that intermediate plumages are rarely mentioned in the literature most often used in India. Such plumages have been observed, however, by Naik & Parasharya (1983), who have also described the variability of dark plumages, from pale grey to dark, and who gave more details on phenotypical variations in both species (Parasharya & Naik 1984, 1987).

Although identification can be difficult in the field, Ali & Ripley (1978) suggested that the bill colour, which is always black in *garzetta*, can be used as a diagnostic key to separate this species from *schistacea*, in which the bill varies from horny-brown to yellowish. However, these authors further suggested that different morphs attributed to *schistacea* seen in India might be ecological populations of *garzetta*, the dark morph being a population adapted to marine habitat. This essentially proposed the idea of niche separation between white- and dark-morph populations. This hypothesis, however, is not supported by the overall breeding ranges of *garzetta* and Reef Heron (Western and Indian), which overlap in Africa, India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

While most dark or intermediate birds reported from southern Europe and north-western Africa (and even America) have been identified as either Western Reef Heron or hybrids Little Egret x Western Reef Heron, similar Indian and Sri Lankan records for Indian Reef Heron are scanty (although the taxon recorded in Israel is *schistacea*; Shirihai 1996). Reports suggest there is a small number of dark individuals as compared to white in East and Central Africa (Butler 1922, Murton 1971). The proportion of such white and dark individuals varies across their range (Ashkenazi 1993).

FIGURE 3 Probable intermediate morphs of Indian Reef Heron / Rode-Zeerifreiger *Egretta gularis schistacea* or putative hybrids Little Egret x Indian Reef Heron / vermoedelijke hybriden Kleine Zilverreiger x Rode-Zeerifreiger *E garzetta x gularis schistacea* from India and Sri Lanka mined from public domain. **A** probable intermediate morph *E gularis schistacea*, Kabini, Karnataka, India, 18 April 2014 *(Amit Singh)*; **B** probable intermediate morph *E gularis schistacea*, Enamavu Kole, Kerala, India, 24 September 2012 *(P J George)*. Resembling dark *schistacea* and observed within range of *schistacea*. Bird in breeding plumage, foraging with breeding white-morph adult *E garzetta*; **C** putative hybrid *E garzetta x gularis schistacea*, Kalpitiya Peninsula, Sri Lanka, 4 February 2012 *(Pathmanath Samaraweera)*. Resembling dark *schistacea* but showing nuchal filoplumes and dark bill characteristic of *garzetta*; **D** probable vagrant intermediate morph *E gularis schistacea*, Saswad, Maharashtra, India, 3 November 2016 *(Atharva Damle)*. Showing characteristics of dark *schistacea* but observed far outside range of *schistacea*.

**Hybrid *garzetta* x *schistacea* in Pune, India**

On 29 March 2012, Pankaj Koparde observed an egret showing mixed characters of *garzetta* and *schistacea*, foraging in freshwater marsh at Pashan lake, Pune, Maharashtra, India (figure 1). This bird was slightly bigger than *garzetta* with an overall grey appearance. PK determined the size of the individual by comparing it with other *garzetta* foraging in the lake. The individual was solitary and not mixing with other *garzetta*. The plumage was greyish white. The bird had short dorsal breeding plumes but no nape plumes. The upper mandible was black and the lower black with a pale grey anterior half. The orbital skin was greenish yellow, becoming deeper yellow towards the eye. The tibiae and anterior c 75% of the tarsi were black, the posterior part

FIGURE 4 Egrets photographed in India and Sri Lanka and identified as putative hybrids Little Egret x Indian Reef Heron / vermoedelijke hybriden Kleine Zilverreiger x Rode-Zeerifreiger *Egretta garzetta* x *gularis schistacea*. Annotation on photographs refers to number in appendix 1.

of tarsi and toes were yellow. The bill resembled *garzetta* in shape and size, although the upper mandible was slightly more curved. This individual thus showed characters of both *garzetta* and *schistacea* (table 1). It was present up to July (PK pers obs). A similar looking individual, possibly the same bird, was seen in 2013-15 during March-November.

**More hybrids *garzetta* x *schistacea* and intermediate morphs *schistacea* from India and Sri Lanka**

PK retrieved 30 reports of birds observed between 2008 and 2015, which were labelled as dark-morph *garzetta* or identified as such after discussion on internet fora (appendix 1, figure 2). Most of these records were supported by photographs taken in the field revealing a high degree of phenotypic variation regarding plumage colour, bill shape, length and colour, and coloration of tibia and tarsus (figure 3). A close examination of these photographs led us to the conclusion that most birds were showing characters of both *garzetta* and *schistacea*, leading to their re-identification as putative hybrids (appendix 1). Photographic evidence was lacking for five reports and photographic material was too poor (lack of sharpness or too distant) in four cases to ascertain identification. From the remaining 21 records, 16 birds were satisfyingly identified as hybrids, whereas five birds were most probably intermediate morph *schistacea*. As a result, none of the initially alleged dark-morph *garzetta* is any longer identified as this species, at least not in those cases where documentation was found to be sufficient for identification.

**Conclusion**

That 30 records were easily found from the public domain shows the commonness of such sightings, yet highlights the fact that such a high frequency of hybridization between *garzetta* and *schistacea* has never been suspected for the Indian subcontinent. Most of the records were outside the breeding range of *schistacea* in India and Sri Lanka, possibly pointing towards straggling *schistacea* unable to find a mate of the own species and thereafter interbreeding with *garzetta*. Alternatively, the resemblance between hybrids and intermediate *schistacea* or even dark-morph *schistacea* suggests that such hybrids may be much more difficult to point out within large numbers of *schistacea*. Of course, further research is welcome, particularly involving molecular studies in order to clarify the taxonomy of these puzzling birds and the frequency of hybridization.

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## Samenvatting

Waarschijnlijke hybriden Kleine Zilverreiger x Rode-Zeerifreiger in India en Sri Lanka Het zeldzame voorkomen van donkere individuen binnen het grote verspreidingsgebied van Kleine Zilverreiger *Egretta garzetta* roept vragen op over hybridisatie met de polymorfe Rifreiger *E gularis*. Hybridisatie is herhaaldelijk gedocumenteerd tussen Kleine Zilverreiger en nominaat Westelijke Rifreiger *E g gularis*. In dit artikel worden voor het eerst hybriden gedocumenteerd tussen Kleine Zilverreiger en Rode-Zeerifreiger *E g schistacea*. Na de waarneming van een leigrijze rifreiger in Pune, India, in maart 2012 leidde literatuuronderzoek en het opsporen van beelden via internetfora en andere sociale media tot meer gevallen van variabele donkere individuen, waarvan de meeste niet eerder werden gepubliceerd in een tijdschrift. De vogel van maart 2012 wordt hier beschreven en er wordt een overzicht gegeven van 30 andere gevallen in India en Sri Lanka van mogelijke of waarschijnlijke hybriden, met kenmerken van zowel Kleine Zilverreiger als Rode-Zeerifreiger. Alle vogels die voldoende fotografische waren gedocumenteerd (n=21) bleken met zekerheid (n=16) of vermoedelijk (n=5) hybride kenmerken te tonen en geen van de 30 vogels kon met zekerheid als donkere vorm Kleine Zilverreiger worden gedetermineerd.

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APPENDIX 1 Summary of reports of egrets claimed as dark-morph Little Egret *Egretta garzetta* from India and Sri Lanka in 2008-15 retrieved from photographs in public domain. * Putative hybrid; ** intermediate-morph Indian Reef Heron *E gularis schistacea*; *** could not be indentified or no photograph available. MH: Maharashtra, RJ: Rajasthan, SP: Southern Province, KL: Kerala, TL: Telangana, KN: Karnataka, WB: West Bengal, MP: Madhya Pradesh. # Referral site to field descriptions: OBI – Oriental Bird Images (2015), FBIB – Facebook Indian Birds (2015), FBBP – Facebook Birds of Pune (2015), INW – India Nature Watch (2015).

| No | Locality and date | Observer | Referral site # |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | **Uran JNPT*, MH, India, March 2008** | **Babasaheb H Gaikwad** | **OBI** |
| | Showing characters indicative of both *garzetta* (long nuchal feathers, all-black bill) and *schistacea* (shape of neck, paler upper leg) while other characters intermediate between both species (dark legs, bill shape); combination suggesting hybrid. | | |
| 2 | **Sambar lake***, RJ, India, October 2010** | **Pankaj Gupta** | **FBIB** |
| | Pied coloration, leg colour and bill suggestive of *schistacea,* and overall impression of hybrid, however, image is not sharp enough to allow detailed examination and identification remains tentative. | | |
| 3 | **Bundala National Park*, SP, Sri Lanka, January 2012** | **Mapalagama Premasiri** | **OBI** |
| | Showing characters indicative of both *garzetta* (long nuchal feathers, all-black bill) and *schistacea* (shape of neck, paler upper leg) while other characters intermediate between both species (dark legs, bill shape); combination suggesting putative hybrid. Strong bill even more strongly suggesting hybrid. | | |
| 4 | **Kalpitiya peninsula*, Sri Lanka, February 2012** | **Pathmanath Samaraweera** | **OBI** |
| | Resembling dark *schistacea* but showing long nuchal feathers and all-dark bill (also dark legs) which indicate *garzetta* influence. Therefore, identified as putative hybrid. | | |
| 5 | **Pashan lake***, MH, India, May 2012** | **Vishwatej Pawar** | **FBBP** |
| | No photographs available. | | |
| 6 | **Pune outskirts*, MH, India, May 2012** | **Rohit Damale** | **FBBP** |
| | First-year bird undergoing first moult (see pointed tip of one unmoulted tertial). Leg colour suggesting *garzetta*. However, no elongated nuchal feather (which already occurs at this age in *garzetta*), and pale lower mandible suggestive of *schistacea*. Bill seems little too heavy for *garzetta*; therefore, bird looks intermediate between *gularis* and *garzetta,* suggesting hybrid. | | |
| 7 | **Yala National Park*, SP, Sri Lanka, May 2012** | **Mapalagama K Premasiri** | **OBI** |
| | Very dark bill and legs, and elongated head-feathers indicative of *garzetta*. However, bill seems much too heavy at base for *garzetta*; clear yellow tone on loral skin also odd for *garzetta*. Both points suggest hybridization with *schistacea*. Also, no indication of nuptial scapular filoplumes, expected in *garzetta* at this time of year. Thus most probably hybrid. | | |
| 8 | **Pashan lake*, MH, India, June 2012** | **Rohan Kamath** | **FBBP** |
| | Black legs indicative of *garzetta* influence while heavy bill with largely pale lower mandible indicative of *schistacea*; combination leading to identification as hybrid. | | |
| 9 | **Vasai***, MH, India, August 2012** | **Kuldeep Chaudhari** | **FBIB** |
| | Difficult to be sure from available evidence: bill and legs suggesting *garzetta* while neck shape more like *schistacea*, thus suggestion of hybrid. | | |
| 10 | **Enamavu Kole**, KL, India, September 2012** | **P J George** | **FBIB** |
| | Very like *schistacea* in silhouette and bare part coloration, and probably called intermediate morph of *schistacea* if seen in western part of subspecies' range. No certainty regarding hybrid component. However, location is in overlapping range of *schistacea* and *garzetta*. | | |
| 11 | **Embilikala Kalapuwa*, SP, Sri Lanka, November 2012** | **Sarala Jeevanthi Gamage** | **OBI** |
| | Dark bill and legs suggestive of *garzetta*; however, bill shape and neck shape indicative of *schistacea*, making it putative hybrid. | | |
| 12 | **Embilikala Kalapuwa*, SP, Sri Lanka, December 2012** | **Sarala Jeevanthi Gamage** | **OBI** |
| | Black legs suggestive of *garzetta*, whereas stronger, slightly curved bill indicating *schistacea* influence. | | |
| 13 | **Hyderabad*, TL, India, June 2013** | **Hemant Kumar** | **FBIB** |
| | Long feathers at rear head and dark legs indicative of *garzetta* but bill shape indicative of *schistacea*. | | |
| 14 | **Rajaram bridge**, MH, India, March 2013** | **Abhijit Phadke** | **FBBP** |
| | More resembling *schistacea* in bare part coloration (silhouette more difficult to assess being in erect posture), and probably called intermediate morph of *gularis* if seen in western part of species' range. However, bird was seen far outside range of *gularis,* and therefore may be vagrant *schistacea*. | | |

**15 Alibaug*, MH, India, April 2013** **Pratik Humnabadkar** **FBIB**
Long feathers at rear head, dark bill and (rather) dark legs indicative of *garzetta*, while bill shape indicative of *schistacea*.

**16 Kochin*, KL, India, May 2013** **Madhu Gopalakrishnan** **FBIB**
Seeming oddly small when compared with *schistacea* nearby in photograph. Coloration recalling intermediate morph of *schistacea*, including pale base of lower mandible. However, bill very thin, much more like *garzetta*, thus suggesting hybrid.

**17 Hyderabad*, TL, India, June 2013** **Laxmikanth Kodi** **FBIB**
Rear head-feathers and all-dark bill like *garzetta*, bill shape and leg colour as *schistacea*.

**18 Kabini*, KN, India, December 2013** **Pranad Patil** **OBI**
Bill shape as *schistacea* but bill colour as *garzetta*.

**19 Ramapura lake***, KN, India, December 2013** **Jayaram Jahgirdar** **FBIB**
No photographs available.

**20 Pashan lake***, MH, India, March 2014** **Sahil Pawar** **FBBP**
Overall coloration recalling indermediate morph of *schistacea*, bill and legs possibly recalling *garzetta*; photograph unsharp and from too large distance for safe identification.

**21 Kabini**, KN, India, April 2014** **Amit Singh** **FBIB**
Possible intermediate morph of *schistacea*, not showing strong indication of hybridization, and location adjacent to *schistacea* range.

**22 Kabini*, KN, India, May 2014** **Khusro Ahmed** **FBIB**
Very variegated first-year bird showing elongated nuchal feathers of *garzetta*. However, bill shape odd (base too heavy for *garzetta*) and pale lower mandible suggestive of *schistacea*.

**23 Pashan lake***, MH, India, September 2014** **Varun Kher** **FBBP**
No photographs available.

**24 Gajoldoba wetland**, WB, India, December 2014** **Somdeb Biswas** **FBIB**
Possibly intermediate morph of *schistacea*. However, location is far outside range of *schistacea*. Therefore, bird might be vagrant *schistacea*.

**25 Indore outskirts*, MP, India, January 2015** **Shariq Khan** **FBIB**
Overall silhouette, including bill shape, indicating *schistacea*. However, coloration unusual, indicating probable hybrid. Location far outside *schistacea* range.

**26 Pashan lake***, MH, India, February 2015** **Sunil Desai** **FBBP**
Difficult bird to identify. Leg and bill colour, as well as bill shape, indicative of (most probably adult) *garzetta*, however, no elongated nuchal feathers and colour odd, suggesting hybrid. Unfortunately, photograph not allowing definite identification.

**27 Karnala Wildlife Sanctuary***, MH, India, 2015** **Varun Kher** **FBBP**
No photographs available.

**28 Bhigwan***, MH, India, 2015** **Varun Kher** **FBBP**
No photographs available.

**29 Amravati*, MH, India, December 2015** **Ninad Abhang** **INW**
Very like young 'lavender blue' *schistacea*; however, intense black on legs and rather thin bill indicating *garzetta* influence.

