

# AROUND THE REGION

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Records and photographs for *Sandgrouse* 39 (2) should be sent by 15 June 2017 to atr@osme.org.

## AZERBAIJAN

An Azeri-Swedish-German team monitored the migration site Besh Barmag on the Caspian coast north of Baku 8–25 Sep; during this period 140 000 south-flying birds were counted although raptor numbers were low compared with previous years. 150 spp were counted 16–19 Sep, including 4000 **Garganey** *Anas querquedula*, 3000 **White-winged Terns** *Chlidonias leucopterus*, 3000 **Blue-cheeked Bee-Eaters** *Merops persicus*. Outside this period, 11 **Sociable Lapwings** *Vanellus gregarius* were counted 15 Sep and two 21 Sep. Three **Caspian Plovers** *Charadrius asiaticus* seen 18 Sep on dry fields c40 km north of Besh Barmag and possibly the same three passed Besh Barmag 21 Sep. 300 **Black-winged Pratincoles** *Glareola nordmanni* seen on the dry fields 17 Sep.

## CYPRUS

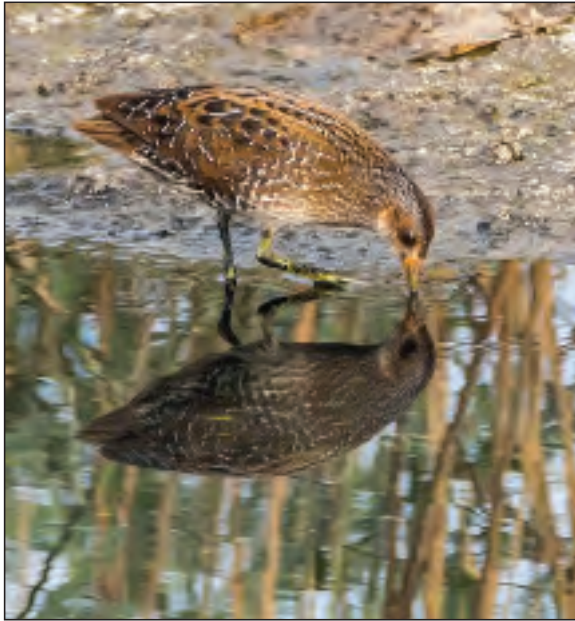
The usual wintering group of **Greater White-fronted Geese** *Anser albifrons* with five at Larnaca sewage treatment plant 21 Oct, increasing to six 10 Dec and seven 24 Dec to year's end (numbers have decreased annually from the several hundred that used to winter in the area). The long staying **Ruddy Shelduck** *Tadorna ferruginea* was last seen Larnaca STP 13 Aug, while up to two there 5 Nov–18 Dec and 16 Larnaca salt lake 22 Dec. A **Red-crested Pochard** *Netta rufina* at Haspolat/Mia Milia STP 16 Oct. A **Tufted Duck** *Aythya fuligula* Mersinlik/Flamoudi dam 25 Nov and four Haspolat/Mia Milia STP 27 Nov. Six **Scopoli's Shearwaters** *Calonectris diomedea* off Paphos headland 3 Oct, five on 5 Oct while 20 off Pomos 10 Oct, then 139 on 13 Oct and 72 on 14 Oct. A **Yelkouan Shearwater** *Puffinus yelkouan* close to shore Akrotiri 27 Aug and 17 moving west off Pomos 13 Oct. Two **Great**

**Crested Grebes** *Podiceps cristatus* Achna dam 24–26 Nov with one 29 Nov staying until at least 31 Dec and two Asprokremmos dam 22–26 Dec (one there 29 Dec). The third record of **Horned Grebe** *P. auritus* offshore at Lady's Mile 14 Nov (last record 1958).

A **Black Stork** *Ciconia nigra* over Kannaviou dam 16 Sep, one over Phasouri reed beds 24 Sep, one cape Greco 10 Oct, one Phasouri reed beds 19 Nov and a juvenile flying south Lady's Mile 17 Dec. Three **Western White Storks** *C. c. ciconia* over Pegeia 16 Aug, up to four Akrotiri 14–28 Sep, five Frenaros 16 Sep and 14 Mandria 18 Sep, three Paphos STP 4–11 Oct and one migrating south Pyla/Pile 13 Oct. 210 **Western Cattle Egrets** *Bubulcus ibis* Haspolat/Mia Milia STP 27 Nov was a high count as were 261 **Grey Herons** *Ardea cinerea* Karşiyaka/Vasileia headland 26 Sep. There were 49 **Purple Herons** *A. purpurea* at Karşiyaka/Vasileia headland 26 Sep and 213 **Little Egrets** *Egretta garzetta* Esentepe coast/Agios Amvrosio 25 Sep. Several reports of **Great White Pelicans** *Pelecanus onocrotalus*: max 14 Mandria 18 Sep and three Akrotiri salt lake 28 Sep, one Haspolat/Mia Milia STP and an immature Larnaca STP until 24 Dec. A total 1027 **Glossy Ibises** *Plegadis falcinellus* passed north coast late June onwards (casual observations and random counts, indicate true total much higher); eight remained at Haspolat/Mia Milia STP until 8 Nov.

