

# AROUND THE REGION

Ian Harrison (compiler)

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 2017 unless stated otherwise.

Records and photographs for *Sandgrouse* 40(2) should be sent by 10 June 2018 to atr@osme.org or ianbirds@gmail.com.

## AZERBAIJAN

A wader study at Kizil Agach lagoons July–September resulted in large numbers and a high number of species including day counts of up to 30 000 birds. Ringing took place at the Besh Barmag bottleneck most of the autumn while an international team monitored the migration there 14 Oct–18 Nov and counted 1.4 million birds. Wader study highlights: The first **Pacific Golden Plover** *Pluvialis fulva* for a hundred years. 43 **Caspian Plovers** *Anarhynchus asiaticus* mid July was a maximum daily count. A **White-rumped Sandpiper** *Calidris fuscicollis* Machmud Chala wetlands 17 Aug (first record). A **Pectoral Sandpiper** *Calidris melanotos* mid July (very few records). 800 **Broad-billed Sandpipers** *Calidris falcinellus* mid Aug was a maximum daily count. A **Grey Phalarope** *Phalaropus fulicarius* early Aug (second record). Besh Barmag bottleneck totals (highlights): 83 **Lesser White-fronted Geese** *Anser erythropus* and 60 000 ducks. 47 **Marbled Ducks** *Marmaronetta angustirostris* (Shirvan nat park 14 Nov). 21 000 **Pygmy Cormorants** *Microcarbo pygmeus* and 90 000 **Great Cormorants** *Phalacrocorax [carbo] sinensis*. 10 000 **Little Bustards** *Tetrax tetrax*. Four **Black-legged Kittiwakes** *Rissa tridactyla* (third–sixth records) and 75 000 **Common Black-headed Gulls** *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*. A **Rufous Turtle Dove** *Streptopelia (orientalis) meena* (second record). 373 000 larks including an **Oriental Skylark** *Alauda gulgula* and 677 **White-winged Larks** *Alauda leucoptera*. Two **Yellow-browed Warblers** *Phylloscopus inornatus* (second–third records). One **Black-throated Thrush** *Turdus [ruficollis] atrogularis*. 4 **Richard's Pipits** *Anthus richardi* and 34 **Siberian Buff-bellied Pipits** *A. (rubescens) japonicus*. A **Pine Bunting** *Emberiza leucocephalus*, three **Little**

**Buntings** *E. pusilla* 13–14 Oct (first–third records) and a **Lapland Bunting** *Calcarius lapponicus* (first record).

## BAHRAIN

A **Sociable Lapwing** *Vanellus spinosus* southern Bahrain 1 Dec. A **Calandra Lark** *Melanocorypha calandra* 1 Dec (second record, last 1982). A **Blue Rock Thrush** *Monticola solitarius* ringed southern Bahrain 26 Nov 2013 has wintered every year since then in the same location from November onwards (first seen current winter 1 Nov).

## CYPRUS

Only four **Greater White-fronted Geese** *Anser albifrons* arrived mid Nov to overwinter Larnaca sewage treatment plant, numbers decreasing each winter. 11 **Ruddy Shelducks** *Tadorna ferruginea* Akrotiri salt lake 11 Nov (the only report this winter). 26 **Common Pochards** *Aythya farina* Kanli (Kanlıköy) reservoir 7 Dec and 160 Kapouti (Kalkanlı) reservoir 19 Dec. A male **Tufted Duck** *Aythya fuligula* Bishop's pool 28 Sep–2 Oct, five Kapouti (Kalkanlı) reservoir 19 Oct and one Larnaca STP 13 Dec. Up to three **Scopoli's Shearwaters** *Calonectris [d.] diomedea* off Agios Amvrosios 8–15 Sep, five 18 Oct and two 22 Oct; four cape Kormakitis 14 Oct but higher numbers reported from Pomos point (150 on 16 Oct, 60 on 19 Oct). Six cape Drepanum 3 Nov. Five **Yelkouan Shearwaters** *Puffinus yelkouan* Pomos point 16 Oct, three Orga (Kayalar) 18 Oct and one Paphos headland 29 Oct. Three **Great Crested Grebes** *Podiceps cristatus* Panagra dam 11 Sep, one Akrotiri gravel pits early Dec–15 Dec, one Glapsides beach 6 Dec, two Asprokremmos dam 16–21 Dec. Two **Horned Grebes** *P. auritus* offshore near Kouklia fish farm (Paphos) 16 Nov and subsequent dates (Plate 1), decreasing to one



**Plate 1.** Horned Grebe *Podiceps auritus* 10 December 2017 Kouklia, Paphos, Cyprus. © Christodoulos Makris

5 Dec to year end (third record, last 1958). **Black-necked Grebes** *P. nigricollis* present island wide during Dec with max 41 Larnaca STP 20 Dec and ones and twos elsewhere including Akrotiri peninsula, Agia Napa STP, Mavrokolympos dam and Manglis lake (Nicosia). Only five reports of **Western White Storks** *Ciconia c. ciconia*: one Bishop's pool 2 Sep, two Zakaki marsh 12 Sep and two Kouklia (Paphos) 27 Sep, four Larnaca STP 22 Sep and then two there 28 Sep with Hungarian rings. Five **Great White Pelicans** *Pelecanus onocrotalus* Akhna dam 9 Oct, single juvs Bishop's pool 19–23 Oct and Agios Loukas marsh (Ayluga, Famagusta) 13 Oct increasing to nine 21 Oct.

Migrating **Western Ospreys** *Pandion [h.] haliaetus* reported Sep–Nov Akhna dam, Akrotiri salt lake, Larnaca STP, Lara, Mandria, Neo Horio and Rizokarpasos (Dipkarpaz). Single **Short-toed Snake-eagles** *Circaetus gallicus* Paphos STP 8 Oct and Akrotiri gravel pits 17 Oct. Single **Lesser Spotted Eagles** *Clanga pomarina* in the Akrotiri area 4, 25 & 27 Sep and 2, 3 & 24 Oct and Flamoudi (Mersinlik) 20 Sep. **Booted Eagles** *Hieraetus pennatus* Erimi 12 Jul, Zakaki marsh 22 Sep and 14 Oct, Mandria 12 Oct, Anarita 13 Oct and Pegeia 23 Oct. **Levant Sparrowhawks** *Accipiter brevipes* more numerous than usual: one Akrotiri salt lake 16 Sep and 4 Oct, one Timi 25 Sep, a juv Phasouri 2–3 Oct, Zakaki marsh 6 Oct. Late **Pallid Harriers** *Circus macrourus* (both males) Mandria 14 Nov and Avdimou 22 Nov. At least 35 **Common Buzzards** *Buteo b. buteo* heading north over