**30 Saswad**, MH, India, November 2015** **Atharva Damle** **FBBP**
More resembling *schistacea* in bare part coloration (silhouette more difficult to assess, being in erect posture), and probably called intermediate morph *gularis* if seen in western part of species' range. However, bird was far outside range of *gularis* and therefore may be vagrant *schistacea*.

## Breeding surveys of Western Osprey in Egypt in 2012-16

The world population of Western Ospreys *Pandion haliaetus* consists of three taxa: nominate *P h haliaetus* (Palearctic), American Osprey *P h carolinensis* (North America; vagrant in Europe) and *P h ridgwayi* (Caribbean region) (Cramp & Simmons 1977, Poole 1989, del Hoyo et al 1994, Ferguson-Lees & Christie 2001, Strandberg 2013). A fourth taxon, occurring in coastal Australia and Indonesia to New Caledonia, is now generally considered a separate species, Eastern Osprey *P cristatus* (cf Christidis & Boles 2008, Strandberg 2013).

The population of nominate *haliaetus* breeding along the Red Sea differs distinctly from the rest of *haliaetus* (cf Strandberg 2013); Red Sea breeding birds tend to be distinctly smaller and paler in plumage compared with *haliaetus* from Europe and Asia (Goodman & Meininger 1989; plate 320). Further DNA study is needed to establish if the Red Sea population may warrant separate subspecific status.

In Egypt, Western Osprey is a breeding resident along the northern Red Sea coast and on islands in the Red Sea. It is a scarce passage migrant and winter visitor between early September and early May (Goodman & Meininger 1989). Several breeding surveys in Egypt have been published. Frazier et al (1984) reported 39 nests in 1982. Baha el Din & Saleh (1983) counted 87 birds and just 23 active (recently used) nests in autumn 1982. The species appeared to be breeding very successfully in 1983 when 38 breeding pairs were counted, with a total of 42 chicks and fledged young and other nests (in egg phase) containing a total of 14 eggs (Jennings et al 1985). In 1994, Hoath et al (1997) counted just 19 recently used nests. Grieve & Millington (1999) counted 66 pairs on 18 islands in 1998 and in 1999 a further 13 pairs on the islands not surveyed earlier, so at least 79 pairs were breeding. Considering that some islands have never been extensively surveyed, the total population for the Egyptian Red Sea area was estimated at 85-100 pairs by Grieve & Millington (1999). This paper documents recent surveys of Western Osprey in Egypt in 2012-16, with some aspects of behaviour and main threats for the population.

**320** Western Osprey / Visarend *Pandion haliaetus*, male, Hamata, southern Red Sea coast, Egypt, 18 April 2014 *(Mohamed I Habib)*. Note paleness of plumage compared with European birds.

**321** Western Osprey / Visarend *Pandion haliaetus*, male, Lahmi bay, Red Sea coast, Egypt, 14 April 2014 *(Mohamed I Habib)*

*Methods*

Red Sea Governorate has the longest sea coast compared with any other Egyptian governorate, extending from El Zaafrana in the north to Hala'ib in the south, a distance of 1050 km; the Red Sea coast also includes part of the South Sinai Governorate. Along this coastline, there are several archipelagos. A new series of surveys started in early December 2012 and ended in July 2016. Main goal was to survey the local resident breeding Western Ospreys. Therefore, the visiting time was limited from early December to late April. Distinguishing local breeders from migrating and wintering individuals is straightforward, based on plumage: European birds are darker and 'cleaner' compared with birds of the Red Sea population, which are paler in plumage and also smaller. Local breeders also stay close to the nest for courtship or nesting. Also three wintering sites and a stopover area were visited, to examine the status of the wintering Western Ospreys.

For the breeding surveys in 2012-16, most islands and the Red Sea coast shoreline were surveyed. All islands were reached by boat. After landing on the islands, birds were observed and counted, mostly from higher vantage points to prevent disturbance. Visits to each nest were limited to less than 5 min. Counting units were apparently occupied nests, defined as the summed numbers of occupied and unoccupied nests that appear to have been used (active nest) during the present breeding seasons (cf Bibby et al 2007). Positions of all nests were noted by using a GPS when possible. Temperatures varied from 28°C at the beginning of the season in late December to more than 34°C in late May.

From June 2012 to late January 2013, all islands between Ras Shokair archipelago (Ashrafi, Gysom islands and Umm El Humate) and Hurghada archipelago (Big Gifton, Small Gifton, Umm Gawish and Abu Minqar) were visited. In 2014-16, we received approval from the national government to visit two more islands, Zabargad and Rocky Island, and we visited Qalaan archipelago (Shawareet, El Sheikh, Mahabis, Sayal and Wadi El Gemal) and Nabq protected area in South Sinai Governorate. In 2014-16, we (re)visited three islands: Abu Minqar, Ashrafi and Umm Gawish.

*Results*

In total, 31 active nests were found along the Egyptian Red Sea (table 1). This number is remark-

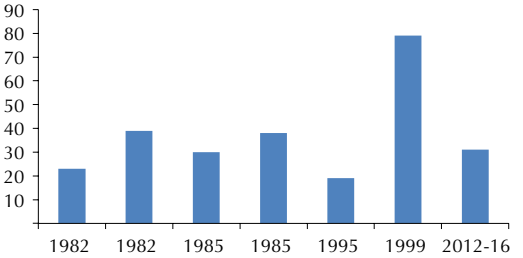


FIGURE 1 Western Osprey *Pandion haliaetus* nests found during surveys in Egyptian part of Red Sea in 1982, 1985, 1995, 1999 and 2012-16 (Baha el Din & Saleh 1983, Frazier 1984, Jennings et al 1985, Hoath et al 1997, Grieve & Millington 1999; this note)

ably low, as the total Egyptian breeding population was previously estimated at 85-100 pairs. The population seemed to be stable (Goodman & Meininger 1989) but it is unclear whether previous counts have been done during the winter season and whether distinction was made between local and migratory individuals. It seems possible that the Egyptian population has declined. In 1973, 21-30 nests were active on Gezera Tiran and in 1985 18-20 pairs bred on this island (Safriel et al 1985).

*Breeding behaviour*

Based on five years of observation, Western Ospreys are territorial and pairs start courtship and building nests from the first week of December in southern Egypt to the first week of January in northern Egypt. They start laying eggs from the last week of December in southern Egypt to the last week of January in northern Egypt. Fledglings occur from the last week of March to late April. Nests are made from twigs of dry bushes and drifted materials from ships and fishing boats and are built on top of mangrove trees or on top of a sandy dune or fishermen roof huts. Nests are used in successive years by the same pairs, adding new twigs every year. For example, a nest at the southern tip of Abu Menqar had a height of 1.40 m in 2002 and had 'grown' to 1.85 m in 2012. In late spring and summer, the nest was also used by other breeding species, such as Indian Reef Heron *Egretta gularis schistacea*, Red Sea Spoonbill *Platalea leucorodia archeri* and White-eyed Gulls *Larus leucophthalmus* (cf Habib 2016). A single case of polyandry was documented on El Sheikh in the Qalaan archipelago (plate 323) but the breeding results of this trio are not known.

*Feeding behaviour*

Along the Egyptian Red Sea, birds forage over reef flats and along reef edges. Males were the main providers during the breeding season, bringing food to the nest for the female and nestlings (cf Clancy 2005). The diet consists almost entirely of fish; only on one occasion during the breeding season a tern carcass was found on a nest. Preferred fishes are, eg, parrot fishes (Scaridae), surgeon fishes (Acanthuridae), cornet fishes (Fistulariidae) and butterfly fishes (Chaetodontidae).

*Threats*

Western Ospreys in Egypt mostly breed on remote offshore islands, probably to avoid predation by Red Foxes *Vulpes vulpes* during evenings (pers obs). However, human disturbance is common on these islands. For example, as a result of building tourist cafeteria on the southern part of Big Gifton, birds were forced to build new nests on the northern side of the island. More disturbance occurs when fishermen land during the breeding seasons and collect eggs, and kite surfers regularly arrive on the islands by safari boat and may even spend the night on Ashrafi. Pollution threats in the surveyed areas are, for instance, oil rigs and bilge water from tourist boats. Oil can have devastating effects on birds breeding on the islands because

TABLE 1 Western Osprey *Pandion haliaetus* nests found during surveys in Egyptian part of Red Sea in 2013-15

| | | Number of nests | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Date** | **Location** | **Active** | **Non-active** |
| Jan 2013 | Abu Minqar | 2 | 1 |
| Jan 2013 | Umm Gawish | 2 | 1 |
| Jan 2013 | Marina Abu tiq (floating raft) | 1 | 0 |
| Jan 2013 | Abu Kirsh | 1 | 0 |
| Jan 2013 | Ashrafi | 2 | 0 |
| Jan 2013 | Gysom South | 1 | 0 |
| Jan 2013 | Gysom North | 1 | 0 |
| Jan 2013 | Um El Humate | 1 | 0 |
| Jan 2013 | Wadi El Gamal | 2 | 1 |
| Jan 2013 | El Sheikh | 3 | 0 |
| Jan 2013 | Mahabis | 1 | 0 |
| Jan 2013 | Sayal | 1 | 0 |
| Jan 2013 | Lahmi mangrove | 4 | 0 |
| Jan 2013 | Hartway bay | 2 | 0 |
| Aug 2014 | Zabargad | 1 | 0 |
| Jun 2015 | Zabargad resort | 1 | 0 |
| Aug 2015 | Nabaq mangrove/ Maria Schröder wreck | 4 | 0 |
| Aug 2015 | Rocky Island | 1 | 0 |
| **Total** | | **31** | **3** |

they use plunge diving to hunt along the reef edge and this makes them vulnerable to oil pollution (cf Baha el Din et al 1983). Additionally, illegal hunting in the Nile delta and lake Nasser may have an effect on migrating birds. Further surveying is needed to investigate the reasons for the possible recent decline of the Egyptian Red Sea population, including study with colour rings to individually monitor birds.

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**322** Western Osprey / Visarend *Pandion haliaetus*, female, Hurghada, Red Sea coast, Egypt, 13 January 2013 *(Mohamed I Habib)* **323** Western Ospreys / Visarenden *Pandion haliaetus*, two males and female, El Sheikh, Red Sea coast, Egypt, 18 January 2013 *(Mohamed I Habib)*. Only case of polyandry found during surveys in 2012-16. **324** Western Ospreys / Visarenden *Pandion haliaetus*, Abu Minqar, Red Sea coast, Egypt, 13 January 2013 *(Mohamed I Habib)*. Pair on 1.85 m tall nest. **325** Western Ospreys / Visarenden *Pandion haliaetus*, male (left) and female, Ashrafi, Red Sea coast, Egypt, 15 January 2013 *(Mohamed I Habib)*

**326** Western Osprey / Visarend *Pandion haliaetus*, Hamata, Red Sea coast, Egypt, 18 April 2014 *(Mohamed I Habib)*. Almost four months old juvenile.


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# ‘Diluted’ Red-crested Pochard in Morocco in 2015-16

In autumn 2015, I studied the Red-crested Pochard *Netta rufina* population at Hassar lake in Mohammedia province, Morocco; I counted, photographed and studied individuals, populations, behaviour, reproduction and development of chicks. Hassar lake is located between 33°33’00.82’’N and 33°34’28.90’’N and 7°25’27.27’’W and 7°26’04.54’’W and was created by a small dam built to protect Mohammedia town against flooding. In an annual cycle, numbers of Red-crested Pochard increased in winter to spring and decreased in summer. The high number in November was related to the arrival of wintering birds. All males observed in August-October were in eclipse plumage or immatures; the first breeding plumage male was seen on 24 October. On 29 October, an aberrantly coloured male, swimming with two normally coloured males and a female, was observed (plate 327-328). The bird differed by: ***1*** the normally black areas (breast, belly and tail) were grey; ***2*** the normally brown back was cream coloured; and ***3*** the normally bright red head was pale brownish-yellow overall. The male remained at the lake to at least January 2016 but rarely mixed with other Red-crested Pochards. In February 2015, a similar male had been observed and described at Sidi Boughaba lake, Gharb province (34°15’0’’N 6°40’0’’W; Illa Llobet & Giménez Lozano 2015; plate 329). Comparison of the photographs from February and October 2015 suggests that it involved the same male that moved from Sidi Boughaba lake to Hassar lake, a distance of c 90 km. All chicks studied in Hassar lake in 2015 had a normal coloration and no aberrant coloration was observed during their development. We therefore assume the aberrant bird arrived at Hassar lake in October 2015.

*Plumage aberrations in birds*

Plumage aberrations are not uncommon in birds but there is quite some confusion in the literature, especially in relation to albinos. The major aberrant plumage conditions are defined by Buckley (1982), and include albinism, leucism, melanism, carotenism and dilution. According to earlier literature, albinism, leucism and other patterns of pigment reduction are thought to be widespread among birds, with examples having been documented for 50 avian families in North America alone, representing well over 245 species (Ross 1963). However, the majority of identifications and descriptions of plumage chromatic aberrations of birds are unsubstantiated or unclear. This problem of identification of chromatic aberrations was treated by van Grouw (2013), who detailed those aberrations and defined them (see also Mahabal et al 2016).

*Dilution*

The aberration of the Moroccan Red-crested Pochard is ‘dilution’, which involves a quantitative reduction of melanins: the number of pigment granules is reduced but the pigment itself is not changed. The lower concentration results in a weaker (or diluted) colour (van Grouw 2006, 2013). There are two forms of dilution: ‘pastel’ and

**327** Red-crested Pochards / Krooneenden *Netta rufina*, with Common Moorhen / Waterhoen *Gallinula chloropus*, Hassar lake, Mohammedia, Morocco, 29 October 2015 *(Abdeslam Rihane)*. ‘Diluted pastel’ male (right) with normally coloured male.

**328** Red-crested Pochards / Krooneenden *Netta rufina*, Hassar lake, Mohammedia, Morocco, 3 December 2015 *(Abdeslam Rihane)*. ‘Diluted pastel’ male (right) with normally coloured female.

**329** Red-crested Pochard / Krooneend *Netta rufina*, Sidi Boughaba lake, Gharb province, Morocco, 19 February 2015 *(Marc Illa Llobet & Lídia Giménez Lozano)*. 'Diluted pastel' male.

'isabel'. In 'pastel', black feathers turn grey and reddish-brown feathers turn yellow-brown caused by a quantitative reduction of both eumelanin and phaeomelanin, respectively. In 'isabel', black feathers turn grey, caused by a quantitative reduction of eumelanin only, and the phaeomelanin is unaffected. Any plumage showing this mutation is very sensitive to light, and therefore birds with this aberration can become much paler as their plumage ages. In seabirds, this bleaching is even quicker and stronger because of the combination of salt water and sun (Jakubas & Wojczulanis-Jakubas 2012).

The diluted Red-crested Pochard in Morocco can thus be classified as 'pastel', because both eumelanin (black parts) and phaeomelanin (head colour) are reduced. The degree of dilution varies both between individuals and within a single mutation but most mutations cause a melanin reduction of c 50%. All birds with this form of dilution look like a pale version of their normal counterparts. Illa Llobet & Giménez Lozano (2015) stated that the paler colour of the orangey feathers was a consequence of the high abrasion, but their dilution classification (isabel) seems to be wrong.

