

# AROUND THE REGION

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Records in *Around the Region* are published for interest only; their inclusion does not imply acceptance by the records committee of the relevant country. All records refer to 2014 unless stated otherwise.

Records and photographs for *Sandgrouse 37* (2) should be sent by 1 June to atr@osme.org.

## AZERBAIJAN

This paragraph's records October 2013. A **Rough-legged Buzzard** *Buteo lagopus* Besh Barmag 4 Oct (in a 90 min raptor watch, which produced 18 raptor species including six eagle spp). A **Saker Falcon** *Falco cherrug* Kizil Agach 9 Oct. One **Sociable Lapwing** *Vanellus gregarius* and seven **White-tailed Lapwings** *Vanellus leucurus* Haji Gaboul 7 Oct. A **Daurian Shrike** *Lanius isabellinus* Kizil Agach 9 Oct. One **Green Warbler** *Phylloscopus nitidus* and a male **Desert Wheatear** *Oenanthe deserti* (probably third modern record) Besh Barmag 6 Oct. Four **Wallcreepers** *Tichodroma muraria* Xinaliq 5 Oct. At least ten **Citrine Wagtails** *Motacilla citreola* Kizil Agach 9 Oct and one **Richard's Pipit** *Anthus richardi* Besh Barmag 6 Oct.

The following records are 2014, first a visit 7–11 May, second a migration count Besh Barmag 10 Oct–7 Nov, which recorded more than 1.3 million birds of 212 spp. Total 17 **Caucasian Grouse** *Lyrurus mlkosiewiczzi* Laza 8 May while several **Caucasian Snowcocks** *Tetrao gallus caucasicus* Xinaliq, Greater Caucasus, 7 May. Total 85 **Lesser White-fronted Geese** *Anser erythropus* BB migration count 10 Oct–7 Nov. Several **Shikras** *Accipiter badius* at known breeding site near Masalli 10–11 May. Two **Saker Falcons** *Falco cherrug*, four **Sociable Lapwings** *Vanellus gregarius* and a **Caspian Plover** *Charadrius asiaticus* BB migration count. 20 **Terek Sandpipers** *Xenus cinereus* Kizil Agach 10 May while what may be first record of **Grey Phalarope** *Phalaropus fulicarius* there 31 Oct. Seven **White-winged Larks** *Melanocorypha leucopterus* and possibly first record of **Dusky Warbler** *Phylloscopus fuscatus* (11 Oct) BB migration count. A **Blyth's Reed Warbler** *Acrocephalus dumetorum* Kizil Agach 11 May and a **Desert**

**Wheatear** *Oenanthe deserti* there 31 Oct. Pair **Güldenstädt's Redstart** *Phoenicurus erythrogastrus* Xinaliq 7 May. Six **Richard's Pipits** *Anthus richardi* BB migration count. Six **Caucasian Great Rosefinches** *Carpodacus rubicilla* Xinaliq 7 May and single **Pine Bunting** *Emberiza leucecephalus* BB migration count.

## BAHRAIN

**Egyptian Nightjar** *Caprimulgus aegyptius* nest with chicks 24 Mar (first breeding record). A **Paddyfield Warbler** *Acrocephalus agricola*



Plate 1. Paddyfield Warbler *Acrocephalus agricola* 28 November 2014, Alba marsh, Bahrain. © J Babbington



Plate 2. Mourning Wheatear *Oenanthe lugens* 13 December 2014, Bahrain. © A Al Kaabi

trapped/ringed 28 Nov Alba marsh (Plate 1), second record. A wintering **Mourning Wheatear** *Oenanthe lugens* (Plate 2) returned 13 Dec to same location where trapped/ringed December 2013.

## CYPRUS

An **Egyptian Goose** *Alopochen aegyptiaca* Asprokremmos dam 19 Jun–31 Oct, fourth Cyprus record since 1958. 110 **Ferruginous Ducks** *Aythya nyroca* Agia Eirini dam 13 Oct. A **Greater Scaup** *Aythya marila* Asprokremmos dam 4–5 Dec, seventh record, while a **White-headed Duck** *Oxyura leucocephala* Larnaca sewage treatment plant 5–6 Dec was 14th Cyprus record. A **Great Crested Grebe** *Podiceps cristatus* Kanli dam 14 Sep was surprisingly early. First record **Striated Heron** *Butorides striata* (a juvenile) Zakaki marsh 23 Oct—at least 31 Dec. One **Black-winged Kite** *Elanus caeruleus* Morphou 9 Nov, second record. Single **Egyptian Vultures** *Neophron percnopterus* at Bishops pool 9 Sep and Zakaki marsh 18 Sep. A juvenile **Levant Sparrowhawk** *Accipiter brevipes* Akrotiri 6 Oct (fewer than ten last decade). **Lesser Spotted Eagle** *Aquila pomarina* accidental but annual visitor: one Famagusta 21 Sep, one Akrotiri peninsula 27 Sep, three there 6 Oct with one remaining to 15 Oct and one Asprokremmos dam 7 Oct. A **Saker Falcon** *Falco cherrug* Akrotiri salt lake 10 Oct.

Single **Corncrake** *Crex crex* Agia Napa sewage works 4 Sep. One shot there 19 Sep and singles shot in Agia Napa area 15 and 21 Sep. One Phasouri reed-bed area 9–13 Oct. **Demoiselle Crane** *Grus virgo* passage Akrotiri SL peaked at 71 on 28 Aug. A **Eurasian Oystercatcher** *Haematopus ostralegus*, a less than annual migrant, Polis beach 8 Jul while two there 19 Aug. Single **Broad-billed Sandpipers** *Limicola falcinellus* Lady's mile 28 Jul and 30 Aug–9 Sep and a **Bar-tailed Godwit** *Limosa lapponica* Clapsides beach, Famagusta, 14–16 Sep (22nd record). Seventh record **Black-legged Kittiwake** *Rissa tridactyla*, a juvenile, Mackenzy beach harbour, Larnaca, 7–26 Dec. One first winter **Great Black-headed Gull** *Larus ichthyaetus* Larnaca airport pools (south) 19–21 Dec and a different bird, there 23 Dec (this species increasingly occurring but still less-than-annual visitor). Only autumn record of **Stock**

**Dove** *Columba oenas*, a rare winter visitor, two birds Zakaki marsh 20 Oct.

An **Isabelline Shrike** *Lanius isabellinus*, less than annual visitor, Agia Napa SW 30 Jul. Two **Northern Ravens** *Corvus corax* Platres 21 Nov were first sightings Troodos forest since 2008. Second record **Desert Lark** *Ammomanes deserti* Akhna dam 14 Aug. A **Yellow-browed Warbler** *Phylloscopus inornatus* Mandria 25 Sep was 15th Cyprus record. Second record **Paddyfield Warbler** *Acrocephalus agricola* ringed Polis reed-beds 16 Sep while **Marsh Warblers** *Acrocephalus palustris* reported Agia Napa SW 30 Aug and Armou hills 22 Sep. **Savi's Warblers** *Locustella luscinioides* heard Phasouri reed-beds 23 Aug and singles ringed Polis reed-beds 9 and 26 Sep and 2 Oct (uncommon passage migrant). **Barred Warblers** *Sylvia nisoria* peaked at 10 Agia Napa SW 4 Sep, an unusually large number. Second record **Ménétries's Warbler** *Sylvia mystacea* Agia Napa SW 30 Jul.

