

# DUTCH BIRDING

Jaargang 3

Volume 3

Nummer 3

Number 3

September 1981

September 1981



Tijdschrift van de Stichting Dutch Birding Association  
Journal of the Stichting Dutch Birding Association

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*Dutch Birding* is het driemaandelijkse tijdschrift van de Stichting Dutch Birding Association.

*Dutch Birding* is the quarterly journal of the Stichting Dutch Birding Association.

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## SLANGENAREND OP DE MAASVLAKTE IN AUGUSTUS 1981

### SHORT-TOED EAGLE ON DE MAASVLAKTE IN AUGUST 1981

Op 8 augustus 1981 om omstreeks 18:55 werd onze aandacht getrokken door een forse op de grond zittende roofvogel op de Maasvlakte (ZH). De vogel zat op een dijk langs de Europaweg *c.* 500 m ten noordwesten van het Oostvoornse Meer. Opvallend waren het contrast tussen de lichte kop en de donkerbruine bovendelen en de lichtere baan over de vleugels.

Wij konden de op de dijk zittende roofvogel goed zien op een afstand van *c.* 50 m. De naar voren gerichte, grote heldergele ogen deden ons direct denken aan de afbeelding van de Slangenarend *Circus gallicus* van Wijdenes (NH) in *Dutch Birding* (Rebergen 1980). Onder de niet goede lichtomstandigheden leek de washuid blauwgrijs en uitgebreid tot voorbij het oog en tot op kin en keel. Doordat de vogel bovendien de achterste kruinveren opstak, leek de kop spits en deed hij in eerste instantie denken aan de kop van een Aasgier *Neophron percnopterus*. Bij benadering vloog de vogel weg en streek achter de dijk neer in een oude opspuitput. In de vlucht was een duidelijk contrast waarneembaar tussen de donkere slagpen en de lichtere mantel, vleugeldekveren en staart; de ondervleugel was licht. De mantel, rug en staart maakten een rommelige indruk. De vlucht was soepel met een vrij diepe langzame vleugelslag; de vleugelpunten krulden sterk omhoog. Aan de neergestreken vogel vielen nu de lichte onderdelen en de vage donkere borstband op. Verder leek de tarsus blauwgrijs en was hij niet bevederd. Wij determineerden de vogel als Slangenarend.

Later op de avond konden wij de Slangenarend tot op *c.* 20 m benaderen. De vogel maakte een verzwakte indruk. De volgende dag (9 augustus) werd hij door veel vogelaars gezien. Om omstreeks 17:30 werd de vogel van het strand bij Oostvoorne (ZH) geraapt en naar een dierenarts gebracht. De volgende ochtend (10 augustus) werd hij dood aangetroffen. De arend bleek sterk vermagerd (zie tabel 1).

Tabel 1. Maten van de Slangenarend *Circus gallicus* van de Maasvlakte (ZH)

|                                |        |
|--------------------------------|--------|
| Vleugel                        | 550 mm |
| Staart (sterk gesleten)        | 260 mm |
| Snavel (gemeten vanaf washuid) | 38 mm  |
| Tarsus                         | 90 mm  |
| Middenteen (zonder klauw)      | 49 mm  |
| Gewicht                        | 1 kg   |

#### Beschrijving

Voorhoofd vuilwit en met enige bruine vlekken; kruin- en nekveren wit of wit met bruine punt (kop maakte hierdoor gevlekte indruk); teugel grijsbruin; oorstreek vuilwit en met bruine vlekken; kin en keel vuilwit; achterste kruinveren vormden korte kuif (niet altijd even goed zichtbaar). Mantel donkerbruin; schouderveren bruin en lichter dan mantel en met lichte randen; rug opvallend beigebruin gevlekt; stuit eveneens beigebruin gevlekt; bovenstaartdekveren donkerder dan stuit. Borst vuilwit en met verspreide bruine vlekken welke borstband vormden; buik vuilwit; flank wit en met op sommige veren hartvormige subterminale bruine vlekken; dij en onderstaartdekveren vuilwit. Arm- en handpennen donkerbruin, basis van handpennen met lichte tekening; grote vleugeldekveren donker grijsbruin; middelste en kleine vleugeldekveren grijsbruin met opvallende donkere schachten en lichtere randen. Ondervleugel vuilwit en met lichtbruine vlekjes in rij op dekveren en onduidelijk op arm- en handpennen; buitenste handpennen met donkere punt en donker gedeelte aan buitenvlag; vleugelachterraand lichtbruinig. Staart vaalbruin, oude penne vaal en met weinig opvallende dwarsbanden, nieuwe penne

donkerder en met vier donkere dwarsbanden; schachten licht, binnenvlag van s3 - s5 erg licht, buitenvlag donkerder. Oog heldergeel, pupil zwart, oogkasring zwart; snavel blauwgrijs en met donkere punt, washuid grijsgeel; poten grijsgeel.

#### Bespreking

De Slangenarend was in actieve vleugel- en staartrui. Aan beide vleugels waren vier nieuwe handpennen (p1 - p4) aanwezig; de armpennen waren niet aan het ruien. De staart had vijf nieuwe pennen (s1 en s6 en een s2). Op grond van de aanwezigheid van slechts twee generaties pennen in vleugel en staart mag worden aangenomen dat het een tweede kalenderjaar vogel was (cf. Stresemann & Stresemann 1966).



37. Slangenarend/Short-toed Eagle *Circaetus gallicus*, De Maasvlakte (ZH), augustus 1981 (René Pop)



38-39. Slangenarend/Short-toed Eagle *Circaetus gallicus*, De Maasvlakte (ZH), augustus 1981 (Arnoud van den Berg; Edward van IJzendoorn)



De omstandigheden waaronder de Slangenarend werd waargenomen, waren vrij uitzonderlijk. De steeds laag wegvliegende verzwakte vogel hebben wij in de vlucht nauwelijks van anderen kunnen bekijken. De bandering op de onderstaart hebben wij daarom niet goed kunnen waarnemen. Doordat de staart in de rui was, maakte de bandering op de bovenstaart een rommelige indruk en was deze niet altijd even goed waarneembaar. Svensson (1981) wees op de zelfde problemen bij een ruiende Wespindief *Pernis apivorus*.

Wij waren echter wel in staat details aan de Slangenarend waar te nemen welke het totaalbeeld van de vogel sterk deden verschillen met dat van gezonde individuen. (1) Het vooral op enige afstand duidelijk zichtbare lichte vleugelveld werd gevormd door de witte bases van veren welke zichtbaar waren onder de verbleekte en sterk gesleten vleugeldekveren. (2) Van een afstand leken de poten blauwgrijs; van dichtbij was echter waarneembaar dat deze grijsgeel waren. In de literatuur (Cramp & Simmons 1980, Glutz von Blotzheim *et al.* 1971) wordt gesproken over bleekgrijze tot grijsblauwe poten. Er dient echter op te worden gewezen dat de grote meerderheid van de in de literatuur afgebeelde Slangenarenden eveneens grijsgele poten hebben. (3) Ook de washuid wordt in de literatuur bleekgrijs tot grijsblauw genoemd. Op een afstand leek dat bij 'onze' Slangenarend ook zo. Van dichtbij was echter goed te zien dat de washuid (evenals de poten) grijsgeel was.

Recentelijk heeft van IJzendoorn (1981) kritiek geuit op een groot deel van de negen waarnemingen van de Slangenarend in Nederland. Wij willen hier volstaan met op te merken dat de Slangenarend van De Maasvlakte de vierde vondst voor Nederland vormde.

#### Dankzegging

Hierbij danken wij Paul de Heer en Edward van IJzendoorn voor de bijdrage die zij hadden in de totstandkoming van dit artikel.

#### Summary

On 8 and 9 August 1981 a Short-toed Eagle *Circaetus gallicus* was observed on De Maasvlakte (Zuid-Holland). It died on 10 August in a bird hospital. A detailed description is given. It is interesting to note that the bird had a grey-yellow cere and legs. This at variance with the literature. On ground of the presence of only two generations of feathers in wing and tail it was probably a second calendar-year bird. This was the fourth finding for the Netherlands.

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## ON BILL COLOUR OF POMARINE SKUA

I (Oreel 1981) stated that a light-coloured and dark-tipped bill is probably diagnostic of Pomarine Skua *Stercorarius pomarinus*. However, R.J. Chandler (*in litt.*) rightly pointed out that this statement was not correct since the bill of a first-year Arctic Skua *S. parasiticus* shows a pale base with a dark tip as well. The colour of the pale bill area is blue-grey in first-year Arctic and yellow-brown in Pomarines (*cf.* Witherby *et al.* 1941). It is, however, evident that the bill colour of skuas is more variable than indicated by Witherby *et al.* and others. In this connection, it is interesting to note that first-year Pomarine Skuas can have a grey base to bill (E.J. van IJendoorn *pers. comm.*).

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## FOTOGRAFEREN VAN GEVANGEN VOGELS

Omdat bij het fotograferen van gevangen vogels vaak fouten worden gemaakt, volgen hier vier tips. (1) Zorg dat een zo groot mogelijk deel van de vogel scherp is. Hou de vogel dus niet te dicht bij de lens. Gebruik verder een zo klein mogelijk diafragma om een zo groot mogelijke dieptescherpte te krijgen. (2) Hou de vogel tegen een rustige achtergrond zodat de contouren goed zichtbaar zijn en het contrast tussen de vogel en achtergrond blijft. (3) Vermijd zo veel mogelijk de vogel tegen de lucht te houden. Dit zorgt namelijk vaak voor te donkere foto's. (4) Zorg dat bij het vasthouden van de vogel storende handen en vingers zo veel mogelijk buiten het beeld blijven.

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## AGEING AND SEXING OF ROUGH-LEGGED BUZZARDS

A typical Rough-legged Buzzard *Buteo lagopus* should present few identification problems provided that a reasonable flight view is obtained. The bold blackish belly patch or patches, conspicuous carpal patches and, at least in adults, black-banded tail are obvious features on a basically pale, even whitish bird below. In all ages, the white tail above with broad black (sub)terminal band is characteristic and will rule out a pale Buzzard *B. buteo* which can show some features of Rough-legged. This brief note, however, deals not with the subject of identification as such (for that one should consult Porter *et al.* 1981) but with ageing and sexing. This is possible but not always easy, requiring an unabraded bird which provides a good view. It should, therefore, be attempted with caution.

The accompanying illustrations by Karel Mauer show the main features of a fairly typical first-winter, adult female and adult male Rough-legged Buzzard and, though variations occur, the following check-list should enable observers to age or sex a bird that is observed in flight.