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## Stilt Sandpiper at Volvi lake, Greece, in September 2016 and WP records

During my holiday on the Aegean coast in Greece, I visited Volvi lake at Chalkidiki peninsula, Thessaloniki, for wildlife photography. On 4 September 2016, very early in the morning (still in the dark), I had prepared my hide near the shore. For three hours after sunrise, I photographed Eurasian Oystercatchers *Haematopus ostralegus*, Sanderlings *Calidris alba*, Caspian Terns *Hydroprogne caspia*, Sandwich Terns *Sterna sandvicensis* and several common species. At c 100 m, I then noticed a group of small waders. I approached them and took photographs from a distance. One of the birds was unusual, darker than others, and a species unknown to me. I had not taken a field guide and without internet access, I left the bird unidentified. On 5 September, before the next sunrise, I put the hide near the place where I observed the waders. I was lucky, because in front of me a mixed flock of 15 waders landed (Temminck's

Stints *C temminckii*, Sanderlings, Dunlins *C alpina*, Little Stints *C minuta*), including the unidentified bird from the previous day. The flock was feeding in a small area with shallow water; they flew several times, frightened by a Western Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus*, but always quickly returned to feed. Because of the short distance (2-3 m), good light and long observation time, I managed to take some good photographs of the mystery sandpiper, which I then identified as Stilt Sandpiper *C himantopus*. The next two days, I did not see it again in the area.

*Description and identification*

The diagnostic features for Stilt Sandpiper are clearly visible in the accompanying photograph (plate 330): ***1*** the long, slightly decurved black bill; ***2*** the wide and long, white supercilium contrasting with the dark cap and ear-coverts; ***3*** the completely patterned underparts with brown bars; ***4*** the long (in particular tibiae) and dark yellowish legs; and ***5*** the brownish-black mantle-feathers, scapulars and tertials. This combination of features only fits adult Stilt Sandpiper (van Duivendijk 2011, Svensson et al 2015).

*Distribution and status in the WP*

This was the first record for Greece and the southeasternmost in the Western Palearctic (WP). Stilt Sandpiper breeds from northern Alaska, USA, east to Victoria island and Hudson Bay, Canada. It winters from southern USA to central South America, mainly from Bolivia to northern Argentina (del Hoyo et al 1996). It is a rare visitor in Japan and Taiwan (Brazil 2009) and there are at least four records from Australia and one in New Zealand (Hill 2006). There are no confirmed records in Russia, Central Asia, South Asia and the Middle East (Ayé et al 2012, Rasmussen & Anderton 2012, Koblik & Arkhipov 2014, Blair et al 2016).

In the WP, there now have been 91 records to the end of 2016 (table 1), mainly in north-western European countries, especially in Britain (34 records), Ireland (16) and France (12). Records from the southern part of the WP region are extremely rare; singles come from Morocco, Tunisia (the only African records but see below for Cape Verde record), mainland Spain and Mallorca, Hungary and Greece. The first for the WP was found in England in 1954 (Chislett 1955) and the number of records started to increase in the following decades, particularly since the 1980s. The average for 1980-2016 (n=77) is two records per year. The best years were 2016 (six records), 2008 (five) and also 1989, 1991 and 2013-14 (each

**330** Stilt Sandpiper / Steltstrandloper *Calidris himantopus*, adult, Volvi lake, Thessaloniki, Greece, 5 September 2016 *(Hristo Peshev)*

TABLE 1 Records of Stilt Sandpiper *Calidris himantopus* in the WP to the end of 2016 (Peter Barthel in litt, Arnoud van den Berg in litt, Magnus Corell in litt, Joe Hobbs in litt, Leander Khil in litt, Łukasz Ławicki in litt, Petteri Lehikoinen in litt, Geir Mobakken in litt, Gunnlaugur Pétursson in litt, Staffan Rodebrand in litt, Rasmus Strack in litt; this note)

*Azores (2)*
7 October 2007, Fajã dos Cubres, São Jorge
11 November to 2 December 2016, Cabo da Praia, Terceira

*Britain (34)*
31 August to 4 September 1954, Kilnsea, East Yorkshire, England
1-7 September 1962, Chichester gravel-pits, West Sussex, England
19 July to 7 August 1963, Wisbech sewage farm, Lincolnshire, England
7-13 August 1963, Manhood End, Chichester Harbour, West Sussex, England
12-26 August 1965, Wisbech sewage farm, Lincolnshire, England
27 September to 8 October 1967, Hundred End, Southport, Lancashire, England
27-29 July 1969, Minsmere, Suffolk, England
18 April 1970, Dornoch, Sutherland, Highland, Scotland
14 July 1972, Sidlesham Ferry, West Sussex, England
2 September 1973, Walton-on-the-Naze, Essex, England
11-18 September 1976, Garth's Loch, Scatness, Shetland, Scotland
16 April to 3 October 1984, Frodsham, Cheshire, England
4-10 May 1985, Minsmere, Suffolk, England
22 August 1985, Dungeness, Kent, England
18-25 August 1987, Cliffe, Kent, England
2-4 July 1989, Flamborough Head and Catwick, East Yorkshire, England
11-22 July 1990, Cliffe, Kent, England
7-19 August 1990, Trimley St Mary, Suffolk, England
7-13 September 1997, Minsmere, Suffolk, England
21 July to 3 August 2002, Pennington Marshes, Hampshire, England
5-7 November 2002, Norwick, Unst, Shetland, Scotland
10-17 May 2005, Burnham Norton and Titchwell, Norfolk, England
11-13 July 2006, Conwy Reserve, Caernarfonshire, Wales
12-21 August 2006, Brownsea Island, Poole, Dorset, England
27 May 2008, Rutland Water, Rutland, England
15-21 August 2008, Coombe Hill Meadows, Gloucestershire, England
14-15 September 2008, Rubha Ardvule, South Uist, Outer Hebrides, Scotland; 17 September 2008, Glascoe Dubh, Isle of Man; 22 September to 1 October, Campfield Marsh, Cumbria, England (same individual)
9-11 July 2009, Loch of Strathbeg, Aberdeenshire, Scotland
23 July to 7 August 2011, Lodmoor, Dorset, England
5-9 August 2012, Low Newton-by-the-Sea, Northumberland, England
29 August to 2 September 2013, Neumann's Flash, Cheshire; 2-7 September 2013, Sandbach Flashes, Wirral, England (presumed same individual)
11-12 July 2014, Hickling Broad, Norfolk, England
29 July to 14 August 2014, Cresswell Pond and Druridge Pools, Northumberland, England
22-23 May 2016, Pennington Marshes, Hampshire, England

*Denmark (1)*
23-24 April 1998, Læsvig, Vejlerne, Nordjylland

*Finland (2)*
20-22 June 1983, Hovinsaari, Kotka
2 July 2013, Kirrinsanta, Pori

*France (12)*
23 July 1989, Le Teich, Gironde
5-6 August 1991, L'Île-d'Olonne, Vendée
17 September 1991, Plovan, Finistère
25 September 1991, Ouessant, Finistère
26 July 1997, Pénestin, Morbihan
11 October 1997, Frossay, Loire-Atlantique
10-12 August 2002, Treffiagat, Finistère
28-29 July 2008, Guérande, Loire-Atlantique
15-17 August 2011, Arles, Bouches-du-Rhône
8-15 August 2012, Le Teich, Gironde
21-27 July 2013, Le Teich, Gironde
26 September to 8 October 2014, Joué-sur-Erdre, Loire-Atlantique

*Germany (2)*
11-13 August 1980, Rieselfelder Münster, Nordrhein-Westfalen
20 July 2008, Strandsee Hohenfelde, Schleswig-Holstein

*Greece (1)*
4-5 September 2016, Volvi lake, Thessaloniki

*Hungary (1)*
13-15 July 2006, Hajdúszoboszló, Ős-Kösely

*Iceland (1)*
17 June 1985, Flatey á Breiðafirði, Austur-Barðastrandarsýsla (collected)

*Ireland (16)*
6-7 October 1968, Akeragh Lough, Kerry
14-17 July 1979, Ballycotton, Cork
1 August 1983, Tacumshin Lake, Wexford
1-3 August 1988, Lady's Island Lake, Wexford
6-7 August 1988, Ballycotton, Cork
14-18 August 1988, Kinsale Marsh, Cork
4-9 September 1989, Akeragh Lough, Kerry
22-29 October 1989, Tacumshin, Wexford
19-21 September 1991, Rosscarbery/Inchydoney, Cork
13 August 2000, North Slob and Castlebridge, Wexford

12-14 September 2001, Lough Beg, Derry
6-11 August 2003, Lough Beg, Cork
14-25 September 2003, Burnham Lagoon, Dingle Harbour, Kerry
19 August 2005, Reedy Flat, Lough Neagh, Armagh
23-26 June 2009, The Cull and Tacumshin Lake, Wexford
2-3 and 10-13 September 2014, Tacumshin Lake, Ring Marsh, Lady's Island Lake and Rosslare Back Strand, Wexford; 4-7 September 2014, Swords Estuary, Dublin (same individual)

*Morocco (1)*
28 March to 3 April 1996, Souss estuary

*Netherlands (4)*
24 July 1998, Rhenen, Utrecht
22-24 July 2000, Camperduin and 't Zandt, Noord-Holland
9-17 May and 26 June to 12 July 2004, Ezumakeeg, Friesland
11-12 May 2016, Neer, Limburg; 14-18 May 2016, Borculo, Gelderland; 19 May 2016, Terschelling, Friesland (same individual)

*Norway (7)*
16-17 June 1987, Hamningberg, Finnmark
27-30 May 1993, Grudavatnet, Rogaland
28-30 June 1996, Slettnes, Finnmark
16 October to 8 November 2010, Halsøen, Nord-Trøndelag
26 June 2013, Ytresand, Nordland
19-21 June 2016, Grudavatnet, Rogaland
23-27 August 2016, Børaunen, Rogaland

*Spain (2)*
6-7 May 1983, Salinas de Levante, Mallorca
18 April 2015, Pals, Girona

*Sweden (4)*
13-14 July 1963, Beijershamn, Öland
12 May 1996, Möröbanken, Ersnäs, Norrbotten
2-7 July 2005, Beijershamn, Öland
21-24 April 2012, Kogrundet, Hargsviken, Uppland

*Tunisia (1)*
29 December 1999, Thyna, Sfax

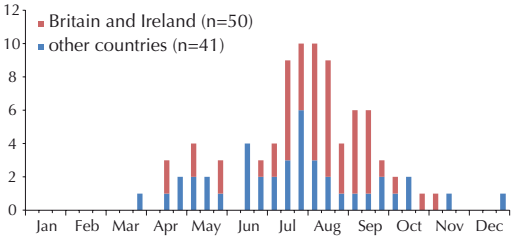


FIGURE 1 Distribution of records (n=91) of Stilt Sandpiper *Calidris himantopus* in the WP in 10-days periods by date of discovery

with four). In the WP, the species has been observed from the third decade of March to the last decade of December. The main period of occurrence is late summer to early autumn, with a clear peak from the second decade of July to the second decade of August (42%); only 16% of all records are from spring (figure 1). On 4 March 2017, the first for the Cape Verde Islands was photographed at Riu Tuareg lagoon, Boavista (Dutch Birding 39: 124, 127, plate 193, 2017).

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# WP reports

This review lists rare and interesting Western Palearctic birds reported mainly from **June to late July 2017**. 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 A pair of **Whooper Swan** *Cygnus cygnus* raising four young at Zámecký ponds near Chropyně on 5 June concerned the first breeding for Czechia. Zehtindjiev et al (2017) showed no evidence for displacement of wintering **Red-breasted Geese** *Branta ruficollis* at a wind farms area (c 200 turbines) on the western Black Sea coast in north-eastern Bulgaria although, between 2008 and 2014, the number of winterers here varied between several 100s and up to 25 000; the median arrival and departure dates were 8 January and 20 February, respectively (Acta Zool Bulgarica 69: 215-228, 2017; cf Dutch Birding 36: 73-86, 2014). An annual average of 2200 **Taiga Bean Geese** *Anser fabalis* were hunted in Finland in 2010-13, which is a significant number considering the fast decline of this taxon in north-western Europe from up to 100 000 individuals in the non-breeding season in the 1990s to up to 50 000 in the 2000s (Eur J Wildl Res 63: 19, 2017). A male hybrid **King x Common Eider** *Somateria spectabilis x mollissima* was seen at Seydisfjördur, Iceland, on 21-22 June. The adult male **American White-winged Scoter** *Melanitta deglandi deglandi* returned to Blackdog, Aberdeenshire, Scotland, on 2 July (in 2016, it was present from 25 June to 29 August). The long-staying male at Keflavík, Iceland, from January remained into July. In Nordland, Norway, the returning adult male **Asian White-winged Scoter** *M d stejnegeri* was reported at Fauske on 18 July. A male **Black Scoter** *M americana* stayed off Murcar, Aberdeenshire, from 31 May to 4 June. The fifth **Bufflehead** *Bucephala albeola* for Iceland at Sandgerði from 9 November 2016 remained until 10 June. Two males **Harlequin Duck** *Histrionicus histrionicus* at Alkevika bay on 30 June concerned the fourth record for Jan Mayen, Norway. The resident male **American Black Duck** *Anas rubripes* at Strontian, Highland, Scotland, remained into July. If accepted, a male at Hagabukta, Rogaland, from 22 June to at least 7 July will be the fifth for Norway.

GROUSE TO TROPICBIRDS The first documented **See-see Partridge** *Ammoperdix griseogularis* for Saudi Arabia was photographed in Al-Jawf province in May. In Anda-

**331** Oriental Plover / Steppeplevier *Anarhynchus veredus*, adult male, Røst, Nordland, Norway, 1 July 2017 *(Steve Baines)*

**332** Ascension Frigatebird / Ascensionfregatvogel *Fregata aquila*, juvenile, Curral Velho, Boa Vista, Cape Verde Islands, 25 June 2017 *(Samir Martins)*

**333** Elegant Tern / Sierlijke Stern *Sterna elegans*, adult summer, Brownsea Island, Poole, Dorset, England, 21 June 2017 *(Paul Morton)*

**334** Masked Booby / Maskergent *Sula dactylatra*, adult, Curral Velho, Boa Vista, Cape Verde Islands, 26 June 2017 *(Samir Martins)* **335** American Royal Tern / Amerikaanse Koningsstern *Sterna maxima maxima*, second-year, with Mediterranean Gulls / Zwartkopmeeuwen *Larus melanocephalus*, Morieux, Côtes-d'Armor, France, 26 June 2017 *(Hugo Touzé)*. Ringed on South Pelican Island, Brunswick, North Carolina, USA, on 5 July 2016.

lucía, Spain, four adults and an immature **Lesser Flamingo** *Phoenicopterus minor* raised last year were back in Málaga. The second **Pied-billed Grebe** *Podilymbus podiceps* for mainland Portugal from October 2016 was very vocal at Sesimbra in June. Two long-stayers on São Miguel, Azores, and one at Loch Feorlin, Argyll, Scotland, remained through mid-July. **Oriental Turtle Doves** *Streptopelia orientalis* were seen at Orrevatnet, Rogaland, on 17-18 May and at Stora Svinskär, Värmdö, Uppland, Sweden, on 8 June. If accepted, a **Zenaida Dove** *Zenaida aurita* at Ponta Delgada, São Miguel, Azores, on 11 April would be the first for the WP but it is likely to have been ship-assisted. In Morocco, a male **Namaqua Dove** *Oena capensis* at Mijk, Western Sahara, from April remained until at least 17 May. The first for Armenia was a female at Sevan lake, Gegharkunik, on 30 May. In Iran, 10 were photographed at Band-Ali Khan in Tehran province on 5 June. In the Canary Islands, **Red-billed Tropicbirds** *Phaethon aethereus* bred on Fuerteventura and Lanzarote.