Up to three **Wallcreepers** *Tichodroma muraria* Avagas gorge 23 Nov—early Dec. A juvenile **Rose-coloured Starling** *Pastor roseus*, a less than annual visitor, cape Greco 26 Aug. One **Redwing** *Turdus iliacus*, a rare autumn migrant, Troodos forest 10 and 18 Nov while a **Rufous-tailed Rock Thrush** *Monticola saxatilis*, a less than annual winter visitor, Akhna dam 6 Sep. Eleven **Rock Sparrows** *Petronia petronia* Avagas gorge 7 Nov, with singles Arodes 8 Nov and cape Greco 1 Dec (fewer than 15 previous records). A **Common Rosefinch** *Carpodacus erythrinus* Acheliea soakaways, lower Ezousas valley, 17 Nov, was 10th record. A large autumn passage of **Hawfinches** *Coccothraustes coccothraustes*, maximum counts 43 Tsada 28 Oct and 44 Armou 2 Nov. Up to ten **Yellowhammers** *Emberiza citrinella* (fewer than 15 previous records since 1992) Troodos area 10 Nov–25 Dec in a mixed flock of buntings that also included **Pine Buntings** *Emberiza leucocephalos* (maximum 10, eighth record). Two, possibly three **Western Cinereous Buntings** *Emberiza cineracea* Agia Napa SW 30 Aug–3 Sep.

## EGYPT

Five **Greater Flamingos** *Phoenicopterus roseus* Kutanii, south of Jebel Elba, 11 Aug and 25 Port Said early Oct. A **Brown Booby** *Sula leucogaster* Hurghada 28 Sep. At least one

pair **Chestnut-bellied Sandgrouse** *Pterocles exustus* south of Halayeib (Jebel Elba) June 2013. A **Lammergeier** *Gypaetus barbatus* Wadi Markwan (Elba national park) 25 Sep and a **Eurasian Griffon Vulture** *Gyps fulvus* St Katherine (Sinai) 1 Dec. One **Pallid Harrier** *Circus macrourus* Abu Simbel 11 Nov and an **Eastern Imperial Eagle** *Aquila heliaca* Sharm 18 Nov. A **Lanner Falcon** *Falco biarmicus* Elba NP November and one **Barbary Falcon** *Falco pelegrinoides* Abu Simbel 11 Nov. At least one pair **Black-crowned Sparrow-Larks** *Eremopterix nigriceps* Jebel Elba 11 Dec, a **Black Scrub-robin** *Cercotrichias podobe* south of Halaib 23 Nov and one **Hooded Wheatear** *Oenanthe monacha* Elba NP November. A singing **African Pied Wagtail** *Motacilla aguimp* Abu Simbel 11 Nov and six **Indian Silverbills** *Euodice malabarica* near Jebel Shisa, between the High and Old dams, Aswan, 27 Oct.

## GEORGIA

High counts of **European Honey Buzzards** *Pernis apivorus* Saghalvasho: 81 666 on 28 Aug, 52 177 on 31 Aug, 91 536 on 4 Sep and 88 308 on 7 Sep. Single **Crested Honey Buzzards** *Pernis ptilorhynchus* various dates Shuamta 3–19 Sep, max three 17 Sep. Singles Saghalvasho 8, 15, 22 and 23 Sep and two 14 Sep. 790 **Western Marsh Harriers** *Circus aeruginosus* passed Saghalvasho 2 Oct while 1527 **Levant Sparrowhawks** *Accipiter brevipes* seen Shuamta 7 Sep. 33 318 **Steppe Buzzards**



**Plate 3.** Red-rumped Swallow *Cecropis daurica* 15 September 2014, Chorokhi delta, Georgia. © DK Lamsdell

*Buteo b. vulpinus* Shuamta 22 Sep, 35 812 on 26 Sep and 178 116 on 2 Oct, with 93 467 Saghalvasho 2 Oct. 221 **Booted Eagles** *Aquila pennata* Shuamta and 847 Saghalvasho 17 Sep. 2130 **Demoiselle Cranes** over Dedoplistkaro region 22 Sep. A single **Sociable Lapwing** *Vanellus gregarius* Chorokhi delta 18 Sep and two 30 Sep. First record **Lesser Sand Plover** *Charadrius atrifrons* Kolkheti national park 3 Sep. One juvenile **Great Black-headed Gull** *Larus ichthyaetus* Chorokhi delta 10 Oct. A **White-throated Kingfisher** *Halcyon smyrnensis* Batumi airport area 27 Sep. **Blue-cheeked Bee-eaters** *Merops persicus* Chorokhi delta: singles 15 Sep and two 16 Sep. Seventh record **Red-rumped Swallow** *Cecropis daurica* trapped 15 Sep Chorokhi delta (Plate 3). First record **Radde's Warbler** *Phylloscopus schwarzi* ringed Shuamta 6 Oct.

## IRAQ

Several **Shore Larks** *Eremophila alpestris* Halgurd mountain c2365 m asl 5–15 Jun. **Radde's Accentors** *Prunella ocularis* Shireen mountain, Barzan, May.

## ISRAEL

Sixth record **Lesser White-fronted Goose** *Anser erythropus* Kfar Barukh reservoir, Jizreel valley, 10 Nov–end Dec and a **Greater Scaup** *Aythya marila* Rosh Hanikra, north Mediterranean coast, 30 Dec. One **Red-breasted Merganser** *Mergus serrator* Acre 4–20 Nov. A **Manx Shearwater** *Puffinus puffinus* off North beach, Eilat, first found 27 May, but not definitely identified until June where it remained until 20th (first record). One **Leach's Petrel** *Oceanodroma leucorhoa* off Hasharon beach 19 Dec. Second record **Lesser Flamingo** *Phoenicopterus minor* km20 salt pans, Eilat, 14 Nov–end Dec (first record at same site March 2006). Two **Red-billed Tropicbirds** *Phaethon aethereus* off Eilat's NB 7 Jul with a single there 27 Jul. One **Yellow-billed Stork** *Mycteria ibis* Tirat Zvi, Bet Shean valley 20–21 Jun and another near Yokneam, west Jizreel valley 8–31 Aug. More than 15 **Oriental Honey Buzzards** *Pernis ptilorhynchus* recorded by SPNI raptor count team central Israel 7–25 Sep. Three **Cinereous Vultures** *Aegyptus monachus* Gamla nature reserve Dec and singles Mount Gilboa Dec and near Kiryat Gat