### First-winter

*Tail:* below whitish to greyish-white with diffuse and sometimes very diffuse darker subterminal band, wider and paler than adult; above white with dark subterminal band always present, distinct but less so than adult. *Hindwing:* below with diffuse darker trailing edge, not clear-cut band as adult. *Belly patch:* complete, there being usually two separate patches in adult. *Head and upperbreast:* paler, less noticeably streaked than adult.

### Adult

*Tail:* below and above white with broad well-defined blackish subterminal band and one to three narrow bands (depending on sex, see below). *Hindwing:* below shows conspicuous blackish trailing edge, this being diffuse in first-winter. *Belly patch:* two patches on either side of belly, not or barely joining, belly patch is complete in first-winter. *Head and upperbreast:* darker, more streaked than first-winter.

### Adult female

This shows less tail bands than adult male, frequently only visible on uppertail (as illustrated) but sometimes one narrow band is visible from below.

### Adult male

This shows more tail bands than adult female, these being usually more visible on the uppertail than below. They may be more conspicuous below than in the bird illustrated and birds sometimes show three narrow bands rather than two as illustrated. (There is also a tendency for adult males to have darker heads, upper-breasts and underwing-coverts than adult female but more work needs to be done to substantiate the reliability of these differences.)

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Richard F. Porter, c/o RSPB, The Lodge, Sandy, Bedfordshire SG19 2DL, United Kingdom

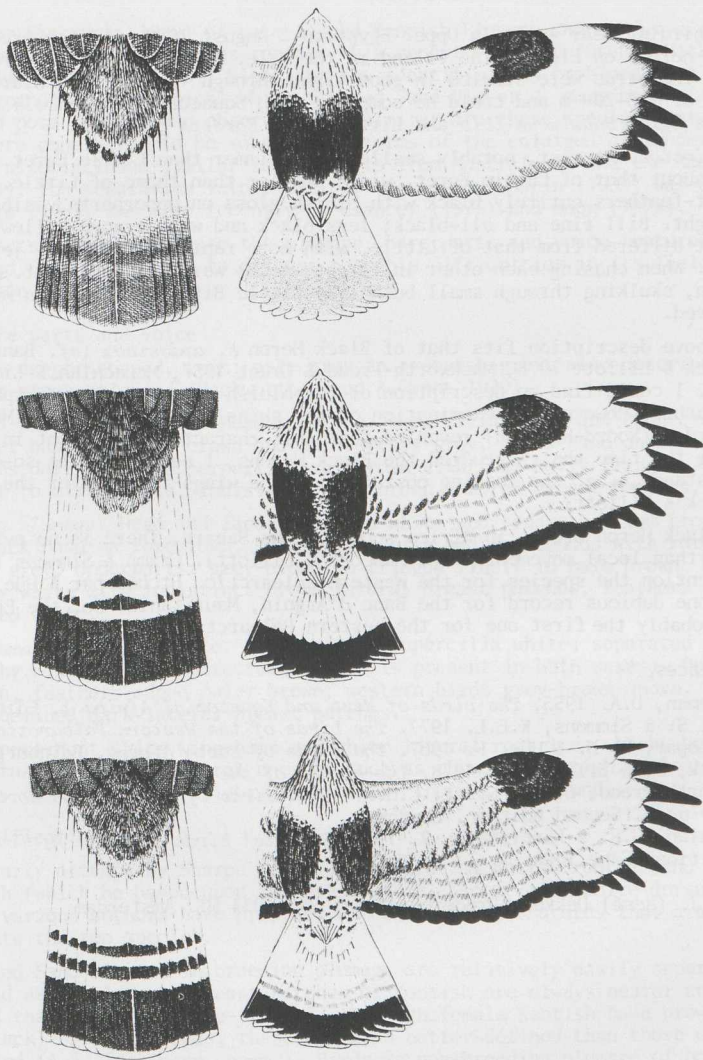


Figure 1. Rough-legged Buzzard/Ruigpootbuiszard *Buteo lagopus*, first-winter (above), adult female (middle), adult male (below) (Karel Maurer)

## BLACK HERON IN EGYPT IN AUGUST 1980

When birding near Aswân in Upper Egypt on 2 August 1980, I discovered two small black herons on Elephantine Island in the Nile. On 3 August they were still present. The birds were studied in good light through 10 x 40 binoculars at a distance of 100-200 m and could be compared with Squacco Heron *Ardeola ralloides*, Cattle Egret *Bubulucus ibis* and Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*.

*Description.* At rest, notably smaller and slimmer than Little Egret. In flight, size about that of Cattle Egret, wings smaller than those of Little. Body- and flight-feathers entirely black with bluish gloss on upperparts visible in bright sunlight. Bill fine and all-black; legs black and with orange-yellow feet. Flight differed from that of Little, with more rapid and somewhat jerky wingbeats. When chasing each other in flight, necks were stretched out. On one occasion, skulking through small bush like Little Bittern *Ixobrychus minutus* was observed.

The above description fits that of Black Heron *E. ardesiaca* (cf. Bannerman 1953, Hancock & Elliott 1978, Mackworth-Pread & Grant 1957, McLachlan & Liversidge 1978). I could find no description of the bluish gloss on the upperparts in the literature. However, an examination of the skins in the Zoölogisch Museum at Amsterdam (Noord-Holland) revealed that this character is present in Black Heron. During the time that I studied the Black Herons, I never saw the so-called canopy-stance, i.e. the feeding posture with the wings raised over the head (cf. Hancock & Elliott).

The Black Heron breeds in Africa south of the Sahara. There is no evidence for other than local movements (cf. Hancock & Elliott). Cramp & Simmons (1977) do not mention the species for the Western Palearctic. Etchécopar & Hûe (1967) mention one dubious record for the Banc d'Arguin, Mauritania. So, the Egypt record was probably the first one for the Western Palearctic.

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## IDENTIFICATION OF WHITE-FRONTED SAND PLOVER

The report by Sharrock (1980) of pale-legged Kentish Plovers *Charadrius alexandrinus* in Morocco and the various replies this report elicited (Grant; Mackrill, Fairbank; Glover; Vittery 1981) highlight the identification problems that the northerly expanding Afrotropical White-fronted Sand Plover *C. marginatus* (cf. Vittery) can pose to European observers. So similar are these species that up to 1939 they were considered to be subspecific forms of the enlarged *alexandrinus* group which also included similar sand plovers from Australasia and the Americas (Peters 1934). The separation into polytypic species by Chapin (1939) was adopted by Vaurie (1965) and more recently by Clancey (1975) and Snow (1978).

This paper sets out to enumerate the plumage, bare parts and voice features of White-fronted Sand Plover and to discuss possible difficulties in its field identification.

### Plumage, bare parts and voice

Bill: black, dagger-shaped. Legs: pale grey to greenish-grey, also described as yellowish or stone-coloured (Mackworth-Praed & Grant 1970).

*Juvenile and immature plumage.* Head and face: supercilia white and connected on forehead over base of bill, crown and ear-coverts grey, black band on forecrown absent, lores dark brown. Upperparts: grey-brown with fine buffy fringes. Underparts: clear to dirty white, indistinct pale brown lateral breast patches.

*Non-breeding plumage.* Head and face: forehead white and separated from grey crown by black band on forecrown, supercilia white and continuous with forehead, ear-coverts grey. Upperparts: grey-brownish fringed finely in pale brown. Underparts: dirty white with indistinct brown lateral breast patches, feathers on these fringed white.

*Breeding plumage.* Head and face: forehead and supercilia white, separated from grey crown by black band on forecrown (which is present in both sexes). Upperparts: brown, feathers edged paler brown; western birds grey-brown above. Underparts: ill-defined dark lateral breast patches.

In flight: prominent white wing-bars and white lateral rectrices which, however, do not contrast with dark central ones as much as those of Kentish. Voice: distinct 'twit, twit' call (in flight) and softer 'churr' (on ground).

### Field identification

Since the early attempts by Sharpe (1896) at separating White-fronted Sand Plover from Kentish (which he based upon the presence or absence of a white dorsum of the neck), various authors have proposed combinations of features that arguably differentiate the two species.

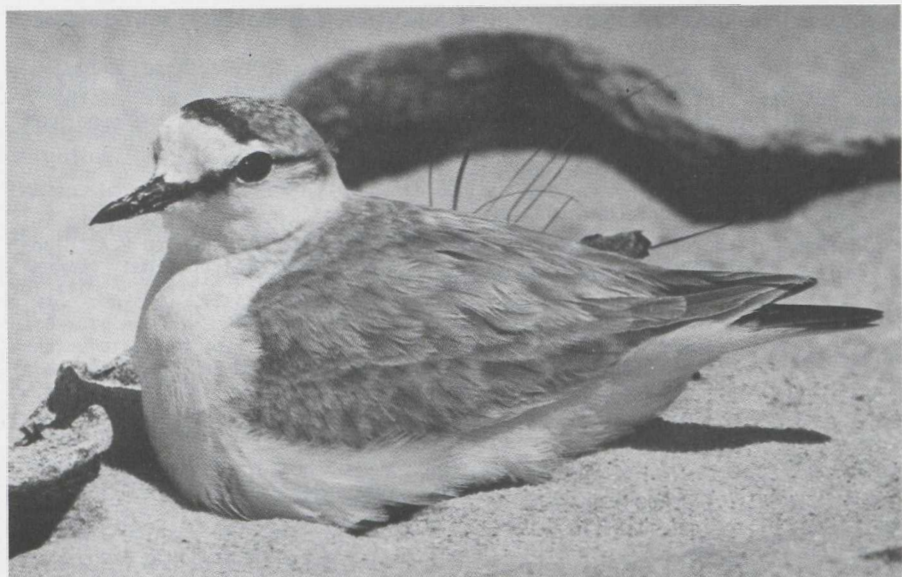
White-fronted Sand Plovers in breeding plumage are relatively easily separated in the field as the lateral breast patches of Kentish are always neater and better-defined than those of White-fronted. Although female Kentish have brownish (and not black) breast patches, these are also better-defined than those of White-fronted (A.J. Tree *pers. comm.*). Birds in non-breeding plumage of both species have less conspicuous breast patches but Kentish Plovers always appear neater than White-fronteds. In all plumages, male and female White-fronteds have at least some black separating the white forehead from the grey crown whereas female Kentish always lack black on the forecrown.