Zakaki marsh 7 Dec was unusual. The first confirmed breeding of **Water Rail** *Rallus [a.] aquaticus* since 1985 (three small chicks 13 Jul at Zakaki marsh). One **Corncrake** *Crex crex* Frenaros 7 Sep and another rescued from a swimming pool in Souni 18 Sep while a dead bird found Latchi 29 Sep. A **Baillon's Crake** *Zapornia pusilla* Zakaki marsh 6 Aug and one Phasouri reedbeds 18 Aug. Several migrating flocks of **Demoiselle Cranes** *Anthropoides virgo* seen leaving Akrotiri salt lake 23 Aug–12 Sep with max c70 on 27 Aug and 4 Sep. A small migrating flock was heard over Tala 27 Aug and 25 migrated south over Polis Chrysochou bay 6 Sep. **Common Cranes** *Grus grus* only recorded in Oct with several flocks of up to 95 seen island wide 4–20 Oct from Akhna dam, Akrotiri salt lake, Kouklia (Paphos), Larnaca salt lake, Mandria (Paphos), Meneou, Palaikythro, Phasouri reedbeds, Tala and Zakaki marsh.

Four **Eurasian Oystercatchers** *Haematopus ostralegus* flew across Polis Chrysochou bay 30 Aug. **Pied Avocets** *Recurvirostra avosetta* recorded Akrotiri gravel pits 10 Aug (one), Evretou dam 15 Sep, Larnaca STP 4 Oct (one), Lady's Mile 24 Nov–late Dec (two). A juv **Pacific Golden Plover** *Pluvialis fulva* Larnaca STP 9 Sep and a moulting adult there 21 Oct (tenth/eleventh records). A **Eurasian**



**Plate 2.** Eurasian Dotterel *Eudromias morinellus* 11 September 2017, Mandria, Paphos, Cyprus. © Dave Walker

**Dotterel** *Charadrius morinellus* Mandria 11–12 Sep (Plate 2). The regular Paphos headland **Whimbrel** *Numenius phaeopus* returned 19 Jul and then seen regularly till year end. Two heading west Polis Chrysochou bay 1 Sep; two Larnaca STP 2–9 Sep while up to four at Larnaca desalination plant fields 3–20 Sep and a single Akrotiri gravel pits 15 Oct. A single **Bar-tailed Godwit** *Limosa (l.) lapponica* Glapsides, Famagusta 9–13 Sep while a juv moved around the coast south of Larnaca STP 19–23 Oct (perhaps the same bird there 7–21 Nov. A **Red Knot** *Calidris canutus* Lady's Mile 29 Aug. Single **Broad-billed Sandpipers** *Calidris falcinellus* Akrotiri salt lake 17 Jul and Lady's Mile 24 Jul and three Larnaca STP 31 Aug. A **Great Snipe** *Gallinago media* Lady's Mile 9 Nov. A **Terek Sandpiper** *Xenus cinereus* Larnaca STP 31 Aug (11th record) and a **Red-necked Phalarope** *Phalaropus lobatus* there 31 Aug–6 Sep. A juv **Black-winged Pratincole** *Glareola nordmanni* Larnaca STP 26 Oct. A **Black-legged Kittiwake** *Rissa tridactyla* off Paphos headland 12 Nov (eighth record). Two adult **Great Black-headed Gulls** *Ichthyaetus ichthyaetus* Polis Chrysochou bay 7 Sep were the earliest autumn record. A **Common Gull** *Larus [c.] canus* Lady's Mile 7–8 Nov. A **Caspian Tern** *Hydroprogne caspia* off Polis Chrysochou bay 30 Aug.

Six **Western Stock Doves** *Columba o. oenas* near Larnaca desalination plant 26–28 Oct with four present 4 Nov. **Laughing Dove** *Spilopelia senegalensis* continues to spread: reports now from the west coast at Chlorakas (Paphos) and north coast at Agios Phylonas. A late record of **Common Cuckoo** *Cuculus canorus* (a juv) Paphos STP 19 Nov. A **Short-eared Owl** *Asio flammeus* Livera (Sadrazamköy) 11 Oct and one Paphos headland 4 Nov. Up to four **Little Swifts** *Apus affinis* in the Zakaki area 1–9 Oct. A **Pied Kingfisher** *Ceryle rudis* Zakaki marsh from end April seen regularly until 20 Sep. A late **European Bee-eater** *Merops apiaster* Phasouri reedbeds 11–16 Nov while a **Eurasian Hoopoe** *Upupa epops* Asprokremmos dam 18–24 Nov was also a late record as were single **Eurasian Wrynecks** *Jynx torquilla* Paphos headland 1–2 Nov and Oroklini marsh 3 Nov. 25 **Red-footed Falcons** *Falco [v.] vespertinus* Mia Millia (Haspolat) STP 10 Oct. Six **Eleanora's Falcons** *F. eleonora* Kapouti (Kalkanlı) reservoir 26 May–29 Jun (Plate 3). An unusually high number of **Merlins** *F. columbarius* recorded Nov–Dec from a number of locations. Two **Eurasian Hobbies** *F. subbuteo* with a young juv 23 Jun believed to have bred in the Akanthou (Tatlisu) area. A **Saker Falcon** *F. cherrug* Larnaca airport pools (south) 24 Dec.



**Plate 3.** Eleanora's Falcon *Falco eleonora* 26 May 2017 Kapouti (Kalkanlı) reservoir, Cyprus. © Sadik Azimli



A juv **Turkestan Shrike** *Lanius [isabellinus] phoenicuroides* Asprokremmos dam 18 Sep and an early 'Steppe' **Grey Shrike** *L. (meridionalis) pallidirostris* Armou hills 24–30 Sep and one **Livera** (Sadrazamköy) 11 Oct (17th/18th records). A **Northern Raven** *Corvus (corax) corax* Arodes 2 Oct (unusual away from Pentadaktylos mountains) and three **Trikomo** (Ískele) 21 Dec (increasingly scarce there). Two **Bimaculated Larks** *Melanocorypha bimaculata* Mandria 14 Nov and eight **Lesser Short-toed Larks** *Alaudala (r.) rufescens* there 6–14 Nov. A **Siberian Chiffchaff** *Phylloscopus [collybita] tristis* Anthoupolis (Nicosia) 29 Oct, an **Eastern Bonelli's Warbler** *P.[bonelli] orientalis* Paphos headland 3 Dec and the third record of **Dusky Warbler** *P. fuscatus* Mandria 3 Nov. A **Yellow-browed Warbler** *P. inornatus* ringed Prodigios 24 Sep and another seen Paphos foothills 31 Oct (18th/19th records). Single **Marsh Warblers** *Acrocephalus palustris* ringed Kouklia (Paphos) 21 Sep and Neo Horio 24 Sep, while another seen Phasouri reedbeds 11 Nov. An **Icterine Warbler** *Hippolais icterina* ringed Kouklia (Paphos) 21 Sep. **Savi's Warblers** *Locustella luscinioides* ringed Polis reedbeds 13 Oct (one) and 27 Oct (two). Only two **Barred Warbler** *Sylvia nisoria* reports: Agia Napa STP 14 Aug and Frenaros 19 Aug. A late **Lesser Whitethroat** *S. [c.] curruca* Kouklia (Paphos) 23 Dec and a **Rüppell's Warbler** *S. rueppelli* ringed Kouklia (Paphos) 21 Sep (rare in autumn).