11–12 Dec. Second record **Ruppell's Vulture** *Gyps rueppellii* (an adult) Gamla 15 Jul. One **Crab Plover** *Dromas ardeola* Ma'agan Michael 26 Jun (fourth record) and a **Lesser Sandplover** *Charadrius atrifrons* there 20–25 Jul (sixth record). A **Greater Painted-snipe** *Rostratula (b.) benghalensis* Nizzana 29 Sep and a **Grey Phalarope** *Phalaropus fulicarius* Timorom, south Judean plains, 31 Dec. A **Lesser Black-backed Gull** *Larus fuscus* Ashdod 28 Nov, Norwegian colour-ringed, first confirmed record ssp *graelisii* Israel. One **Swift Tern** *Thalasseus bergii* Eilat 22 Sep and a **Lesser Crested Tern** *Thalasseus bengalensis* off Eilat's NB 28 Jun, six there 6 Aug and two 22 Sep. Two **Arctic Terns** *Sterna paradisaea* off Eilat's NB 7 Aug. An **Oriental Turtle Dove** *Streptopelia orientalis meena* Yotvata, 6–7 Nov and a **Pallid Scops Owl** *Otus brucei* ringed IBRCE, Eilat, 9 Dec. Three **Egyptian Nightjars** *Caprimulgus aegyptius* Yotvata 10 Dec. About ten **Daurian Shrikes** *Lanius isabellinus* seen October with most Bet Shean valley, but also at Hatzor and Eilat (two) while a **Turkestan Shrike** *Lanius (isabellinus) phoenicuroides* Tirat Zvi, Bet Shean valley, 30 Aug. First record **Ashy Drongo** *Dicrurus leucophaeus* kibbutz Gan Shmuel, north coastal plains, 3 Dec and there again 13–17 Dec.

A female **Black-crowned Sparrow-lark** *Eremopterix nigriceps* Yotvata 26 Oct–7 Nov. Up to four **Oriental Skylarks** *Alauda gulgula* Yotvata October and a **Dunn's Lark** *Eremalauda dunni* Wadi Zin, central Negev, 14 Jun. **Yellow-browed Warbler** *Phylloscopus inornatus*: total of nine October and ten November at various locations while **Hume's Leaf Warblers** *Phylloscopus humei* at Nafha 20–22 Nov, Tivon 29 Nov and one at kibbutz Gvulot, northwest Negev, 5–31 Dec. Ninth record **Common Grasshopper Warbler** *Locustella naevia* ringed Yeruham 22 Aug. A **Ring Ouzel** *Turdus torquatus* Nafha, central Negev, 20–22 Nov while a **Kurdistan Wheatear** *Oenanthe xanthopyrmyna* mount Gilboa 15 Nov–end Dec and another mt Meron, upper Galilee, 15 Nov. A **Radde's Accentor** *Prunella ocularis* Beer Sheva 12 Dec, two Elrom, Golan heights, 5–31 Dec, another Gamla 13–31 Dec and one Tkoa, Judean hills, 30 Dec. Two **Red-fronted Serins** *Serinus pusillus* mt Hermon 4 Jul and three Elrom 5 Dec. A **Common Rosefinch** *Carpodacus*

*erythrinus* ringed IBRCE, Eilat, 10 Sep while two near Tel Aviv 14 Sep and another Eilat 15 Oct. Two **Red Crossbills** *Loxia curvirostra* Tel Mond, Heffer valley and six Ramat Hovav, north Negev, 11 Nov (first records since 1994). A **Pine Bunting** *Emberiza leucocephalos* Tel Hazeka, Golan heights, 1 Dec. One **Little Bunting** *Emberiza pusilla* ringed Tsor'a 20 Nov and another ringed Neve Eitan, Bet Shean valley, 5 Dec while a **Rustic Bunting** *Emberiza rustica* was near km20 saltpans, Eilat, 21 Nov.

## KAZAKHSTAN

A **Siberian Crane** *Grus leucogeranus* Shoshkaly lake, Naurzum reserve, 11 Sep and a **Long-billed Dowitcher** *Limnodromus scolopaceus* Sorbulak lakes, Almaty region, 7 Sep. One **Little Gull** *Larus minutus* there 5 Oct while a **Whiskered Tern** *Chlidonias hybrida* there 21 Jun. A **Pomarine Skua** *Stercorarius pomarinus* there 24 Sep. A **Great Grey Shrike** *Lanius borealis mollis* Katon-Karagay, Vostochno Kazakhstan oblast, east Kazakhstan, 13 Sep. A **Hume's Short-toed lark** *Calandrella acustirostris* Karzhantau 17 Jul. One **Pallas's Leaf Warbler** *Phylloscopus proregulus* Dzhabagly village, south Kazakhstan, 27 Oct and a **Hume's Leaf Warbler** *Phylloscopus humei* Karamendy village, Naurzum region, Kostanay oblast, 18 Oct. One **Goldcrest** *Regulus regulus* Tuzbair spring, Mangystau oblast, 19 Oct. A **Red-flanked Bluetail** *Tarsiger cyanurus* Karamendy village, Naurzum region, 13 Sep. A **Pied Stonechat** *Saxicola caprata rossorum* lower Ural river, Atyrau region, 22 Jun. One **Black-throated Accentor** *Prunella a. atrogularis* Karamendy village, Naurzum region, 20 Oct. An **Olive-backed Pipit** *Anthus hodgsoni* Sarsenbay, Katon, 20 Jul while a **Buff-bellied Pipit** *Anthus (rubescens) japonicus* Vostochno Kazakhstan oblast, east Kazakhstan, also that day.