White-fronted Sand Plovers are never as clean looking underneath as Kentish and are generally rusty above and with paler legs. Although they are also shorter-legged than Kentish, they have proportionately longer tails, giving them a more

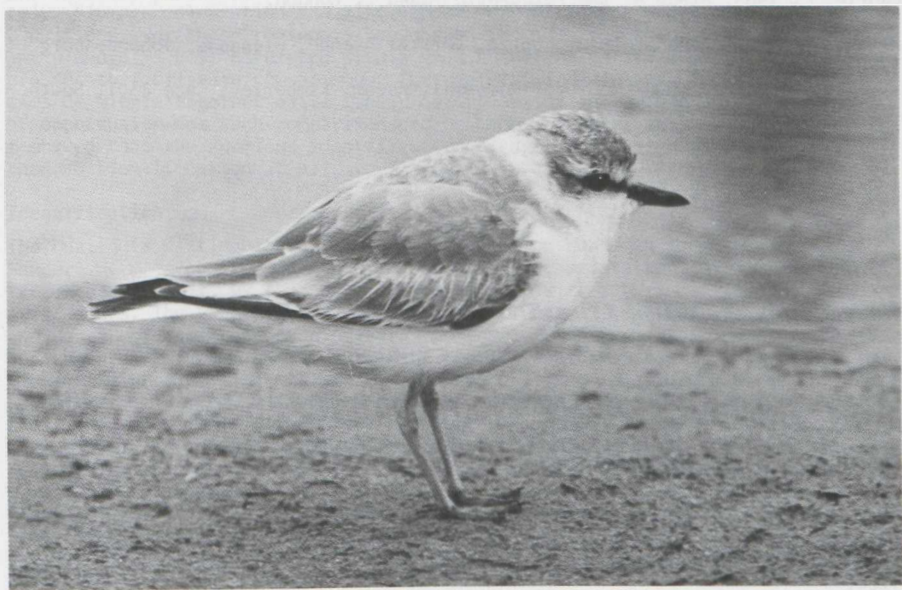


40-41. Kentish Plover/Strandplevier *Charadrius alexandrinus*, male in breeding plumage (J.B. & S. Bottomley); White-fronted Sand Plover/Vaal Strandloper/tjie *Charadrius marginatus*, breeding plumage (C.J. Uys)





42-43. White-fronted Sand Plover/Vaal Strandlopertjie *Charadrius marginatus*, breeding plumage (C.J. Uys); White-fronted Sand Plover/Vaal Strandlopertjie *Charadrius marginatus*, immature plumage (C.J. Uys)



horizontal *jizz* than the latter which is best described as a neat puff-ball on stilts.

Ringed Plovers *C. hiaticula* in juvenile and immature plumage may appear very similar to White-fronteds but the more extensive lateral breast patches and the presence of delicate white fringing and dark subterminal bands on the upperpart feathers should separate them from the more uniform White-fronteds.

#### Acknowledgements

We should particularly thank A.J. Tree for his invaluable assistance in the initial stages of the preparation of this paper. Thanks are also due to P.A. Clancey, J.T.R. Sharrock, Tony Smith and C.J. Uys. Bent Pors Nielsen kindly commented on an earlier draft of this paper. Finally our thanks to Manfred Schmitt for useful discussion.

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#### THE BIRDS OF SAUDI ARABIA: A CHECKLIST

*The birds of Saudi Arabia: a checklist* by Michael C. Jennings (1981 & ISBN 0 9507405 00) contains up to date information on the status and distribution of the 413 species which have occurred in Saudi Arabia and notes on a further 42 species which have been mentioned in the literature but which are 'rejected'. Includes much of relevance to nearby regions. Four general maps, 117 breeding distribution maps and habitat notes for most of the 150 or so breeding species. A few line drawings by C.J.F. Coombs, full bibliography, comprehensive gazetteer and an Arabic introduction. A hundred and 14 pages. Costs UK £ 6.00 plus £ 0.30 postage (or £ 1.00 airmale). Obtainable from Michael C. Jennings (63 Blandford Road, Chiswick, London W4, United Kingdom) or credit UK Post Office Giro 50 851 7206.

## IDENTIFICATION, SUBSPECIFIC VARIATION, AGEING AND SEXING IN EUROPEAN DUNLINS

The Dunlin *Calidris alpina* is the commonest European wader and exhibits a considerable range of variation in size and plumage. A sound knowledge of this variation, and the reasons for it, are not only essential when attempting to identify suspected rarities but also make the observation of this species much more rewarding.

Dunlins have a wide breeding range throughout the Northern Hemisphere, extending from 51° N in Great Britain to 78° N in eastern Greenland and Spitsbergen, with the bulk of the population breeding between 60° and 70° N. Throughout the breeding range, they are most abundant on marshland with low-growing sedges and grasses and plenty of shallow standing water. In winter, they are capable of feeding on a wide range of different invertebrates and although the largest numbers of birds are associated with muddy substrata in estuaries, they also occur on some sandy shores, as well as at freshwater lakes, ponds and marshes. Birds from different parts of the breeding range differ in breeding plumage, as well as in size, and since most of the moult occurs away from the breeding grounds, these different plumage types are frequently encountered at European estuaries in the spring and autumn.

Before describing variations in size and plumage, a strong note of caution needs to be introduced. The differences between different ages, sexes and subspecies are usually very subtle and, with some exceptions, considerable experience is necessary before these categories can be identified in the field. Even the most experienced observer who is familiar with the bird in the hand, will always be unsure about the status of some individuals. In the case of subspecific variations in size and breeding plumage, this is a result of the fact that there is often a continuous gradation of characters (known as a cline) between birds in adjacent parts of the breeding range (Greenwood 1979). Solitary individuals are particularly problematical since it may be difficult to judge their size adequately. Plumage colouration can also appear very different under different lighting conditions. For these reasons, the subspecific identification of birds in breeding plumage is best attempted when a good number of contrasting individuals are present to facilitate comparisons. Fortunately, individuals of different subspecies do mingle together quite freely during spring and autumn, providing plenty of opportunity for such comparisons to be made. However, it should always be remembered that the spurious identification of age, sex or subspecies is far worse than no identification at all.

### Identification

The Dunlin is distinguished from all other common European sandpipers, except Sanderling *C. alba*, Purple Sandpiper *C. maritima*, stints and larger female Ruff *Philomachus pugnax*, by the possession of a rump with a dark central band and white sides. The Sanderling in non-breeding plumage is paler above, whiter below and has a more conspicuous wing-bar. The Purple Sandpiper is much darker above and has a darker head and breast. Many people regard one of the most characteristic features of Dunlin as being its 'hunched' or 'round-shouldered' posture (figure 1). This is because, even though the neck is not particularly short, the head is carried low. In the alert posture, the head is carried higher, stretching of the neck often being a prelude to flight. The bill always shows a distinct downward curve towards the tip (figure 1 and 2), even in the subspecies with a very short bill (though the decurvature is then less pronounced (figure 3)). The length of the bill amounts to about 57 % of the total head and bill length.

Stints are smaller and shorter-billed than nearly all Dunlins but care is sometimes necessary with males of the smallest subspecies which have very short bills

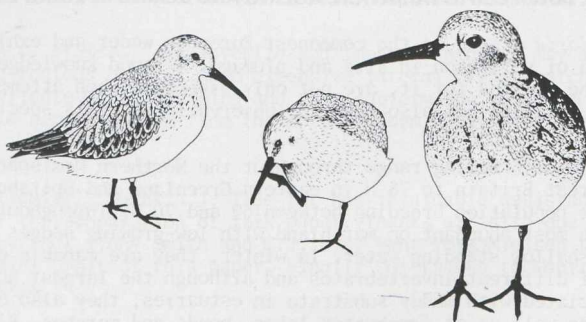


Figure 1. *Calidris alpina alpina* in non-breeding plumage (Peter Ferns)

indeed. Curlew Sandpipers *C. ferruginea* overlap in size with the largest Dunlins but generally have longer and more downcurved bills. They also, of course, have a white rump and move more 'elegantly', the relatively greater length of the tibia contributing to this.

The most serious identification problems in juvenile or non-breeding plumage arise in the case of vagrants. For smaller members of the genus *Calidris*, the problems were reviewed by Wallace (1980). He pointed out, for example, that the smallest Dunlins sometimes overlap in size with Western Sandpipers *C. mauri*. The paler and broader supercilium of the latter is an useful distinguishing feature, as is the call (a high-pitched 'cheet'). The Baird's Sandpiper *C. bairdii* has distinctly buff underparts, relatively little white on the sides of the rump, a less conspicuous wing-bar (but see Bond 1978 and van IJzendoorn 1981) and folded wings which project beyond the tail. The Pectoral Sandpiper *C. melanotos* is generally larger than Dunlin, has an inconspicuous short wing-bar, narrow white sides to the rump and a sharp division between the streaked breast and the white belly. The Broad-billed Sandpiper *Limicola falcinellus* has a less conspicuous wing-bar, a double supercilium and a bill which is broad from its base to its tip. In addition to its white rump, the White-rumped Sandpiper *C. fuscicollis* lacks a distinct downward curve at the tip of the bill and its folded wings project beyond the tail. The Dunlin does have a slight lateral broadening of the bill tip but this does not appear as prominent as in those stints and peeps which like Dunlin have black legs, e.g. Little Stint *C. minuta*, Red-necked Stint *C. ruficollis*, Semipalmated Sandpiper *C. pusilla* and Western Sandpiper. The above list of species and their characters is by no means comprehensive and much fuller coverage can be found in Hollom (1980), Prater *et al.* (1977) and Wallace. In breeding plumage, there should be no risk of confusion with any other species because of the black belly patch which is unique to Dunlin.

#### Subspecific variation

Six subspecies of Dunlin are generally recognised. *C.a. alpina* breeds in northern Scandinavia, Spitsbergen and the northern USSR as far east as approximately Taymyr. *C.a. schinzii* breeds in the countries bordering the Baltic and North Sea and in Great Britain, the Faeroes, Iceland and southeastern Greenland. *C.a. arctica* breeds only in northeastern Greenland. *C.a. sakhalina* breeds in the far northeastern USSR and northern Alaska. The first three of these subspecies occur regularly in Europe though *arctica* is only a passage migrant. *C.a. sakhalina* has

occurred as a vagrant in autumn. There have been no European records of the other two subspecies: *C.a. pacifica* which breeds in western Alaska, and *C.a. hudsonia* which breeds in the eastern half of the Northwest Territories of Canada. A map of breeding ranges of all six subspecies was given in Ferns & Green (1979). Other subspecies have also been proposed but are not at the moment widely accepted: e.g. *C.a. centralis* for the population between the Yenisey and Yana in the USSR which shows characters intermediate between *alpina* and *sakhalina* (Buturlin 1932), and *C.a. articola* for the breeding population of northern Alaska (Browning 1977, Todd 1953).