Single **Goldcrests** *Regulus (r.) regulus* in different areas of Troodos 14 and 25 Nov. At least two **Wallcreepers** *Tichodroma muraria* in their usual winter haunt, Avagas gorge, 7 Nov–year end. Three juv **Rose-coloured Starlings** *Pastor roseus* feeding on a fig tree Karpasia 15 Aug (two 16 Aug). A good winter for **Fieldfares** *Turdus pilaris* Nov/Dec, mainly from Troodos but two were Paphos headland 1 Nov and singles Karpasia 18 Nov, Spiros beach 21 Nov and Nicosia 23 Nov while eight (high count) Agia Irini (Akdeniz) 13 Dec (Plate 4). Similarly, good numbers of **Redwings** *T. iliacus*: single numbers Troodos Nov/Dec and six Asprokremmos dam 4 Nov away from the mountains. 20 **Mistle Thrushes** *T. viscivorus* Agia Irini (Akdeniz) (high count). Only single records of **European Pied Flycatcher** *Ficedula [h.] hypoleuca* (Troodos 12 Sep) and **Collared Flycatcher** *F. albicollis* (Neo Horio 3 Oct).

**Red-breasted Flycatchers** *F. [p.] parva* Livera (Sadrazamköy) 25 Sep (Plate 5) and Agia Varvara 29 Sep. A male **Caspian Stonechat** *Saxicola torquatus hemprichii* Paphos STP 30 Oct and a female **Western Siberian Stonechat** *S. maurus* Kouklia (Paphos) 5 Nov. A pair of **Finsch's Wheatears** *Oenanthe finschii* Larnacatis Lapithou (Kozanköy) 1 Dec (Plate 6). A **Rock Sparrow** *Petronia petronia* cape Greco 2 Nov. A **Yellow-headed Wagtail** *Motacilla flava lutea* Agia Napa football fields 3 Sep (ninth record). The first **Bramblings** *Fringilla montifringilla* of the winter were singles at Prodigios and Troodos 24 and 31 Oct. From then to year end frequently reported



**Plate 4.** Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris* 13 December 2017 Agia Irini (Akdeniz), Cyprus. © Birtan Gökeri



**Plate 5.** Red-breasted Flycatcher *Ficedula [p.] parva* 25 September 2017 Livera (Sadrazamköy), Cyprus. © Ali Özdiç



**Plate 6.** Finsch's Wheatear *Oenanthe finschii* | December 2017 Larnaca tis Lapithou (Kozanköy), Cyprus. © Birtan Gökeri



**Plate 7.** Brambling *Fringilla montifringilla* | November 2017, Troodos, Cyprus. © Dave Walker

Troodos (Plate 7), max count nine, while away from Troodos one Larnaca salt lake 11 Dec. Similarly good numbers of **Hawfinches** *Coccothraustes coccothraustes* Nov/Dec (flocks of at least 15 reported from several areas of Troodos). A **Trumpeter Finch** *Bucanetes githagineus* Tombs of the Kings archaeological site, Paphos, 4–10 Nov. 12 **Eurasian Siskins** *Spinus spinus* Kormakitis (Koruçam) 27 Oct. Three **Yellowhammers** *Emberiza citrinella* Troodos 16 Nov, four 17 Nov and 12 on 25 Nov. A **Little Bunting** *E. pusilla* Latchi 3 Nov (sixth record).

## EGYPT

A **Verreaux's Eagle** *Aquila verreauxii* 80 km north of Shalatein (southern Red Sea coast) 25 Nov, rare so far south.

## IRAN

All records for Iran from Hormozgan province. A **Black Stork** *Ciconia nigra* near Tiab creek 26 Nov and a **Goliath Heron** *Ardea goliath* Shahr-e Now creek 29 Nov (Plate 8). A **Masked Booby** *Sula dactylatra* Bandar Abbas 25 Nov. A **Black-winged Kite** *Elanus caeruleus* Bahmani 25 Nov, one Kolagh Kashi 25 Nov, one Hakami 26 Nov. Seven **Crested Honey Buzzards** *Pernis ptilorhyncus* Jahad park 24 Nov, one Hasan Langi Pain 25 Nov, four Hakami 26 Nov, one Bandar Abbas 30 Nov, two Genu mountain 1 Dec. One **Bonelli's Eagle** *Aquila fasciata* Minab 25 Nov and two adults Sararu 30 Nov (200 km southeast of breeding range). 500 **Black Kites** *Milvus migrans* Koshtargah 24 Nov. A **White-breasted Waterhen** *Amaurornis phoenicurus* Sararu 30 Nov. 17 **Great Stone-curlews** *Esacus recurvirostris* Tiab creek 26 Nov where also an adult and a juv **Crab-plover** *Dromas ardeola*.



**Plate 8.** Goliath Heron *Ardea goliath* 29 November 2017, Shahr-e Now Creek, Iran. © Kjell A Dokka



**Plate 9.** Hume's Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus humei* 25 November 2017, Bahmani, Iran. © Magnus Ullman

Two **Pacific Golden Plovers** *Pluvialis fulva* and 24 **Great Knots** *Calidris tenuirostris* Golshar shore 24 Nov. Three **Great Black-headed Gulls** *Ichthyaeetus ichthyaeetus* Azini creek 27 Nov, one Bahl 29 Nov. A **Spotted Owllet** *Athene brama* Gaz river 28 Nov. Two **Sind Woodpeckers** *Dendrocopos assimilis* Hakami 26 Nov, two Asheghan 27 Nov and one Bandar 30 Nov. 20 **Sand Larks** *Alaudala raytal* Golshar shore 24 Nov, 70 Kolagh Kashi 25 Nov. Two **Plain Leaf Warblers** *Phylloscopus neglectus* Gaz river 28 Nov and two Genu mountain 1 Dec. Two **Hume's Leaf Warblers** *P. humei* Bahmani 25 Nov. Five **Oriental White-eyes** *Zosterops palpebrosus* Azini creek 27 Nov and ten Khalathi creek 29 Nov. One **Drongo** *Edolius* sp in flight Minab 28 Nov. Five **Afghan Babblers** *Turdoides huttoni* Koshtargah 24 Nov, six Hasan Langi Pain 25 Nov, two near Minab 27 Nov, two Sirik 30 Nov, 30 Genu mountain 1 Dec.