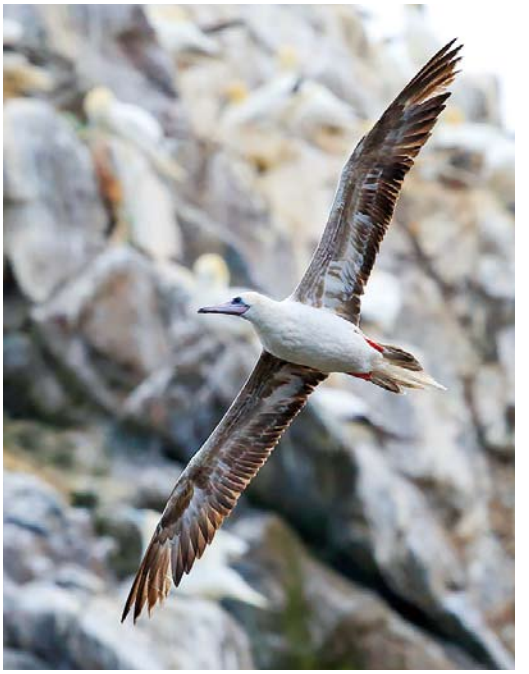
SWIFTS TO RAILS In Scotland, a **White-throated Needletail** *Hirundapus caudacutus* spent over an hour on Barra, Outer Hebrides, on 22 June. An exhausted **Alpine Swift** *Apus melba* taken into care at Gdańsk, Pomerania, on 2 July was the 13th for Poland but the first documented by photographs; after a week, it was ringed and released. On 12 June, the first **Pacific Swift** *A pacificus* for the Netherlands flew for 5 min in mid-morning above the coastal inlands of Westkapelle, Zeeland. The first for Iceland stayed at Holt, Mýrar, on 24 June. On 2 July, the eighth for Britain (and first for Scotland) was photographed at Longhaven, Aberdeenshire. It is possible that all these records refer to the same individual. A carcass of a **House Swift** *A nipalensis* at Ladner, Delta, British Columbia, Canada, on 18 May 2012 constituted the first record for the Americas (Wilson J Ornithol 129: 411-416, 2017). A male **Sora** *Porzana carolina* sound-recorded at Kurefjorden, Østfold, on 10-24 June was the first for Norway. The first breeding of **Baillon's Crake** *Zapornia pusilla* for Romania concerned a pair with a juvenile photographed at Vadu, Constanţa, on 7 July.

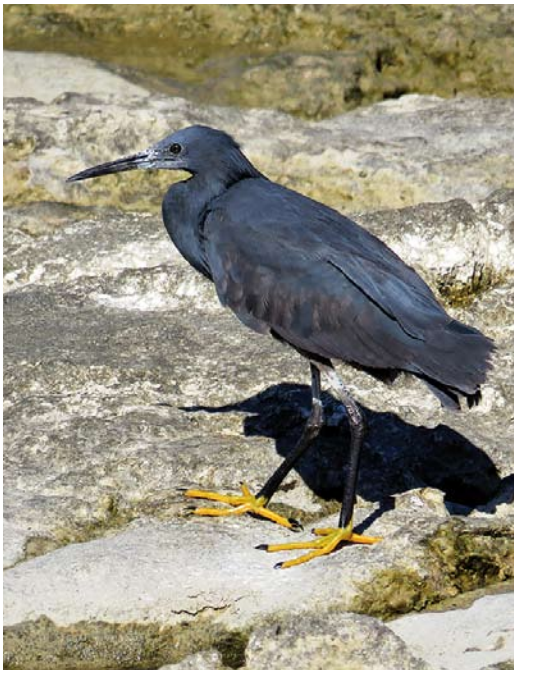
TUBENOSES If accepted, a **White-faced Storm Petrel** *Pelagodroma marina* and a **Black-bellied Storm Petrel** *Fregetta tropica* off Al-Hallaniyah island on 3 June will be the third and fourth for Oman, respectively. An adult **Black-browed Albatross** *Thalassarche melanophris* was reported irregularly on Helgoland and Sylt, Schleswig-Holstein, Germany, until at least 11 July. Probably the same adult first flew past Herdlevær, Hordaland, Norway, on 25 June and then Bempton Cliffs, East Yorkshire, England, on 28 June (where it had also been seen on 13-18 May); the next day, it was reported between 05:30 and 18:00 at five coastal sites in north-eastern England and south-eastern Scotland. On 13 July, it flew c 3-4 km west of Hirtshals, Nordjylland, Denmark, and on 16 July this or another one was photographed at sea from the deck of the ferry from Hull towards Zeebrugge, constituting the first for Belgium (an unidentified albatross occurred at Zeebrugge on 16 December 1980). The second **Swinhoe's Storm Petrel** *Hydrobates monorhis* for mainland Portugal was trapped at Punta de Almadena, Algarve, on 9 June (the previous one was trapped at the same place on 27 June 1998). The first for South America was trapped in French Guiana in June. An adult trapped on Fair Isle, Shetland, Scotland, on 14 July had been ringed here on 27 July 2013 and re-trapped and seen on 14-15 and 23 August 2016 (cf Dutch Birding 35: 255, 337-339, 2013, 38: 395, 398, 2016). A **Sooty Shearwater** *Puffinus griseus* at Jahra pools on 6 June was the fourth for Kuwait.

STORKS TO HERONS An adult **Yellow-billed Stork** *Mycteria ibis* stayed near Silves, Algarve, Portugal, from 27 May to 8 June. In Israel, one was found at Bet Shean valley on 9 July. The third **White Stork** *Ciconia ciconia* for the Azores from 31 December 2016 remained on São Miguel into July. In June, **Striated Herons** *Butorides striata* bred for the first time in Bahrain. A **Squacco Heron** *Ardeola ralloides* near Haromsk, Stolin, on 22 May was only the second for Belarus. The second breeding record of **Cattle Egret** *Bubulcus ibis* for Britain concerned five nests with nine young at Ham Wall nature reserve, Somerset, England (the previous record was a pair breeding in 2008). At the same reserve, seven pairs of **Western Great Egret** *Ardea alba* produced 17 young (this species' first nesting in Britain was in 2012). The third **Cattle Egret** for Latvia was found at Liepaja lake on 8 July. A **Black Heron** *Egretta ardesiaca* at Porto Cesareo, Puglia, from 25 May to 3 June was the first for Italy (the only previous record for Europe was in Greece on 3-11 June 2012). In the Azores, the **Snowy Egret** *E thula* at Madalena, Pico, from 12 May remained until 6 June and one was at Lagoa do Junco, Terceira, from 15 July.

FRIGATEBIRDS TO BOOBIES The first **Magnificent Frigatebird** *Fregata magnificens* for Senegal was photographed off Ngor, Dakar, on 29 April. A juvenile **Ascension Frigatebird** *F aquila* at Curral Velho, Boa Vista, on 24-27 June was the first for the Cape Verde Islands and the third for the WP (previous ones were in Argyll, Scotland, in July 1953 and July 2013). A **Red-footed Booby** *Sula sula* off Dakar on 19 October 2016 was the first for Senegal. In the Cape Verde Islands, three were present at Curral Velho on 11-22 June. The second for France was photographed in a colony of Northern Gannets *Morus bassanus* on Île Rouzic, Côtes-d'Armor, on 26 June (the first was in 2011). A juvenile **Brown Booby** *S leucogaster* was found at Peniche, Leiria, Portugal, on 21 May and one reported at Bocca di Serchio, Pisa, on 18 July was the fourth for Italy. An adult **Masked Booby** *S dactylatra* on Curral Velho on 26-27 June was the fourth for the Cape Verde Islands.

WADERS The first **Black-winged Stilt** *Himantopus himantopus* for Iceland from 20 April remained at Álftanes until 1 July. In Britain, a record six pairs bred at five different locations in May-June and, in Poland, a record c 10 pairs were breeding. A pair of **Pied Avocets** *Recurvirostra avosetta* with a nest near Turau, Zhytkavichy, on 18 May





**336** Red-footed Booby / Roodpootgent *Sula sula*, immature, Île Rouzic, Côtes-d'Armor, France, 26 June 2017 *(Armel Deniau)* **337** Black Heron / Zwarte Reiger *Egretta ardesiaca*, immature, Porto Cesareo, Puglia, Italy, 28 May 2017 *(Luca Giussani)* **338** Black Heron / Zwarte Reiger *Egretta ardesiaca*, immature, Porto Cesareo, Puglia, Italy, 25 May 2017 *(Marco Bernardini)*

**339** Namaqua Dove / Maskerduif *Oena capensis*, female, Lake Sevan, Gegharkunik, Armenia, 30 May 2017 *(Alexander Rukhaia/batumibirding.com)*

**340** Hybrid King x Common Eider / hybride Koningseider x Eider *Somateria spectabilis x mollissima*, adult male, Seydisfjördur, Iceland, 22 June 2017 *(Tobias Epple)*

**341** Grey-tailed Tattler / Siberische Grijze Ruiter *Tringa brevipes*, with Ruddy Turnstones / Steenlopers *Arenaria interpres* and Sanderling / Drieteenstrandloper *Calidris alba*, Cabo da Praia, Terceira, Azores, 7 July 2017 *(Josh Jones)*

**342** Great Knot / Grote Kanoet *Calidris tenuirostris*, adult summer, Chipiona, Cádiz, Spain, 1 July 2017 *(Francisco Chiclana)*

**343** Oriental Pratincole / Oosterse Vorkstaartplevier *Glareola maldivarum*, summer plumage, Bottorp, Småland, Sweden, 15 May 2017 *(Tobias Berger)* cf Dutch Birding 39: 206, 2017 **344** Oriental Pratincole / Oosterse Vorkstaartplevier *Glareola maldivarum*, summer plumage, Pasalan, Joroinen, Finland, 14 July 2017 *(Mika Bruun)* **345** Red-necked Stint / Roodkeelstrandloper *Calidris ruficollis*, summer plumage, Nærlandsstranda, Rogaland, Norway, 6 July 2017 *(Sigmar Lode)* **346** Blue-cheeked Bee-eater / Groene Bijeneter *Merops persicus*, adult, Groot Schietveld, Brecht, Antwerpen, Belgium, 2 July 2017 *(Erik Ducastel)*

concerned (only) the second breeding for Belarus. A **Pacific Golden Plover** *Pluvialis fulva* at Seewinkel, Burgenland, on 20 May was the second for Austria. In Kazakhstan, c 500 **Sociable Lapwings** *Vanellus gregarius* were found at Zhanteke on 16 June. An adult male **Oriental Plover** *Anarhynchus veredus* at Røstlandet, Røst, Nordland, from 29 June to 1 July was the first for Norway and the second for the WP (the previous one was in Finland on 25 May 2003; cf Dutch Birding 25: 338, plate 374-375, 2003). The second **Far Eastern Curlew** *Numenius madagascariensis* for Canada was photographed at Lake Laberge, Yukon, on 1 June (the previous one was in British Columbia in 1984). The **Hudsonian Whimbrel** *N hudsonicus* in Cantabria, Spain, was still at Cicero marshes, Santoña, on 19 July. An adult **Great Knot** *Calidris tenuirostris* at Doñana beach, Huelva, on 30 June, and then re-found at Chipiona, Cádiz, on 1-2 July was the first for Spain; a previous record at Ebro delta, Tarragona, in April 1979 has now been rejected (Ardeola 64: 397-442, 2017). The first **'Cox's Sandpiper'** (hybrid between Curlew Sandpiper and Pectoral Sandpiper *C ferruginea x melanotos*) for New Zealand was photographed at Lake Ellesmere, Christchurch, on 25 November 2016. An adult **Red-necked Stint** *C ruficollis* at Nærlandsstranda on 6 July was the sixth for both Norway and Rogaland. If accepted, a **Temminck's Stint** *C temminckii* reported at Straumfjörður, Mýrar, on 26 May will be the third for Iceland. A **Grey-tailed Tattler** *Tringa brevipes* at Cabo da Praia, Terceira, from 7 July onwards was the first for the Azores and the fifth for the WP (previous ones were in Wales in 1981, Scotland in 1994, Sweden in 2003 and the Netherlands in 2010; moreover, an unidentified tattler occurred on São Miguel, Azores, on 7 September 2008).

**347** Black-winged Kite / Grijze Wouw *Elanus caeruleus*, Zamość, Lubelskie, Poland, 2 June 2017 *(Michał Zawadzki)* **348** Pacific Swift / Siberische Gierzwaluw *Apus pacificus*, Holt, Mýrar, Iceland, 24 June 2017 *(Brynjúlfur Brynjólfsson)* **349** White-throated Needletail / Stekelstaartgierzwaluw *Hirundapus caudacutus*, Barra, Outer Hebrides, Scotland, 22 June 2017 *(Bruce Taylor)* **350** Black-browed Albatross / Wenkbrauwalbatros *Thalassarche melanophris*, at sea (51°25.857′, 2°57.512′), off Belgium, 16 July 2017 *(Stephen Dunstan)*

A **Collared Pratincole** *Glareola pratincola* at Pikla, Pärnumaa, on 25 May was (only) the second for Estonia. An adult **Oriental Pratincole** *G maldivarum* photographed at Pasalan, Joroinen, on 14 July was the first for Finland. After six **Cream-colored Coursers** *Cursorius cursor* in Granada, Andalucía, in May, two pairs bred in Mediterranean Spain. In France, the one in Haute-Corse from 15 May stayed until 30 June.

AUKS TO GULLS A **Thick-billed Murre** *Uria lomvia* off Corvo on 2 June was the fifth for the Azores. The first **Black Noddy** *Anous minutus* for Hong Kong, China, was photographed at Kung Chau, near Tap Mun Island, on 18 June. An adult **Sabine's Gull** *Xema sabini* found exhausted at Boa Esperança, Boa Vista, on 5 May was the fourth for the Cape Verde Islands. In late June, a nest containing three eggs by a pair of **Bonaparte's Gulls** *Chroicocephalus philadelphia* in a colony of Black-headed Gulls *C ridibundus* in western Iceland concerned the species' first breeding for the WP. The first **Franklin's Gull** *Larus pipixcan* for the Seychelles was photographed at D'Arros on 7 May. An adult at Saltvík, Húsavík, on 22-23 May was the sixth for Iceland. On the Mediterranean coast of Israel, two **White-eyed Gulls** *L leucophthalmus* were reported at Ma'agan Michael on 26 May and at Palmakhim on 29 May. An adult photographed at Meneou, Larnaca, on 23-24 June was the first for Cyprus. In Portugal, the adult **Cape Gull** *L dominicanus vetula* first seen in 2009 was back at Quinta de Marim, Olhão, Algarve, from 30 June onwards.