A juvenile female **Egyptian Vulture** *Neophron percnopterus* raised in captivity and ringed in Bulgaria reported Pomos 8 Sep but later drowned 25 km off Tel Aviv, Israel, 9 Sep while another reported via satellite tag over Akamas 13 Sep evening, drowned off Egypt 14 Sep; one over Akrotiri gravel pits 28 Sep. Five reports of **Short-toed Snake Eagles** *Circaetus gallicus*: one Akrotiri GP 17 Sep, 16 Oct, one Pissouri 20 Sep, one Timi

(Paphos) 21 Sep and one Akrotiri salt lake 8 Oct. Single **Lesser Spotted Eagles** *Aquila pomarina* Akrotiri SL 13 and 25 Sep, Phasouri reed beds 28 Sep and Secret Valley golf course 9 Oct. **Booted Eagles** *Hieraaetus pennata* seen migrating through Mandria (Paphos) 18 and 30 Sep, Asprokremmos dam 19 Sep, Timi beach (Paphos) 21 Sep, Zakaki marsh 24 Sep and Akrotiri SL 3 Oct. A juvenile **Levant**



**Plate 1.** Spotted Crake *Porzana porzana* Haspolat/Mia Milia sewage treatment plant, Cyprus, 21 November 2016. © Ali Özding

**Sparrowhawk** *Accipiter brevipes* Phasouri reed beds 19 Sep. A **Little Bustard** *Tetrax tetrax* Paphos headland 28 Dec (third record although several previous anecdotal reports of shot birds). A **Spotted Crake** *Porzana porzana* Mersinlik/Flamoudi reservoir 23 Sep and one 18–21 Nov Haspolat/Mia Milia STP (Plate 1) while a **Corncrake** *Crex crex* shot Karpaz/Karpas peninsula 4 Sep.

Several large flocks of **Demoiselle Cranes** *Grus virgo* seen or heard over the west of the island late Aug–early Sep: 60 over Stroumbi (Paphos) 23 Aug, 200 Pomos heading SW on morning of 31 Aug. Several flocks seen leaving early morning after roosting on Akrotiri SL: over 100 on 27 Aug, 67 on 29 Aug and 27 on 30 Aug. Smaller numbers early Sep: max 30 on 1 Sep, 14 on 3 Sep and nine 6 Sep (various locations). A **Common Crane** *G. grus* Akrotiri SL 2 Oct (first of the autumn) and 13 there 19 Oct, 40 Agioi Trimithias (Nicosia) 19 Oct and 120 the same day at Yeni Erenköy/Gialousa (highest autumn concentration), three Akrotiri SL 20–25 Nov may be the same birds seen Larnaca SL 16–17 Dec, 20 Akrotiri area 21–27 Dec, 18 Paphos airport 29 Dec.

75 **Eurasian Stone-curlews** *Burhinus [oediconemus] oediconemus* East Mesaoria plain 12 Oct was a high count (four reported shot Dec).



**Plate 2.** Eurasian Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus* Gaziveran/Kazivera, Cyprus, 22 September 2016. © Sadik Azimli





**Plate 3.** Pied Kingfisher *Ceryle rudis* Boğaz/Bogazi lagoon, Cyprus, 26 November 2016. © Huseyin Yorganci

Single **Eurasian Oystercatchers** *Haematopus ostralegus* Polis Chrysochou bay 7 Aug and 10 Sep, Gaziveran/Kazivera 22–24 Sep (Plate 2) and two Sadrazamköy/Livera 20 Oct. A very high concentration of 130 **Spur-winged Lapwings** *Vanellus spinosus* Ayluga lake/Agios Loukas 19 Sep. Single **Bar-tailed Godwits** *Limosa lapponica* Akrotiri GP 8 Aug and 16–24 Sep and Gaziveran/Kazivera 23–25 Sep. 12–14 **Spotted Redshanks** *Tringa erythropus* Ayluga lake/Agios Loukas 19 Sep–3 Oct was a high count. The first **Broad-billed Sandpiper** *Limicola falcinellus* of the autumn Larnaca STP 15 Aug then two Lady's Mile 20 Aug, one remaining in the area 26 Aug–9 Sep. A single **Little Gull** *Hydrocoloeus minutus* Famagusta 8 Dec (now far less regular and less common than in the past). A first-winter **Great Black-headed Gull** *Ichthyaetus ichthyaetus* Lady's Mile 1 Dec and Larnaca SL 22 Dec. A first-winter **Common Gull** *Larus c. canus* Lady's Mile 15–16 Dec, increasing to three until 31 Dec when one bird (ssp *heinei*) noted. A **Caspian Tern** *Hydroprogne caspia* off Agia Napa 23 Nov while an unusually high number of **White-winged Terns** *Chlidonias leucopterus* (220) at Polis, Chrysochou bay, 19 Aug. Single pale phase **Arctic Skuas** *Stercorarius parasiticus* headed west off Pomos 10 and 14 Oct and three 13 Oct.