## KUWAIT

Three **Eastern Greylag Geese** *Anser a. rubrirostris* Jahra pools reserve 28 Dec while third record of **Lesser Flamingo** *Phoeniconaias minor* 6 Nov at the Free Zone. Second record **White-tailed Eagle** *Haliaeetus leucoryphus* JPR 11 Dec while eighth record **Sociable Lapwing** *Vanellus gregarius* Jahra East outfall 6 Nov. A **Pallid Scops Owl** *Otus brucei* Um Niqqa 7 Dec (11th record) and one **Long-eared**



**Plate 4.** Long-eared Owl *Asio otus* 5 December 2014, Al Abraq, Kuwait. © AbdulRahman Al Sirhan



**Plate 5.** Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris* 28 November 2014, Jahra pools reserve, Kuwait. © AbdulRahman Al Sirhan



**Plate 6.** Purple Sunbird *Cinnyris asiaticus* 12 November 2014, Khiran, Kuwait. © Khalaf Al Fahad



**Plate 7.** Olive-backed Pipit *Anthus hodgsoni* 8 December 2014, Al Abraq, Kuwait. © Mohammed Khorshed



**Plate 8.** Hawfinch *Coccothraustes coccothraustes* 6 November 2014, Jahra East outfall, Kuwait. © Mohammed Khorshed



**Plate 9.** Rock Bunting *Emberiza cia* 2 December 2014, Al Abraq, Kuwait. © Mohammed Khorshed

**Owl** *Asio otus* 5 Dec Al Abraq (Plate 4, fifth record). Fifth record **Hume's Leaf Warbler** *Phylloscopus humei* Al Abraq 20 Nov while second record **Goldcrest** *Regulus regulus* there 1 Dec. Eighth record **Ring Ouzel** *Turdus torquatus* Al Abraq 3 Dec and a **Fieldfare** *Turdus pilaris* JPR 28 Nov (Plate 5). One **Purple Sunbird** *Cinnyris asiaticus* Khiran 12 Nov (Plate 6, second record). An **Olive-backed Pipit** *Anthus hodgsoni* Al Abraq 8 Dec (Plate 7, eighth record). One **Brambling** *Fringilla montifringilla* JPR 12 Nov while second record **European Greenfinch** *Carduelis chloris* there 29 Nov. A **Desert Finch** *Rhodospiza obsoleta* Subhan 10 Nov (11th record) and first record **Hawfinch** *Coccothraustes coccothraustes* JEO 6 Nov (Plate 8). Fourth record **Rock Bunting** *Emberiza cia* Al Abraq 2 Dec (Plate 9).

## LEBANON

A **European Storm Petrel** *Hydrobates pelagicus* (fourth record) Mina Tripoli 4 Oct. One **Black-winged Kite** *Elanus caeruleus* caught after a storm near Hermel, north Lebanon, 22 Nov and later released. Flock of 1000 **Common Woodpeckers** *Columba palumbus* 10 Nov Ain Lijeh, Shouf biosphere reserve. A few scattered individuals recorded for the first time in Beirut around this date. One **Short-eared Owl** *Asio flammeus* 8 Nov Shouf BR. Qalaat Niha cliff, Shouf BR, now hosts occasional **Wallcreeper** *Tichodroma muraria*.

## OMAN

A **Lesser Whistling Duck** *Dendrocygna javanica* Raysut sewage treatment plant 27 Nov, then Al Mughsayl 29 Nov–31 Dec at least (fifth record). Two more A'Duqm 21–24 Dec (6th record). Large influx of **Greater White-fronted Geese** *Anser albifrons* to many Gulf countries; seven Khawr Dirif 6 Nov and 16 A'Shuweimeiyah that day; up to 35 Salalah area 11 Nov–6 Dec while two Al Atheiba, Muscat, 5 Dec. One **Cotton Pygmy Goose** *Nettapus coromandelianus* Khawr Dirif 6 Nov and one Al Ansab wetland 20–25 Nov (unusual locations, this species normally visits Salalah area). Eight **Mallards** *Anas platyrhynchos* early arrivals Al Ansab wetland 7 Sep while two **Northern Shovelers** *Anas clypeata* even earlier there, 6 Jul (numbers rose to 200 by 12 Oct and 253 on 25 Dec), five **Eurasian Teals** *Anas crecca* early arrivals there, 17 Aug, rising to 14 on 7 Sep and later maximum 257 on 25 Dec. Six **Ferruginous Ducks** *Aythya nyroca* Qurum park 30 Nov and four Al Ansab wetland 25 Dec. A **Wedge-tailed Shearwater** *Puffinus pacificus* off Ras Janjari 15 Nov while second record of **Cory's Shearwater** *Calonectris [diomedea] borealis* c5km off Muscat 21 Jun. 268 **Jouanin's Petrels** *Bulweria fallax* off Ras Janjari 15 Nov while 227 **Wilson's Storm Petrels** *Oceanites oceanicus* in one hour off Ras Al Khabbah 18 Aug. There were a number of records of **Swinhoe's Storm Petrel** *Oceanodroma monorhis*: six singles in one hour off Ras Al Khabbah 17 Aug and five next day; six off Ras Abu Rasas, Masirah island, 19 Aug, two seen during a boat trip 18 Sep and one off Masirah 4 Oct.



One **Great Crested Grebe** *Podiceps cristatus* Qurm park 2 Oct, 12 and 21 Nov (seventh record, first for 20 years). A **Black-necked Grebe** *Podiceps nigricollis* Al Ansab wetland 6 Jul unusual at this time of year. Eighth record **African Sacred Ibis** *Threskiornis aethiopicus* still present to 31 Dec. New maximum (167) **Glossy Ibises** *Plegadis falcinellus* East Khawr 11 Nov and 6 Dec. One **Black Stork** *Ciconia nigra* Wadi Darbat 31 Oct and 4 Dec and same bird Tawi Atayr 15 Nov. Numbers of **Abdim's Storks** *Ciconia abdimii* built up from November to a new maximum of 610 Raysut STP 31 Dec. A **Eurasian Bittern** *Botaurus stellaris* West Khawr 20 Nov (scarce and irregular visitor). An adult male **Little Bittern** *Ixobrychus minutus* Khawr Taqah 23 Aug indicates probable breeding. **Yellow Bittern** *Ixobrychus sinensis* included four East Khawr 22 Aug, three Khawr Taqah 26 Aug, three Al Baleed archaeological park 27 Aug and four Al Mughsayl 5 Nov (one there 3 Dec). Eleven **Squacco Herons** *Ardeola ralloides* East Khawr 28 Jul. **Indian Pond Herons** *Ardeola greyii* widespread Salalah area 3–6 Dec including four West Khawr 6 Dec (singles Qatbit motel 12 Dec and A'Duqm 23 Dec). At least 100 **Grey Herons** *Ardea cinerea* Nimr wetlands, central desert, 18–19 Oct. Sixth record **Black-headed Heron** Dawkah farm 14 Nov, another reported a few days earlier Khawr Rawri. Nine **Purple Herons** *Ardea purpurea* Nimr wetlands 18–19 Oct. One **Intermediate Egret** *Egretta intermedia* East Khawr 28 Jul, two Al Ansab wetlands 14 and 21 Sep and one there 25 Dec. This species widespread Salalah area 3–6 Dec with a new maximum of six Khawr Rouri 6 Dec. 75 **Little Egrets** *Egretta garzetta* Nimr wetland 18–19 Oct with 15 **Western Reef Herons** *Egretta gularis*.