Tabel 1. Average bill lengths of six subspecies of Dunlin *Calidris alpina* (sample size in brackets)

| Subspecies                     | Males      | Females    | Sources                                                                                                         |
|--------------------------------|------------|------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>C.a. arctica</i>            | 26.1 (68)  | 29.1 (52)  | Glutz von Blotzheim <i>et al.</i> (1975), Green (1978)                                                          |
| <i>C.a. schinzii</i> (Europe)  | 27.9 (338) | 32.1 (319) | Glutz von Blotzheim <i>et al.</i> (1975), Heldt (1966), Soikkeli (1974)                                         |
| <i>C.a. schinzii</i> (Iceland) | 29.0 (38)  | 33.0 (18)  | Hørring (1939)                                                                                                  |
| <i>C.a. alpina</i>             | 31.1 (49)  | 35.0 (41)  | Dement'ev <i>et al.</i> (1969), Glutz von Blotzheim <i>et al.</i> (1975), Vaurie (1965)                         |
| <i>C.a. sakhalina</i>          | 33.3 (208) | 36.6 (161) | Browning (1977), Glutz von Blotzheim <i>et al.</i> (1975), Kozlova (1962), Maclean & Holmes (1971), Todd (1953) |
| <i>C.a. hudsonia</i>           | 36.2 (58)  | 39.2 (35)  | Browning (1977), Glutz von Blotzheim <i>et al.</i> (1975), Maclean & Holmes (1971), Todd (1953)                 |
| <i>C.a. pacifica</i>           | 36.6 (92)  | 40.1 (54)  | Browning (1977), Maclean & Holmes (1971), Todd (1953)                                                           |

In non-breeding plumage, there are no very clear plumage differences between the subspecies. *Sakhalina*, however, does tend to have more white on the outer webs of the primaries, sometimes extending as far as the sixth, thus giving it a slightly more extensive wing-bar (Witherby *et al.* 1941). *Hudsonia* has dark shaft streaks extending along the whole length of the flanks though these may be faint (K.C. Parkes *cited by* Browning) whereas in all the other subspecies this streaking is confined to the anterior half of the ventral surface. These characters are extremely subtle and the main difference between the subspecies in non-breeding plumage is one of size (table 1). Wing length is not an useful field character and is subject to seasonal change (e.g. Pienkowski & Minton 1973) and errors of measurements. Total length is very difficult to measure with any degree of consistency and although it provides the best general indication of relative size, too few measurements of the different subspecies are available to be worth

considering. This leaves bill length as the most useful biometric character which may be of value in the field. *Pacifica* is the largest subspecies and has the longest bill, followed in order of decreasing size by *hudsonia*, *sakhalina*, *alpina*, *schinzii* and *arctica*. Males have bills which are on average three or four millimeters shorter than females from the same breeding area. As mentioned earlier, populations of the same subspecies from different parts of the range also tend to show differences in size. Thus, for example, *schinzii* from Iceland tend to have bills which are on average just over a millimeter longer than those from the rest of Europe. The range of variation in bill length of birds of the same sex from the same breeding area is quite wide, the standard deviation of bill length being c. 5 % of the mean. Thus, for birds with a mean bill length of 30 mm, 95 % of individuals of the same sex from the same breeding area can be expected to fall within the range 27 - 33 mm. The net result of all these sources of variations is that individuals of the different subspecies show a good deal of overlap. The approximate range actually recorded for each subspecies (sexes combined) is as follows: *pacifica* 32.0 - 43.5 mm, *hudsonia* 33.0 - 43.0 mm, *sakhalina* 28.5 - 41.0 mm, *alpina* 27.7 - 36.5 mm, *schinzii* 24.0 - 36.3 mm and *arctica* 24.0 - 31.2 mm (sources as in table 1). However, these ranges are compiled from measurements made at the small number of breeding areas which happen to have been studied, and the true ranges are undoubtedly greater. For example, *arctica* have been trapped on passage in the Severn Estuary (Wales) in spring with bill lengths of 23 mm and autumn passage birds in Europe (subspecies not identified) have had bills as long as 40 mm (Martin-Löf 1958, OAG Münster 1976). The latter could, of course, have been *sakhalina* rather than *alpina* but bills of 40 mm are sufficiently common in Europe to make this unlikely.

All this may appear disheartening to anyone trying to identify Dunlin subspecies in the field but it is worth remembering that *alpina* has a bill which is on average 20 % longer than *arctica*, and to take the extreme case, female *pacifica* have bills which are 54 % longer than those of male *arctica*.

In breeding plumage, the differences between the subspecies are much more pronounced. In the case of *alpina*, *schinzii* and *arctica*, the breeding plumage is described, and illustrated by means of a colour plate, in Ferns & Green. A summary of this information is given below, together with details of the other subspecies derived from Browning and Maclean & Holmes (1971).

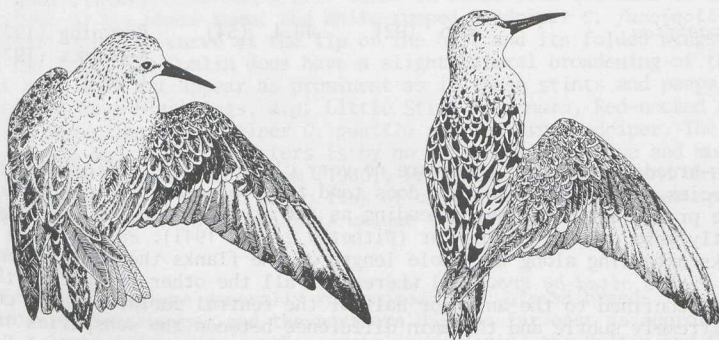


Figure 2. *Calidris alpina alpina* in non-breeding plumage on the left (drawn from a bird in the hand) and in breeding plumage on the right (drawn from a museum skin) (Peter Ferns)

During the pre-breeding moult in spring, both adults and first-winter birds replace their body feathers (but not any remiges and seldom any rectrices). Some juveniles undergo an incomplete pre-breeding moult (Nieboer 1972) since most of them do not breed in their first year. The feathers of crown, mantle and often rump which are mostly dull grey with paler borders and a dark shaft streak in non-breeding plumage, are replaced by feathers with almost black centres, grey or white terminal fringes and coloured edges (figure 2). In winter, some of the feathers of the upper breast have small dark spots at the apex of the rachis (producing the darkish upper breast as in figure 1) and these are replaced by feathers with much larger black spots (figure 4). The upper breast often becomes slightly tinged with buff. The belly feathers have an all-white apical half in winter and these are replaced by feathers with a broad black apical band which produces the black belly patches (figure 3 and 4).



Figure 3. *Calidris alpina alpina* in breeding plumage (Peter Ferns)

In *alpina*, the coloured edges of the dorsal breeding plumage feathers are a deep rusty-red, in *schinzii* they are yellowish-red and in *arctica* they are pale reddish-yellow and much less extensive than in the other two subspecies. The greyish or whitish terminal fringes of these feathers are most prominent in *alpina*. The spots on the upper breast tend to be finer in *schinzii* and *arctica* than in *alpina*. In the field, the upperparts of these three subspecies which are the only ones likely to be commonly encountered in breeding plumage in Europe, thus appear as follows. *Alpina* is dark red, *schinzii* is paler, showing distinctly more yellow, and *arctica* is a very pale yellowish-grey. The distinction between *alpina* and the other two subspecies is quite easy to make, given a reasonably close view in good light, but the distinction between *schinzii* and *arctica* can be much more difficult since some birds appear to be intermediate. This may possibly be because *schinzii* breeding in southeastern Greenland are intermediate in colour between *schinzii* and *arctica* - they are certainly intermediate in size (Greenwood 1979).

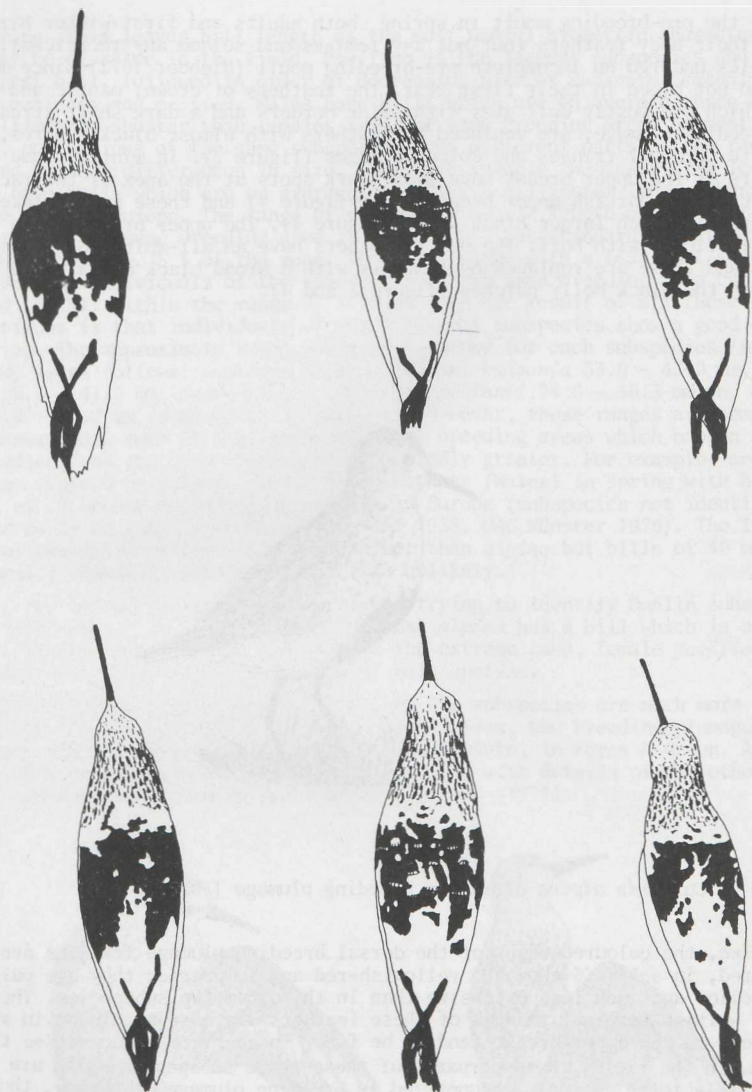


Figure 4. Underparts of *Calidris alpina pacifica* (left), *C. a. alpina* (centre) and *C. a. schinzii* (right) in breeding plumage. Males above and females below (drawn from museum skins) (Peter Ferns)

The subspecies most likely to turn up in Europe as a vagrant is *sakhalina* and it has already been reported on several occasions (e.g. Harrison & Harrison 1971, Hens *et al.* 1962, Holgersen 1963). It is a brighter deeper shade of red on the back than *alpina*. *Pacifica* and *hudsonia* are the brightest and richest red of all the subspecies (and it is thus not surprising that an alternative name for Dunlin in North America is Red-backed Sandpiper). However, *hudsonia* can be distinguished from *pacifica* and all other subspecies in breeding plumage because the spots on the upper breast extend right up to the black belly patch (with no intervening white band as in figure 4) and often to the under tail-coverts and sides of the rump.

