

# FROM THE RARITIES COMMITTEES

Ian Harrison (compiler)

Observers who have had a country first record accepted by a Rarities Committee are encouraged to write it up as a paper for publication.

## CYPRUS

BirdLife Cyprus Rarities Committee members: Colin Richardson (chair), Melis Charalambides, Stavros Christodoulides, Jeff Gordon, Hugh Buck, Nigel Cottle. A full list of Cyprus birds requiring rarity descriptions and rare bird report forms are available from Colin Richardson at richar@cytanet.com.cy to whom claims should be sent. The following information includes that published in the *2010–2012 Cyprus Bird Reports* and lists records assessed by the BirdLife Cyprus Rarities Committee from 2011–2013.

**Ruddy Duck** *Oxyura jamaicensis*. One Meneou pools 20–30 December 2011 (J Stylianou

*et al*) and one Neapolis pond 3 May 2012 (Colin Richardson). First and second records (Category C).

**Goosander** *Mergus merganser*. One male Kanlidam 29–31 December 2011 (M Günel). Fifth record.

**Red-necked Grebe** *Podiceps grisegena*. Two Akrotiri salt lake 4 July 2012 (C Richardson). Seventh record.

**Dalmatian Pelican** *Pelecanus crispus*. Eight over Armou 15 December 2012 (C Richardson, M Easterbrook). Ninth record.

**Crested Honey Buzzard** *Pernis ptilorhyncus*. One male over Akrotiri 21 October 2012 (D Radford). First record.

**Little Bustard** *Tetrax tetrax*. One juvenile found at Geri, Nicosia 3–15 December 2013 (G Konstantinou, Plate 1). This well watched bird was guarded by its finder almost daily until finally shot by hunters on 15 December 2013. Third record.

**Sociable Lapwing** *Vanellus gregarius*. One Akrotiri gravel pits 23–24 March 2012 (R Atkins).



Plate 1. Little Bustard *Tetrax tetrax* 3 December 2013, near Geri, Cyprus. © Filippos Georgiades

**Pacific Golden Plover** *Pluvialis fulva*. One Larnaca sewage works 21 September–3 October 2013 (P Wragg). Eighth record.

**Grey Phalarope** *Phalaropus fulicaria*. One Larnaca sewage works 4 June 2011 (M Shakespeare), one immature Phasouri reed-beds 7 October 2011 (J East) and one Spiros pool 12 May 2012 (M Gore, M Charalambides). Second, third and fourth records.

**Black-legged Kittiwake** *Rissa tridactyla*. One cape Greco 19 November 2012 (J Stylianou). Sixth record.

**Laughing Dove** *Stigmatopelia senegalensis*. One Lefke 17 April 2012 (M Gunel). Third record of apparently wild origin.

**Namaqua Dove** *Oena capensis*. One lower Xeros Potamos 29 April–3 May 2011 (L Chrystophorou). Third record.

**Steppe Grey Shrike** *Lanius (meridionalis) pallidirostris*. One Paphos lighthouse 17 November 2011 (P Bray) and one Mandria 26 November 2011 (L Chrystophorou). Eighth and ninth records.

**'Arabian' Grey Shrike** *Lanius (meridionalis) aucheri*. One cape Greco 8–10 April 2013 (J Honold). Second record.

**House Crow** *Corvus splendens*. One Apostolos Andreas 19 September–8 October 2011 (G Bourne, D Carter). First record (Category E).

**Caucasian Mountain Chiffchaff** *Phylloscopus (sindianus) lorenzii*. One trapped Kouklia 2 April 2013 (C & D Lamsdell). Second record.

**Eastern (Central Asian) Black Redstart** *Phoenicurus (ochruros) phoenicuroides*. One male Mandria 24 November 2011–1 January 2012 (A & L Crane). First record.

**Kurdistan Wheatear** *Oenanthe xanthopyrmyna*. One male cape Greco 15 January–23 March 2011 (K & R Howard) and one male Agia Napa sewage works 5–15 April 2011 (P Wragg). Fifth & sixth records, although possibly the same bird involved.

**Pied Wheatear** *Oenanthe pleschanka*. One male Armou hills 22–23 October 2011 (C Richardson) and one female cape Andreas 30 April 2013 (C Richardson). Third & fourth records.

**Eastern Mourning Wheatear** *Oenanthe lugens*. One Souskiou 14 February 2011 (S Iezekiel). Third record.

**Rock Sparrow** *Petronia petronia*. Up to 30 Marathounta hills 2 February–14 March

2011 (C Richardson); up to 15 Marathounta hills 15 December 2011–19 January 2012 (C Richardson); 20 Syngراسis 16 December 2012 (M Gunel) and one Marathounta hills 15 January 2013 (C Richardson). Eighth to 11th records. This species has occurred every winter since 2008 and may have been previously overlooked. Its status is being reviewed.