Three **Black-bellied Sandgrouse** *Syrhaptes orientalis* shot Yeni Erenköy/Gialousa and one shot Taşlıca/Neta 28 Dec (last day legal ground-bird shooting). First record **Rufous Turtle Dove** *Streptopelia (orientalis) meena* shot in the Larnaca area mid Dec. The colonisation of the island by **Laughing Doves** *Spilopelia senegalensis* continues with more than twenty recorded outside Larnaca and new breeding locations found in villages to the east of Paphos in addition to the established colonies at Agia Napa and Limassol; one Laughing Dove reported as far east as Karpaz/Karpass 8 Oct. One **Long-eared Owl** *Asio otus* Dipkarpaz/Rizokarpaso village 19 Nov and one **Short-eared Owl** *A. flammeus* Paphos headland 28 Dec (both uncommon winter visitors).

A **Little Swift** *Apus affinis* over Akrotiri GP 16 Aug with another at nearby Phasouri 25 Sep (18 & 19th records) and a late record of **Common Swift** *A. apus* Bishop's Pool 14 Dec. A **Pied Kingfisher** *Ceryle rudis* Paphos coast 1 Nov and one Boğaz/Bogazi lagoons 24 Nov–31 Dec (Plate 3) and into 2017. Up to two overwintering **Eurasian Hoopoes** *Upupa epops* near Nicosia airport various dates Nov, increasing to seven 19 Dec (same location and months as 2010). 25 **Red-footed Falcons** *Falco (vespertinus) vespertinus* Balıkesir/Palaikythro 6–11 Oct.



**Plate 4.** 'Steppe' Grey Shrike *Lanius (meridionalis) pallidirostris* 29 November 2016, cape Greco, Cyprus. © Jane Stylianou



**Plate 5.** Horned Lark *Eremophila alpestris* 25 October 2016, Troodos, Cyprus. © Brian Robertson





**Plate 6.** Wallcreeper *Tichodroma muraria* 12 November 2016, Avakas gorge, Paphos, Cyprus. © Dave Walker

A **Steppe Grey Shrike** *Lanius (meridionalis) pallidirostris* Akrotiri SL 26 Oct–18 Nov and another cape Greco 21 Nov–15 Dec (Plate 4, 13 & 14th records). 30 **Penduline Tits** *Remiz pendulinus* Haspolat/Mia Milia STP 8 Nov. One **Lesser Short-toed Lark** *Alaudala (rufescens) rufescens* Mandria 5 Nov and a first-winter male **Horned Lark** *Eremophila alpestris* Troodos 25 Oct (Plate 5, fourth record). Two late **Barn Swallows** *Hirundo rustica* 26 Nov Ayluga lake/Agios Loukas.

A **Mountain Chiffchaff** *Phylloscopus [collybita] sindianus* Avakas gorge 6 Nov was the third record. Single **Eastern Bonelli's Warblers** *P. orientalis* Souni 16 Aug and Marathounta 18 Aug (uncommon on autumn migration). At least two **Dusky Warblers** *P. fuscatus* Paphos STP 8 Nov–3 Dec and another Goudi (Paphos) 16–17 Nov (second & third records, first 1967). Single **Yellow-browed Warblers** *P. inornatus* at Çınarlı/Platani (Troodos) 4–10 Nov and Larnaca 20 Nov. An **Eastern Olivaceous Warbler** *Iduna pallida* cape Greco 10 Oct was a late record for this migrant breeder and passage migrant. One **Olive-tree Warbler** *Hippolais olivetorum*

Nicosia 12 Sep and a **River Warbler** *Locustella fluviatilis* Balikesir/Palaikythro 5 Sep. Only a few **Barred Warbler** *Sylvia nisoria* autumn reports: two Agia Napa STP 12 Aug, one Frenaros 11–14 Aug and one cape Greco 31 Oct.