TERNS In Scotland, a **Sooty Tern** *Onychoprion fuscatus* was photographed at Uisaed Point, Argyll, on 2 June. The second for the Cape Verde Islands was seen on Raso on 13 June (the first was on Raso in March and could relate to the same individual; cf Dutch Birding 39: 124,

**351** Eleonora's Falcon / Eleonora's Valk *Falco eleonorae*, second-year, Baldramsdorf, Kärnten, Austria, 8 June 2017 *(Rudi Mann)* **352** Amur Falcon / Amoerroodpootvalk *Falco amurensis*, adult male, Plopul, Tulcea, Romania, 29 May 2017 *(Tommy Holmgren)* **353** Amur Falcon / Amoerroodpootvalk *Falco amurensis*, first-summer female, Polgigga, Cornwall, England, 7 July 2017 *(Stuart Piner)*

**354** Egyptian Vulture / Aasgier *Neophron percnopterus*, adult, Tillitse, Lolland, Denmark, 5 June 2017 *(Klaus Malling Olsen)* **355** Franklin's Gull / Franklins Meeuw *Larus pipixcan*, adult summer, Saltvík, Húsavík, Iceland, 23 May 2017 *(Yann Kolbeinsson)* **356** White-eyed Gull / Witoogmeeuw *Larus leucophthalmus*, adult summer, Meneou, Larnaca, Cyprus, 24 June 2017 *(Costas Constantinou)*

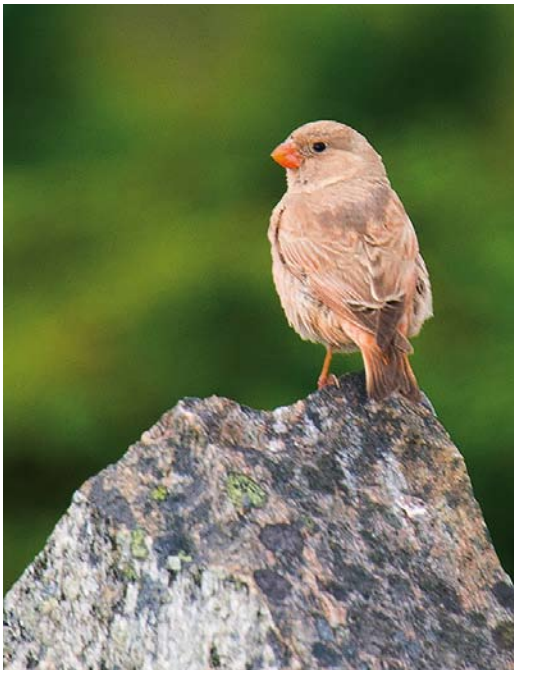
2017). Dayton et al (2017) analysed the genetic variation of 78 **Whiskered Terns** *Chlidonias hybrida* from breeding colonies in France, Poland and Ukraine; they found a strong differentiation between individuals from France and eastern Europe, confirming the presence of a western and an eastern subpopulation characterized by differences in winter distribution and migratory routes (Waterbirds 40: 105-117, 2017). In June, 33 pairs were nesting near Zuidlaardermeer, Groningen, the Netherlands. Among several good reasons to assume that these Dutch breeding birds belong to the eastern subpopulation is a recovery of one photographed on 3 July that was ringed as a chick near Zator, Małopolska, Poland, in August 2010 (not recovered since). A second calendar-year **Forster's Tern** *Sterna forsteri* on Texel, Noord-Holland, on 12 June was the sixth for the Netherlands. An adult turned up at Tacumshin, Wexford, Ireland, on 1-2 July. In France, the colour-ringed adult male **Elegant Tern** *S elegans* which had its 'purity' confirmed by genetic analysis (see Dutch Birding 38: 330, 403-405, 2016) was back at Banc d'Arguin, Gironde, from 23 April to 4 May and then also stayed at Fouesnant, Finistère, France, from 25 May to 4 June. A few days later, it had moved across to England to stay on Hayling Island, Hampshire, on 7-10 June, at Pagham Harbour, West Sussex, on 10-20 June, and on Brownsea Island, Dorset, on 21-22 June before returning to France, where it was seen at Calais, Pas-de-Calais, from 4 July. In Spain, a pair was photographed in a Sandwich Tern *S sandvicensis* colony at Ebre delta, Tarragona, in late June and attempted to breed. This or another 'pure' pair bred in the València region from 21 June and produced one chick. The **American Royal Tern** *S maxima maxima* first seen on Guernsey, Channel Islands, between 5 February and 25 May (Dutch Birding 39: 119, 124, 206, 2017) became the first for France when staying in Côtes-d'Armor at Saint-Brieuc, Morieux and Hillion on 6-29 June. This individual has been ringed as a nestling on South Pelican Island, Brunswick, North Carolina, USA, on 5 July 2016. Previous European ringing recoveries of this species were from Kenfig, Glamorgan, Wales, on 24 November 1979 (ringed in North Carolina in 1978 or 1979), and from Puerto de Rosas, Spain, on 26 December 1989 (ringed in Virginia on 1 August 1989).

RAPTORS In May-July, two pairs of **Western Osprey** *Pandion haliaetus* successfully raised six young at Biesbosch, Noord-Brabant; the species' first-ever breeding for the Netherlands was at the same site in 2016. A **Black-winged Kite** *Elanus caeruleus* was seen between Haigerloch and Hart, Baden-Württemberg, Germany, from 20 May to 20 June. The second for Poland stayed at Zamość and Szopinek, Lubelskie, from 30 May to 23 June; the first was found in 2016. In Italy, one was reported at Pieve Vergonte, Piemonte, on 4 June. The species was also photographed at Groot Schietveld, Antwerpen, Belgium, on 21 July and at Oostvaardersplassen, Flevoland, the Netherlands, on 22 July. If accepted, a **Bearded Vulture** *Gypaetus barbatus* flying east over Mullsjö, Jönköping, on 22 May would be the first for Sweden; it may have been the same individual as the one flying over the Netherlands, Germany and Denmark between 13 and 20 May (cf Dutch Birding 39: 206, 2017). A second-year male ('Lucky') released in 2016 in the Hohe Tauern national park in Austria left the Alps in May to spend, first, a few days in central Germany, then passing through Belgium and into the Netherlands on 25 May, subsequently flying north via The Hague, Zuid-Holland, to Texel, where it stayed on 27-29 May. After several days in northern Noord-Holland, it departed on 31 May to fly south over eastern Belgium after which it stayed, eg, near Paris, France, on 2 July before returning to the Alps. An adult **Egyptian Vulture** *Neophron percnopterus* over Hundested on 3 June and then at Tillitse, Lolland, on 5 June was the fourth for Denmark. In France, a **Rüppell's Vulture** *Gyps rueppelli* was reported at Col du Soulor, Pyrénées-Atlantiques, on 19 June. One photographed at Mijk near Dakhla on 26 June was at least the second for the Western Sahara (the first concerned three individuals 5 km west of Aousserd, Oued-Ed Dahab, on 1 August 2011; cf Dutch Birding 33: 395, plate 514, 2011). At least 96 **Griffon Vultures** *G fulvus* migrated over eastern Belgium to Nordrhein-Westfalen, Germany, on 28 May, and a flock of c 60 moved to the north-east of the Netherlands to stay for a night near Exloo, Drenthe, on 29/30 May. Seven colour-ringed Griffons in the Netherlands in the past years originated from Italy (one), France (two) and Spain (four). In Germany, an unmarked second-year **Cinereous Vulture** *Aegypius monachus* stayed with three Griffon at Dreiborner Hochfläche, Nordrhein-Westfalen, on 14-16 June. An immature **Steppe Eagle** *Aquila nipalensis* photographed at Jbel Moussa, Tétouan, on 18 May was the first for Morocco (Go-South Bull 14: 101-105, 2017). The third **Eastern Imperial Eagle** *A heliaca* for Belarus was found exhausted and taken into care at Vishau, Byalynichy, on 22 May. An adult **Bonelli's Eagle** *A fasciata* photographed at Djoudj on 22 December 2015 was not the first for Senegal since the species has been recorded several times in the 1990s, occurring even regularly since 2010 (Bram Piot in litt; contra Dutch Birding 38: 405, 2016). The 2016 survey of **Hen Harriers** *Circus cyaneus* in Britain revealed the presence of 545 pairs; previous surveys were in 2010 (662) and 2004 (806 pairs). A pair of third calendar-year **Pallid Harriers** *C macrourus* raising four female young in farmland in eastern Groningen in May-July concerned the species' first documented breeding for the Netherlands and western Europe. The first egg was laid between 8 and 10 May, and five chicks of between three and 11 days old were in the nest on 17 June. In early July, just before fledging, four remaining young received black colour rings with white inscription. Reports on a second breeding record in Groningen this spring/summer have not yet been substantiated. This breeding coincides with a record spring influx of more than 90 individuals in the Netherlands, of which 59 in the first two weeks of May, and a handful staying into the summer (cf Dutch Birding 39: 209, 2017). There have been breeding hopefuls in the past when males Pallid attempted to pair up with a female Hen (on Schiermonnikoog, Friesland, in 1985) or Montagu's Harrier *C pygargus* (at Finsterwolde, Gronin-

**357** Spectacled Warbler / Brilgrasmus *Sylvia conspicillata*, first-summer male, Feldberg, Baden-Württemberg, Germany, 8 June 2017 *(Tobias Epple)* **358** Spectacled Warbler / Brilgrasmus *Sylvia conspicillata*, first-summer male, Dreiborner Hochfläche, Nordrhein-Westfalen, Germany, 19 June 2017 *(Norbert Uhlhaas)* **359** Eastern Subalpine Warbler / Balkanbaardgrasmus *Sylvia cantillans*, male, Vík, Lón, Iceland, 31 May 2017 *(Yann Kolbeinsson)* **360** Dark-eyed Junco / Grijze Junco *Junco hyemalis*, male, Svenska Högarna, Uppland, Sweden, 14 May 2017 *(Joakim Ekman)* cf Dutch Birding 39: 211, 2017 **361** Marmora's Warbler / Sardijnse Grasmus *Sylvia sarda*, male, Pla d'en Xixa, El Brull, Barcelona, Spain, 6 June 2017 *(Carles Tobella)* **362** Myrtle Warbler / Mirtezanger *Setophaga coronata*, male, Skokholm, Pembrokeshire, Wales, 18 June 2017 *(Richard Brown)*

**363** Eastern Subalpine Warbler / Balkanbaardgrasmus *Sylvia cantillans*, male, Helgoland, Schleswig-Holstein, Germany, 20 May 2017 *(Axel Halley)*

**364** Upcher's Warbler / Grote Vale Spotvogel *Hippolais languida*, Sveti Nikola, Kavarna, Bulgaria, 4 June 2017 *(Simeon Gigov)*



**365** Black-Headed Penduline Tit / Zwartkopbuidelmees *Remiz macronyx*, male, Yerkinkala, Atyrau, Kazakhstan, 12 June 2017 *(Erik Rask/bigyearwp.com)* **366** Trumpeter Finch / Woestijnvink *Bucanetes githagineus*, male, Breivik, Øygarden, Hordaland, Norway, 20 June 2017 *(Bert de Bruin)* **367** Grey-necked Bunting / Steenortolaan *Emberiza buchanani*, male, Hallig Hooge, Schleswig-Holstein, Germany, 14 June 2017 *(Martin Gottschling)*

gen, in 2014; cf Dutch Birding 36: 273, 2014). Two juveniles shot and collected at Werkhoven, Utrecht, in the fourth week of August 1935 have sometimes been considered as an indication of previous breeding in the Netherlands. In Belarus, a juvenile with a wing not yet fully grown (so, it probably hatched nearby, constituting the country's first breeding since 1916) was photographed near Krugi, Magiliou, on 15 July. In Italy, a **Levant Sparrowhawk** *Accipiter brevipes* was seen at Capriglia, Toscana, on 24 May (in April, two individuals were reported here). A **Red Kite** *Milvus milvus* paired with a **Black Kite** *M migrans* rearing three young in Lviv oblast in May-June concerned the species' first breeding in Ukraine for at least 30 years.

OWLS In 2016, for the second time in 60 years, the number of breeding **Common Barn Owls** *Tyto alba guttata* in the Netherlands was higher than 3100 pairs. A male **Eurasian Scops Owl** *Otus scops* was singing at Asselfingen, Baden-Württemberg, Germany, from 6 May to 21 June and one was sound-recorded at Kluki, Pomerania, Poland, on 19 May. In Nos Oiseaux 64: 99-103, 2017, photographs of melanistic **Tawny Owls** *Strix aluco* trapped 15 km apart in Fribourg, Switzerland, on 21 December 2007 and 1 April 2015 have been published and discussed; only a few other cases are known, eg, from Switzerland (two), Austria (three) and Croatia (one), indicating melanism in this species is very rare and perhaps mainly occurring in central Europe (as it is in Ural Owl *S uralensis*; see Dutch Birding 31: 159-179, 2009). In Scotland, a **Snowy Owl** *Bubo scandiacus* was seen again on Papa Westray, Orkney, on 21 June.

BEE-EATERS TO FALCONS The first **Blue-cheeked Bee-eater** *Merops persicus* for Belgium was photographed flying past Groot Schietveld, on 2 July. In Scotland, a female **Lesser Kestrel** *Falco naumanni* was found on Noss, Shetland, on 1 May. If accepted, a male at Vienna on 7 May will be the first for Austria since 2005. The identification of a juvenile male **Red-footed Falcon** *F vespertinus* collected in Gilgit on 19 October 1880 and deposited at the Natural History Museum, Tring, Hertfordshire, England, has just been confirmed by molecular analysis as the first for Pakistan and the Indian Subcontinent (Indian Birds 13: 57-60, 2017). The first **Amur Falcon** *F amurensis* for Romania was an adult male paired with a female Red-footed at Plopul, Tulcea, on 27-29 May. A first-summer female photographed at Polgigga, Cornwall, on 6-7 July, and then re-found at St Buryan, Cornwall, on 17 July was the second for Britain (the previous one was in September-October 2008). An **Eleonora's Falcon** *F eleonorae* photographed at Baldramsdorf, Kärnten, on 8 June was the first for Austria.

SHRIKES TO SWALLOWS A female **Brown Shrike** *Lanius cristatus* at Zeyit reservoir on 17 December 2016 was the first for Turkmenistan and not for Turkey (contra Dutch Birding 39: 209, 2017). If accepted, a male **Red-tailed Shrike** *L phoenicuroides* photographed on Utlängan, Blekinge, on 30 May will be the third for Sweden (previous ones were in 2004 and 2007). In Spain, a **Pied Crow** *Corvus albus* was reported at Sardalla, Ribadesella, Asturias, on 7 June. At least two **Black-headed Penduline Tits** *Remiz macronyx* were found in the Ural delta at Yerkinkala near Atyrau, Kazakhstan, on 12 June. A juvenile (ringed) and a pair of **Yellow-bellied Tits** *Pardaliparus venustulus* photographed at Muraviovka Park, Amurskaya oblast, on 25 September 2013 were the first for Russia (Forktail 32: 88-90, 2016). In Wales, a **Eurasian Crag Martin** *Ptyonoprogne rupestris* was seen at Lake Vyrnwy, Powys, on 25 May. From 1 May to early July, the first breeding pair of **Red-rumped Swallow** *Cecropis daurica* for Hungary at Balatonfüred raised at least three young. One photographed at Ventė, Šilutė, on 8 June was (only) the first for Lithuania.