Sixth record **Lesser Frigatebird** *Fregata ariel* Higl, Masirah island, 3 Nov. **Brown Boobies** *Sula leucogaster* usually more common in the south so 12 off Quriyat 17 Sep was a large number; one off Muscat 30 Oct. Two **Crested Honey Buzzards** *Pernis ptilorhynchus* Salalah 10 Nov and a **Black-winged Kite** *Elanus caeruleus* Barka 18 Nov. Five **Yellow-billed Kites** *Milvus aegyptius* Khawr Taqah 7 Nov. 388 **Egyptian Vultures** *Neophron percnopterus* Al Multaqa waste disposal site 22 Nov while eight Jaaluni (unusual) 9 Aug. Five **Eurasian Griffon Vultures** *Gyps fulvus* Tawi Atayr 15

Nov and one **Cinereous Vulture** *Aegypius monachus* (fourth record) there 25 Nov. Five **Lappet-faced Vultures** *Torgos tracheliotus* there 7 Oct and six 15 Nov. Three **Pallid Harriers** *Circus macrourus* Sahanawt farm, Salalah, 5 Dec. A **Steppe Buzzard** *Buteo b. vulpinus* Wadi Hinna 25 Dec. One **Lesser Spotted Eagle** *Aquila pomarina* East Khawr 29 Oct while a *fulvescens* **Greater Spotted Eagle** *Aquila clanga* Al Ansab wetland 30 Oct. 825 **Steppe Eagles** *Aquila nipalensis* (new maximum) Raysut waste disposal site 14 Nov (700 on 5 Dec). Two **Lesser Kestrels** *Falco naumanni* Tawi Atayr 31 Oct. Seven **Amur Falcons** *Falco amurensis* Shisr 29 Nov and a **Sooty Falcon** *Falco concolor* Wadi Sahanawt 25 Aug. Fifth record **Merlin** *Falco columbarius* Sahnawt farm, Salalah, 25 Nov and 5 Dec. A **Eurasian Hobby** *Falco subbuteo* Wave, Muscat, 22 Nov and another Wadi Darbat 4 Dec. One **Barbary Falcon** *Falco (peregrinus) pelegrinoides* Tawi Atayr 25 Dec.

A **Corncrake** *Crex crex* Wadi Shab 20 Oct while **White-breasted Waterhens** *Amauromis phoenicurus* Raysut STP 1 Nov, Montasar 26 Nov and Khawr Rouri 6 Dec. Sixth record of **Watercock** *Gallicrex cinerea* Al Mughsayl 5 Nov while the longstaying **Purple Swamphen** *Porphyrio porphyrio* seen various dates Al Ansab wetland to 31 Dec. Two **Red-knobbed Coots** *Fulica cristata* Khor Rouri 3 Oct and three there 4–6 Dec perhaps indicating that this species is spreading along the coast. A **Demoiselle Crane** Al Mughsayl 31 Dec. Three **Spotted Thick-knees** *Burhinus capensis* Al Baleed archaeological park 27 Aug. A **Spur-winged Lapwing** *Vanellus spinosus* Raysut STP 5 Dec—at least 31 Dec while 65 **Sociable Lapwings** *Vanellus gregarius* Sahanawt farm 16 Nov (32 there 17 Dec). Seven **White-tailed Lapwings** *Vanellus leucurus* Al Ansab wetland 3 Dec. Two **Lesser Sand Plovers** *Charadrius atrifrons* Dawkah farm 21 Aug (unusual at an inland location). A **Caspian Plover** *Charadrius asiaticus* East Khawr 24 Aug, three there 26 Aug and four on 28 Aug. Nine **Pheasant-tailed Jacanas** *Hydrophasianus chirurgus* Khawr Rouri 3–6 Dec, a high number. Third record **Eurasian Woodcock** *Scolopax rusticola* Duqm 1 Jan. A **Jack Snipe** *Lymnocyrtus minimus* Al Ansab wetland 30 Oct. One **Great Snipe** *Gallinago media* Sur STP 24 Nov. 13th record **Long-billed Dowitcher** *Limnodromus*

*scolopaceus* Khawr Rawri 18 Nov and 4 Dec. A **Spotted Redshank** *Tringa erythropus* East Khawr 6 Dec. 50 **Terek Sandpipers** *Xenus cinereus* Khawr Jarama 10 Nov. One **Great Knot** *Calidris tenuirostris* East Khawr 25 Aug and 84 at the more usual location of Barr al Hikman (Filim) 25 Nov. A **Long-toed Stint** *Calidris subminuta* East Khawr 3, 12 and 14 Nov and one Khawr Rouri 6 Dec (unclear whether same bird). A **Pectoral Sandpiper** *Calidris melanotos* East Khawr 31 Oct and 15 Nov. 1024 **Ruffs** *Philomachus pugnax* East Khawr 12 Nov (new maximum), 1000 there 5–6 Dec.

One **Brown Noddy** *Anous stolidus* Mirbat 30 Jul, one off Muscat 30 Oct, seven off Mirbat 3 Nov. An adult **White-eyed Gull** *Larus leucophthalmus* photo'd Ras Al Hadd 15 Aug (14th record). Ninth record **Black Tern** *Chlidonias niger* (1cy) East Khawr 5 Oct subsequently Raysut STP various dates 24 Oct–31 Dec. Single **Rufous Turtle Doves** *Streptopelia (orientalis) meena* Dawkah farm 21 Aug and Sahanawt farm various dates 14 Nov–17 Dec. 24 **Namaqua Doves** *Oena capensis* Saham STP 29 Dec, unusually high number. A **Bruce's Green Pigeon** *Treron waalia* Qatbit 21 Aug (unusual record for this site, c200 km north of usual feeding/breeding area). One juvenile **Great Spotted Cuckoo** *Clamator glandarius* (3rd record) Khawr Taqah 7 Nov. **Pied Cuckoos** *Oxylophus jacobinus*: two Khawr Rouri 30 Oct, one Dawqah farm 30 Oct, one Ayn Hamran 2 Nov, one Sahanawt farm 5 Nov, two Ayn Hamran 13 Nov and one Shisr 29 Nov. Two **Asian Koels** *Eudynamis scolopaceus* Al Balid farm 25 Nov and one Qatbit 30–31 Oct (now regular winter, in very small numbers, central desert). A **Short-eared Owl** *Asio flammeus* Al Balid farm 29 Nov. **European Nightjars** *Caprimulgus europaeus* seen during pelagic boat trips off Muscat 18 Sep (two) and 30 Oct (one). An **Alpine Swift** *Tachymarptis melba* Masirah waste disposal site 5 Aug, one Ayn Hamran 7 Oct and three there 5 Dec. Eight **Forbes-Watson Swifts** *Apus berliozi* Ayn Hamran 5 Dec with smaller numbers at four other sites in area 3–6 Dec. A **Little Swift** *Apus affinis* Wadi Darbat 12 Nov and Ayn Hamran 5 Dec. Eight **European Rollers** *Coracias garrulus* Qatbit 11 Oct while two late **Blue-cheeked Bee-eaters** *Merops persicus* West Khawr 6 Dec. An early **Eurasian**

**Hoopoe** *Upupa epops* Qatbit 24 Jul while 15 Saham STP 29 Nov and ten Ayn Hamran 3 Dec. Two **Eurasian Wrynecks** *Jynx torquilla*, also late-stayers, Ayn Hamran 3 and 5 Dec.