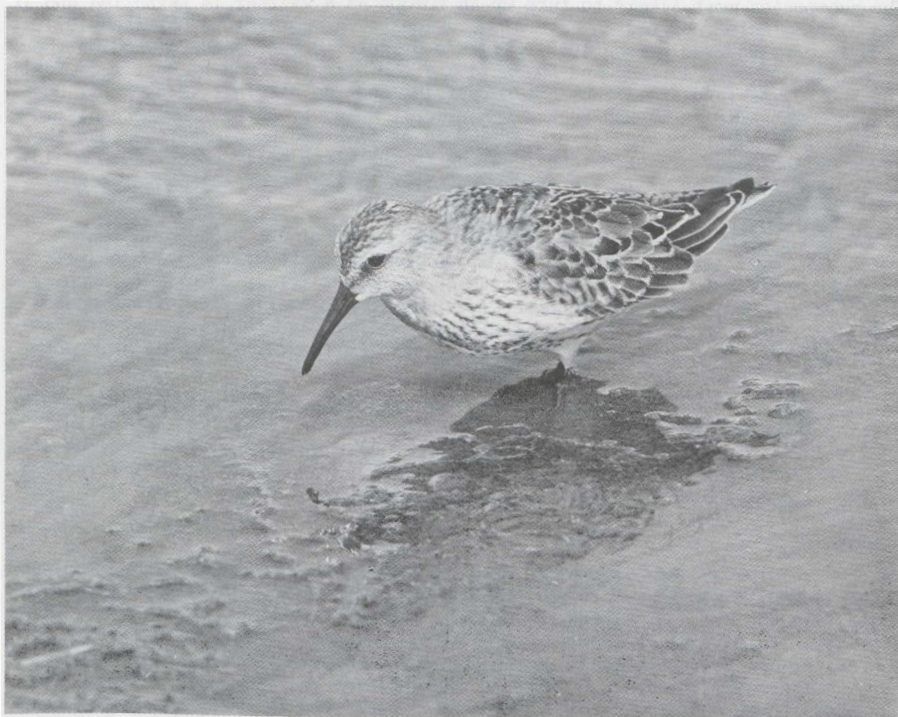
It was suggested by several authors that the extent of the black belly patch forms an useful subspecific identification feature, with *arctica* and *schinzii* having a small patch and *alpina* a large one (e.g. Prater *et al.* 1977). Such a difference is not clear-cut, however (see figure 4), and in view of the added complications of white fringes on the belly feathers and their subsequent abrasion (see later), this can not be regarded as a particularly useful field character in spring.

It has, for many years, been recognised that at least *alpina* and *schinzii* can be distinguished on the basis of their calls (Bannerman & Lodge 1961, Buturlin 1932). In *alpina*, the call is deep, loud and clear, in *schinzii* and *arctica* it is more feeble and higher-pitched. This presumably reflects slight differences in the size of the vocal apparatus of each subspecies.

### Ageing

On the breeding grounds, the natal down of the chicks gradually becomes replaced by the juvenile plumage. In some respects, the dorsal plumage of juveniles is quite like the breeding plumage of adults. The body feathers, for example, have dark brown (almost black) centres, surrounded by white, yellow or buff fringes. There are, however, no clearly separate lateral coloured portions to these feathers as there are in adults - instead, the whole of the fringe on a single feather tends to be uniform in tone. It has been suggested that the colour of these fringes differs in the different subspecies, with *alpina* being more richly coloured, *schinzii* being buff and *arctica* pale buff or whitish. On average, this is probably true but there is a good deal of individual variation. I have examined some *arctica* with nearly all-white fringes, some with all buff and others with a mixture of both on the same individual. These fringes tend to abrade quite quickly and so this is not a particularly valuable character when observing migrating juveniles in Europe in autumn. The fringes of the individual wing-coverts are also buff in juveniles, forming a marked contrast with the all-white fringes of adults. The breast of juveniles is white with dark spots and streaks and usually has a pronounced buff tinge. The belly has some conspicuous and very characteristic blackish spots. Otherwise, the underparts are white and there is, of course, no black belly patch. The bills of juvenile waders are often incompletely grown at the time when they leave their breeding grounds and so they tend to be rather shorter than those of adults from the same breeding areas during the autumn migration.

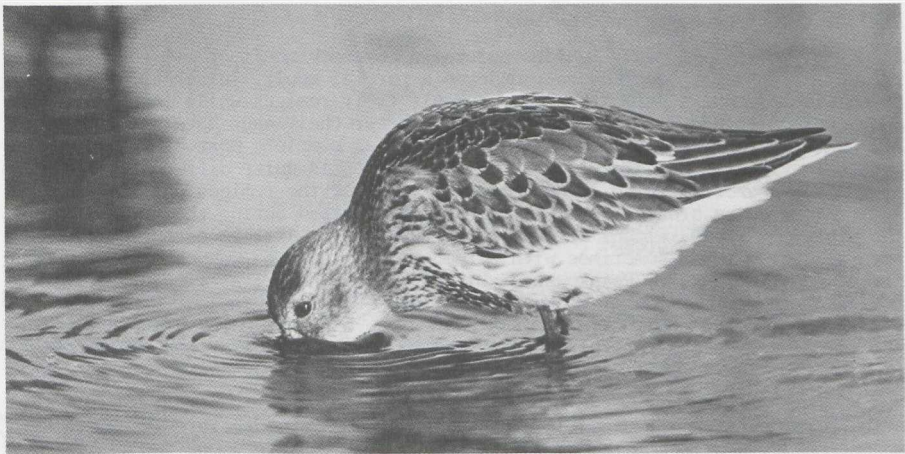
The transition from juvenile to first-winter plumage is a continuous process and usually commences on the breeding grounds, sometimes before the juvenile plumage has itself completely replaced the natal down (Holmes 1966). This moult involves the replacement of most of the body feathers but the remiges and rectrices are retained, as are some of the wing-coverts and occasionally some dorsal body feathers, particularly in the region of the rump. Migrating juveniles observed on European shores in the autumn may show any or all of the above features. Birds which have a mottled buff-washed breast, dark spots on the belly and no black belly patch are clearly recognisable as juveniles from a considerable dis-



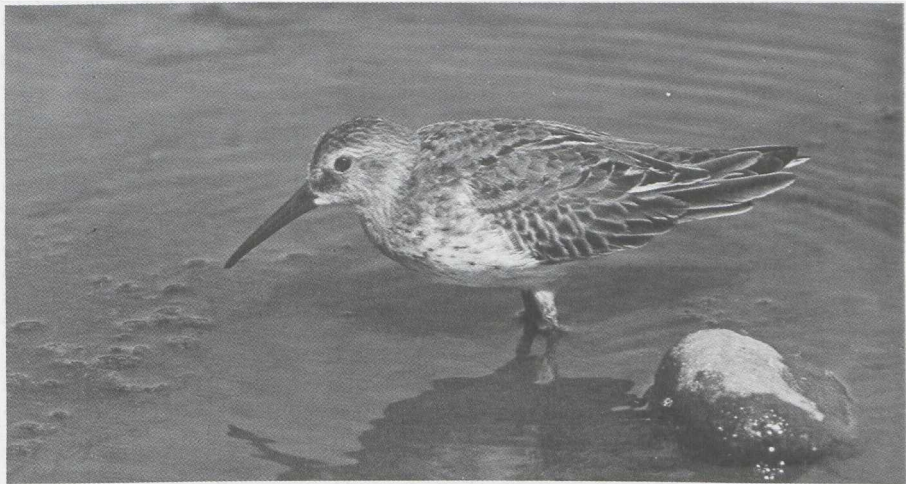
44. Juvenile Dunlin/Bonte Strandloper *Calidris alpina*. The black belly spots characteristic of early autumn juveniles can be seen, together with a mixture of juvenile (dark with whitish edges) and first-winter (grey with dark shaft streaks) coverts, scapulars and mantle feathers (*Keri Williams*)

tance. These underparts features soon disappear, however, and the most useful character is then the pale whitish or buffish fringes on the wing-coverts and tertials. In the autumn, these stand out very clearly but they gradually disappear as a result of moulting or abrasion so that it becomes more and more difficult to distinguish them from adults. By the following spring, it is almost impossible to separate juveniles from adults in the field. Because the adults moult all their remiges in the autumn, these feathers are much cleaner and less abraded than those of juveniles throughout the first half of the winter. Any birds seen with remiges missing symmetrically in both wings (and therefore in normal wing moult) must be adults.

When they first arrive at European estuaries, juveniles have often had rather little experience of feeding on mud-flats and many of them, therefore, tend to be observed at freshwater pools and marshes at the top of the shore (or inland), even when the tide is low. As with many other juvenile waders, they usually allow a human observer to approach much more closely than is the case with adult birds. (This is one of the reasons why there are plenty of good photographs of juvenile Dunlins but rather few of adults.)



45. Juvenile Dunlin/Bonte Strandloper *Calidris alpina*. The black spots on the lower belly have disappeared but the juvenile coverts and scapulars with their wide and uniformly coloured fringes are still conspicuous amongst a few moulted first-winter scapulars. At this time of year, adult breeding plumage feathers are dark, abraded and lack such prominent fringes (Keri Williams)



46. Juvenile Dunlin/Bonte Strandloper *Calidris alpina*. Later on in the season, juveniles such as this one become more difficult to age because most of the body feathers are replaced or become abraded. The median and lesser coverts retain their buff edges however (in adults these are white) but this is impossible to see in a black and white photograph. They are also difficult to see because the carpal joint of the folded wing is covered by the flank feathers (Keri Williams)

## Moult and feather abrasion

As already mentioned, adult Dunlins undergo a complete moult of all feathers in the autumn whereas juveniles only undergo a partial moult. In *sakhalina* in northern Alaska, adults actually start to moult their remiges while incubating in June, whilst in *pacifica* they start shortly after their eggs have hatched, usually in July (Holmes 1971). Both these subspecies complete most of their moult before leaving the breeding grounds. The situation is quite different in *alpina*, *schinzii* and *arctica* which do not commence moult of the remiges until they have left the breeding areas. The moult takes place instead during the migration to the winter quarters, either at one of the European or African estuaries or at several such sites - sometimes with a temporary cessation (suspension) of moult in between (Boere 1976, Peinkowski & Dick 1975, Pienkowski *et al.* 1976). The duration of the primary moult of Dunlins in the Netherlands is just under 90 days, females tending to moult earlier (since they leave the breeding grounds before the males) and second-year birds also tending to moult earlier than full adults (Boere). The post-breeding moult usually takes place throughout Europe between July and October.