Up to two **Wallcreepers** *Tichodroma muraria* Avakas gorge from 6 Nov and seen regularly until at least 12 Dec (Plate 6). A juvenile **Rose-coloured Starling** *Sturnus roseus* Zakaki marsh 1 Nov. One **Fieldfare** *Turdus pilaris* Mandria 27 Oct, six Arodes (Paphos) 15–16 Nov, ten Troodos 24 Nov and two Palaioметоcho (Nicosia) 14 Dec. A **Redwing** *T. iliacus* Kalo Horio 23 Nov while six **Mistle Thrushes** *T. viscivorus* recorded, max four Sadrazamköy/Livera 21 Nov. 20th record **White-throated Robin** *Irania gutturalis* near Akoursos (Paphos) 17 Aug. One female **Eurasian Pied Flycatcher** *Ficedula (hypoleuca) hypoleuca* Troodos 30 Aug and Asprokremmos dam 19–26 Sep (rare autumn). **Red-breasted Flycatchers** *F. parva* ringed Larnaca SL 19 Sep and Prodromos 1 Oct and others seen Protaras (Famagusta) 10 Oct and cape Greco 7 Nov. A **Semi-collared Flycatcher** *F. semitorquata*



**Plate 7.** Siberian Buff-bellied Pipit *Anthus (rubescens) japonicus* 8 November 2016, Nicosia, Cyprus. © Stavros Christodoulides

**Plate 8.** Bramblings *Fringilla montifringilla* Sadrazamköy/Livera, Cyprus, 29 October 2016. © Ertaç Cüneyt

Asprokremmos dam 12–19 Sep was the first autumn record. Male **'Ehrenberg's Redstarts'** *Phoenicurus p. samamisticus* Amathus hills (Limassol) 21 Sep and Armou hills 19 Oct. **'Western' Siberian Stonechats** *Saxicola (torquatus) maurus* Mandria 10 Nov and Paphos headland 10 Dec. Fall of 195 **Northern**

**Wheatears** *Oenanthe oenanthe* Mandria 24 Sep. One immature male **Desert Wheatear** *Oenanthe deserti* Paphos headland 10–13 Nov.

Five **Rock Sparrows** *Petronia petronia* Sinirustu/Sygkrasi, Famagusta, 19–27 Nov (generally scarce but regularly seen at this location). Several wintering **Dunnock** *Prunella*





**Plate 9.** Pine Bunting *Emberiza leucocephalos* 4 November 2016, Troodos, Cyprus. © Dave Walker

**Plate 10.** Rustic Bunting *Emberiza rustica* 24 November 2016, Paphos sewage treatment plant, Cyprus. © Jane Stylianou

*modularis* records: one Neo Horio (Paphos) 17 Nov, two Livadi tou Pashia (Troodos) 22 Nov, one Souni 23 Nov and one Avakas gorge 27 Nov. Fewer than normal **Citrine Wagtail** *Motacilla citreola* records: one Haspolat/Mia Milia STP 18 Sep, one Akrotiri SL 26 Sep, a juv Akrotiri GP 4 Oct and another there 10 Oct. Two **Richard's Pipits** *Anthus richardi*

Paphos STP 11 Oct (one 12 Oct), one Mandria 1–6 Nov and two Paphos headland 28–29 Dec. Third and fourth records of **Blyth's Pipit** *A. godlewskii*, Paphos STP 11 Oct and Mandria 31 Oct, and fifth record of **Olive-backed Pipit** *A. hodgsoni* Nicosia 5 Nov. **Siberian Buff-bellied Pipits** *A. (rubescens) japonicus* Nicosia 8 Nov



(Plate 7) and another Achna dam 19–29 Nov (fourth and fifth records).

A **Brambling** *Fringilla montifringilla* Paphos STP 25 Oct, a pair Sadrazamköy/Livera 29 Oct–4 Nov (Plate 8) and then single males Troodos 4–18 Nov with two reported 14 and 15 Nov. Up to six **Hawfinches** *Coccothraustes coccothraustes* Troodos 3 Nov–9 Dec while three Nata (Paphos) 14 Dec. A **Yellowhammer** *Emberiza citronella* Troodos 30 Oct and then a flock of 18 reported 12–26 Nov. **Pine Buntings** *E. leucocephalos* Troodos 4 Nov (one bird, Plate 9), two 15 Nov, one 17 Nov and at least three 18 Nov (seven previous records, now becoming more regular). First record of **Rustic Bunting** *E. rustica* (a first-winter female, Plate 10) Paphos STP 24 Nov. Thirty **Common Reed Buntings** *E. schoeniclus* Mehmetcik/Galateia lake 8 Dec was a high concentration.

## IRAN

Two **Long-tailed Ducks** *Clangula hyemalis* Ashuradeh, Golestan province, 29 Dec. A **White-tailed Eagle** *Haliaeetus albicilla* Pars-Abad, Moghan, Ardabil province, 24 Nov. One **Red-footed Falcon** *Falco vespertinus* Malekshahi city, Ilam province, 10 Nov. First record **Forest Wagtail** *Dendronanthus indicus* Bandar Abbas, Hormozgan province, 30 Nov. A **Rustic Bunting** *Emberiza rustica* Khoosheh



**Plate 11.** White-throated Robin *Irania gutturalis* 20 April 2016, Qara Dagh, Iraq. © Korsh Ararat

**Plate 12.** Eastern Cinereous Bunting *Emberiza (cineracea) semenowi* 2 April 2016, Qara Dagh, Iraq. © Korsh Ararat

Mehr village, Bonab, East Azarbaijan province, 23 Oct.

