List of Wheatears
with References
Compiled by Joe Hobbs
Introduction
This is the final version of the Wheatear’s list, no further updates will be made. Grateful thanks to Dominic Mitchell (www.birdingetc.com & www.dominicmitchell.com) and Tom Shevlin (www.irishbirds.ie) for the cover images and all those who responded with constructive feedback. All images © the photographers.
Please note that this and other Reference Lists I have compiled are **not exhaustive** and are best employed in conjunction with other sources.
Joe Hobbs

Index
Note: Seebohm’s Wheatear treated by the IOC as a form of Norther Wheatear is given its own entry in this note.

Final Version
Version 1.3 (May 2019).

Cover

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Species</th>
<th>Page No.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abyssinian Wheatear [Oenanthe lugubris]</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arabian Wheatear [Oenanthe lugentoides]</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Wheatear [Oenanthe leucura]</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black-eared Wheatear [Oenanthe hispanica]</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blackstart [Oenanthe melanura]</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brown Rock Chat [Oenanthe fusca]</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brown-tailed Rock Chat [Oenanthe scotocerca]</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capped Wheatear [Oenanthe pileata]</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chestnut-rumped Wheatears [Oenanthe sp.]</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cyprus Wheatear [Oenanthe cypriaca]</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desert Wheatear [Oenanthe deserti]</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Familiar Chat [Oenanthe familiaris]</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finsch’s Wheatear [Oenanthe finschii]</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heuglin's Wheatear [Oenanthe heuglini]</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hooded Wheatear [Oenanthe monacha]</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hume’s Wheatear [Oenanthe albonigra]</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isabelline Wheatear [Oenanthe isabellina]</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bird Name</td>
<td>Scientific Name</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kurdish Wheatear</td>
<td><em>Oenanthe xanthoprymna</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mourning Wheatear</td>
<td><em>Oenanthe lugens</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern Wheatear</td>
<td><em>Oenanthe oenanthe</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pied Wheatear</td>
<td><em>Oenanthe pleschanka</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red-breasted Wheatear</td>
<td><em>Oenanthe bottae</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red-rumped Wheatear</td>
<td><em>Oenanthe moesta</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red-tailed Wheatear</td>
<td><em>Oenanthe chrysopygia</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seebohm’s Wheatear</td>
<td><em>Oenanthe oenanthe seebohmi</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somali Wheatear</td>
<td><em>Oenanthe phillips</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sombre Rock Chat</td>
<td><em>Oenanthe dubia</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variable Wheatear</td>
<td><em>Oenanthe picata</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White-crowned Wheatear</td>
<td><em>Oenanthe leucopyga</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White-fronted Black Chat</td>
<td><em>Oenanthe albitrons</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Relevant Publications


General Notes


**Northern Wheatear**

*Oenanthe oenanthe* [Linnaeus].


Other name: Greenland Wheatear (*leucorhoa*).


**Seebohm's Wheatear**

*Oenanthe oenanthe seebohmi* [Dixon].

Subspecies of Northern Wheatear per IOC.

NW Africa. Winters SW Mauritania & Senegal.

Other name: Black-throated Wheatear.

**Henry Seebohm** (1832-1895), British businessman, amateur ornithologist and oologist who travelled widely in in Greece, Scandinavia, Turkey and South Africa.


Capped Wheatear

*Oenanthe pileata* [J.F. Gmelin].

- *O.p. pileata* S Namibia & W South Africa.
- *O.p. neseni* Angola & N Namibia.


Red-breasted Wheatear

*Oenanthe bottae* [Bonaparte].

- *O.b. bottae* Highlands of SW Saudi Arabia & Yemen.
- *O.b. frenata* Highlands of Eritrea & Ethiopia.

Other name: Red-breasted Chat, Botta’s Wheatear.

Sometimes considered conspecific with Heuglin’s Wheatear.

Dr. Paolo Emilio Botta (1802-1870), Italian physician, naturalist and diplomat in Egypt, Arabia and Persia between 1830 and 1846.