A few birds retain some breeding plumage feathers quite late into the winter and, occasionally, a bird remains in full breeding plumage throughout the year. A few birds also remain in full non-breeding plumage throughout the summer. The pre-breeding moult of *alpina* in Europe usually takes place between mid-March and the end of May whilst most *schinzii* and *arctica* arrive (at least in Great Britain) in April and May with their breeding plumage almost completely developed (Ferns & Green 1979). The pre-breeding moult does not, however, always produce a bird with the typical appearance of a bird in breeding plumage. This is because the feathers of the black belly patch nearly always have white terminal fringes which obscure the black portions of the underlying feathers. Thus, the black belly patch often first appears as two separate areas of black spots on either side of the midline. The white terminal fringes gradually wear away and the belly patch becomes more prominent until it is completely developed as in figure 4. This is the main reason why the belly patch is of little value as a subspecific identification feature in the spring. Sometimes, the mantle feathers of the breeding plumage have grey fringes which, for a short time, obscure the full colour of the underlying feathers. A few non-breeding plumage feathers are sometimes retained in the mantle throughout the summer, especially in *arctica*, and occasionally a few individuals renew the central pair of rectrices and some inner secondary coverts during the pre-breeding moult.

During the course of the breeding season, the feathers of the back gradually become faded and abraded. The coloured fringes wear away, leaving only the black centres. Many birds thus return to European estuaries in the autumn looking much darker than in the spring.

## Sexing

In non-breeding plumage, there are no known differences between the sexes other than size. In breeding plumage, however, all subspecies show a degree of sexual dimorphism, first noted by Schiøler (1922), which is most pronounced in spring when the plumage is fresh and which tends to disappear throughout the summer as the feathers become abraded. In autumn, only a few individuals can therefore be sexed with confidence. This sexual dimorphism is most pronounced in the large brightly coloured subspecies: *sakhalina*, *pacifica* and *hudsonia* (see figure 5). In these subspecies, the hindneck in females is slightly lighter in tone than the feathers on the crown and mantle but it still shows dark spots and streaks. In males, on the other hand, both the colour and the spots and streaks are largely missing from this area so that the hindneck appears as a pale whitish collar. In female *alpina* and *schinzii*, there is almost no contrast between the plu-

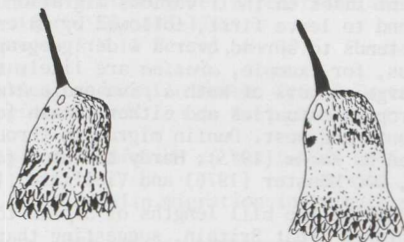


Figure 5. Dorsal view of the heads of female (left) and male (right) *Calidris alpina pacifica* to show maximum sexual differentiation of the nape (drawn from museum skins) (Peter Ferns)

mage of the hindneck and that of the crown or mantle. In males, there is a marked contrast and the hindneck is paler but not as strikingly so as in the three larger subspecies. However, there are always a few individual *alpina* and *schinzii* which show intermediate characters and which can not, therefore, be sexed with confidence. In *arctica*, the difference between males and females is essentially as in the other subspecies but the dorsal breeding plumage is so pale in colour that the contrast is much more difficult to distinguish. In all subspecies, females tend to show a more intense buffish wash of the upper breast but in the paler subspecies this is less well-marked in both sexes. Since most juveniles undergo a complete pre-breeding moult in their first spring, they show the same sexual differences as the adults.

#### Migration

The majority of European wintering Dunlins belongs to *alpina* and this subspecies, therefore, represents the norm against which individuals of other subspecies must be compared. Some *schinzii* are probably also present in winter, especially in southern Europe (and even as far north as Great Britain), but the majority winter in northwestern Africa (Pienkowski & Dick 1975). The winter quarters of *arctica* have yet to be identified but they are probably also in Africa. During spring, local *alpina* undergo their pre-breeding moult at or close to their winter quarters and there is a well-marked passage in April along the southern coast of the North Sea of birds *en route* to breeding grounds further east. These birds are joined by a small movement of *schinzii* from further south, heading for breeding areas on the European mainland. In Great Britain, there is a small passage of local breeding *schinzii* in mid-April, followed by a much larger passage of the same subspecies heading for Iceland and southeastern Greenland in late April and early May. This is particularly well-marked on the west coast of Great Britain and possibly also on the west coast of France and Iberia. Later in May, there is a small passage of *arctica*. This, too, is most marked in the west but some individuals have also been identified on the southeast coast of Great Britain and therefore a few undoubtedly turn up on the southern coasts of the North Sea. Spring migrant *schinzii* and *arctica* include few juveniles (in contrast to *alpina*), yet they are noticeably more approachable than wintering flocks of *alpina*.

Small numbers of birds usually remain on European estuaries throughout the summer and undergo an early post-breeding moult. In July - September, they are joined by birds returning from the breeding grounds. At some sites, it has been noted that *schinzii* tend to return earlier than *alpina* (Evans 1966) but the breeding range is so wide in both these subspecies that the situation is likely to

differ at different sites on their various migration routes. In most breeding areas, females tend to leave first, followed by males and then juveniles. The autumn migration tends to spread over a wider geographical area than the spring migration and thus, for example, *arctica* are likely to turn up even further east in the autumn. Large numbers of both *alpina* and *schinzii* undergo their post-breeding moult at European estuaries and either remain for the winter or move further on to the south and west. Dunlin migration through various parts of Europe had been described by Fuchs (1973), Hardy & Minton (1980), Martin-Löf (1958), Nørrevang (1955), OAG Münster (1976) and Vielliard (1972).

There is a tendency for the bill lengths of *alpina* to increase later during the spring passage through Great Britain, suggesting that the birds from breeding areas further east in the USSR pass through later. These are birds of the 'centralis' type which probably originate from the transition zone between *alpina* and *sakhalina*. The most likely time for genuine *sakhalina* to occur in Europe is in the autumn when some may migrate in the wrong direction (to the west instead of the east). Pectoral Sandpipers sometimes occur in Europe in autumn when weather conditions make it seem more likely that they have come from the USSR than from North America (e.g. Smart 1975). It is also possible that *hudsonia* could turn up when conditions favour the arrival of North American vagrants in autumn but it is much harder to imagine *pacifica* making it to Europe.

#### Acknowledgements

I would like to thank G.H. Green and my other colleagues in the Celtic Wader Research Group for helpful discussion on the subspecific identifications of Dunlins. I am also grateful to the many people who have allowed us to watch and catch waders on their land, particularly W.H. Attewell, and to the National Museum of Wales for the loan of specimens.

#### Summary

The main identification features of six subspecies of Dunlin *Calidris alpina* (*C.a. alpina*, *C.a. schinzii*, *C.a. arctica*, *C.a. sakhalina*, *C.a. hudsonia* and *C.a. pacifica*) in breeding and non-breeding plumage are described and information is also given on the ageing and sexing of these birds in the field. There is a considerable overlap in the characters of different populations of these subspecies, especially with regard to size, and subspecific identification should, therefore, be made with caution.

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#### GREY-HEADED PARROTBILL IN HONG KONG IN DECEMBER 1980

When birding in the Kowloon Hills in Hong Kong on 11 December 1980, I observed a flock of at least 10 Grey-headed Parrotbills *Paradoxornis gularis* in dense stands of dwarf golden bamboo *Phyllostachys aurea*. The flock was accompanied by several Hwameis *Garrulax canorus*. The Kowloon Hills are situated just north of Kowloon and surround the city's reservoirs.

The above record was probably the first one of Grey-headed Parrotbill for Hong Kong. It is, for instance, not mentioned in Viney & Phillips (no date), Webster (1975) and Webster & Phillips (1977). The possibility of being escapes is unlikely considering the number of birds, the behaviour and the habitat. The species' range is from Sikkim to southern China and Hainan; it inhabits evergreen forests, oaks, scrub and second growth (King et al. 1975).

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## DIKBEKZEEKOET BIJ MONSTER IN JANUARI 1981

### BRÜNNICH'S GUILLEMOT NEAR MONSTER IN JANUARY 1981

In juli 1981 kreeg ik van diverse mensen te horen dat een vogelaar te Vlaardingen (ZH) een opgezette Dikbekzeekoet *Uria lomvia* in zijn bezit zou hebben. Dit bleek inderdaad het geval te zijn. Het betrof een vogel in broedkleed. De vogel was bij het zoeken naar olieslachtoffers op 10 januari 1981 bij Monster (ZH) gevonden.

De bovenstaande vondst was het zevende geval van de Dikbekzeekoet voor Nederland. Het vorige geval betrof een levend exemplaar langs de Brouwersdam (ZH) op 4 februari 1979 dat op 10 februari dood werd gevonden (van den Berg & Bos 1980). Op 4 en 18 januari werden langs de Belgische kust twee dode Dikbekzeekoeten gevonden; ook dit waren olieslachtoffers (van Gompel 1981).

#### Summary

On 10 January 1981 an oiled Brünnich's Guillemot *Uria lomvia* in breeding plumage was found dead near Monster (Zuid-Holland). This was the seventh record for the Netherlands.

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47. Dikbekzeekoet/Brünnich's Guillemot *Uria lomvia*, opgezet/stuffed, Vlaardingen (ZH), augustus 1981 (René Pop)

## MEER OVER OEHOE VAN DEN HELDER

### MORE ABOUT EAGLE OWL OF DEN HELDER

Na de mededelingen door van den Berg (1979), van IJzendoorn (1979) en Steinhaus (1981) over de Oehoe *Bubo bubo* die van oktober 1973 tot februari 1981 in de Donkere Duinen bij Den Helder (NH) verbleef, lijkt het mij zinvol om de onderstaande notities te publiceren.

De Oehoe hield zich meestal op in het afgesloten gedeelte van het c. 50 ha grote dennenbos in de Donkere Duinen. Hier bezat hij een paar vaste roestbomen. Onder deze bomen werden regelmatig braakballen gevonden. In de 6 à 8 cm lange en 2 à 4 cm brede braakballen werden resten aangetroffen van Postduiven *Columba livia* (veel ringen), Houtduiven *C. palumbus* en met name jonge konijnen *Oryctolagus cuniculus*. Een enkele maal werden ook schedels gevonden van Kauw *Corvus monedula* en bruine rat *Rattus norvegicus*. Resten van Ransuil *Asio otus* en Vlaamse Gaai *Garrulus glandarius* werden beide eenmaal aangetroffen.