## IRAQ

A survey of Qara Dagh and Khoshk mountain, Iraqi Kurdistan, April–June 2016 produced 50 pairs of **Egyptian Vultures** *Neophron percnopterus*, 30 pairs **Griffon Vultures** *Gyps fulvus*, 75 pairs **Sombre Tits** *Poecile lugubris*, 12 pairs of **White-throated Robins** *Irania gutturalis* (Plate 11), ten **Semi-collared Flycatchers** *Ficedula semitorquata* and 52 pairs of **Eastern Cinereous Buntings** *Emberiza (cineracea) semenowi* (Plate 12). In addition to this survey, a **Black-winged Kite** *Elanus*



*caeruleus* seen Sulaimani 3 Jun, eleven **Eastern Imperial Eagles** *Aquila heliaca* between Arbat and Darbandikhan, 15 Dec, breeding **Iraq Babblers** *Turdoides altirostris* 29 May 2016 Erbil (two birds, one juvenile) and Sulaimani (five birds, one juvenile), 110 **Spanish Sparrows** *Passer hispaniolensis* Erbil, 27 and 29 May and three **Dead Sea Sparrows** *P. moabiticus* Erbil 26 and 29 May.

## ISRAEL

The fifth record of **Taiga Bean Goose** *Anser fabalis* Agamon Hula 8–19 Dec. Higher than average numbers of **Eastern Greylag Geese** *A. anser rubrirostris* (rare vagrants, not seen every year) were recorded around the country in small flocks from last half Nov. **Greater White-fronted Geese** *A. albifrons* were more plentiful than usual from mid Nov. One **Lesser White-fronted Goose** *A. erythropus* Maoz Haim, Bet Shean valley, 31 Oct–31 Dec (seventh record) while one Agamon Hula 25–26 Dec suspected to be a hybrid. One **Mute Swan** *Cygnus olor* Hula reserve 27–28 Dec (very rare winter visitor). **Ruddy Shelduck** *Tadorna ferruginea* numbers higher than usual from late November. A **Black-throated Diver** *Gavia arctica* off Haifa 15 Dec. Second record **Wilson's Storm Petrel** *Oceanites oceanicus* off Eilat 12 Sep (first since 1983); not clear if one there 13 Sep was same bird. Sixth record **European Storm Petrel** *Hydrobates pelagicus* off Haifa 24 Oct (first since 1992). Seventh record **Swinhoe's Petrel** *Oceanodroma monorhis* off Eilat 12–13 Sep while a *Pterodroma* sp off Eilat 27 Nov was possibly **Soft-plumaged Petrel** *P. mollis* or **Fea's Petrel** *P. feae* (one previous record of each). Single **Horned Grebes** *Podiceps auritus* recorded Ein Hamifratz, north coastal plains, 10–13 Nov and Ma'agan Michael 15–17 Dec (third & fourth records).

First **Lammergeier** *Gypaetus barbatus* since 2004 (an immature) Golan Heights 15 Nov–31 Dec. Long-staying immature **Bateleur** *Terathopius ecaudatus* seen southern Judean plains 6 Jul and then moved to NW Negev by late Oct (Reim 23 Oct, Habesor national park 15 Nov) and then returned to the plains Dec. Sixth record **Tawny Eagle** *Aquila rapax* near Ze'elim, NW Negev, 14 Jul–14 Aug. One **Sociable Lapwing** *Vanellus gregarius* Kfar Ruppim 23 Sep while several reported various

locations Oct. Single **White-tailed Lapwings** *V. leucurus* Nizzana 28 Sep and Jizreel valley 29 Sep while single **Pacific Golden Plover** *Pluvialis fulva* Gvat, Jizreel valley, 16–17 Oct, Maoz Haim 27–30 Oct and Sde Boker 29 Oct. Three **Caspian Plovers** *Charadrius asiaticus* Eilat 6–26 Aug. Higher than normal numbers of **Eurasian Dotterels** *C. morinellus* noted second half Nov. Two **Great Snipes** *Gallinago media* Timorim, south coastal plains, 25 Aug (unusual in autumn). One 1cy **Audouin's Gull** *Ichthyaetus audouinii* Ma'agan Michael 23 Aug and another Acre 17–20 Dec. First record '**Western Black-backed Gull**' *Larus fuscus graellsii* found Ma'agan Michael 28 Nov 2014 and subsequently Ashdod Mar Dec 2015 returned to Ma'agan Michael 27 Dec. **Lesser Crested Tern** *Thalasseus bengalensis* numbers built up at Eilat from mid July (max 13 on 30 Jul) while one Acre 16–17 Dec (rare in Mediterranean). One **Arctic Tern** *Sterna paradisaea* Eilat 29 Jul and one ringed Atlit 31 Jul.