Heuglin’s Wheatear

*Oenanthe heuglini* [Finsch and Hartlaub].

S Mauritania & Mali E to Sudan, W Ethiopia, NE Uganda & NW Kenya.

Sometimes considered conspecific with Red-breasted Wheatear.

Theodor von Heuglin (1824-1876), German ornithologist, explorer and mining engineer who undertook several expeditions in Africa as well as travelling to Spitsbergen and Novaya Zemlya in 1870 and 1871.


Isabelline Wheatear

*Oenanthe isabellina* [Temminck].

NE Greece, E Balkans, Middle East and S & E Ukraine E to Transbaikalia, Inner Mongolia & NC China. Winters W Africa E to S Asia.


October 2000].


Forktail warbler *Oenanthe isabellina*.

Maroc [Two Isabelline Wheatears seen in SE Morocco].


Notes: Tail-wagging by Isabelline Wheatear. *British Birds* 74(10): 443.


Notes on habitat and distribution of montane birds in southern Iran. *Bonner Zoologische Beiträge* 29(1-3): 18-37 (35).


Habitat selection and coexistence of migrants and Afrotropical residents. *Ibis* 134(sup.1): 77-82.


The status of passerines in southern Yemen and records of the OSME survey in spring 1993. *Sandgrouse* 17: 54-72 (60).


**Hooded Wheatear**

*Oenanthe monacha* [Temminck].

E Egypt, S Israel, S Jordan, N, E & SE Arabian peninsula, Iran & SW Pakistan.

Other name: Hooded Chat.


**Desert Wheatear**

*Oenanthe deserti* [Temminck].


[O.d. homochroa] N Africa E to NW Egypt. Winters Sahara and Mauritania E to Chad.


The proposed forms *atrogularis* & *salina* are included in *O.d. deserti*. 


Black-eared Wheatear
*Oenanthe hispanica* [Linnaeus].

*O.h. hispanica* SW & SC Europe E to Italy & Croatia and NW Africa. Winters W African Sahel.

*O.h. melanoleuca* C & SE Europe, Asia Minor & Levant E to Caspian Sea, SW Kazakhstan & N, W & S Iran. Winters C & E Sahel & NE Africa.

Other names: Black-throated Wheatear, Western Black-eared Wheatear (*hispanica*), Eastern Black-eared Wheatear (*melanoleuca*).


**Cyprus Wheatear**

*Oenanthe cypriaca* [Homeyer].

Cyprus. Winters Sudan and Ethiopia.

Other name: Cyprus Pied Wheatear.

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Randler, C. 2013. Alarm calls of the Cyprus Wheatear Oenanthe cypriaca - one for nest defence, one for parent-offspring communication? Acta Ethologica 16(2): 91-96


**Pied Wheatear**

*Oenanthe pleschanka* [Lepechin].


The white-throated form, *vittata*, is here considered to be a colour morph of Pied Wheatear although it has been suggested that it could possibly be a hybrid Pied x Eastern Black-eared Wheatear.

Other names: Pleschankas Wheatear, Pleschankas Chat. Pleschanka is the Russian name for this species and not a person.


of the Bombay Natural History Society 45.

Wheatears at Petten and Katwijk in October

Three Pied Wheatears in the Netherlands in 1999.

108(4): 633

16(5): 186

in eastern Turkey.

1989

2(2): 189

and wintering ranges in Iran for over sixty species.

157 (155).

BIRDS 54:

survey in spring 1993.

Jo

territoriality of wintering wheatear 

134(s.1): 77

74: 111


Martins, R.P.

1994. Identification of Pied Wheatear and Eastern Black wheatear 

Oenanthe hispanica


Ullman, M.

2016. Pied Wheatear 

Oenanthe pleschanka

in eastern Turkey. 


Ullman, M.


Dutch Birding 16(5): 186-194.

Vaurie,

C. 1966. Correspondence on the scientific name of the Caspian Tern and Pied Wheatear. 


[Three Pied Wheatears in the Netherlands in 1999].

Dutch Birding 22(5): 283-287.