## ISRAEL

Five **Red-breasted Mergansers** *Mergus serrator* Mediterranean coast in Dec (two Acre, one Nakhsholim and two Palmakhim). First confirmed breeding record **White-headed Duck** *Oxyura leucocephala* (Jizreel valley July, female with ducklings). An exhausted **Black-throated Diver** *Gavia arctica* picked up Haifa 12 Nov and taken into care. Two **Wilson's Storm Petrels** *Oceanites oceanicus* off Eilat 12 Sep, one seen again 15 Sep (third record). A **Swinhoe's Storm Petrel** *Hydrobates monorhis*

off Eilat 15 Aug, two 12 Sep, one seen again 15 Sep (ninth/tenth records, it now seems this species occurs regularly in the gulf of Aqaba). An immature **Yellow-billed Stork** *Mycteria ibis* different sites in the Jizreel valley 9 Jul–6 Aug and another Harod valley Aug–at least 16 Sep. The two immature **Pink-backed Pelicans** *Pelecanus rufescens* recorded in Jun lingered Yeruham into Aug and northwestern Galilee into Jul.

A few migrating **Crested Honey Buzzards** *Pernis ptilorhynchus* various locations Sep and one near Haifa 9 Dec. A juvenile **Bateleur** *Terathopius ecaudatus* Jilabun, Golan heights, 26 Jul while the long-staying immature that relocated Judean plains to Hula valley in Aug, was seen over Nebi Samuel, Jerusalem 12 Sep and after being seen back in the Judean plains mid Oct then ranged between northwest Negev (21 Nov) and Ben Nir, Judean plains (29 Nov). Two **Demoiselle Cranes** *Anthropoides virgo* over Lavie, Galilee, 13 Sep. The third record of **Red-wattled Lapwing** *Vanellus indicus* near Kfar Blum, Hula valley, 13–20 Nov. A **Pacific Golden Plover** *Pluvialis fulva* Kfar Yehoshua reservoir, Jizreel valley, 29 Sep–14 Oct and one Tel Aviv 27–31 Oct and a **Caspian Plover** *Anarhynchus asiaticus* Habesor, northwest Negev, 19 Jul. One **Pectoral Sandpiper** *Calidris melanotos* Gan Shmuel fishponds, Hasharon region, 14–26 Sep (14th record). A **Long-billed Dowitcher** *Limnodromus scolopaceus* Maayan Zvi 15 Oct moved a few km to Nakhsholim where it remained to end Nov (third record).

**Steppe Grey Shrikes** *Lanius (meridionalis) pallidirostris* recorded Nebi Samuel 19 Sep–3 Oct, Maoz Hayim (Bet Shean valley) 22–23 Sep, Tel Aviv 9–31 Oct and 24 Nov, near Hazeva 26 Oct and Urim, northwest Negev, 24 Sep and 28 Dec. **Hume's Leaf Warblers** *Phylloscopus humei* Jerusalem, 29–30 Oct, Ketura (south Arava) 10–11 Nov, Tel Aviv 12 Nov (and three individuals in Dec), Lotan 21 Nov. A **Paddyfield Warbler** *Acrocephalus agricola* ringed IBRCE (Eilat) 8 Oct (12th record). A **Ménétriés's Warbler** *Sylvia mystacea* IBRCE 10 Nov and a **Ring Ouzel** *Turdus torquatus* Sde Boker 9 Nov. The fifth record of **Red-rumped Wheatear** *Oenanthe moesta* (a female) Uvda valley 21 Oct–31 Dec and then a male and female km94, central Arava, 4 Nov–31 Dec (sixth record). A **Basalt Wheatear** *O.*



*lugens warriae* Uvda valley, 28 Oct–31 Dec. Two more individuals, probably returning birds from previous winter, all Nov near Be'er Ora and Amram's Pillars north of Eilat (c13th–15th records). A **Kurdistan Wheatear** *O. [x.] xanthopyrmyna* Ketura, southern Arava, 26 Nov–31 Dec. A **Radde's Accentor** *Prunella ocularis* Gamla, Golan heights, 25 Nov. **Olive-backed Pipits** *Anthus hodgsoni* Sde Boker, 9 Nov (two), one Mitzpe Ramon 22–24 Nov, one IBRCE 22–29 Nov. A **Yellow-throated Sparrow** *Gymnoris xanthocollis* IBRCE 11–16 Sep and one Mitzpe Shalem, (Dead sea) 30 Sep (fifth & sixth records). A fly-over bird Kfar Ruppin 21 Sep was a probable **Yellow-breasted Bunting** *Emberiza aureola*. **Little Buntings** *E. pusilla* Nafcha (Negev mountains) 28 Oct, Hefer wetlands 29 Oct, 2 and 10 Nov, IBRCE 5 Nov, Kerem Ben Zimra (Upper Galilee) 11 Nov and Nir Oz (northwest Negev) 11 Nov.

## JORDAN

A 1cy **Black-winged Kite** *Elanus caeruleus* east of Madaba 20 Sep (Plate 10) and then single birds Madaba and the Jordan valley late Sep–late Nov. Now regularly recorded at these sites. At least 80 **White-cheeked Terns** *Sterna repressa*, including a few young still being fed, Aqaba 6 Sep (Plate 11, previously considered

a rare migrant, but probably under-recorded). Over 50 *flava* wagtails Al-Karama, Jordan valley, 22 Dec (not known to over-winter in Jordan). About half were **Black-headed Wagtails** *Motacilla (flava) feldegg* (the other ssp currently unidentified)

## OMAN

A ringed **Canada Goose** *Branta canadensis* Aviation Club beach, 23 Nov (first record). Two



**Plate 10.** Black-winged Kite *Elanus caeruleus* (1cy) 20 September 2017, east of Madaba, Jordan. © Fares Khoury



**Plate 11.** Three White-cheeked Terns *Sterna repressa* (right side of photo) 6 September 2017, Aqaba coast, Jordan. © Fares Khoury