22 **Daurian Shrikes** *Lanius isabellinus* Al Mughsayl 17 Nov (high count). One **Bay-backed Shrike** *Lanius vittatus* near East Khawr 15 Nov and a **Steppe Grey Shrike** *Lanius (meridionalis) pallidirostris* Masirah island 4 Oct. A **Masked Shrike** *Lanius nubicus* Ayn Hamran 26 Nov. First record **Ashy Drongo** *Dicrurus leucophaeus* Qatbit 25–26 Nov. 120 **Brown-necked Ravens** *Corvus ruficollis* Jaaluni 26 Aug while 14 **Hypocoliuses** *Hypocolius ampelinus* Mudday 13 and 22 Nov. 500 **Greater Short-toed Larks** *Calandrella brachydactyla* Jarziz farm 12 Nov while an **Oriental Skylark** *Alauda gulgula* Al Ghaftayn 27 Nov (first record for central desert). 12 **White-eared Bulbuls** *Pycnonotus (leucogenys) leucotis* Quriyat 17 Aug, again confirming spread of this species. A **Cetti's Warbler** *Cettia cetti* singing East Khawr 5 Oct (third record). A **Great Reed Warbler** *Acrocephalus arundinaceus* Al Mughsayl 6 Oct while a **Savi's Warbler** *Locustella luscinioides* (rare visitor) Al Mughsayl 31 Dec. Two **Wood Warblers** *Phylloscopus sibilatrix* Masirah island 5–7 Oct, two Wadi Darbat 26 Oct and one Ayn Hamran 3 Dec. Five **Green Warblers** *Phylloscopus nitidus* Masirah island 5–7 Oct while three **Plain Leaf Warblers** *Phylloscopus neglectus* Ras A'Sawadi 30 Oct (unusual out of Mussandam although they seem to be becoming more regular away from this area). Two **Yellow-browed Warblers** *Phylloscopus inornatus* Montasar 26 Nov and one Qatbit 30 Nov.

Two **Common Starlings** *Sturnus vulgaris* Raysut STP 3 Dec while a **Black-throated Thrush** *Turdus atrogularis* Jarziz farm 1 Dec. A **Thrush Nightingale** *Luscinia luscinia* Dawkah farm 29 Aug and another Ayn Jarziz 8 Oct. One female **White-throated Robin** *Irania gutturalis* Qatbit 24 Jul (second July sighting). Two **Blue Rock Thrushes** *Monticola solitarius* Al Ansab wetland 25 Dec. A **Semi-collared Flycatcher** *Ficedula semitorquata* Al Ghaftayn 27 Nov while the sixth record of **Taiga Flycatcher** *Ficedula albicilla* Ayn Tobruq 24 Nov, seventh record Qatbit 12 Dec. A **Nile Valley Sunbird** *Anthodiaeta metallica* Qatbit 14–15 Nov. 30 **House Sparrows** *Passer domesticus* Salalah 27



Aug confirming spread of this species in the area. Flocks of **Yellow-throated Sparrows** *Gymnoris xanthocollis*: 80 and then 50 Wave, Muscat, 9 Aug and 500 Quriyat 17 Aug. 11 **Red Avadavats** *Amandava amandava* 20 Dec near Salalah bird sanctuary. One **Eastern Yellow Wagtail** *Motacilla tschutschensis taivan* Khawr Rouri 11 Nov and a **Masked Wagtail** *Motacilla (alba) personata* Salalah bird sanctuary 14 Nov. 28 **Arabian Golden-winged Grosbeaks** *Rhynchostruthus percivali* Ayn Hamran, a new maximum.

## SAUDI ARABIA

A juvenile **Greater White-fronted Goose** *Anser albifrons* Jubail 7 Nov and 23 **Ferruginous Ducks** *Aythya nyroca* Dhahran Hills percolation pond 14 Sep (Plate 10), 16 staying into November. A **Eurasian Bittern** *Botaurus stellaris* Wadi Rabigh 21 Nov and 166 (high count) **Western Great Egrets** *Ardea alba* Sabkhat Al Fasl 14 Nov. One and probably two juvenile **Crested Honey Buzzards** *Pernis ptilorhynchus* Dhahran camp 27–28 Oct. One sub-adult *fulvescens* **Greater Spotted Eagle** *Aquila clanga* SAF 31 Oct with a different bird there 21–28 Nov. Two **Cinereous Vultures** *Aegypius monachus* Wadi Rabigh 14 Nov. Two **Purple Swamphens** *Porphyrio porphyrio* Dhahran Hills pond 13–14 Dec, a site 95 km south of nearest known location with one finally identified as **African Swamphen** *P. madagascariensis* (second record, bird probably originating from Qatar breeding population). Flock of 135 **Northern Lapwings** *Vanellus vanellus* near Riyadh 15 Nov and an adult



**Plate 10.** Ferruginous Duck *Aythya nyroca* 10 September 2014, Dhahran Hills percolation pond, Dhahran, Eastern province, Saudi Arabia. © J Babbington

**White-tailed Lapwing** *Vanellus leucurus* Dhahran Hills PP 9–21 Aug. One **Black-winged Pratincole** *Glareola nordmanni* KAUST golf course 1 Oct–14 Nov at least.

A **Pharaoh Eagle Owl** *Bubo ascalaphus* Al Hayer, near Riyadh, 15 Nov (unusual site). The highest single count of **Egyptian Nightjars** *Caprimulgus aegyptius* was 13 SAF 22 Aug with more than 10 staying to mid Sep. One Dhahran 21 Nov. A **White-throated Kingfisher** *Halcyon smyrnensis* Buraidah 26–28 Oct at least with another SAF 28 Nov and a **Pied Kingfisher** *Ceryle rudis* Al Hayer, near Riyadh, 7–22 Nov. Two **Arabian Magpies** *Pica (pica) asirensis* Sallal Al Dahna 11 Dec. A late **Savi's Warbler** *Locustella luscinioides* trapped/ringed SAF 24 Oct. Six **'Mangrove' White-eyes** *Zosterops ?abyssinicus* Either mangroves, Jizan province 8 Oct. A **Finsch's Wheatear** *Oenanthe finschii* Jabal Nayriyyah 21 Nov and one Qaryat Al Ulya pivot fields same day. Flock of 740 **Streaked Weavers** *Ploceus manyar* feeding in fields near Riyadh 25 Oct. 12 **Arabian Golden-winged Grosbeaks** *Rhynchostruthus percivali* between Taif and Al Baha 15 Nov with this area the only known regular location for this regional endemic in the country. Eight **Trumpeter Finches** *Bucanetes githagineus* Al Hayer dam area 21 Nov.