Wilkinson, M.E. 1966. Pied Wheatear, 

Oenanthe picata (Blyth) at Kanyakumari, South India. 

White-fronted Black Chat

*Oenanthe albifrons* [Rüppell].

- **[O.a. albifrons]**: Eritrea & N Ethiopia.
- **[O.a. pachyrhyncha]**: SW Ethiopia.
- **[O.a. clericalis]**: S Sudan, N DR Congo & Uganda.
- **[O.a. limbata]**: Cameroon E to Central African Republic.
- **[O.a. frontalis]**: Senegal & Gambia E to N Cameroon.

Treated by del Hoyo *et al.* 2005 as *Pentholaea albifrons*.

Other names: White-fronted Chat, White-forehead Chat.


Somali Wheatear

*Oenanthe phillipsi* [Shelley].

N & E Somalia and SE Ethiopia.

Other name: Phillip's Wheatear.


Red-rumped Wheatear

*Oenanthe moesta* [M.H.K. Lichtenstein].

North Africa E to Sinai and S Syria S to Israel & NW Saudi Arabia & E to W Iraq.

The proposed form brooksbanki is included with the nominate.

Other names: Buff-rumped Wheatear, Tristram's Wheatear.


Blackstart

*Oenanthe melanura* [Temminck].

- **[O.m. melanura]**: Israel, Jordan & Sinai (NE Egypt) S to NW & interior C & S Arabia.
- **[O.m. neumannii]**: SW Saudi Arabia, W & S Yemen & SW Oman.
- **[O.m. lypura]**: NC & NE Sudan SE Egypt S to Eritrea.
- **[O.m. aussae]**: NE Ethiopia, Djibouti & N Somalia.
- **[O.m. airensis]**: Air (N Niger) E to C Sudan.
- **[O.m. ultima]**: E Mali & W Niger.

Treated by del Hoyo *et al.* 2005 as *Cercomela melanura*.

Other names: Black-tailed Chat, Black-tailed Rockchat, Black-tailed Cercomela.


Familiar Chat
Oenanthe familiaris [Wilkes].
[O.f. familiaris] W & E Cape E to R Great Kei (S South Africa).
[O.f. falkensteini] SE Senegal E to NW Ethiopia and S Uganda & Tanzania S to Zambezi River Valley. Treated by del Hoyo et al. 2005 as Cercomela familiaris.
Other name: Red-tailed Chat.
Carl Eduard Hellmayr (1878–1944), German / American ornithologist.
Johann Falkenstein (1842-1817), German surgeon and collector in tropical Africa from 1873 to 1876.


Brown-tailed Rock Chat
Oenanthe scotocerca [Heuglin].
[O.s. scotocerca] Red Sea hills in NE Sudan and N Eritrea.
[O.s. furensis] E Chad and W Sudan.
[O.s. spectatrix] Awash Valley (E Ethiopia) and adjacent N Somalia.

Sombre Rock Chat  
*Oenanthe dubia* [Blundell and Lovat].  
EC Ethiopia.  
Treated by del Hoyo *et al.* 2005 as *Cercomela dubia.*  
Other names: Sombre Rockchat, Sooty Chat.


Brown Rock Chat  
*Oenanthe fusca* [Blyth].  
N & C India and NE Pakistan.  
Treated by del Hoyo *et al.* 2005 as *Cercomela fusca.*  
Other name: Brown Rockchat, Indian Chat.


Variable Wheatear  
*Oenanthe picata* [Blyth].  
NE & SE Iran & Turkmenistan E to W Tien Shan, Pamirs and N & W Pakistan. Winters SW Asia.  
Occurs in three colour morphs, *i.e.* *picata, opistholecua & capistrata.*  
Hugh Edwin Strickland (1811-1853), English ornithologist and geologist who travelled in Greece and Turkey.  


Petronia petronia - E Portugal, Spain & extreme S France.


**Black Wheatear**

*Oenanthe leucura* [J.F. Gmelin].

[O.l. leucura] E Portugal, Spain & extreme S France.