LEAF WARBLERS TO SYLVIAS If accepted, a **Two-barred Warbler** *Phylloscopus plumbeitarsus* photographed on Foula, Shetland, on 30 May will be the sixth for Britain. In Spain, an unseasonal **Yellow-browed Warbler** *P inornatus* was seen at Rudrón national park, Molino del Canto, Burgos, on 18 June. An **Eastern Bonelli's Warbler** *P orientalis* sound-recorded at Vic-la-Gardiole, Hérault, on 21-22 May was the first for France. Shipilina et al (2017) revisited the hybrid zone of **'Northern' Chiffchaff** *P collybita abietinus* and **Siberian Chiffchaff** *P tristis* combining genetic, phenotypic and song data. They found that, where both taxa occur, there are many intermediate phenotypic characters as well as mixed singers. Their genetic analyses based on mtDNA and whole-genome sequence data indicate high levels of gene exchange between both taxa (Ecol Evol 2017-7: 2169-2180, http://tinyurl.com/yapmcb87). In Poland, an unseasonal singing male **Siberian Chiffchaff** was photographed and sound-recorded at Bytom-Miechowice, Silesia, on 4-6 June. A singing male **Iberian Chiffchaff** *P ibericus* at Owiesno, Silesia, on 31 March was the third for Poland. The first **Eastern Subalpine Warbler** *Sylvia cantillans* for Iceland was a male at Vík, Lón, from 31 May to 18 June. In Germany, a singing male **Spectacled Warbler** *S conspicillata* was photographed at Feldberg, Baden-Württemberg, on 8 June and maybe the same individual stayed (and was trapped) at Dreiborner Hochfläche, Nordrhein-Westfalen, from 13 June. It appeared to be nesting, raising five young, and the identity of the female is being investigated by DNA analysis. Probably the same male **Marmora's Warbler** *S sarda* seen at Barcelona, Spain, on 7-9 May was trapped here on 6 June.

REED WARBLERS TO WHEATEARS Seven to eight breeding pairs of **Booted Warbler** *Iduna caligata* were counted in Lithuania this spring (the first breeding record was in 2015). An **Eastern Olivaceous Warbler** *I pallida* trapped near Narowla, Homelski, in late May 2016 was the first for Belarus. If accepted, an **Upcher's Warbler** *Hippolais languida* on Akrotiri peninsula on 8 May will be the second for Cyprus. The first for Bulgaria was photographed at Sveti Nikola, Kavarna, Dobrich, on 4 June. A flock of 10 **Bank Mynas** *Acridotheres ginginianus* in Baluchistan on 11 April were the first for Iran. A female **Varied Thrush** *Ixoreus naevius* photographed at Providence,

Chukotka, on 22-23 April was the fifth for Russia (Russian J Ornithol 26: 1909-1910, 2017; cf Dutch Birding 38: 201-214, 2016). An **Eastern Nightingale** *Luscinia megarhynchos golzii* ringed at Donges, Loire-Atlantique, on 27 August 2013 has been accepted as the first for France (Ornithos 24: 134-135, 2017). In June, a male **Siberian Stonechat** *Saxicola maurus* was breeding together with a female **Whinchat** *S rubetra* at Pasvik valley, Sør-Varanger, Norway. An **Isabelline Wheatear** *Oenanthe isabellina* at Waidegg, Kärnten, on 11 June was the third for Austria. A **Pied Wheatear** *O pleschanka* photographed at Nome, Alaska, on 4-10 July was the first for North America.

SPARROWS Four **Eurasian Tree Sparrows** *Passer montanus* on Troughton Island, Western Australia, on 6-8 August 2016 were the remaining individuals (or progeny) from a group of 17 that arrived after a storm in c 2011. This represents the first documented colonisation by this species of a near-shore location in Australia with little or no likelihood of ship assistance (Australian Field Ornithol 34: 67-70, 2017). A **Common Rosefinch** *Erythrina erythrina* mentioned as the second for Cyprus (cf Dutch Birding 39: 211, 2017) was in a fact the c 13th record (Colin Richardson in litt). In June, this species bred for the first time in Bosnia and Herzegovina. A **Trumpeter Finch** *Bucanetes githagineus* was photographed on Yeu, Vendée, France, on 25 May. The second for Norway stayed at Breivik, Øygarden, Hordaland, on 19-26 June; the first was found in 2013. In Switzerland, one was photographed north-west of Matterhorn in Wallis on 7 July. In Czechia, an unseasonal adult male **Lapland Longspur** *Calcarius lapponicus* was photographed in Jeseniky mountains on 19 June. After five **Dark-eyed Juncos** *Junco hyemalis* in Europe in March-May (cf Dutch Birding 39: 211, 2017), two additional males were found at Dlogellau, Gwynedd, Wales, on 12 May and at Stalham, Norfolk, England, on 10 June.

BUNTINGS TO AMERICAN WARBLERS Gholamhosseini et al (Ardea 105: 27-36, 2017) showed that the hybrid zone between **Red-headed Bunting** *Emberiza bruniceps* and **Black-headed Bunting** *E melanocephala* in northern Iran has expanded c 170 km westward in recent decades with Black-headed gradually being replaced by Red-headed. The first **Black-headed Bunting** for the Seychelles was a female or first calendar-year on Bird Island from 22 October to 11 November 2016. A male photographed at Jastarnia, Hel peninsula, on 14 June was the third for Poland. This spring, the species bred for the first time both in Hungary at Kunbaja, Bács-Kiskun, and in Germany near Tübingen, Baden-Württemberg (four fledglings). A male **Grey-necked Bunting** *E buchanani* on Hooge, Schleswig-Holstein, on 14 June was the third for Germany (previous ones were on Helgoland in 2009 and 2013). A singing male **Black-faced Bunting** *E spodocephala* at Uba valley in Western-Altai nature reserve on 27 June was the first for Kazakhstan; another individual calling at the same location may have been a female. A singing male **Myrtle Warbler** *Setophaga coronata* was first seen and then trapped on Skokholm, Pembrokeshire, Wales, on 18 June.

For a number of reports Birdwatch, British Birds, Go-South Bulletin, www.birdguides.com, www.hbw.com, www.netfugl.dk, www.rarebirdalert.co.uk, www.tarsiger.com and www.waarneming.nl were consulted. We wish to thank Steve Baines, Tobias Berger, Patrick Bergier, Marco Bernardini, Paul Bradbeer, Richard Brown, Bert de Bruin, Mika Bruun, Brynjúlfur Brynjólfsson, Paco Chiclana, Costas Constantinou, José Luis Copete, Magnus Corell, Andrea Corso, Armel Deniau, Philippe Dubois, Erik Ducastel, Stephen Dunstan, Enno Ebels, Håvard Eggen, Joakim Ekman, Tobias Epple, Natalino Fenech, Marcin Filipek, Raymond Galea, Eduardo Garcia del Rey, Ali Gholamhosseini, Simeon Gigov, Luca Giussani, Luís Gordinho, Martin Gottschling, Ricard Gutiérrez, Axel Halley, Trevor Hardaker, Pete Hayman, Paul Herrieven, Tommy Holmgren, Edward van IJzendoorn, Mike Jennings, Josh Jones, Zbigniew Kajzer, Leander Khil, Bence Kókay, Yann Kolbeinsson, Richard Kvetko, Ruud Leblanc, Mateusz Ledwoń, Sigmar Lode, André van Loon, Klaus Malling Olsen, Rudi Mann, Andy Marquis, Samir Martins, Gerbrand Michielsen, Geir Mobakken, Killian Mullarney, Gerard Ouweneel, Yoav Perlman, Reiner Petersen, Stuart Piner, Bram Piot, René Pop, Nikos Probonas, Erik Rask, Guillaume Réthoré, Colin Richardson, Magnus Robb, Alexander Rukhaia (Batumi Birding), Baz Scampion, Roy Slaterus, Geert Spanoghe, Rasmus Strack, Peter Symens, Bruce Taylor, Carles Tobella, Hugo Touzé, Norbert Uhlhaas, Dzmitry Vincheuski, Roland van der Vliet, Peter de Vries, Arend Wassink, Claes Wikström and Michał Zawadzki for their help in compiling this review.

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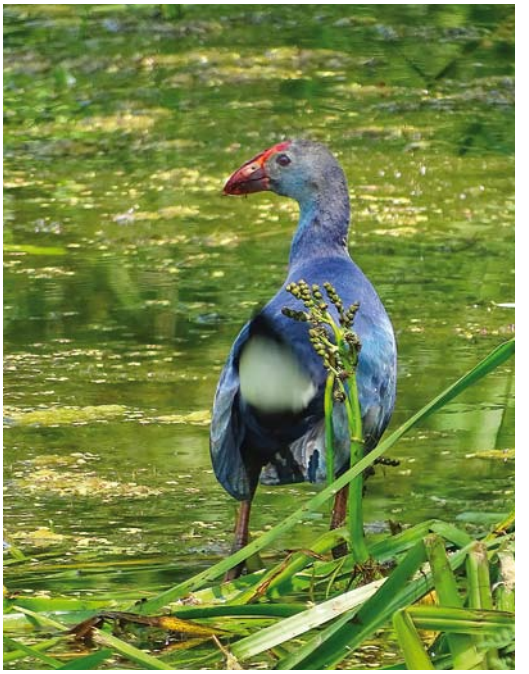
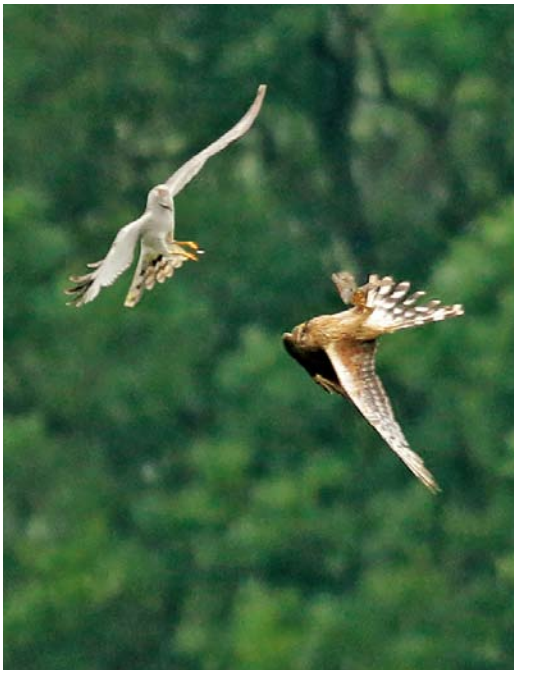
# Recente meldingen

Dit overzicht van recente meldingen van zeldzame en interessante vogels in Nederland beslaat voornamelijk de periode **mei-juni 2017**. 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.

EENDEN Tot eind mei werden kleine aantallen **Witbuikrotganzen** *Branta hrota* opgemerkt, uitsluitend in het Waddengebied. Een late waarneming betrof een exemplaar op 24 juni in de Kennemerduinen bij Bloemendaal, Noord-Holland. De laatste **Zwarte Rotgans** *B nigricans* van het seizoen werd gemeld op 17 mei op Texel, Noord-Holland. **Roodhalsganzen** *B ruficollis* verdwenen in rap tempo uit het land; de laatste twee verbleven op 13 mei op Ameland, Friesland. Andere locaties betroffen Schiermonnikoog, Friesland, het Oostvaardersveld, Flevoland, en de Emmapolder, Groningen. Overvliegende vogels passeerden op 1 mei telpost Noordkaap, Groningen, en op 10 mei de Eemshaven, Groningen (twee). De 59 152 **Brandganzen** *B leucopsis* die op 10 mei vanaf de Eemshaven werden geteld, zorgden voor de derde teldag ooit in Nederland. Er werden nog vijf langstrekkende **IJseenden** *Clangula hyemalis* gemeld, waaronder late op 25 juni langs Camperduin, Noord-Holland, en op 29 juni langs Noordwijk, Zuid-Holland. Daarnaast werden op nog c 10 plaatsen langs de kust en in het IJsselmeergebied zwemmende vogels gezien. Het mannetje **Buffelkopeend** *Bucephala albeola* van Barendrecht, Zuid-Holland, werd daar op 27 mei voor het laatst gezien en vermoedelijk dezelfde vogel dook op 29 mei op in de Brabantse Biesbosch, Noord-Brabant, om daar (net als vorig jaar) de zomer door te brengen. Vermoedelijk ontsnapte mannetjes **IJslandse Brilduiker** *B islandica* werden gefotografeerd op 31 mei in Uithoorn, Noord-Holland, en op 2 juni in Alphen aan den Rijn, Zuid-Holland. **Witoogeenden** *Aythya nyroca* werden van c 10 plekken verspreid over het land gemeld, met nog steeds enkele langdurig pleisterende in de Lauwersmeer, Friesland/Groningen; op het Dwingelderveld, Drenthe; bij Blitterswijck, Limburg; bij Meppel, Drenthe; en bij Rhoon, Zuid-Holland. Mannetjes **Amerikaanse Wintertaling** *Anas carolinensis* zwommen op 2 mei in een weidevogelreservaat bij Akersloot, Noord-Holland, en op 6 mei op het Jaap Deensgat, Groningen.

**368** Grijze Strandloper / Semipalmated Sandpiper *Calidris pusilla*, zomerkleed, Lomm, Limburg, 15 mei 2017 *(Huub Crommentuyn)*





**369** Grijskoppurperkoet / Grey-headed Swamphen *Porphyrio poliocephalus*, Overheicop, Zuid-Holland, 18 juni 2017 *(Enno B Ebels)* **370** Steppekiekendieven / Pallid Harriers *Circus macrourus*, derde-kalenderjaar mannetje en vrouwtje tijdens prooioverdracht, Noordoost-Groningen, 1 juli 2017 *(Fred Visscher)* **371** Grijze Strandloper / Semipalmated Sandpiper *Calidris pusilla*, zomerkleed, Lomm, Limburg, 15 mei 2017 *(Huub Crommentuyn)*

HOENDERS TOT DUIKERS Ringers op zes locaties vingen in totaal 46 **Kwartels** *Coturnix coturnix*, waarvan er twee reeds voorzien waren van een Belgische ring. Het voorjaarstotaal (april-mei) van op telposten geregistreerde **Zomertortels** *Streptopelia turtur* kwam uit op 71, waarvan 39 langs Breskens, Zeeland. Het gemiddelde voor deze telpost over de voorgaande 10 seizoenen bedraagt 113, met als negatieve uitschieter zeven in 2015 en als positieve 425 in 2008. Nagekomen nieuws betreft een **Alpengierzwaluw** *Apus melba* die op 30 april in zuidelijke richting langs Sint-Maartenszee, Noord-Holland, vloog. Een **Siberische Gierzwaluw** *A pacificus* vloog op 12 juni vanaf c 10:15 gedurende c vijf minuten boven het Noordervroon bij Westkapelle, Zeeland. Ondanks dat de gelukkige ontdekker van deze nieuwe soort voor Nederland het nieuws snel verspreidde, bleven vervolgwaarnemingen uit. De 22 450 **Gierzwaluwen** *A apus* die op 5 mei langs Breskens vlogen, zorgden voor de derde teldag ooit. Acht van de 10 beste dagen zijn in handen van deze telpost, waaronder het Nederlandse record van 41 365 op 26 mei 2012. Van **Kleinst Waterhoen** *Zapornia pusilla* kwamen vanaf 17 mei onder meer meldingen van bekende plekken zoals het Zuidlaardermeergebied, Groningen; Polder Achteraf bij Breukeleveen, Noord-Holland; en de Weerribben, Overijssel. De meeste aandacht kregen twee roepende mannetjes op het Landje van Geijsel bij Ouderkerk aan de Amstel, Noord-Holland. Bijzonder zijn de nachtelijke opnames van trekroepjes die mogelijk betrekking hebben op deze soort uit Grevenbicht, Limburg (17 mei), en Noordwijk, Zuid-Holland (14 juni). Op deze aan populariteit winnende manier van het registreren van vogeltrek werden dit voorjaar ook twee **Porseleinhoenders** *Porzana porzana* opgemerkt. Een geringde **Grijskoppurperkoet** *Porphyrio poliocephalus* verbleef op 22 mei in de Brabantse Biesbosch. Een zeker ongeringde vogel bij Overheicop, Zuid-Holland, op 16 en 18 juni bracht desalniettemin toch kleine groepjes twitchers op de been. Maximaal twee **IJsduikers** *Gavia immer* in zomerkleed zwommen tot half mei op het Volkerak, Zuid-Holland, en één vanaf 16 juni op de Oosterschelde, Zeeland, zorgde voor een bijzonder zomergeval.