A **Rufous Turtle Dove** *Streptopelia (orientalis) meena* Hula lake 12 Oct. One **Steppe Grey Shrike** *Lanius (meridionalis) pallidirostris* Yotvata 17–18 Oct and another Lakhish, south Judean lowlands, 26 Nov. A **Dunn's Lark** *Eremalauda dunni* Uvda valley 13 Sep. **Oriental Skylarks** *Alauda gulgula* recorded several locations Oct and Nov, max 11 Yotvata 23 Oct. First record **Asian House Martin** *Delichon dasypus* Ma'agan Michael 16–27 Dec. Fourth record **Pallas's Leaf Warbler** *Phylloscopus proregulus* ringed Yeruham 28 Oct and reappeared 1 Nov (previous record 1999). **Hume's Leaf Warblers** *P. humei*: Tel Aviv (two birds) 19 Oct, 29–31 Oct; Nebi Samuel, Jerusalem, 2 Nov; Beer Ora, south Arava, 3 Nov and Migdal Ha'emek, Jizreel valley, 29 Nov. **Yellow-browed Warblers** *P. inornatus* several locations Nov. 12th record **Common Grasshopper Warbler** *Locustella naevia* ringed Agamon Hula, 24 Aug. One **Menetries's Warbler** *Sylvia mystacea* ringed IBRC Eilat 2 Oct and a female near Hazeva, north Arava, 27 Nov.

One male **Kurdistan Wheatear** *Oenanthe (x.) xanthopyrmyna* near Arad, north Negev, 13 Nov. An **Arabian Golden Sparrow** *Passer euchlorus* of unknown origin, first seen 3–8 Aug at IBRC, Eilat, ringed there 17 Nov and remained to 30 Nov (nearest breeding

site north of Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, where thought to be feral). Single **Olive-backed Pipits** *Anthus hodgsoni* Sde Boker 19 Sep, Tel Aviv 29 Oct and Jerusalem bird observatory 15 Nov. **Siberian Buff-bellied Pipits** *A. (rubescens) japonicus* several locations Nov (singles or low numbers) increasing in Dec with small concentrations recorded. Three **Red Crossbills** *Loxia curvirostra* Mount Herzl, Jerusalem, 19–30 Nov. **Little Buntings** *Emberiza pusilla* Yotvata 2 Nov, IBRC Eilat 6 Nov and Ma'agan Michael 28 Nov.

## JORDAN

First record **Red-breasted Merganser** *Mergus serrator* Kafrein dam, Jordan valley, 9–12 Dec. Four records **Black-winged Kite** *Elanus caeruleus*: Azraq wetland reserve 17 Oct, Shaumari 8 Nov, Jordan valley 13 Nov, Madaba 14–15 Nov (9–12th records). Three records **Common Buzzard** *Buteo b. buteo* Jordan valley (13 Nov, 9 and 30 Dec) and two near Madaba, 15 Nov–31 Dec and into 2017 (second to fifth records).

## KAZAKHSTAN

More than 20 000 **White-headed Ducks** *Oxyura leucocephala* on the Tengiz-Korgalzhyn lake system, Korgalzhyn district, Akmola region, 13–16 Sep (three times previous max and higher than existing global population estimate). 90% concentrated on two lakes – lakes Essey (8000 birds) and Saumalkol (10 000 birds). Other White-headed Duck flocks spread across eight other locations, all Important Bird Areas.

## OMAN

Two **Eastern Greylag Geese** *Anser a. rubrirostris* Khawr Dhurf 5 Dec and six at The Wave, Seeb, 15 Dec. A **Greater White-fronted Goose** *A. albifrons* Raysut lagoons 1 Nov, two Khawr Al Mughsayl 22 Nov, two East Khawr 23 Nov–9 Dec increasing to eight 26 Dec, eight Khawr Dhurf 5 Dec, six Seeb 15 Dec, 12 Khawr Rouri 30 Dec. Three **Ruddy Shelducks** *Tadorna ferruginea* Raysut sewage treatment plant 1 Nov, two Khawr Sawli 21 Nov and four Raysut STP 9 Dec. 16 **Common Shelducks** *T. tadorna* and nine **Ruddy Shelducks** Raysut and six Raysut STP, 29 Dec. Three **Cotton Pygmy Geese**

*Nettapus coromandelianus* East Khawr 26 Dec and five Al Mughsayl 29 Dec. A **Red-crested Pochard** *Netta rufina* Saham STP 25 Nov and one Khawr Durf 24 Dec. Three **Ferruginous Ducks** *Aythya nyroca* Khawr Rawri 21 Nov, two Seeb 15 Dec and one East Khawr 27 Dec. 900 **Wilson's Storm Petrels** *Oceanites oceanicus* off Masirah island 11–16 Sep including 400 Ras al Ya 14 Sep. One **Swinhoe's Storm Petrel** *Oceanodroma monorhis* Raysut cliffs 2 Jul, three 4 Jul, seven Ras al Ya, Masirah island, 12 Sep, and ten 14 Sep. One **Sooty Shearwater** *Puffinus griseus* Raysut 2 Jul while 84 **Flesh-footed Shearwaters** *P. carneipes* counted 12–16 Sep off Masirah. A **Lesser Flamingo** *Phoeniconaias minor* Wadi Baqlat 26 Jul (Plate 13). Nine **Red-billed Tropicbirds** *Phaethon aethereus* off Raysut cliffs 4 Jul.