[O.l. riggenbach] NW Africa E to Jebel Nafusa (NW Libya).

Note: Taxon *riggenbach* replaces *syenitica* which cannot be attributed to the northwestern Africa form.


**Abyssinian Wheatear**

*Œnanthe lugubris* [Rüppell].


[O.l. vaurei] NE Somalia.


Treated by del Hoyo *et al*. 2005 as races of Mourning Wheatear.

Other names: Abyssinian Black Wheatear, Schalow's Wheatear (*schalowi*), East African Wheatear (*schalowi*).

Herman Schalow (1852-1925), German banker and ornithologist who was one time Vice President and later President of the German Ornithological Society.


**White-crowned Wheatear**

*Œnanthe leucopyga* [C.L. Brehm].


[O.l. ernesti] S Israel, W & S Jordan & Sinai (NE Egypt) S to C & E Arabia, and possibly also Yemen and Oman.

The proposed form *aegra* is included with *O.l. leucopyga*.


Ernst Johann Otto Hartert (1859-1933), German ornithologist and curator of the Rothschild Museum, Tring.


**Hume’s Wheatear**

*Oenanthe albonigra* [Hume].

Iraq & SW Iran E to S & E Afghanistan, N & S Pakistan & NE Arabia.

Other name: Black-headed Wheatear.

Allan Octavian Hume (1829-1912), English theosophist, poet and writer on Indian birds who became known as the ‘Father of Indian Ornithology’. He was one of the founders of the Indian National Congress.


**Finsch’s Wheatear** *Oenanthe finschii* [Heuglin].

[O.f. finschii] Asia Minor & Levant including extreme N Israel E to W & SW Iran. Winters also on coastal E Mediterranean, N Egypt & Middle East.

[O.f. barnesi] E Turkey, NE & E Iran and W Turkmenistan E to SC Kazakhstan, E Afghanistan & W Pakistan. Winters also in Mesopotamia & SW Asia.

Other name: White-backed Wheatear.

Friedrich Hermann Otto Finsch (1839-1917), Prussian/German ethnographer, naturalist and traveller.


**Mourning Wheatear** *Oenanthe lugens* [M.H.K. Lichtenstein].

[O.l. lugens] Syria, Israel, Jordan & NW Arabia S to E Egypt & NE Sudan.

[O.l. halophila] N Africa E to W Egypt W of R Nile.


[O.l. warraei] Basalt desert area north of Azraq, Jordan.

Other names: Basalt Wheatear (*warraei*) Maghreb Wheatear (*halophila*), Western Mourning Wheatear (*halophila*) Persian Mourning Wheatear (*persica*), Iranian Wheatear (*persica*).

Iranian Wheatear *O.l. persica* is probably better treated as a full monotypic species and inserted between Arabian and Kurdish Wheatears in the list sequence (see both of Förchler, M.I. et al. 2010).


Arabian Wheatear

Oenanthe lugentoides [Seebohm].

[O.l. lugentoides] SW Saudi Arabia & W Yemen.

[O.l. boscaweni] E Yemen & S Oman.

Treated by del Hoyo et al. 2005 as races of Mourning Wheatear.

Other name: South Arabian Wheatear.


Chestnut-rumped Wheatears

**Kurdish Wheatear**

*Oenanthe xanthoprymna* [Hemprich and Ehrenberg].
SE Turkey to SW Iran and probably extreme NE Iraq. Winters E Egypt S to E Sudan & Eritrea, Arabian peninsula & NE Somalia.
Other names: Persian Wheatear, Rusty-tailed Wheatear.

**Red-tailed Wheatear**

*Oenanthe chrysopygia* [de Filippi].
NE Turkey, Armenia & N Iran E to Pamir range (S Tadjikistan), Afghanistan & extreme W Pakistan. Winters Arabian peninsula, S Iraq, S Iran, E Afghanistan, Pakistan & NW India.
Other names: Afghan Wheatear, Red-tailed Chat, Rufous-tailed Wheatear.

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**References**