STORMVOGELS TOT IBISSEN Zeetrekposten meldden in totaal 15 **Noordse Stormvogels** *Fulmarus glacialis*, waarvan het overgrote deel langs Camperduin. Langs dezelfde telpost passeerden in deze periode ook maar liefst drie soorten pijlstormvogels, te weten op 24 mei een **Vale** *Puffinus mauretanicus* (net als in 2008 en 2012!), op 19 mei en 7 juni één respectievelijk zeven **Noordse** *P puffinus* en eveneens op 7 juni twee **Grauwe Pijlstormvogels** *P griseus*. In totaal 14 **Zwarte Ooievaars** *Ciconia nigra* werden op trektelposten gezien, de meeste (zes) over de Strabrechtse Heide, Noord-Brabant. Een 's nachts overvliegende **Woudaap** *Ixobrychus minutus* werd op 10 juni opgenomen in Santpoort-Zuid, Noord-Holland; op deze nachtgeluidentelpost zijn in twee jaar tijd al zes reigersoorten opgenomen. Op soortgelijke wijze werden op 28 april ook al twee exemplaren vastgelegd over Arnhem-Zuid, Gelderland. De eerste **Ralreiger** *Ardeola ralloides* van het jaar werd op 23 mei kortstondig waargenomen bij de Gaasperplas in Amsterdam, Noord-Holland. Van 5 juni tot 1 juli verbleef een veel getwitchte vogel in het Zuidlaardermeergebied. Voorts waren er meldingen op 26 juni bij Nederhorst den Berg, Noord-Holland, en op 29 juni bij Reeuwijk, Zuid-Holland. Tot 11 juni werden op een kleine 20 plekken **Koereigers** *Bubulcus ibis* waargenomen, waaronder langblijvers in de Oostvaardersplassen, Flevoland (twee); het Lauwersmeergebied, Groningen (twee); de Hilversumse Bovenmeent, Noord-Holland; en de omgeving van Nieuwkoop, Zuid-Holland (maximaal drie). De grootste groep, vier vogels, werd gezien op 15 mei bij Retranchement, Zeeland. **Zwarte Ibissen** *Plegadis falcinellus* doken op c 15 plaatsen op, waaronder langdurig bij Berkel en Rodenrijs, Zuid-Holland (maximaal vier). Leuk was de waarneming van een overvliegende op 14 mei over zowel Schiermonnikoog als Ameland, Friesland.

GRIELEN TOT STRANDLOPERS In Zeeland werden **Grielen** *Burhinus oedicnemus* gemeld op 22 mei bij Biervliet en op 30 juni bij Emmadorp. In beide gevallen betrof het een vogel die eerder al in België verbleef; mogelijk betrof het beide keren dezelfde. **Steltkluten** *Himantopus himantopus* werden gemeld op zeker 75 plekken verspreid over het land, met op meerdere plekken broedgevallen en -pogingen. Er trokken 79 **Morinelplevieren** *Charadrius morinellus* langs de telposten, waarvan maar liefst 55 langs telpost Noordkaap (onder andere 19 op 6 mei en 18 op 11 mei). De eerste **Steppekievit** *Vanellus gregarius* voor Groningen bevond zich op 28 en 29 mei bij Noordlaren; met 16 gevallen scoort Gelderland het beste voor deze soort. Tussen 6 mei en 2 juni werden 14 **Breedbekstrandlopers** *Calidris falcinellus* doorgegeven. Buiten bekende plekken in het Waddengebied waren er waarnemingen op 22 mei kortstondig bij Colijnsplaat, Zeeland, op 26 mei bij Losser, Overijssel (twee), en op 2 juni in de Dijkgatsweide bij Den Oever, Noord-Holland. Een **Blonde Ruiter** *C subruficollis* werd op 20 mei kortstondig waargenomen op het wad bij Uithuizen, Groningen. **Gestreepte Strandlopers** *C melanotos* verbleven op 10 en 11 mei op het Landje van Geijsel; op 11 mei in de Dijkgatsweide; op 12 mei bij Spijkenisse, Zuid-Holland; op 13 mei bij Ridderkerk, Zuid-Holland; op 13 en 14 mei in de Ezumakeeg, Friesland; en op 17 mei in Utopia op Texel. De eerste **Grijze Strandloper** *C pusilla* voor Limburg, die in de avond van 15 mei werd ontdekt bij Arcen, kon de volgende dag rekenen op een groot aantal bezoekers. Eerdere gevallen waren afkomstig uit Friesland, Groningen, Flevoland (drie), Noord-Holland (vier), Zeeland en Zuid-Holland. **Grauwe Franjepoten** *Phalaropus lobatus* waren erg schaars, met slechts drie waarnemingen: van 2 tot 8 mei op Texel; op 10 mei in Polder Breebaart, Groningen (twee); en van 2 tot 4 juni in de Ezumakeeg. Van 3 tot 26 juni zwom een **Rosse Franjepoot** *P fulicarius* rond bij Dannemeer, Groningen. Ook was er een melding op 20 juni in de Ezumakeeg. **Terekruiters** *Xenus cinereus* waren goed vertegenwoordigd met waarnemingen op 5 mei bij Stellendam, Zuid-Holland; op 20 mei bij Ternaard, Friesland; van 25 tot 28 mei bij Westhoek, Friesland; en op 30 mei

**372** Steppekievit / Sociable Lapwing *Vanellus gregarius*, Oostpolder, Groningen, 29 mei 2017 *(Martijn Bot)* **373** Siberische Gierzwaluw / Pacific Swift *Apus pacificus*, Westkapelle, Zeeland, 12 juni 2017 *(Thomas Luiten)* **374** Forsters Stern / Forster's Tern *Sterna forsteri*, tweede-kalenderjaar, Wagejot, Texel, Noord-Holland, 12 juni 2017 *(Pieter Duin)* **375** Dwergarend / Booted Eagle *Aquila pennata*, tweede-kalenderjaar, Dijkzicht, Texel, Noord-Holland, 17 mei 2017 *(Gerhard Christenhuis)*

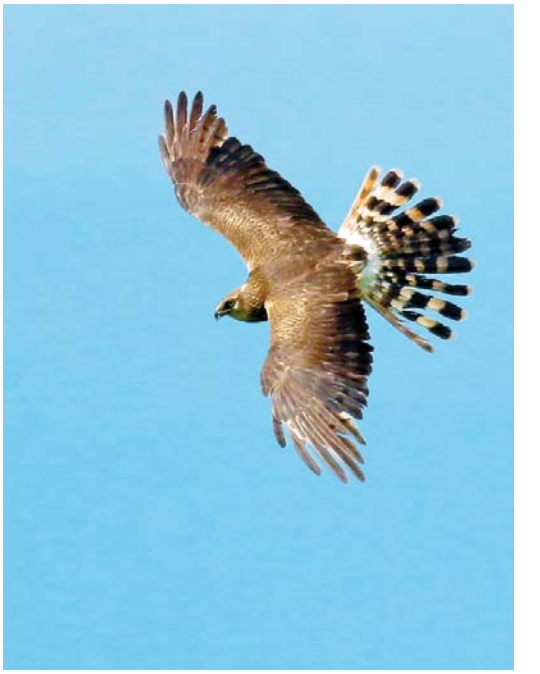
in de Slufter op Texel. Een **Kleine Geelpootruiter** *Tringa flavipes* bevond zich van 21 tot 23 juni eveneens in de Slufter op Texel, aanvankelijk in het gezelschap van een **Poelruiter** *T stagnatilis*. Van laatstgenoemde soort kwamen nog c 10 meldingen verspreid over de periode. Een **Grote Grijze Snip** *Limnodromus scolopaceus* vertoefde op 7 en 8 mei in de Ezumakeeg. De enige zekere **Poelsnip** *Gallinago media* werd gefotografeerd bij Eagmaryp (Akmarijp), Friesland, op 16 mei.

ALKEN TOT STERNS Zomerkleed **Zwarte Zeekoeten** *Cepphus grylle* werden waargenomen op 3 en 8 mei vanaf een boot op de Oosterschelde nabij Neeltje Jans, Zeeland, en vanaf 10 mei in de haven van West-Terschelling, Friesland. In mei werden er zes **Kleinste Jagers** *Stercorarius longicaudus* waargenomen, waaronder een adulte op 23 mei kort pleisterend ten noorden van Warffum, Groningen. In de avond van 2 mei werd een **Dunbekmeeuw** *Chroicocephalus genei* kortstondig waargenomen en gefotografeerd bij Ossenisse, Zeeland. Indien aanvaard betreft dit het zevende geval en 12e exemplaar voor Nederland en het derde voor Zeeuws-Vlaanderen; alle zijn afkomstig uit de periode van 30 april tot 25 mei. Nadat op 30 april op telpost Breskens het nationale record van **Zwartkopmeeuw** *Larus melanocephalus* tot liefst 446 exemplaren was aangescherpt, werd hier op 17 mei en passant ook de op één na beste dag aan toegevoegd met 239 langstrekkende. Tweede-kalenderjaar **Baltische Mantelmeeuwen** *L fuscus fuscus* werden gemeld op Texel op 20 mei en 24 juni. In mei werden nog enkele **Kleine Burgemeesters** *L glaucoides* waargenomen. Tussen 20 en 27 mei verbleef een derde-kalenderjaar in de Bantpolder, Friesland, en deze maakte daarbij ook een dagtrip naar Schiermonnikoog. Op 24 en 25 mei werd een tweede-kalenderjaar gefotografeerd in Amsterdam. Ook werden tot

eind mei langs de kust nog enkele **Grote Burgemeesters** *L hyperboreus* gezien. Een vogel op Texel hield het tot ten minste 21 juni uit. In totaal 31 **Lachsterns** *Gelochelidon nilotica* trokken langs telposten, met een mooi aantal van acht op 11 mei over Rottumeroog, Groningen, een evenaring van de tweede dag ooit. Beste dag blijft 29 juli 1975 met negen langs Vlieland, Friesland. Van **Witwangstern** *Chlidonias hybrida* werden maar liefst 33 broedparen gemeld in de omgeving van het Zuidlaardermeer. Daarnaast doken ze op ongeveer andere 30 plaatsen op, met name medio mei. Een groep van c 17 op 20 mei werd eerst gezien in de Hilversumse Bovenmeent en later in Polder IJdoorn bij Amsterdam. Op 24 mei trokken acht vogels noordwaarts langs telpost Camperduin, een evenaring van de tweede teldag ooit. Het landelijk record is met 18 op 21 mei 2012 in handen van telpost Engbertsdijkvenen, Overijssel. **Witvleugelsterns** *C leucopterus* waren met c 10 exemplaren een stuk schaarser dan normaal. Pleisteraars verbleven onder meer van 6 tot 30 mei bij Kinderdijk, Zuid-Holland, van 18 tot 25 juni in de Loosdrechtse Plassen, Noord-Holland, en de gehele periode in het Zuidlaardermeergebied. De tweede-kalenderjaar **Forsters Stern** *Sterna forsteri* die op de avond van 12 juni in het Wagejot op Texel verbleef, werd ontdekt door dezelfde vogelaar die het exemplaar van vorig voorjaar vond. Het betreft het zesde geval.

VISARENDEN TOT UILEN De twee broedparen van **Visarend** *Pandion haliaetus* in de Brabantse Biesbosch kregen in totaal zes jongen. Trektellers registreerden in totaal 95 **Visarenden**, 295 **Wespendieven** *Pernis apivorus*, 1407 **Bruine Kiekendieven** *Circus aeruginosus* (waaronder 102 op 13 mei over de Eemshaven), 27 **Steppekiekendieven** *C macrourus*, 81 **Grauwe Kiekendieven** *C pygargus* (waaronder 21 over de Eemshaven), acht **Zeearenden** *Haliaeetus albicilla*, 77 **Rode Wouwen** *Milvus milvus* (waaronder 18 op 13 mei over de Eemshaven), 167 **Zwarte Wouwen** *M migrans* (waaronder 15 op 1 mei langs Breskens), 27 **Roodpootvalken** *Falco vespertinus* en 311 **Smellekens** *F columbarius* (waaronder 25 op 12 mei over de Eemshaven). **Grijze Wouwen** *Elanus caeruleus* bleven maar komen, ditmaal met twee waarnemingen op 11 mei; één werd ontdekt vanuit een rijdende auto vanaf de N57 bij Ouddorp, Zuid-Holland, en een andere vloog boven het Doldersummerveld, Drenthe. Net als in maart (en sommige eerdere jaren) was er ook in deze periode bezoek van onvolwassen **Lammergieren** *Gypaetus barbatus*. Een vogel zonder merktekens trok op 13 mei van Culemborg, Gelderland, via Flevoland en Friesland naar Ulrum, Groningen, en een gezenderde genaamd 'Lucky' uit een herintroductieproject in de Alpen van Oostenrijk werd vanaf 25 mei waargenomen. Laatstgenoemde vogel trok met name op 26 mei bij Den Haag, Zuid-Holland, en van 27 tot 29 mei op Texel veel bekijks. De laatste waarneming was op 31 mei in het Dijkgatsbos in de Wieringermeer, Noord-Holland. **Slangenarenden** *Circaetus gallicus* verbleven met name in Drenthe, in de omgeving van het Balloërveld, Dwingelderveld, Fochteloërveen en (kortstondig) het Bargerveen. Ook waren er enkele waarnemingen van de Hoge Veluwe, Gelderland. Elders werd de soort gefotografeerd op 27 mei langs Breskens (eerste voor deze telpost) en op 19 juni over Berkheide bij Wassenaar, Zuid-Holland. De eerste **Vale Gier** *Gyps fulvus* van het jaar verscheen op 19 mei boven Vorden, Gelderland. Op 20 mei werd een groep van 27 opgemerkt boven Dordrecht, Zuid-Holland, die gevolgd kon worden tot Scherpenzeel, Gelderland, alwaar werd overnacht. De volgende ochtend viel de groep uiteen en waren er meerdere vervolgwaarnemingen verder naar het noordoosten en oosten. Andere werden onder meer waargenomen op 30 mei bij Exloo, Drenthe (c 60!), en van 5 tot 9 juni bij Stedum, Groningen (vijf). Eén van de vogels uit de groep van 27 was geringd (wit HFT) en bleek in 2016 in de Gorges du Tarn in Zuid-Frankrijk uit het ei te zijn gekropen. Het aantal van in Nederland waargenomen geringde Vale Gieren komt hiermee uit op minimaal zeven (één uit Italië, twee uit Frankrijk en vier uit Spanje). **Schreeuwarenden** *Aquila pomarina* werden gemeld op 6 mei boven het Zuidlaardermeergebied en vervolgens Siddeburen, Groningen, en op 11 mei in de omgeving van Koedijk en Aagtdorp, Noord-Holland. Op 18 mei volgde een melding van een mogelijke over de A1 bij Kootwijk, Gelderland. Een onvolwassen **Bastaardarend** *A clanga*, die op 4 juni werd opgemerkt boven de Kollumerwaard, zwierf blijkbaar door Friesland (getuige vervolgwaarnemingen op 13 juli bij Beetsterzwaag en op 14 juli in het Fochteloërveen; foto's wezen uit dat het steeds om hetzelfde individu ging). Lichte vorm **Dwergarenden** *A pennata* werden gemeld op 14 mei over telpost Brobbelbies-Noord bij Schaijk, Noord-Brabant; op 16 mei over Aartswoud, Noord-Holland; op 17 mei langs Oudeschild op Texel; en op 10 juni over Oud-Beijerland, Zuid-Holland. Naast doortrekkende **Steppekiekendieven** waren er ook enkele pleisteraars, waaronder het bekende mannetje de gehele periode in de omgeving van Bentwoud, Zuid-Holland. Ronduit spectaculair was het stilgehouden broedgeval in Noordoost-Groningen waar in juli vier jongen uitvlogen; een nieuwe broedvogelsoort voor Nederland en West-Europa. Mogelijk kwam ook **Dwerguil** *Glaucidium passerinum* voor het eerst tot broeden in Nederland, maar geruchten daarover werden vooralsnog niet opgehelderd.