## TURKEY

A **Goosander** *Mergus merganser* İğneada 29 Nov. An oiled **Red-throated Diver** *Gavia stellata* picked up İstanbul, Karaburun, 9 Dec but died following week. Another individual Samandağ, Hatay, 14 Dec (first record for province). Same area produced a **Scopoli's Shearwater** *Calonectris diomedea* 14 Dec, one of the few winter sightings. Boat trip off Didim, Aydın, produced two **European Storm Petrels** *Hydrobates pelagicus* 6 Oct. Several **Red-necked Grebes** *Podiceps grisegena* northern half of the country: one İğneada 31 Oct, two Uluabat Gölü 8 Nov and one between Rumelifeneri and Kilyos, İstanbul, 14 Dec. One **Black-winged Kite** *Elanus caeruleus* Milleyha, Hatay, 29 Oct, three flying off the sea there 8 Nov, one Şanlıurfa 22 Jul and one Diyarbakır 14 Nov. First wintering record **Levant Sparrowhawk** *Accipiter brevipes* Hatay 11 Dec. One **Saker Falcon** *Falco cherrug* present during breeding season central Anatolia. Two on passage Amanos mountains, Hatay, 29



**Plate 11.** Lapland Longspur *Calcarius lapponicus* 3 November 2014, Kızılırmak delta, Bafra, Samsun, Turkey. © N Yavuz

Sep and one mountains near Abant, Bolu, 13 Oct. **Little Bustard** *Tetrax tetrax* is almost extinct as a breeding bird but regularly seen Black sea coast late autumn and early winter: singles Arsin, Trabzon, 24 Nov, Trabzon 4 Dec, Kastamonu 24 Nov and group of three Of, Trabzon, 8 Dec. Flock of 259 **Demoiselle Cranes** *Anthropoides virgo* lake Kulu maximum count for year. A **Pacific Golden Plover** *Pluvialis fulva* Enez lagoons 13 Sep. One **Terek Sandpiper** *Xenus cinereus* (regular but rare wader) lake Kulu 2 Sep with a **Pectoral Sandpiper** *Calidris melanotos*. A **Black-winged Pratincole** *Glareola nordmanni* near Muş 21 Sep. Second record **Glaucous Gull** *Larus hyperboreus*, a first winter bird, photo'd Rize 12 Dec and stayed until end of month at least (first record 140 years previously). A **Pomarine Skua** *Stercorarius pomarinus* seen during the boat trip off Didim 6 Oct.

A **Namaqua Dove** *Oena capensis* arrived off the sea Milleyha, Hatay, 8 Nov while another 25 km northeast of Kulu 16 Jul. Both were considered to be wild. One **Daurian Shrike** *Lanius isabellinus* Birecik 28 Oct. Two **Pallas's Leaf Warblers** *Phylloscopus proregulus* photo'd Kızılırmak delta (one 29 Oct, one 5 Nov). One **Yellow-browed Warbler** *Phylloscopus inornatus* Subaşı, Antakya, 26 Oct, two Kızılırmak delta 18 Oct and one there 28 Oct. A **Blyth's Reed Warbler** *Acrocephalus dumetorum* caught Aras ringing station, Kars, 27 Aug. Passage of **Booted Warblers** *Iduna caligata*: one singing Halfeti 31 May while singles Rize 28 Aug and Antakya 18 Sep. An **Asian Desert Warbler** *Sylvia nana* Istanbul,

Karaburun, 29 Oct. A **Variable Wheatear** *Oenanthe picata* claimed from locality near Van province summer 2014 but no further details available. Ringing station Kızılırmak delta produced a **Black-throated Accentor** *Prunella atrogularis*, caught/photo'd 31 Oct and new sp for Turkey. Milleyha coastland, Hatay, produced three **Richard's Pipits** *Anthus richardi* 29 Oct and single **Buff-bellied Pipits** *Anthus (rubescens) japonicus* 29 Oct and 22 Nov. A **Pine Bunting** *Emberiza leucocephalos* Aras ringing station 25 Oct and third **Lapland Longspur** *Calcarius lapponicus* Kızılırmak delta 3 Nov (Plate 11).

## UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

Two **Greater White-fronted Geese** *Anser albifrons* Mirfa 14 Nov and one Ruwais and one flying along the shore Al Aqqah 28 Nov. Pelagic boat trip highlights from Kalba: a **Cory's/Scopoli's Shearwater** *Calonectris [diomedea] borealis/C. diomedea* (precise identification not possible) 13 Sep, seventh record **Wedge-tailed Shearwater** *Puffinus pacificus* 19 Jul, eighth record **Swinhoe's Petrel** 16 Sep, and 30 **Flesh-footed Shearwaters** *Puffinus carneipes* and 300 **Jouanin's Petrels** *Bulweria fallax* 19 Sep. One **Eurasian Bittern** *Botaurus stellaris* Al Ain 30 Oct remained into Nov. First **Crested Honey-buzzard** *Pernis ptilorhynchus* of autumn was back on Abu Dhabi island from mid Oct although, unusually, this species remained otherwise absent until several late December reports. An unseasonal **Black-winged Kite** *Elanus caeruleus* Dubai pivot fields 15 Sep (17th record) and one Hamraniyah 17 Sep and 3 Dec. Equally unseasonal **Black-eared Kite** *Milvus (migrans) govinda* Dubai pivot fields 30 Aug (previous records, of *lineatus*, much later in autumn-spring). A **Shikra** *Accipter badius* Al Ain 8 Oct. One **Hen Harrier** *Circus cyaneus* Wamm farms 7 Nov (Plate 12) with one WF 28 Nov and a further bird, an adult male, 6 Dec. A **Steppe Eagle** *Aquila nipalensis* Al Ain 11 Oct while two **Eastern Imperial Eagles** *Aquila heliaca* Zakher lake 14 Nov. An **Amur Falcon** *Falco amurensis* Emirates Palace hotel, Abu Dhabi, 1 Dec and a male **Merlin** *Falco columbarius* Khawr al Beida 7 Nov.