**Eastern Greylag Geese** *Anser a. rubrirostris* Khawr Rawri 20–22 Nov, one Al Mouj golf course, Muscat, 23–24 Nov. Eight **Greater White-fronted Geese** *A. albifrons* 16 Nov, Al Qurm park, increasing to 11 on 25 Nov, all immatures. Three **Lesser White-fronted Geese** *A. erythropus* Al Mouj 15 Nov–10 Dec (fourth record and first for northern Oman). 12 **Ruddy Shelducks** *Tadorna ferruginea* Al Ansab wetland 23 Nov. A **Swinhoe's Storm Petrel** *Hydrobates monorhis* off Khawr Sawli 5 Nov and second record of **Streaked Shearwater** *Calonectris leucomelas* off Mirbat 4 Nov. One **Red-billed Tropicbird** *Phaethon aethereus* Ras al Hadd 4 Nov and one Ras Al Khabbah 15 Nov. **Abdim's Stork** *Ciconia abdimii* recorded Raysut STP from 22 Oct (500), max 570 on 18 Nov. A **Eurasian Bittern** *Botaurus stellaris* Khawr Sawli, 5 Nov. Five **Little Bitterns** *Ixobrychus minutus* Al Mouj golf course, Muscat, 19 Jul, three **Yellow Bitterns** *I. sinensis* East Khawr 21 Jul, one Khawr Rawri 24 Jul, one Al Mughsayl 25 Nov. 40 **Grey Herons** *Ardea cinerea* and 10 **Purple Herons** *A. purpurea* Sohar port 26 Sep. Three **Intermediate Egrets** *A. (i.) intermedia* Al Mughsayl 14 Nov. Three **Great White Pelicans** *Pelecanus onocrotalus* Al Ansab wetland, 19 Nov. A **Brown Booby** *Sula leucogaster* Daymaniyyat islands 10 Nov. One **Black-winged Kite** *Elanus caeruleus* Al Mouj 23 Nov and two juvs there 10 Dec. 100+ **Egyptian Vultures** *Neophron percnopterus* Multaqa rubbish dump 5 Nov. A **Crested Honey Buzzard** *Pernis ptilorhynchus* Khawr Taqah 5 Nov and two there 20 Nov. 11 **Eurasian Griffon Vultures** *Gyps fulvus* Tawi Atayr 15 Nov and 15 Wadi Darbat 3 Dec, presumably the same wintering individuals. A **Cinereous Vulture** *Aegyptius monachus* Raysut rubbish dump 29 Nov and another, possibly the same bird, Wadi Darbat 3 Dec (eighth & ninth records). Six **Lappet-faced Vultures** *Torgos tracheliotos* Multaqa rubbish dump 5 Nov. Six **Greater Spotted Eagles** *Clanga clanga* Al Ansab wetland 29 Oct including a *fulvescens* (possibly the same bird Seeb area 23 Nov) and ten Raysut STP 18 Nov.

A **Water Rail** *Rallus [a.] aquaticus* Saham STP 21 Oct. A **White-breasted Waterhen** *Amaurornis phoenicurus* Al Mughsayl 14–25 Nov. Two **Baillon's Crakes** *Porzana pusilla* and two **Little Crakes** *P. parva* Al Mughsayl 14 Nov. Seventh record of **Watercock** *Gallinula cinerea*

Al Ansab wetland, 5–6 Nov. Three **Common Cranes** *Grus grus* Wadi Darbat 21 Nov. A **Eurasian Stone-Curlew** *Burhinus oediacnemus* Al Mouj 22 Oct. 24 **Pied Avocets** *Recurvirostra avosetta* Raysut 19 Nov. Up to three **Spur-winged Lapwings** *Vanellus spinosus* Raysut STP 18 Nov–2 Dec. A high count (150+) of **Red-wattled Lapwings** *V. indicus* Qurm park 5 Dec. **Sociable Lapwings** *V. gregarius*: Raysut STP 14 Nov (one), Sahanawt farm 19 Nov (21). Ninth record of **Greater Painted-snipe** *Rostratula benghalensis* (an adult male) Khawr Kalba 13 Oct. A **Pheasant-tailed Jacana** *Hydrophasianus chirurgus* (adult in breeding plumage) Al Mouj 27 Jun–1 Jul and one Al Ansab wetlands 29 Oct (very rare north Oman). 25 **Black-tailed Godwits** *Limosa (l.) limosa* Al Mouj 16 Nov was a high count. The long-staying 2cy **Long-toed Stint** *Calidris subminuta* at East Khawr 25 Jul–2 Dec (Plate 12) and seen with a second bird 17 Nov. 660+ **Broad-billed Sandpipers** *C. falcinellus* Khawr Ghawi 19 Nov (a high count). 11 **Terek Sandpipers** *Xenus cinereus* Raysut 19 Nov (comparatively few records Nov). 3000 **Red-necked Phalaropes** *Phalaropus lobatus* off Mirbat 18 Nov. Single **Small Pratincoles** *Glareola lactea* recorded Raysut STP 18 Nov and Khawr Taqah 22 Nov, and then four East Khawr 2 Dec (five 6 Dec). Two **Lesser Noddies** *Anous tenuirostris* Taqah beach 22 Jul (Plate 13) and 11 Dec. Five **Pallas's Gulls** *Ichthyophaga ichthyophaga* Seeb 11 Dec (first record of season). 12 **Pomarine Skuas** *Stercorarius pomarinus* flying south Ras al Hadd (two hour sea watch) 4 Nov. An adult **Long-tailed Skua** *S. longicaudus* Daymaniyyat islands 10 Oct (ninth record).

A flock of 1200+ **Chestnut-bellied Sandgrouse** *Syrrhaptes exustus* in flight Saham STP 3 Nov. A **Rufous Turtle Dove** *Streptopelia (orientalis) meena* Raysut lagoons 24 Nov. A **Pied Cuckoo** *Oxylophus jacobinus* Saham STP 10 Oct and one Khawr Rawri 11 Nov. Ten **Diederik Cuckoos** *Chrysococcyx caprius* Ayn Hamran 22 Jul was a high count. An **Asian Koel** *Eudynamis [s.] scolopaceus* Al Mughsayl 5 Dec. An **Arabian Spotted Eagle-Owl** *Bubo (africanus) milesi* Sal al A'la 2–3 Nov (first Musandam record cf first record for UAE, Al Hajar mountains, 1 Dec). A female **European Nightjar** *Caprimulgus europaeus* flew in from sea, Al Mouj 21 Oct and an **Egyptian Nightjar**