HOPPEN TOT ZWALUWEN In mei werden ten minste 12 **Hoppen** *Upupa epops* doorgegeven, voornamelijk in de eerste dagen van de maand. Op 21 juni was een exemplaar aanwezig bij Ospel, Limburg. Er werden ruim 50 **Bijeneters** *Merops apiaster* gemeld, voornamelijk in de tweede helft van mei en begin juni. Van 2 tot 6 mei verbleef een groep van zeven bij Wervershoof, Noord-Holland (mogelijk de groep die op 30 april langs Breskens vloog). Een **Kleine Klapekster** *Lanius minor* bevond zich op 19 en 20 juni op de noordpunt van Texel – het 10e geval voor dit Waddeneiland. **Roodkopklauwieren** *L senator* verbleven op 20 mei op Terschelling; op 21 mei bij Westkapelle; op 2 juni bij Ameide, Zuid-Holland; op 8 juni bij Oostkapelle, Zeeland; en op 9 en 10 juni in De Plateaux bij Bergeijk, Noord-Brabant (soms boven op een grenspaal). **Kortteenleeuweriken**



**376** Steppekiekendief / Pallid Harrier *Circus macrourus*, derde-kalenderjaar mannetje, Noordoost-Groningen, 1 juli 2017 *(Renate Visscher)* **377** Steppekiekendief / Pallid Harrier *Circus macrourus*, derde-kalenderjaar vrouwtje, Noordoost-Groningen, 1 juli 2017 *(Fred Visscher)* **378** Steppekiekendieven / Pallid Harriers *Circus macrourus*, derde-kalenderjaar mannetje met pulli, Noordoost-Groningen, 22 juni 2017 *(Ruurd Jelle van der Leij/Ruben Smit Productions)*

**379** Witvleugelstern / White-winged Tern *Chlidonias leucopterus*, adult zomer, Alblasserdam, Zuid-Holland, 7 mei 2017 *(Alex van der Giessen)* **380** Roze Spreeuw / Rosy Starling *Pastor roseus*, adult, Bitgummole, Friesland, 26 juni 2017 *(Wim van Zwieten)* **381** Kleine Vliegenvanger / Red-breasted Flycatcher *Ficedula parva*, adult mannetje, Planken Wambuis, Gelderland, 5 juni 2017 *(Paul van Tuil)*

*Calandrella brachydactyla* werden gemeld op 6 mei langs telpost Kustweg bij Lauwersoog, Groningen, en telpost Noordkaap; op 7 mei langs Nieuwe Statenzijl, Groningen (twee); op 9 mei bij Zalk, Overijssel; en op 14 mei bij Hoorn, Noord-Holland. Zaterdag 6 mei was een heuse zwaluwdag voor telpost Breskens; het landelijke record van **Boerenzwaluw** *Hirundo rustica* werd op 34 925 exemplaren gezet en met 5743 exemplaren was het de vierde dag ooit voor **Huiszwaluw** *Delichon urbicum*. Tot 7 mei werden c zes **Roodstuitzwaluwen** *Cecropis daurica* gezien. Naast enkele langsvliegende, bleef een exemplaar op 6 mei enkele uren op de noordpunt van Texel en een dag later was er één uitgebreid te bekijken nabij Oudeschild, eveneens op Texel. Een laatkomer vloog op 27 mei langs Breskens.

BOSZANGERS TOT GRASZANGERS **Grauwe Fitissen** *Phylloscopus trochiloides* zongen op 2 juni in Den Haag (eerste geval voor de stad met het hoogste aantal soorten); op 3 juni bij Spijk, Groningen; van 7 tot 10 juni op Ameland (eerste geval voor het eiland); en van 10 tot 25 juni op Schiermonnikoog. Voorjaarswaarnemingen van **Bladkoningen** *P inornatus* blijven vooralsnog zeldzaam, dus zingende op 7 mei op Schiermonnikoog en op 9 mei in De Muy op Texel zijn het vermelden waard. **Iberische Tjiftjaffen** *P ibericus* zongen nog tot 12 mei bij Noordwijk, Zuid-Holland, en van 8 mei tot ten minste 26 juni bij Nijemardum (Nijemirdum), Friesland. Op 21 en 22 mei zong een (vrijwel zekere) **Balkanbaardgrasmus** *Sylvia cantillans* bij Egmond aan Zee, Noord-Holland. Vanaf 23 mei werden op maar liefst zeven locaties (in zeven provincies!) zingende **Krekelzangers** *Locustella fluviatilis* opgemerkt. Opvallend was dat er alleen op deze datum al drie werden ontdekt. Het was een goed voorjaar voor **Orpheusspotvogel** *Hippolais polyglotta*. Vanaf de eerste waarneming op 13 mei bij Lekkerkerk, Zuid-Holland, werden op minimaal 16 locaties zingende vogels aangetroffen, ook in het westen en noorden van het land. De meeste bleven slechts korte tijd, maar van 21 tot 29 mei zong een vogel bij Anderen, Drenthe, en van 31 mei tot 17 juni bij Eindhoven, Noord-Brabant. Het eerste zekere broedgeval voor Noord-Holland van een zuiver paar vond plaats in het Noordhollands Duinreservaat bij Castricum. Er vlogen zeker drie, mogelijk vier jongen uit. Opvallend is dat er op 14 juni ook één werd gevangen op het ringstation te Castricum, op enkele kilometers van dit broedgeval. Tussen 9 mei en 25 juni zongen twee **Graszangers** *Cisticola juncidis* op Tiengemeten, Zuid-Holland, en op 17 mei vloog er één langs Breskens.

PESTVOGELS TOT VLIEGENVANGERS Late **Pestvogels** *Bombycilla garrulus* werden gemeld op 8 mei op Schiermonnikoog en op 12 mei in Briltil, Groningen. De enige **Roze Spreeuw** *Pastor roseus* was een adult van 25 tot 27 juni in Bitgummole (Beetgumermolen), Friesland. Een luid zingende **Noordse Nachtegaal** *Luscinia luscinia* wekte op 28 mei een kamperende vogelaar bij Ommen, Overijssel. **Kleine Vliegenvangers** *Ficedula parva* zongen vanaf 26 mei bij Planken Wambuis, Gelderland; op 27 mei bij de Westplaat, Zuid-Holland; op 31 mei in

**382** Orpheusspotvogels / Melodious Warblers *Hippolais polyglotta*, adult (midden) en juvenielen, Castricum, Noord-Holland, 19 juli 2017 *(Hans Groot)*

Ooltgensplaat, Zuid-Holland; en op 8 juni in Groningen, Groningen. Een mannetje **Rode Rotslijster** *Monticola saxatilis* bevond zich op 3 en 4 mei in de smalle duinstrook tussen Den Helder en Julianadorp, Noord-Holland. Van de in totaal 14 gevallen van deze soort werden er 12 ontdekt tussen 22 april en 19 mei. Spectaculair was het mannetje **Seebohms Tapuit** *Oenanthe seebohmi* dat op 22 mei een flink gebied bestreek aan de zuidzijde van Den Haag en ternauwernood twitchbaar was. Indien aanvaard betreft het niet alleen een nieuwe soort voor Nederland maar zelfs het eerste Europese geval buiten het Middellandse Zeegebied (cf Dutch Birding 39: 221-222, 2017).

KWIKSTAARTEN TOT GORZEN Een mannetje **Witkeelkwikstaart** *Motacilla cinereocapilla* verbleef van 3 tot 5 mei op Schiermonnikoog (vijfde geval, indien aanvaard). Een mannetje **Citroenkwikstaart** *M citreola* verbleef op 2 mei kort bij telpost Kustweg bij Lauwersoog en een vrouwtje liet zich op 5 mei uitvoerig bewonderen op een onder water gezet bollenveld in de Haarlemmermeer, Noord-Holland. Een **Grote Pieper** *Anthus richardi* vloog op 6 mei over Genemuiden, Overijssel, en op 9 en 10 mei verbleef er één bij Ouddorp, Zuid-Holland. Trektellers noteerden in mei bovendien in totaal slechts zeven **Duinpiepers** *A campestris* en maar liefst 27 **Roodkeelpiepers** *A cervinus*, met name in het noorden. De meeste waarnemingen van **Roodmus** *Erythrina erythrina* waren afkomstig uit de kustprovincies. Van de ongeveer 30 locaties waren er langdurig pleisterende vogels bij Den Helder; in het Noordhollands Duinreservaat; bij het Oostvoornse Meer, Zuid-Holland; op de Hellegatsplaten, Zuid-Holland; en op de Slikken van Flakkee, Zuid-Holland. Ringvangsten waren er bij Castricum (vier), Bloemendaal (drie, waaronder een vogel die een jaar eerder in Castricum was geringd) en Kamperhoek, Flevoland. Er was een mooie influx van **Kruisbekken** *Loxia curvirostra* (met name typen C en X), met vanaf eind mei alleen al meer dan 2700 langs tel-

**383** Kleine Klapekster / Lesser Grey Shrike *Lanius minor*, Texel, 20 juni 2017
*(Jos van den Berg/birdingtexel.com)*

**384** Roodkopklauwier / Woodchat Shrike *Lanius senator*, tweede-kalenderjaar, Westkapelle, Zeeland, 21 mei 2017
*(Paul van Tuil)*

**385** Grauwe Fitis / Greenish Warbler *Phylloscopus trochiloides*, Schiermonnikoog, Friesland, 10 juni 2017 *(Jaap Eerdmans)* **386** Orpheusspotvogel / Melodious Warbler *Hippolais polyglotta*, Anderen, Drenthe, 22 mei 2017 *(Frank van der Wielen)* **387** Orpheusspotvogels / Melodious Warblers *Hippolais polyglotta*, juveniel, Castricum, Noord-Holland, 19 juli 2017 *(Hans Groot)*

**388-389** Seebohms Tapuit / Seebohm's Wheatear *Oenanthe seebohmi*, tweede-kalenderjaar mannetje, Solleveld, Zuid-Holland, 22 mei 2017 *(Tom Visbeek)* **390** Citroenkwikstaart / Citrine Wagtail *Motacilla citreola*, vrouwtje, Vijfhuizen, Noord-Holland, 5 mei 2017 *(Erik Holscher)* **391** Witkeelkwikstaart / White-throated Wagtail *Motacilla cinereocapilla*, mannetje, Eendenkooi, Schiermonnikoog, Friesland, 5 mei 2017 *(Jorrit Vlot)*

posten. Op 7 en 8 mei werd een **Grijze Junco** *Junco hyemalis* waargemomen in een tuin in Bergen aan Zee, Noord-Holland, maar dit werd pas later bekend. Indien aanvaard betreft dit het derde geval; het tweede betrof een veel bezochte vogel van 1 februari tot 10 april 2015 in Groningen. Een mannetje **Zwartkopgors** *Emberiza melanocephala* liet zich op 31 mei bekijken op de Maasvlakte, Zuid-Holland. Op dezelfde dag werd een mannetje gefotografeerd in Stiens, Friesland. Er was hooguit een 10-tal meldingen van **Grauwe Gorzen** *E calandra*, waaronder op 6 mei bij Hoenderloo, Gelderland, en op 7 mei bij Zalk, Overijssel. Een **Ortolaan** *E hortulana* trok op 7 en 8 mei veel bekijks bij Oudeschild op Texel. Het voorjaarstotaal (april-mei) van op telposten geregistreerde exemplaren kwam uit op acht (het hoogste aantal sinds 2011).

Voor zijn hulp bij het samenstellen van deze rubriek bedanken wij Jelle Postma. Ook is dankbaar gebruikgemaakt van de websites dutchbirdalerts.nl, waarneming.nl, trektellen.nl en sovon.nl.

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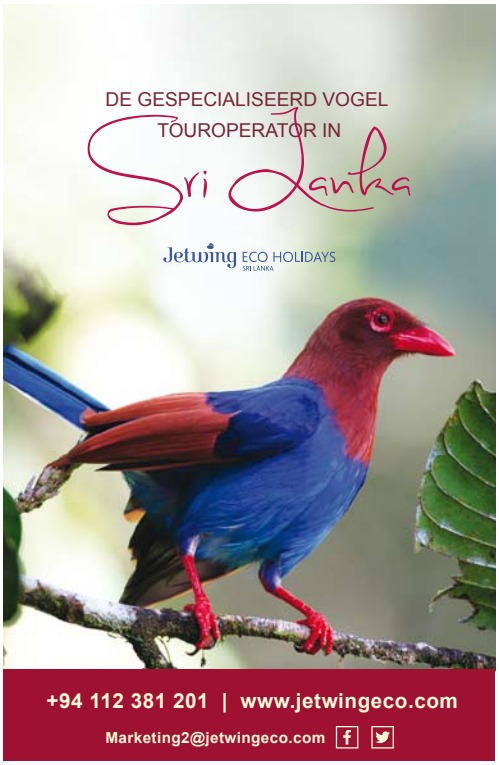
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**De nieuwe BTX oculairmodule vormt een uniek samenspel tussen optische kwaliteit en optimaal kijkcomfort met als doel je een zo lang mogelijke kijkervaring te bieden.**

**Deze unieke oculairmodule combineert de voordelen van een telescoop met die van een verrekijker. Het binoculaire systeem stelt je in staat om dingen op natuurlijke wijze, met beide ogen te zien en presenteert een uitzonderlijk levendig, natuurlijk beeld voor de meest intense kijkervaring ooit.**

**Vanzelfsprekend zijn er geen compromissen gesloten op het vlak van optische kwaliteit. De kristalheldere Swarovision technologie geeft zelfs de kleinste details weer met behoud van scherpte tot aan de rand van het gezichtsveld.**

**Het assortiment van Swarovski omvat meer dan 30 kijkers en telescopen.**