One **Water Rail** *Rallus aquaticus* Al Ain 16 Oct—at least year end. A **Corncrake** *Crex crex* Sila 26 Sep and a **White-breasted Waterhen** *Amaurornis phoenicurus* Al Dhait south 22



**Plate 12.** Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus* 7 November 2014, Wamm farms, UAE. © S Lloyd



**Plate 14.** Pied Stonechat *Saxicola caprata* 29 November 2014, 1st winter female, Abu Dhabi, UAE. © S Lloyd



**Plate 13.** Black Drongo *Dicrurus macrocercus* 7 November 2014, Wamm farms, UAE. © S Lloyd

Nov. A **Spotted Crake** *Porzana porzana* Abu Dhabi for several days from 22 Sep. The UAE's first **Watercock** *Gallinula cinerea* found exhausted Dubai 5 Nov was released next day Warsan. A **Eurasian Stone-Curlew** *Burhinus oedipnemus* chick Abu al Abyad 9 Jul, second UAE breeding record. A **Northern Lapwing** *Vanellus vanellus* WF 21 Nov and the winter's first **Sociable Lapwing** *Vanellus gregarius* Hamraniyah 21 Nov. One **Caspian Plover** *Charadrius asiaticus* 7 Nov Hamraniyah. A **Mediterranean Gull** *Larus melanocephalus* Mafraq 26 Dec (back for fourth successive winter). Six **Brown Noddies** *Anous stolidus*

(scarce this year) seen during boat trip 20 Sep and eighth record **Lesser Noddy** *Anous tenuirostris* during boat trip off Kalba 19 Jul. Single **Sooty Terns** *Onychoprion fuscatus* recorded on trips 4 and 19 Jul with other singles seen from shore 8 Jul (Bidiya) and 14 Jul (Fujairah). One **Roseate Tern** *Sterna dougallii* Fujairah 19–30 Jul (eighth record) and one there 12 Sep (ninth record). 16th record **Black Tern** *Chlidonias niger* there 12 Sep. Single **Long-tailed Skuas** *Stercorarius longicaudus* during pelagic boat trips off Kalba 4 and 19 Jul with other singles seen from shore 8 Jul (Bidiya) and 14 Jul (Fujairah). **Short-eared Owls** *Asio flammeus* Abu Dhabi racecourse 8 Nov and Jebel Dhanna 28 Nov. A **Pacific Swift** *Apus pacificus sensu lato* (third record) WF 12 Sep.

A **Drongo** *Dicrurus* sp Palm Jumeriah 11 Jul. Possibly same individual Zabeel, Dubai, 31 Oct. Sixth record **Black Drongo** *Dicrurus macrocercus* WF 7 Nov (Plate 13) while an **Ashy Drongo** *Dicrurus leucophaeus* Wadi Bih 4 Dec (eighth record). Two **Fan-tailed Ravens** *Corvus rhipidurus* seen from main highway through Al Rahba, near Abu Dhabi, 13 Dec (2nd record). Three **Hypocoliuses** *Hypocolius ampelinus* WF 21 Nov. WF produced **Savi's Warbler** *Locustella luscinioides* and a very early **Moustached Warbler** *Acrocephalus melanopogon* (17th record) within minutes of each other 19 Sep. First **Hume's Warbler**



*Phylloscopus humei* of the winter found Emirates Palace hotel 19 Dec with another Mirfa the same day. 12th record **Green Warbler** *Phylloscopus nitidus* (first since 2007) Mamzar park 11 Oct with another there 25 Oct. Arabia's first **Large-billed Leaf-warbler** *Phylloscopus magnirostris* Mamzar park 11 and 12 Oct. A large arrival of warblers there 26 Oct included a **Garden Warbler** *Sylvia borin* (unusual autumn). At least two **Thrush Nightingales** *Luscinia luscinia* Sila'a and Abu Dhabi 26–27 Sep and a **Ring Ouzel** *Turdus torquatus* Jebel Dhanna 26 Dec. First **European Robin** *Erithacus rubecula* of the winter, Emirates Palace hotel 19 Dec. One **Pied Stonechat** *Saxicola caprata* Abu Dhabi 29 Nov (Plate 14) remained until at least year-end. A **Forest Wagtail** *Dendroanthus indicus* Safa 31 Oct. Dubai's first **Eastern Mourning Wheatear** *Oenanthe lugens* 1 Dec and another Al Ain 16 Dec. First **Buff-bellied Pipit** *Anthus (rubescens) japonicus* of the winter Hamraniyah 21 Nov, numbers rising there to maximum six 22 Dec. Another Emirates Palace hotel 13 Dec and two WF 26 Dec onwards. A **Brambling** *Fringilla montifringilla* Delma island 20 Dec.

## UZBEKISTAN

On 20 May a large breeding colony **Greater Flamingos** *Phoenicopterus roseus* (2594 nests with eggs, c6000–7000 adults) southern Aral sea region in eastern section Sudochie lake (IBA UZ002), first reliable breeding record Uzbekistan. First winter record **Little Egret** *Egretta garzetta* 12 Jan Tuyabuguz reservoir (IBA 032), Tashkent region. Two **Sociable Lapwings** *Vanellus gregarius* 29 Sep 2013 Talimardjan reservoir (IBA UZ023) and migrating flocks of up to 400 there mid Sep 2012 but since then water level significantly higher.

A **Curlew** *Numenius* sp found by UzSPB field group western end Aydar-Arnasay lake system 28 Sep 2013 accidentally shot by hunters. Bird weighed less and was much smaller (particularly bill length) than minimal size of **Slender-billed Curlew** *Numenius tenuirostris*. Individuals and groups of three to five such birds, different from **Whimbrel** *N. phaeopus* in flight, size and colour, regularly occur here spring/autumn migration with **Eurasian Curlews** *N. arquata*. Possibly new **Whimbrel** ssp but further



**Plate 15.** Nest of Collared Pratincole *Glareola pratincola* Syrdarya river, Tashkent region, Uzbekistan. © A. Atakhodjaev

research needed. 22 nests **Collared Pratincole** *Glareola pratincola* Syrdarya river, Dalverzin hunting farm (IBA UZ036), Tashkent region, 13 May (Plate 15). Clutch sizes two–four eggs. 50 **Collared Pratincoles** there 9 Jun 2012 suspected to be breeding. A **White-capped Water-redstart** *Chaimarrornis leucocephalus* 23 Oct 2013 Amankutansay river 27 km south of Samarkand city, 1020 m asl (first reliably confirmed occurrence Zarafshan mountain range, Uzbekistan).

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Azerbaijan: Tomas Axén Haraldsson; Bahrain: Abdulla Al Kaabi; Cyprus: Colin Richardson; Egypt: István Moldová; Georgia: Batumi Raptor Count, Denise & Chris Lamsdell; Iraq: Muhammad Saddik Barzani; Israel: Yoav Perlman; Kazakhstan: www.birds.kz, Ruslan Urazaliyev; Kuwait: AbdulRahman Al Sirhan, Mike Pope; Lebanon: Ghassan Ramadan-Jaradi; Oman: Jens Eriksen (www.birdsoman.com); Saudi Arabia: Jem Babbington (www.birdsofsaudiarabia.com), Philip Roberts; Turkey: Kerem Ali Boyla; United Arab Emirates: Oscar Campbell, Tommy Pedersen (www.uaebirding.com/uae\_news.html); Uzbekistan: Roman Kashkarov.

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