**Ashy-headed Wagtail** *Motacilla (flava) cinereocapilla*. Two Spiros pool 19 February–30 June 2012 (S Christodoulides). Eighth record.

**Masked Wagtail** *Motacilla (alba) personata*. One Paphos sewage plant 28 April 2011 (T Sexey). Third record.

**Blyth's Pipit** *Anthus godlewskii*. One Mandria 10 December 2011 (S Christodoulides). Second record.

**Buff-bellied Pipit** *Anthus (rubescens) japonicus*. Two found, photographed and sound-recorded at Larnaca sewage works 18–20 March 2013 (J Honold, T Valkenburg). First record.

**Red-fronted Serin** *Serinus pusillus*. One male Pileri dam 29 March 2011 (H-M Busch, A Koch) and one at Mavrokolymbos dam 20 January 2012 (M Van de Walle). Seventh & eighth records.

**Common Rosefinch** *Carpodacus erythrinus*. One Agia Napa sewage works 29 August 2012 (M Easterbrook). Ninth record.

**Pine Bunting** *Emberiza leucocephalos*. One Troodos 22 February 2013 (M Bull, J Honold). Sixth record.

**Little Bunting** *Emberiza pusilla*. One Xeros Potamos 11 April 2011 (F Hollander). Third record.

## EGYPT

The Egyptian Ornithological Rarities Committee (EORC) comprises: Sherif Baha El Din (chair), Frédéric Jiguet (secretary), Web Abdou, Richard Bonser, Andrea Corso, Pierre André Crochet, Andrew Grieve, Richard Hoath, Manuel Schweizer. Official external advisers are Istvan Moldovan, Ahmed Riad and Mary Megalli. Claims should be sent to eorc.secretary@gmail.com. See also [www.chn-france.org/eorc/eorc.php?id\\_content=1](http://www.chn-france.org/eorc/eorc.php?id_content=1) where claim forms can be downloaded.

## ISRAEL

The Israel Rarities and Distribution Committee (IRDC) comprises: Avner Cohen (secretary), James P Smith, Barak Granit, Rami Lindroos, Killian Mullarney, Eyal Shochat, Eran Banker and Tomer Landsberger. Claims should be sent to Avner Cohen at [israbirding@gmail.com](mailto:israbirding@gmail.com). See also [www.israbirding.com/irdc](http://www.israbirding.com/irdc) where claim forms can be downloaded.

## JORDAN

The Jordan Bird Records Committee (JBRC) comprises: Fares Khoury (secretary), Richard Porter, Ian Andrews, Feras Rahahleh, Khaldun Al-Omari. Claims should be sent to Fares Khoury at [avijordan2000@yahoo.com](mailto:avijordan2000@yahoo.com).

## KUWAIT

The Kuwait Ornithological Rarities Committee (KORC) comprises: Mike Pope (chair), AbdulRahman Al-Sirhan (secretary), Pekka Fagel, Oscar Campbell (external adjudicator), Peter Kennerley (external adjudicator), Brian Foster (honorary member). Claims should be sent to AbdulRahman Al-Sirhan at [alsirhan@alsirhan.com](mailto:alsirhan@alsirhan.com). KORC has accepted the following claims since the last report in *Sandgrouse* 35(2). JPR Jahra Pools reserve, JEO Jahra East outfall.

**Squacco Heron** *Ardeola ralloides*. Juvenile being fed by an adult JPR 26 August 2013 (K Al Nasrallah, R Al-Hajji, M Pope). First breeding record.

**Indian Pond Heron** *Ardeola grayii*. One JPR 15 July 2013 (O Al Shaheen). Second record.

**Pygmy Cormorant** *Phalacrocorax pygmeus*. One JPR 9 August (H Boresli, O Al Shaheen). Third record.

**Sooty Falcon** *Falco concolor*. One Khuwaisat 13 October 2013 (K Al Nasrallah). 11th record.

**Spur-winged Lapwing** *Vanellus spinosus*. Two JPR 16 May 2013, five JPR 17 October 2013 (O Al Shaheen). 12th and 13th records.

**Grey Phalarope** *Phalaropus fulicarius*. One JEO 28 May 2013, one JEO 22 June 2013 (R Al Hajji). Fifth and sixth records.

**Black Tern** *Chlidonias niger*. One JEO 29 May 2013 (A Al Sirhan). 12th record.

**Pallid Scops Owl** *Otus brucei*. One JPR 30 November 2013 (S Al-Sulaihim), one Jal Al Zour 7 December 2013 (B Atema). Sixth and seventh records.