De opmerking door van den Berg dat de Oehoe nooit riep, is onjuist. Van december tot in april werd 's avonds regelmatig de baltsroep gehoord. Tijdens heldere nachten droeg het geluid soms wel twee km ver. (P. Twisk en ik hebben eens een proef gedaan waarbij baltsgeluiden van de Ransuil ten gehore werden gebracht met behulp van een geluidsapparaat. Tot onze verbazing reageerde de Oehoe hier sterk op. Met het verplaatsen van de geluidsbron verplaatste ook de Oehoe zich.)

Er bestaan aanwijzingen dat de Oehoe gedurende bepaalde perioden niet aanwezig was. Hij werd bijvoorbeeld nooit waargenomen in de perioden waarin boswerkzaamheden werden uitgevoerd in de omgeving van zijn roestbomen. Er werden dan ook geen plukresten van duiven en konijnen gevonden.

#### Summary

The author gives additional information on the Eagle Owl *Bubo bubo* that stayed in the Donkere Duinen near Den Helder (Noord-Holland) from October 1973 to February 1981. Analysis of the collected pellets showed that its food consisted of Homing Pigeons *Columba livia*, Woodpigeons *C. palumbus* and especially young rabbits *Oryctolagus cuniculus*. Remains of Long-eared Owl *Asio otus*, Jay *Garrulus glandarius*, Jackdaw *Corvus monedula* and brown rat *Rattus norvegicus* were also found.

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## GRIJSKOPSPECHT OP BRUNSSUMMERHEIDE IN APRIL EN MEI 1981

### GREY-HEADED WOODPECKER ON BRUNSSUMMERHEIDE IN APRIL AND MAY 1981

Op 27 april 1981 hoorde G. Dunnewold op de Brunssummerheide (L) een lachende 'kuu-kuu-kuu-...' -roep welke hem deed denken aan de roep van een Groene Specht *Picus viridis*. De roep welke uit een 10-tal elementen bestond, verschilde echter in klank en uitvoering van die van de Groene Specht. Hoewel hij niet bekend was met het geluid van de Grijskopspecht *P. canus*, dacht hij toch aan deze soort. De juistheid van deze gedachte werd bevestigd toen de vogel zich liet zien. Het bleek een mannetje te zijn. Tot en met 17 mei werd de Grijskopspecht door veel vogelaars gezien en gehoord.

#### Beschrijving

**Voorkomen.** Kleiner en grijzer dan Groene Specht (waarmee samen gezien). In vlucht grijzer dan Groene en met minder opvallende gele stuit; in vergelijking met Groene Specht lange staart (in vlucht iets weg van Grote Lijster *Turdus viscivorus*). In vergelijking met Groene Specht korte snavel en nek; spitse kop.

**Verenkleed en naakte delen.** Voorhoofd en aansluitend deel van kruin rood, rest van kruin grijs; teugel zwart; oorstreek, kin, keel en nek grijs; achterhoofd iets donkerder grijs; kaakstreep zwart en smal (gebruik van op ondersnavel aansluitende kaakstreep verdient voorkeur boven op mondhoek aansluitende baardstreep). Rug en schouders vaalgroen; stuit groengeel, minder opvallend geel dan bij Groene Specht en meer vloeiend overgaand in rug en bovenstaartdekveren. Borst grijsig, overgaand in meer groenachtig grijs van buik en flanken; onderstaartdekveren zwak gevlekt grijsgroen. Slagpennen donker en met licht vlekkenpatroon zoals bij Groene Specht; vleugeldekveren vaalgroen. Staart bruingroen. Oog donker; snavel grijs; poten donker.

**Geluid.** Een uit 10 tot 15 elementen opgebouwde 'kuu-kuu-kuu-...' -roep. De roep was trager dan van Groene Specht. Naar het einde toe daalde de roep enigszins in toonhoogte en werden de intervallen tussen de afzonderlijke elementen groter. De roep miste het aanloopje naar het beklemtoonde tweede en derde element hetgeen kenmerkend is voor de Groene Specht. Tijdens het roepen hield de vogel de snavel slechts een weinig open.

**Gedrag.** De vogel maakte zijn aanwezigheid kenbaar en 'verdedigde' zijn territorium door te roepen en te roffelen. De vogel bezat vaste roep- en roffelplaatsen welke vooral langs de grens van zijn territorium lagen. Hij riep meestal geëxposeerd vanuit de top van een boom. De vogel roffelde onregelmatig; op sommige dagen veel en op andere weinig.

De bovenstaande beschrijving van het voorkomen, verenkleed en naakte delen, geluid en gedrag is gebaseerd op eigen waarnemingen en op aantekeningen en geluidsopnamen van onder andere Edward van IJzendoorn.

#### Summary

On 27 April 1981 a calling male Grey-headed Woodpecker *Picus canus* was discovered on the Brunssummerheide (Limburg). The bird was seen and heard until 17 May. A description of its appearance, plumage and bare parts, voice and behaviour is given.

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Voor een foto van de hierboven beschreven Grijskopspecht *Picus canus*, zie *Dutch Birding* 3: 70 (plaat 33). JJB & PdH

## KLEINE ZWARTKOP IN AMSTERDAM IN WINTER VAN 1980/81

### SARDINIAN WARBLER IN AMSTERDAM IN WINTER OF 1980/81

Op 14 december 1980 zag Ton Kramer in de struiken voor zijn flat in Amsterdam-Osdorp (NH) een kleine vogel met een zwarte kopkap en een opvallende rode oogring. Hij determineerde de vogel als een volwassen mannetje Kleine Zwartkop *Sylvia melanocephala*. Voordat hij een foto kon maken, was de vogel verdwenen. Een week later, op 21 december, zag hij de Kleine Zwartkop op een balkon etend uit een voederkorfje met pinda's. De vogel werd verjaagd door een koolmees *Parus major*. Pas op 1 februari 1981 zag TK de Kleine Zwartkop terug, ditmaal fouragerend tussen de struiken voor zijn flat. De vogel pikte hier en daar iets op van de grond en at van een broodkorst. Hierbij viel op dat de vogel regelmatig met zijn staart wipte als een kwikstaart *Motacilla*. Ook liet de vogel eenmaal een snel 'tjet-tjet-tjet' horen. Op 22 februari werd de Kleine Zwartkop voor het laatst gezien.

Het is TK gelukt dia's van de Kleine Zwartkop te maken. De kwaliteit hiervan laat echter te wensen over. Op enkele dia's is echter wel duidelijk te zien dat de vogel een Kleine Zwartkop is. Verder is te zien dat de vogel in een stadstuin zit. De onderstaande beschrijving van de grootte, het verenkleed en de naakte delen is gemaakt aan de hand van de dia's en de opmerkingen van TK. (De dia's zijn door de redactie van *Dutch Birding* bekeken.)



48. Kleine Zwartkop/Sardinian Warbler *Sylvia melanocephala*, volwassen mannetje, Amsterdam (NH), winter van 1980/81 (Ton Kramer)

## Beschrijving

Kleiner dan Huismus *Passer domesticus*; ongeveer zo groot als Koolmees. Kopkap (met inbegrip van teugel en oorstreek) glanzend zwart; kin en keel wit (duidelijk gescheiden van kap maar geleidelijk overgaand naar borst en flanken). Rug en schouders vrij donkergrijs. Borst en buik lichtgrijs; flanken donkerder grijs. Vleugels donker. Staart donker en met wit op buitenste penne. Iris lijkt vrij donker, oogring (en oogrand?) opvallend rood; snavel donker en met lichte basis aan ondersnavel; poten bruinachtig.

## Bespreking

De determinatie van de Kleine Zwartkop leverde weinig problemen op. Dit gold ook voor de leeftijds- en geslachtsbepaling. Op grond van de glanzend zwarte kopkap mag worden aangenomen dat de vogel een volwassen mannetje was (cf. Svensson 1975, Williamson 1968). De vogel behoorde waarschijnlijk tot de ondersoort *S.m. melanocephala* welke broedt in mediterrane Europa, Klein-Azië en Noord-Afrika. Hiervoor pleit met name het verenkleed zoals dat te zien is op de dia's (cf. Williamson).

Het biotoop van de Kleine Zwartkop kwam sterk overeen met dat van in Nederland en elders in West-Europa overwinterende Zwartkoppen *S. atricapilla* (cf. Leach 1981). Dit gold ook voor het voedsel. Het eten van brood en pinda's komt ook bij deze soort voor (Leach).

Het was het eerste geval van de Kleine Zwartkop voor Nederland. De soort is een zeldzame dwaalgast in Noordwest-Europa. Tot nu toe zijn alleen Kleine Zwartkoppen vastgesteld in de BRD, Groot-Brittannië en Zweden (Petterson 1981, Sharrock & Sharrock 1976, Vauk 1972). Het was waarschijnlijk het eerste overwinteringsgeval voor Noordwest-Europa.

## Summary

From 14 December 1980 until 22 February 1981 an adult male Sardinian Warbler *Sylvia melanocephala* was observed and photographed in an urban garden in Amsterdam (Noord-Holland). The authors give a description of the bird's size, plumage and bare parts. The plumage showed characters of the subspecies *S.m. melanocephala*. The bird was seen eating bread; it was also seen feeding from a bag containing peanuts. This was the first record of Sardinian Warbler for the Netherlands and probably the first winter record for northwestern Europe.

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## RECENT REPORTS

This report on rare and interesting birds in the Netherlands and Flanders covers mainly June, July and August. The records included are largely unchecked, not authenticated. No claim for the completeness of this report is made. The Dutch and scientific names and their order correspond with the *Dutch Birding Association Checklist* (1980). The English names correspond with *The 'British Birds' list of birds of the Western Palearctic* (1978).

### Divers through frigatebirds

Manx Shearwaters/Noordse Pijlstormvogels *Puffinus puffinus* of the mediterranean subspecies *P.p. mauretanicus* were seen at Scheveningen (Zuid-Holland) on 31 July and at the Hondsbosse Zeewering (Noord-Holland) on 7 August. A Storm Petrel/Stormvogeltje *hydrobates pelagicus* was observed off Schiermonnikoog (Friesland) on 27 August. Shags/Kuifaalscholvers *Phalacrocorax aristotelis* were reported from Zeebrugge (West-Vlaanderen) on 29 July and from IJmuiden (Noord-Holland) on 11 August.