**Plate 12.** Long-toed Stint *Calidris subminuta* 25 July 2017, East Khawr, Dhofar, Sultanate of Oman. © Magnus Ullman



**Plate 13.** Lesser Noddy *Anous tenuirostris* 22 July 2017, Taqah, Dhofar, Sultanate of Oman. © Magnus Ullman

*C. aegyptius* Muntasar 26 Nov. One **Alpine Swift** *Tachymarptis melba* Sohar port 6 Jul and three Ayn Hamran, 30 Nov. A **Pacific Swift** *Apus [p.] pacificus* Khawr Jirama 4 Nov (third record). Single **Little Swifts** *Apus affinis* Masirah STP, Hilf, 27 Jun, Ras Al Khabbah 15 Nov, Ayn Tobruq 20 Nov and Wadi Darbat 3 Dec. A **Malachite Kingfisher** *Corythornis cristatus* Al Mughsayl 22–25 Nov. Only one **Amur Falcon** *Falco [vespertinus] amurensis* recorded (Thumrayt 23 Nov). A late record

of **Sooty Falcon** *F. concolor* Ras A'Sawadi 12 Nov. A **Lanner Falcon** *F. biarmicus* Al Beed farm 2 Nov and two there 16 Nov. A **Saker Falcon** *F. cherrug* Ras A'Sawadi 12 Nov. An **Oriental Skylark** *Alauda gulgula* East Khawr 17 Nov. An early (or late) **Barn Swallow** *Hirundo rustica* Sohar port 8 Jul and a **Red-rumped Swallow** *Cecropis daurica* Ayn Hamran 22 Nov. Two **Streak-throated Swallows** *Petrochelidon fluvicola* Hilf, Masirah, 7 Nov and one Raysut lagoons 15 Nov

(seventh & eighth records). A **Dusky Warbler** *Phylloscopus fuscatus* Al Beed farm 16 Nov (fourth record). Five **Great Reed Warblers** *Acrocephalus [arundinaceus] arundinaceus* Al Mughsayl 14 Nov. A **Savi's Warbler** *Locustella luscinioides* Qurm park 5 Dec.

A **Brahminy Starling** *Sturnia pagodarum* Al Mughsayl 25 Nov and a **Rose-coloured Starling** *Pastor roseus* Majis 19 Jun. Two **Masked Wagtails** *Motacilla (alba) personata* roosting with **White Wagtails** *Motacilla (a.) alba* Ras al Hadd 4 Nov, one Sahanawt farm 20 Nov and one Khawr Taqah 22 Nov. Eight **Arabian Golden-winged Grosbeaks** *Rhynchostruthus [socotranus] percivali* Wadi Nahiz 25 Jul and four Ayn Tobruq 20 Nov.

## QATAR

A male **Red-crested Pochard** *Netta rufina* Irkayya farm (IF) 29 Dec. A **Black-winged Kite** *Elanus caeruleus vociferus* IF 16 Sep–2 Dec (ninth record) and a **Short-toed Snake Eagle** *Circaetus gallicus* there 29 Sep–5 Dec (21st record). The sixth record of **Eastern Imperial Eagle** *Aquila heliaca* IF 3 Nov. Single **Black-eared Kites** *Milvus (migrans) lineatus* IF 7 and 25 Oct. At least four **Long-Legged Buzzards** *Buteo [r.] rufinus* IF 23 Oct–31 Dec (second winter this species has wintered at IF); one West Saliya STP, 8 Dec and one Abu Naklah 8 Dec (26th–31st records). Single **'Northern' Steppe Buzzards** *Buteo b. vulpinus* IF 19 Oct and 1 Dec (sixth & seventh records). A weak **Corncrake** *Crex crex* Al Shamal park 3 Sep eventually killed by a feral cat. A record three **Spur-winged Plovers** *Vanellus spinosus* West Saliya STP 4 Aug and IF 1 Oct. A juv **Sociable Lapwing** *V. gregarius* IF 14 Oct. The first **Caspian Plover** *Anarhynchus asiaticus* Wakra shoreline 2 Aug and then four Irkayya lagoons 25 Aug and three IF 10 Oct. The fourth record of **Black-winged Pratincole** *Glareola nordmanni* (three IF 4 Nov). A maximum count of 80–100 **Pin-tailed Sandgrouse** *Pterocles alchata* during July at an undisclosed site. Fourth record of **Great Spotted Cuckoo** *Clamator glandarius* (one) IF 31 Dec and a hepatic female **Common Cuckoo** *Cuculus canorus* there 29 Oct. A **Pharaoh Eagle Owl** *Bubo ascalaphus* at undisclosed site July. A small influx of **Short-Eared Owls** *Asio flammeus* IF 1 Dec (four birds). **Egyptian Nightjars** *Caprimulgus aegyptius* seen Hassad

farm (adjacent to IF) numerous July dates (max 20), seen also IF and lagoons (26 Aug)—breeding suspected but not confirmed.

Up to 17 **Bimaculated Larks** *Melanocorypha bimaculata* IF 5–22 Dec (sixth record). A **Hume's Whitethroat** *Sylvia [curruca] althaea* IF 6 Oct. Single **Thrush Nightingales** *Luscinia luscinia* IF 16 Sep, Abu Dalouf park 6 Oct, Sheraton hotel 10 Oct (13th–15th records). A **White-throated Robin** *Irania gutturalis* IF 1 Oct (second autumn record). Ninth record **'Caspian Stonechat'** *Saxicola rubicola hemprichii* IF 8 Dec. Two **Yellow-throated Sparrows** *Gymnoris xanthocollis* Abu Dalouf park (Al Shamal) 15–29 Sep were the ninth record. A **Masked Wagtail** *Motacilla (alba) personata* IF 25 Nov (fourth record). A male **Brambling** *Fringilla montifringilla* Abu Dalouf park (Al Shamal) 2 Dec (second record) while a **Common Rosefinch** *Carpodacus erythrinus* was there 15–29 Sep. Fourth record **Eurasian Siskin** *Spinus spinus* (two birds) IF 23 Dec.

## SAUDI ARABIA

A **Ruddy Shelduck** *Tadorna ferruginea* King Abdullah University of Science and Technology, (KAUST, Thuwal, near Jeddah) 12 Nov, a first for the location and first record for Saudi Arabia for many years. Two **Chukar Partridges** *Alectoris chukar* Jebal Al-Lawz (200 km west of Tabuk) 7 Oct, the only site for the species in the Kingdom. Three **Harlequin Quails** *Coturnix delegorguei* remained in a large field near Jizan into late Aug including at least two males. 24 **Black-necked Grebes** *Podiceps nigricollis* Ash Shargiyah Development Company farm (SDF), Fadhili, 24 Nov–8 Dec is the largest flock for many years.