Three **Black Storks** *Ciconia nigra* Raysut STP 1 Nov and Wadi Darbat 30 Dec, 500 **Abdim's Storks** *C. abdimii* Raysut STP 29 Dec together with 800 **Western White Storks** *Ciconia c. ciconia*. Eight **Eurasian Spoonbills** *Platalea leucorodia* Raysut 29 Dec. Eight **Brown Boobies** *Sula leucogaster* off Mughsayl 29 Dec. Two **European Honey Buzzards** *Pernis apivorus* Wadi Hinna 21 Nov. A 2cy female **Crested Honey Buzzard** *P. ptilorhynchus* Sahanawt farm 28 Jul, one unaged bird Khawr Rawri 1 Nov. A **Eurasian Griffon Vulture** *Gyps fulvus* Raysut 24 Nov and five Tawi Atair 26 Dec. One **Cinereous Vulture** *Aegypius monachus* Raysut 28 Nov and one Arift 14 Dec (sixth & seventh records). 13 **Greater Spotted Eagles** *Clanga clanga* Al Ansab wetland, 13 Dec while a **Pallid Harrier** *Circus macrourus* at The Wave, Muscat, 15 Dec was unusual at this location. A **Long-legged Buzzard** *Buteo rufinus* Sahanawt farm 29 Dec and a **Steppe Buzzard** *Buteo b. vulpinus* Wadi Nahiz 27 Dec. One **Demoiselle Crane** *Grus virgo* Raysut STP 1 Nov–29 Dec and two there 10 Dec. A **Common Crane** *G. grus* Sahanawt farm 15 Nov. A juvenile **Water Rail** *Rallus aquaticus* Qatbit 19 Nov and a **Little Crake** *Porzana parva* East Khawr 23 Nov. A **Baillon's Crake** *P. pusilla* Hilf, Masirah, 12–16 Sep, one (adult) Montasar 19 Nov and one Al Mughsayl 29 Dec.

Flock of **Eurasian Stone Curlews** *Burhinus oedicnemus* Al Beed farm 20 Nov. Six **Pied Avocets** *Recurvirostra avosetta* Raysut 29 Dec. One **Spur-winged Lapwing** *Vanellus*





**Plate 13.** Lesser Flamingo *Phoeniconaias minor* 26 July 2016 Wadi Baqlat, Dhofar, Oman. © Erik Hirschfeld

*spinosus* Raysut STP 22 Nov–29 Dec and three East Khawr 29 Dec. 110 **Sociable Lapwings** *V. gregarius* Sahanawt farm 26 Dec. Seven **Pheasant-tailed Jacanas** *Hydrophasianus chirurgus* Khawr Taqah 21 Nov, two East Khawr 23 Nov and 26 Dec, one A'Shuweimiyah 24 Dec (third record for this location) and one Raysut lagoons 29 Dec. Two **Great Knots** *Calidris tenuirostris* Khawr Dhurf 5 Dec were away from their usual wintering area (Barr Al Hikman). **Long-toed Stints** *C. subminuta* Hilf, Masirah island, 11–13 Sep, Shisr 24 Sep, East Khawr 18 Nov–29 Dec, Montasar 19 Nov. One **Small Pratincole** *Glareola lactea* Khawr Taqah 6 Dec. **Brown Noddy** *Anous stolidus* (singles): 12 and 14 Sep Masirah island and two off Fazayah 9 Dec. A **White-eyed Gull** *Ichthyophaga leucophthalmus* Mirbat 14 Nov. One **Common Gull** *Larus c. canus* Ras Madrakah 24 Dec and 100 **Caspian Terns** *Hydroprogne caspia* A'Duqm 23 Dec.