### Herons through ibisses

A calling Night Heron/Kwak *Nycticorax nycticorax* was heard at 's-Gravenhage (Zuid-Holland) on 30 August. The Cattle Egret/Koereiger *Bubulcus ibis* present at Marken-Binnen (Noord-Holland) stayed throughout the period. Another bird wandered through the Alblasserwaard (Zuid-Holland) area from mid-June onwards. A third bird turned up near Nijkerk (Gelderland) on 30 July. Only few Little Egrets/Kleine Zilverreigers *Egretta garzetta* were reported. One bird was seen on Texel (Noord-Holland) from 4 June onwards while another stayed at Moerdijk (Noord-Brabant) from 7 July onwards. In Flanders birds were seen at Doel (Oost-Vlaanderen) on 19 July and at Antwerpen (Antwerpen) on 26 July. In Zuidelijk Flevoland (Zuidelijke IJsselmeerpolders) a Great White Egret/Grote Zilverreiger *E. alba* was regularly observed from 2 June onwards; from mid-August onwards three to four birds were seen. The autumn migration of Black Storks/Zwarte Ooievaars *Ciconia nigra* produced birds at Ferwerd (Friesland) from 5 until 8 August (two), at Castricum (Noord-Holland) from 7 until 12 August (two), at Wervershoof (Noord-Holland) on 9 August (two), at Warffum (Groningen) on 10 August, at Vlaardingen (Zuid-Holland) on 11 August, at Ooltgensplaat (Zuid-Holland) on 13 and 14 August, at Hasselt (Overijssel) on 13 August (three), at Zuidelijk Flevoland on 15 August and at Voltherbroek (Overijssel) on 22 and 23 August and on 29 and 30 August.

### Ducks

A male Steller's Eider/Stellers Eider *Polystiata stelleri* was reported to be present in the Eider/Eider *Somateria mollissima* breeding colony on Schiermonnikoog on 9 and 10 May.

### Sparrowhawks through falcons

A Black Kite/Zwarte Wouw *Milvus migrans* flew over Lelystadhaven, Oostelijk Flevoland (Zuidelijke IJsselmeerpolders) on 2 August. Sensational was the discovery of a Short-toed Eagle/Slangenarend *Circaetus gallicus* at De Maasvlakte (Zuid-Holland) on 8 August. The weakened bird was trapped on 9 August and brought to a birdhospital. Regrettably, the help came too late and the bird died on the morning of 10 August. An adult male Red-footed Falcon/Roodpootvalk *Falco vespertinus* was seen on Texel on 9 June while a female stayed near Nieuw-Lekkerland (Zuid-Holland) from 30 June until 5 July. Early Peregrines/Slechtvalken *Falco peregrinus* were reported from the Hondsbosse Zeewering on 31 July and from Zuidelijk Flevoland from the second half of July onwards.

## Rails through sandpipers

An out-of-season Crane/Kraanvogel *Grus grus* stayed at the Dwingelose Heide (Drenthe) from 2 until 7 July. Black-winged Stilts/Steltkluten *Himantopus himantopus* were present at Zuidelijk Flevoland June - July with a maximum of five. Two birds were seen at Huizen (Utrecht) on 18 July, and a juvenile bird on 28 July. Others were observed at Zandvliet (Antwerpen) on 13 and 18 July (two) and at Hoegaarden (Brabant) in July (two). A Black-winged Pratincole/Steppenorkstaartplevier *Glareola nordmanni* was seen hunting insects with Black Terns/Zwarte Sterns *Chlidonias niger* at Zuidelijk Flevoland during the evening hours from 15 until 19 August. Another was present at Wolphaartsdijk (Zeeland) on 28 - 30 August. A Sociable Plover/Steppenkievit *Chettusia gregaria* was present near Kekerdom (Gelderland) on 26 and 27 August. Baird's Sandpipers/Bairds Strandlopers *Calidris bairdii* were claimed at Het Balgzand (Noord-Holland) on 29 July and on Terschelling (Friesland) on 22 August. An adult Baird's was present at Huizen from 23 until 29 August. Excitement arose when the Baird's was joined by an adult Pectoral Sandpiper/Amerikaanse Gestreepte Strandloper *C. melanotos* (probably a male) on 27 and 28 August. Several birders succeeded in scoping both Nearctic waders at one time. An adult Great Snipe/Poelsnip *Gallinago media* was trapped on Vlieland (Friesland) on 10 August. Marsh Sandpipers/Poelruiters *Tringa stagnatilis* were reported from Zuidelijk Flevoland on 8 July, from Leidschendam (Zuid-Holland) on 26 July and from Het Balgzand on 17 August. Red-necked Phalaropes/Grauwe Franjepoten *Phalaropus lobatus* were present at Zuidelijk Flevoland, Lauwersmeer area and on Vlieland in August.

## Skuas through terns

An adult Long-tailed Skua/Kleinste Jager *Stercorarius longicaudus* flew north over Geldermalsen (Gelderland) on 2 June. A juvenile bird was studied at close quarters at Zuidelijk Flevoland on 16 August while adults were seen on Schiermonnikoog and Texel on 26 August. An inland record of a Great Skua/Grote Jager *S. skua* came from Zuidelijk Flevoland from 25 until 28 August. A Great Black-headed Gull/Reuzenzwartkopmeeuw *Larus ichthyaetus* stayed at Lier (Antwerpen) from 26 until 28 May. The first Yellow-legged Gull/Geelpootmeeuw *L. cachinnans* showed up at De Maasvlakte on 30 July. From this date on two birds were regularly seen. Gull-billed Terns/Lachsterns *Gelochelidon nilotica* were reported from the traditional roost at Het Balgzand with a maximum of nine. At Leidschendam four birds were seen on 12 August and three birds on 18 August. Records of Caspian Terns/Reuzensterms *Sterna caspia* were noted from mid-June onwards. The number of birds at the traditional roost at Gaasterland (Friesland) reached a maximum of six on 6 August. A Whiskered Tern/Witwangstern *C. hybridus* still in full breeding plumage was seen at Nederhorst den Berg (Noord-Holland) on 25 July. Another bird was seen at Ouderkerk aan de Amstel (Noord-Holland) on 18 August. White-winged Black Terns/Witvleugelsterns *C. leucopterus* present at Zuidelijk Flevoland from 13 July onwards reached a maximum of six birds. A northbound bird was seen at Scheveningen on 25 August.

## Auks

A belated report of a Brünnich's Guillemot/Dikbekzeekoet *Uria lomvia* came in. On 10 January an oiled bird in breeding plumage was found on the beach near Monster (Zuid-Holland). A juvenile Black Guillemot/Zwarte Zeekoet *Cephus grylle* was seen swimming off the Hondsbosse Zeewering on 12 August. A summer record of a Puffin/Papegaaiduiker *Fratercula arctica* came from Texel on 28 July.



49-50. Baird's Sandpiper/Bairds Strandloper *Calidris bairdii*, adult, Huizen (Noord-Holland), August 1981 (*René Pop*); Pectoral Sandpiper/Amerikaanse Gestreepte Strandloper *Calidris melanotos*, adult (probably male), Huizen (Noord-Holland), August 1981 (*Edward van IJzendoorn*)





51-52. Red-necked Phalarope/Grauwe Franjepoot *Phalaropus lobatus*, Zuidelijk Flevo-land (Zuidelijke IJsselmeerpolders), August 1981; Red-breasted Flycatcher/Kleine Vliegenvanger *Ficedula parva*, Harskamp (Gelderland), June 1981 (René Pop)



## Bee-eater and woodpeckers

A Bee-eater/Bijeneter *Merops apiaster* was observed at Blokkersdijk (Antwerpen) on 19 July. The Grey-headed Woodpecker/Grijskopspecht *Picus canus* that stayed on the Brunssumerheide (Limburg) during late April and May, was again reported on 3 July.

## Larks through buntings

A Cetti's Warbler/Cetti's Zanger *Cettia cetti* was heard in the Brabantse Biesbosch (Noord-Brabant) on 1 July. Four singing Fan-tailed Warblers/Waaierstaartrietzangers *Cisticola juncidis* were present during the breeding season at Het Verdrongen Land van Saeftinge (Zeeland). At Wemeldinge (Zeeland) three birds were seen and heard on 22 and 25 August. Juvenile Aquatic Warblers/Waterrietzangers *Acrocephalus paludicola* passed through during the first half of August as birds were reported from Zuidelijk Flevoland on 1 August, from De Maasvlakte on 5 and 10 August, from Vlieland on 11 August (trapped) and from Oostvoorne (Zuid-Holland) on 12 August (trapped). A juvenile Barred Warbler/Sperwergrasmus *Sylvia nisoria* was trapped on Vlieland on 8 August. Two were seen at De Maasvlakte on 31 August. A Greenish Warbler/Grauwe Fitis *Phylloscopus trochiloides* was trapped on Schiermonnikoog on 26 August. During the breeding season a singing Bonelli's Warbler/Bergfluit *P. bonelli* was present at the Forêt de Soignes near Brussel (Brabant). A Chiffchaff/Tjiftjaf *P. collybita* of the Iberian subspecies *P.e. ibericus* sang near Hierden (Gelderland) from 8 until the end of May. The Red-breasted Flycatcher/Kleine Vliegenvanger *Ficedula parva* that was recorded on tape at Harskamp (Gelderland) on 13 May, was surprisingly found to be still present in early June and remained at its post until at least 21 June. Another male was found singing near Ugchelen (Gelderland) on 12 June. At the Forêt de Soignes a bird was singing during June. An adult female Penduline Tit/Buidelmees *Remiz pendulinus* with breeding patches was trapped at the Zwarte Meer (Overijssel) on 6 July. This bird was re-trapped near Elburg (Gelderland) on 8 July - a distance of c. 30 km. A Woodchat Shrike/Roodkopklauwier *Lanius senator* was seen on Schiermonnikoog on 26 June. An adult Rose-coloured Starling/Rose Spreeuw *Sturnus roseus* present in a flock of 1000s Starlings/Spreeuwen *S. vulgaris* on Vlieland from 5 until 15 July provided a good 'tick' for most Dutch twitchers. A male Scarlet Rosefinch/Roodmus *Carpodacus erythrinus* was observed in a group of Linnets/Kneuen *Carduelis cannabina* at Oostelijk Flevoland in the first decade of August.

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## **DBA-telefoonstelsysteem**

In de onderstaande lijst staan de telefoonnummers vermeld van personen die deel uitmaken van het DBA-telefoonstelsysteem. Ze kunnen gewaarschuwd worden bij het waarnemen van een zeldzame vogel. Dit geldt ook bij waarnemingen van lokaal of regionaal belang. Deelname aan het telefoonstelsysteem is vrijwillig en staat open voor iedereen.

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