**'Arabian' Grey Shrike** *Lanius (meridionalis) aucheri*. Juvenile photographed JEO 15 June 2013 (O Al Shaheen). Third record.

**Mesopotamian Crow** *Corvus (cornix) capellanus*. One JPR 28 September 2013 (Y Al-Failakawi). Second record.

**Streak-throated Swallow** *Petrochelidon fluvicola*. One JPR 6 December 2013 (D O'Sullivan *et al*). First record.

**Paddyfield Warbler** *Acrocephalus agricola*. One JEO 30 October 2013 (A Al Sirhan). Second record.

**Booted Warbler** *Hippolais caligata*. One Tulha, 15 August 2013 (R Al Hajji, M Pope). Fourth record.

**Zitting Cisticola** *Cisticola juncidis*. One Al-Abraq 28 November 2013 (M Pope, Plate 2). Sixth record, first for 23 years.

**Goldcrest** *Regulus regulus*. One Al Abraq 16 November 2013 (H Al Shayji, A Al Youssef). First record.

**Eastern Nightingale** *Luscinia (megarhynchos) golzii*. One South Sabriya 5 April 2013 (K Al Ghanem). Third record.

**Taiga Flycatcher** *Ficedula albicilla*. One Al Abraq 19 April 2013 and one Al-Shallal's farm 3 December 2013 (A Dean, P Fagel *et al*). First and second records.



**Plate 2.** Zitting Cisticola *Cisticola juncidis* 28 November 2013, Al Abraq, Kuwait. © Mike Pope





**Plate 3.** Eversmann's Redstart *Phoenicurus erythronotus* 16 November 2013, Al Abraq, Kuwait. © Mike Pope

**Eversmann's Redstart** *Phoenicurus erythronotus*. One Al Abraq 16 November 2013 (P Fagel, Plate 3). Tenth record.

**Masked Wagtail** *Motacilla (alba) personata*. One JPR 3 July 2013 (K Al Ghanem). Fourth record.

**Striolated Bunting** *Emberiza striolata*. One Tulha, Sabah Al Ahmad natural reserve, 14 August 2013, one Wafra oilfield 18 November 2013 (H Al Shayji). First and second records.

## OMAN

The Oman Bird Records Committee (OBRC) comprises: Jens Eriksen (recorder), Ian Harrison, Dave Sargeant, Graham Searle, John Atkins, Peter Cowan, Simon Tull, Waheed Al Farsi, Zahran Al Abdulasalam, Manal Al Kindi. Claims should be sent to Jens Eriksen at [hjoman@gmail.com](mailto:hjoman@gmail.com) from whom claim forms can be obtained. OBRC has accepted the following claims since the report in *Sandgrouse* 35(2).

**Harlequin Quail** *Coturnix delagorguei*. One Muntasar 11 October 2007, one Sohar 16–17 December 2010 (J Atkins). Second and third records.

**Red-breasted Goose** *Branta ruficollis*. Adult Sur sewage plant 17 November 2013—at least 15 January 2014 (M Lecacheur *et al*). First record.

**Lesser Whistling Duck** *Dendrocygna javanica*. One Sohar 11–18 August 2013 (J Atkins). Fourth record.

**Marbled Duck** *Marmaronetta angustirostris*. Two Khawr Al Mughsayl 26 March 2009 (S Tibbett). Second record.

**Red-breasted Merganser** *Mergus serrator*. Adult male Al Ansab wetland 5 December 2011 (D Harmer). Fourth record.

**African Spoonbill** *Platalea alba*. One East Khawr 29 March–11 August 2007 (S Tibbett), one Wadi Baqlah 2 October–13 November 2008 (A Lassey, R Tipper). Fifth and sixth records.

**Eastern Cattle Egret** *Bubulcus coromandus*. Adult East Khawr 17 May 2001 (H & J Eriksen); one East Khawr 24 April 2004 and 1 June 2006 (S Tibbett); one Sohar 9 April 2013 (J Atkins). Third–sixth records.

**Frigatebird sp** *Fregata sp.* One Yiti 26 April 2009 (J Atkins). Sixth record.

**Great White Pelican** *Pelecanus onocrotalus*. Juvenile Thumrayt 16–17 November 2011 (S Tibbett), adult Khawr Rawri 4–11 November 2013 (C Lazaro). Eighth and ninth records.