The **Goliath Heron** *Ardea goliath* reported 22 Oct 2016 remained at KAUST to Dec 2017. An adult male **Crested Honey Buzzard** *Pernis ptilorhynchus* Deffi park, Jubail 29 Sep with an immature male at Dhahran 29 Sep–4 Nov. A **Eurasian Griffon Vulture** *Gyps fulvus* Shaybah 27 Oct with three at SDF 23 Nov–1 Dec, a vagrant to the Eastern province although a resident breeder in the west of the Kingdom. An adult male **Little Bustard** *Tetrax tetrax* near Dumah Al Jandal, 8 Oct (first record). A **Little Crane** *Zapornia parva* KAUST, 27 Nov was only the second record for the location while a **Grey-headed Swamphen** *Porphyrio (porphyrio) poliocephalus* was at Dhahran golf



**Plate 14.** Pied Kingfisher *Ceryle rudis* 24 November 2017, Ash Shargiyah Development Company farm, Fadhili, Eastern province, Saudi Arabia. © Jem Babbington

course, 2 Dec. A **Northern Lapwing** *Vanellus vanellus* Dhahran, 17–18 Nov and four **Spur-winged Lapwings** *V. spinosus* Haradh pivot fields 20 Oct and two SDF 10 Nov. One **Sociable Lapwing** *V. gregarius* KAUST 8 Dec and a **White-tailed Lapwing** *V. leucurus* at Sabkhat Al Fasl (SAF) 29 Sep–13 Oct with a juv **Red-necked Phalarope** *Phalaropus lobatus* there 8 Sep.

A **Short-eared Owl** *Asio flammeus* at Dhahran golf course 4 Nov. A high count of up to 15 **Egyptian Nightjars** *Caprimulgus aegyptius* SAF until 8 Sep at least with one remaining until 15 Sep. A **White-throated Kingfisher** *Halcyon smyrnensis* trapped and ringed SAF 15 Sep, remaining to 10 Dec with an unringed bird at the same site 13 Oct, another KAUST 5 Nov–15 Dec, only the second record for the site, and a further bird SDF 10 Nov–8 Dec. A male **Pied Kingfisher** *Ceryle rudis* SDF 4 Nov–15 Dec, joined by a female 24 Nov–8 Dec (Plate 14). An adult **Eleonora's Falcon** *Falco eleonorae* KAUST golf course 24 Oct. Two **White-eared Bulbuls** *Pycnonotus leucotis* near Tabuk 7 Oct, well away from their normal range.

A **Yellow-browed Warbler** *Phylloscopus inornatus* near Tabuk in vegetation on the edge of a pivot irrigation field 8 Oct (Plate 15, a vagrant) while a calling **Hume's Leaf Warbler** *P. humei* Deffi park, Jubail 27 Oct (second



**Plate 15.** Yellow-browed Warbler *Phylloscopus inornatus* 8 October 2017, near Tabuk, Tabuk province, Saudi Arabia. © Jem Babbington

record). One **Sykes's Warbler** *Iduna rama* Tabuk 8 Oct (third record). Several **Common Mynas** *Acridotheres tristis* near Tabuk 8 Oct, well away from their currently recorded range. A **Black Scrub Robin** *Cercotrichas podobe* was on a farm near Al Hassa 20 Oct. A **Collared Flycatcher** *Ficedula albicollis* KAUST 21 Aug, a species still regarded as a vagrant to the Kingdom. An **Eastern Cinereous Bunting** *Emberiza (cineracea) semenowi* KAUST 9–12 September, a first for the location while the



fifth record of **Little Bunting** *E. pusilla* near Jeddah corniche 19–23 Oct.

## TURKEY

The comparatively mild winter has resulted in fewer waterbirds moving southward to the Black sea. Four **Greater Scaups** *Aythya marilla* off Ordu 25 Nov. A **Red-throated Diver** *Gavia stellata* Kızılırmak delta 17 Dec and single **Horned Grebes** *Podiceps auritus* off Trabzon 19 Oct and Anadolufeneri, İstanbul, 16 Dec. More than 15 **European Storm Petrels** *Hydrobates (p.) pelagicus* off Didim, Aydın, 26 Aug. A **Lesser Flamingo** *Phoeniconaias minor* Gediz delta 4 Dec was almost certainly the same bird seen in previous years (last recorded Kulu Gölü 30 Apr 2017). A juv **Sociable Lapwing** *Vanellus gregarius* on the beach near Trabzon 14 Oct. A single **Pacific Golden Plover** *Pluvialis fulva* near Konya 4 Sep while another stayed 13 Sep–end of the year at same spot Kızılırmak delta. A **Great Snipe** *Gallinago media* at Aras ringing station, Iğdır, 20 Sep and a single **Terek Sandpiper** *Xenus cinereus* Kızılırmak delta 3 Sep. A **Grey Phalarope** *Phalaropus fulicarius* 8 Dec Abana, Kastamonu (Black sea) (sixth record). Two **Black-legged Kittiwakes** *Rissa tridactyla* 6 Nov during a short sea-watch at Rumelifeneri, İstanbul. Two **Herring Gulls** *Larus argentatus* Samsun 23 Dec (sixth record). A **Namaqua Dove** *Oena capensis* Rize (Black sea) 25 May 2017 (second record).



**Plate 16.** Olive-backed Pipit *Anthus hodgsoni* 12 December 2017, Subaşı, Hatay province, Turkey. © Mehmet Atahan

Only one record of **Turkestan Shrike** *Lanius [isabellinus] phoenicuroides* (Birecik 29 Oct). A **Dusky Warbler** *Phylloscopus fuscatus* ringed Aras ringing station 2 Oct (fifth record). Two **Pallas's Leaf Warblers** *P. [proregulus] proregulus* Kızılırmak delta 16 Oct (fourth record). Only one **Yellow-browed Warbler** *P. inornatus* this autumn at Kızılırmak delta (15 Oct), but one Ankara city 30 Nov and another near Beypazarı (Ankara province) 8 Oct. Two **Western Grasshopper Warblers** *Locustella (n.) naevia* ringed, one Aras 13 Sep and one Kızılırmak delta 26 Sep. A slightly off-range **Ménétriés's Warbler** *Sylvia mystacea* ringed Kızılırmak delta 19 Sep. A late **Isabelline Wheatear** *Oenanthe isabellina* Riva, İstanbul 23 Nov. Three **Blyth's Pipits** *Anthus godlewski* Milleyha, Hatay province 3 Dec and three **Olive-backed Pipits** *A. hodgsoni* Subaşı village, Hatay province, 12 Dec (Plate 16). A **Rustic Bunting** *Emberiza rustica* third airport Tayakadın, İstanbul, 12 Oct.

## UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

Two **Mute Swans** *Cygnus olor* Jebel Dhanna 15 Dec (fifth record if considered wild). 25 **Jouanin's Petrels** *Bulweria fallax* and a **Red-tailed Tropicbird** *Phaethon aethereus* off Kalba 27 Oct. **Squacco Heron** *Ardeola ralloides* confirmed breeding in Al Ain 1 Jul (with a second brood at the same site 25 Oct). An **Intermediate Egret** *Ardea (i.) intermedia* Ras al Khor 12 Oct. A **Great White Pelican** *Pelecanus onocrotalus* Ras al Khor 22 Nov and then Al Zorah 10–22 Dec (ninth record). A **Masked Booby** *Sula dactylatra* (rare migrant) Al Aqqah beach 4 Sep but died next day.

An unseasonable **Black-winged Kite** *Elanus caeruleus vociferus* Hamraniyah fields 30 Jun while one Qudra 16 Sep, seen again mid Oct, was a more usual date. A **Crested Honey-Buzzard** *Pernis ptilorhynchus* seen several times in Abu Dhabi in Aug was presumably over-summering. Three **Lappet-faced Vultures** *Torgos tracheliotos* Qudra (1 and 20 Sep) presumed to be the same birds seen there occasionally until end Nov. An **Eastern Imperial Eagle** *Aquila heliaca* near Dubai 11 Jul (unusual date) and another Kalba 21 Oct (first of the winter). A **Shikra** *Accipiter (badius) cenchroides* Wamm farms 15 Sep (first east coast record). A **Spotted Crane** *Porzana porzana* Abu Dhabi 4 Oct. The first **Sociable**



**Plate 17.** Sociable Lapwings *Vanellus gregarius* 30 November 2017, Qudra, United Arab Emirates. © Oscar Campbell

**Lapwings** *Vanellus gregarius* (five) Al Ain 23 Oct increased to eight by 16 Nov with three more Qudra 30 Nov (Plate 17) and two Qudra 8 Dec. A **Caspian Plover** *Anarhynchus asiaticus* Hamraniyah fields 1 Sep remained into Oct while the ninth record of **Lesser Noddy** *Anous tenuirostris* was at Luo'alou'ayyah beach 21 Sep.

The first record of **Spotted Eagle-Owl** *Bubo (africanus) milesi* found in the Al Hajar mountains 1 Dec (possibly indicating rare resident). A **Short-eared Owl** *Asio flammeus* in Abu Dhabi end of October, one there 3 Nov, one Wamm farms most of Nov and one A'Sila'a 29 Dec. Up to 30 **Egyptian Nightjars** *Caprimulgus aegyptius* Ajban throughout August, decreasing gradually until early October; 12 also reported at Qudra 19 Jul with singles Abu Dhabi 8 Sep and A'Sila'a 21 Sep. A **Bay-backed Shrike** *Lanius vittatus* Wamm farms 26 Aug–1 Sep. The long-staying **Black Drongo** *Edolius macrocerus* Mushreef park, Dubai, 28 Oct and 25 Dec while one Abu Dhabi golf club 3 Dec was unusual away from greater Dubai. The first **Hypocolius** *Hypocolius ampelinus* (15) were back on Lulu island, Abu Dhabi, by 13 Nov. Eight **Calandra Larks** *Melanocorypha calandra* (tenth record, also highest number recorded) A'Sila'a 1 Dec, another Wamm farms 8 Dec, two there 9 Dec, one remaining to 26 Dec. A **Streak-throated**



**Plate 18.** Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris* 18 November 2017, Jebel Dhanna, United Arab Emirates. © Khalifa Al Dhaheri



**Plate 19.** Caspian Stonechat *Saxicola maurus hemprichii* 30 November 2017, Qudra, United Arab Emirates. © Oscar Campbell





**Plate 20.** Paddyfield Pipit *Anthus rufulus* 24 November 2017, Hamraniyah fields, United Arab Emirates. © Oscar Campbell

**Swallow** *Petrochelidon fluvicola* Al Zorah 24 Dec, moving to Ajman STP 29 Dec into 2018. Single **Yellow-browed Warblers** *Phylloscopus inornatus* Abu Dhabi 25 Oct and Al Mamzar 28 Oct. An early **Green Warbler** *P. [trochiloides] nitidus* Al Mamzar 31 Aug and another there 16 Sep, with one Wadi Wurrayah 27 Sep and one Abu Dhabi 7 Oct. The first **Moustached Warbler** *Acrocephalus melanopogon* for several years at Qudra from 20 Dec, remaining into 2018 (18th record). Three **Blyth's Reed Warblers** *A. dumetorum* recorded 1–21 Sep Abu Dhabi and one Al Mamzar 16 Sep. An early **Savi's Warbler** *Locustella luscinioides* Abu Dhabi 21 Aug with one Al Wathba 7 Oct. The sixth record of **Fieldfare** *Turdus pilaris* Jebel Dhanna 18 Nov (Plate 18, last record 1990). A **Pied Stonechat** *Saxicola caprata* Wamm farms 15 Sep and a **Caspian Stonechat** *S. maurus hemprichi* Qudra 30 Nov (Plate 19, rare in autumn). Two **Eastern Black-eared Wheatears** *Oenanthe (hispanica) melanoleuca* A'Sila'a 21 Sep.

The first record of **Paddyfield Pipit** *Anthus rufulus* Hamraniyah fields 10–26 Nov (Plates 20). The first **Siberian Buff-bellied Pipits** *A. (rubescens) japonicas* arrived late Nov as usual, three at Hamraniyah fields from 24 Nov, one A'Sila'a same date, seen again 29 Dec. A **Brambling** *Fringilla montifringilla* and a **Eurasian Siskin** *Spinus spinus* Delma island 1 Dec.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Azerbaijan: Tomas Axén Haraldsson, Kai Gauger, Pia Fetting, Christoffer Himmel; Bahrain: Abdullah Al Kaabi, Howard King; Cyprus: Jane Stylianou, Damla Beton, Robin Snape; Egypt: Tomas Axén Haraldsson; Iran: Marcus Ullman; Israel: Yoav Perlman; Jordan: Fares Khoury; Oman: Jens Eriksen ([www.birdsoman.com](http://www.birdsoman.com)), Magnus Ullman; Qatar: Gavin Farnell; Saudi Arabia: Jem Babbington ([www.birdsofsaudi-arabia.com](http://www.birdsofsaudi-arabia.com)), Philip Roberts; Turkey: Kerem Ali Boyla, Nizamettin Yavuz, Ali Atahan; United Arab Emirates: Oscar Campbell, Tommy Pedersen ([www.uaebirding.com/uae\\_news.html](http://www.uaebirding.com/uae_news.html)).

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