**Black-winged Kite** *Elanus caeruleus*. One Sohar 22 February 2009 (J Atkins). Tenth record.

**Little Bustard** *Tetrax tetrax*. One Sohar 25–26 December 2011 (H & J Eriksen). Second record.

**Allen's Gallinule** *Porphyrio alleni*. One Raysut 9 August 2013 increasing to two 23–24 August (D Mackenzie and S Tibbett). Ninth record.

**Lesser Moorhen** *Gallinula angulata*. One Salalah nature reserve 1 October 2008 (A Lassey). Second record.

**Long-billed Dowitcher** *Limnodromus scolopaceus*. One Raysut 5 March 2005 (I Harrison). Tenth record.

**Sabine's Gull** *Xema sabini*. Adult off Mirbat 19 November 2013 (H & J Eriksen *et al*, Plate 4). First record.



**Plate 4.** Sabine's Gull *Xema sabini* 19 November 2013, off Mirbat, Oman. © H & J Eriksen



**Plate 5.** Thrush Nightingale *Luscinia luscinia* 7 May 2013, Dawkah farm, Oman. © H & J Eriksen



**Plate 6.** Red-headed Bunting *Emberiza bruniceps* 27 November 2013, Sur, Oman. © H & J Eriksen

**Black-legged Kittiwake** *Rissa tridactyla*.  
Juvenile Taqah 18 January 2013 (P Komi).  
Third record.

**South Polar Skua** *Stercorarius maccormicki*.  
One off Ras Janjari 27 October 2006 (H & J  
Eriksen). Fourth record.

**Malachite Kingfisher** *Corythornis cristatus*.  
One Khawr Al Mughsayl 26 December  
2008 (T Collins), one Khawr Sawli 12

November 2010 (A Lassey). Seventh and  
eighth records.

**Grey-throated Martin** *Riparia (paludicola)*  
*chinensis*. One Sohar 20 October 2011 (J  
Atkins). Seventh record.

**Streak-throated Swallow** *Petrochelidon*  
*fluvicola*. One Sohar 17 March 2006 (J  
Atkins). Fifth record.

**Dusky Warbler** *Phylloscopus fuscatus*. One  
Qatbit 17 November 2010 (A Lassey).  
Second record.

**Yellow-browed Warbler** *Phylloscopus*  
*inornatus*. One Qatbit 5–6 October 2008  
and 11 November 2010, one Al Balid farm  
16 November 2010 (A Lassey). Ninth-  
eleventh records.

**Hume's Whitethroat** *Sylvia althaea*. Two  
singing males Jabal Shams 10 June 2013  
(H & J Eriksen). Third record.

**Thrush Nightingale** *Luscinia luscinia*. One  
Dawkah farm 7 May 2013 (H & J Eriksen,  
Plate 5). Tenth record.

**Black Scrub Robin** *Cercotrichas podobe*. One  
Sall Ala 18–20 April 2010 (A Lassey). Third  
record.

**Taiga Flycatcher** *Ficedula albicilla*. One Al  
Balid farm 16–19 November 2010, one Al  
Ghaftayn 18 November 2010 (A Lassey).  
Second and third records.

**Forest Wagtail** *Dendronanthus indicus*. One  
Hilf 7–9 October 2008 (A Lassey). Eighth  
record.



**Eastern Yellow Wagtail** *Motacilla tschutschensis taivana*. One Sohar 20 February 2003 (I Harrison), one Barka 25 February 2010 (I Harrison and S Tull) and one Sohar 17–18 March 2011 (J Atkins). Second–fourth records.

**Buff-bellied Pipit** *Anthus rubescens japonicus*. One Sohar 13–15 January 2013 (S Menzie). Eighth record.

**Grey-necked Bunting** *Emberiza buchanani*. One As Sayh 1 May 2010 (I Harrison and S Tull). Fourth record.

**Cretzschmar's Bunting** *Emberiza caesia*. One Muntasar 7 February 2007 (I Harrison and I Brown). Fourth record.

**Red-headed Bunting** *Emberiza bruniceps*. Male Sur 27 November 2013 (H & J Eriksen, Plate 6). Fifth record.

## QATAR

Qatar Rare Birds Committee (QRBC) members: Jamie A Buchan (chair/recorder), Michael J Grunwell, Neil G Morris, Simon J Tull. Claims should be sent to Jamie Buchan at jamie\_buchan@yahoo.com.

## UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

The Emirates Bird Records Committee (EBRC) comprises the following voting members: Oscar Campbell (chair), Nick Moran (secretary), Huw Roberts, Mark Smiles, Neil Tovey, Tommy Pedersen (UAE bird recorder). Ahmed Al Ali and Peter Hellyer are non-voting members. Records are circulated and assessments published three times per year according to the timetable outlined at [www.uaebirding.com/ebr.html](http://www.uaebirding.com/ebr.html). Decisions on assessments, plus EBRC's constitution and information about the assessment process and downloadable report forms are all available at the same location. Claims should be sent to [ebrcuae@gmail.com](mailto:ebrcuae@gmail.com) or to Tommy Pedersen at [tommypepe@fastmail.fm](mailto:tommypepe@fastmail.fm). The UAE Bird Checklist, in both short and annotated forms, is available at [www.uaebirding.com/uaechecklist.html](http://www.uaebirding.com/uaechecklist.html) together with recently published reports for 2010 and 2011. The following summary lists particularly significant decisions in 2013, up to and including



**Plate 7.** Cretzschmar's Bunting *Emberiza caesia* 26 March 2013, Jebel Dhanna, UAE. © Tommy Pedersen

the latest record circulation (completed October 2013).

**Bewick's Swan** *Cygnus (columbianus) bewickii*.

Adult Fujairah tennis club dam 17–21 June 2013 (J Judas *et al*); origin uncertain and placed in Category C. One previous record in Category A, 1994.

**Wedge-tailed Shearwater** *Puffinus pacificus*.

Up to eight seen during pelagic trips from Kalba on four dates 31 May–14 June 2013 (M Smiles *et al*). Four previous records, last 2011.

**Flesh-footed Shearwater** *Puffinus carneipes*.

Up to five seen during pelagic trips from Kalba 31 May–21 June 2013 (M Smiles, K Al Dhaheri *et al*). Nine previous records, almost all since 2010. This species is clearly a frequent if somewhat irregular visitor to offshore waters in summer and records from pelagic trips no longer require a claim.

**Juanin's Petrel** *Bulweria fallax*. Twenty seen

on a pelagic trip from Kalba 14 June 2013 (M Smiles *et al*). Eight previous records, all except one since 2011. This species is clearly an erratic and sometimes numerous visitor to offshore waters with records June–December. Records from pelagic trips no longer require a claim.

**Common Crane** *Grus grus*. One Hamranyah

fields 15 March 2013 (NP Williams). Seven previous records; last 1998.

**Long-billed Dowitcher** *Limnodromus*

*scelopaceus*. One Khor al-Beida 25 January 2013 (A Al Ali). First record.

**Long-tailed Skua** *Stercorarius longicaudus*.

One adult seen on pelagic trip from Kalba 7 June 2013 (OJ Campbell *et al*). 14 previous records.

**Mediterranean Gull** *Larus melanocephalus*.

One adult Mafraq rubbish tip 10–19 January and 22 February 2013, possibly a returning bird from February/March 2012 (K Al Dhaheri, NP Williams). One third calendar year bird Al Warsan lakes 21 February 2013 (R Lowe). Nine previous records.

**Great Spotted Cuckoo** *Clamator glandarius*.

One Al Qua'a fodder field 23 February 2013 (SP Lloyd *et al*). Three previous records.

**River Warbler** *Locustella fluviatilis*. One

Mushrif palace gardens 7–11 May 2013 (OJ Campbell *et al*), one Abu Dhabi golf and equestrian club 16/17 May 2013 (OJ Campbell). 11th and 12th records; first since 2005.

**Dusky Warbler** *Phylloscopus fuscatus*. One Al

Wathba wetland reserve 18 January–13 February 2013 (OJ Campbell, M Smiles *et al*). Five previous records; last 2010.

**Streak-throated Swallow** *Petrochelidon*

*fluvicola*. Two Al Warsan lakes 19 January 2013 (M Smiles, OJ Campbell, A Arias). Eight previous records; last 2011.

**Wire-tailed Swallow** *Hirundo smithii*. One

Zakher lake 30 Dec 2012–4 January 2013 (S Young *et al*), one Ajban 21–22 April 2013 (M Almazrouei). Twelve previous records; last 2012.

**Cretzschmar's Bunting** *Emberiza caesia*.

One female Al Ankah 7 January 2011 (M Smiles, OJ Campbell), one adult male, Jebel Dhanna, 24–27 March 2013 (K Al Dhaheri, M Al Musharafy *et al*, Plate 7). First and second records.

**Red-headed Bunting** *Emberiza bruniceps*. One

male Emirates palace 25 March 2013 (SP Lloyd, OJ Campbell *et al*), one Wamm farms 31 August–1 September 2013 (SL James, J Judas *et al*). Five previous records, but only two since 1996.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Ian Harrison, Llyswen Farm, Lôn y Felin, Aberaeron, SA46 0ED, UK. [ianbirds@gmail.com](mailto:ianbirds@gmail.com)