Over 600 **Chestnut-bellied Sandgrouse** *Pterocles exustus* Saham STP 18 Nov was the largest concentration since the 1970s but 500 were also seen near Ayn Hamran 10 Dec. An **Asian Koel** *Eudynamis [s.] scolopaceus* Al Beed farm 11 Dec (now seen more regularly in the central desert, possibly because of increased food available at irrigated farms). Five calling **Arabian Scops Owls** *Otus pamela* Wadi Hamran 21 Nov and three Ayn Tobruq 30 Dec. A **Short-eared Owl** *Asio flammeus* Salalah

24 Nov. One **European Nightjar** *Caprimulgus europaeus* Wadi Hamran 21 Nov and one Qatbit 19 Nov with one there 11 Dec, possibly the same bird. A **Grey-headed Kingfisher** *Halcyon leucocephala* East Khawr park 26 Dec (fifth Dec record). One **Malachite Kingfisher** *Corythornis cristatus* Khawr Mughsayl 21 Jul and eighth record **Pied Kingfisher** *Ceryle rudis* Khawr Rawri 1 Nov–30 Dec. A **Blue-cheeked Bee-eater** *Merops persicus* Khawr Rawri 21 Nov was a late record. A 1cy **Amur Falcon** *Falco amurensis* Salalah 22 Nov, three Tawi Atayr 11 Dec, one Mughsayl 29 Dec.

A marked arrival of **Turkestan Shrikes** *Lanius phoenicuroides* Masirah island 15 Sep (33 seen). Single **Steppe Grey Shrikes** *L. (meridionalis) pallidirostris* Jarziz farm 27 Dec and Dawqah farm 31 Dec. One **Bimaculated Lark** *Melanocorypha bimaculata* Saham 25 Nov. A **Bar-tailed Lark** *Ammomanes cinctura* and one **Dunn's Lark** *Eremalauda dunnii* on the Mudhay–Al Mazyunah road 10 Dec. 200 **Sand Martins** *Riparia riparia* Jarziz farm 27 Dec. Three **Barn Swallows** *Hirundo rustica* A'Duqm 31 Jul was a very late or very early record while 2000 Jarziz farm 27 Dec was a high concentration. A **Wood Warbler** *Phylloscopus sibilatrix* Hilf, Masirah, 13 Sep and a **Yellow-browed Warbler** *P. inornatus* Qatbit 31 Dec. One **Hume's Leaf Warbler** *P. humei* and the eighth record of **Blyth's Reed Warbler** *Acrocephalus dumetorum* Ayn

Hamran 24 Nov. An **Eastern Olivaceous Warbler** *Iduna pallida* East Khawr park 16 Dec (latish date).

Two **Ring Ouzels** *Turdus torquatus* Sayq plateau 16 Nov. Fourth record **Eyebrowed Thrush** *T. obscurus* Ayn Hamran 24 Nov–15 Dec. Influx of **Black-throated Thrushes** *T. atrogularis* into Arabian peninsula this autumn reflected in Oman with 20 Sayq plateau 16 Nov, ten Qatbit 19 Nov (only one 20 Nov), three Masirah island 4 Dec, 40 Sayq plateau 12 Dec (new max) and singles elsewhere as far south as Salalah (21 Nov). A **Song Thrush** *T. philomelos* Al Beed farm 23 Nov, two Qatbit 31 Dec. Single **European Robins** *Erithacus rubecola* Qatbit 15–20 Nov and Wadi Al Muaydin 13 Dec (seventh & eighth records). Ninth record **Taiga Flycatcher** *Ficedula albicilla* Ayn Tobroq 11 Dec. An **Eversmann's Redstart** *Phoenicurus erythronotus* Sayq plateau 16 Nov, two there 12 Dec and a single male Muscat hills 31 Dec were unusual records away from Musandam. One male '**Ehrenberg's Redstart**' *P. phoenicurus samamiscus*, a rare passage migrant, Sayq plateau 7 Aug. Single **Pied Wheatears** *Oenanthe pleschanka* Muntasar and Qatbit 19 Nov.

35 **Nile Valley Sunbirds** *Hedydipna metallica* Mudhay 28 Dec. 750 **Yellow-throated Sparrows** *Gymnoris xanthocollis* migrating in flocks through Seeb 25 Aug. Eight **Scaly-breasted Munias** *Lonchura punctulata* Jarziz farm 27 Dec. 50 **Tree Pipits** *Anthus trivialis* Wadi Darbat 21 Nov was a large and late concentration while an **Olive-backed Pipit** *A. hodgsoni* was at Filim 4 Dec. Two **Trumpeter Finches** *Bucanetes githagineus* Wadi Aydam 28 Dec. 26 **Arabian Golden-winged Grosbeaks** *Rhynchostruthus percivali* Ayn Hamran 2 Jul was the second highest concentration recorded.

## QATAR

Eight **Eastern Greylag Geese** *Anser a. rubrirostris* West Saliya and three **Greater White-fronted Geese** *A. albifrons* Irkaya farm 12 Nov. Two **Ruddy Shelducks** *Tadorna ferruginea* IF 25 Nov–2 Dec, both taken by a hunter's **Peregrine Falcon** *Falco peregrinus*. Two **Long-tailed Ducks** *Clangula hyemalis* Al Thikira STP 29–30 Nov (first record and second GCC record, first Kuwait 2012). Up to 50 **Black-necked Grebes** *Podiceps nigricollis* on lagoons adjacent to IF early Dec. One



**Plate 14.** Long-legged Buzzard *Buteo rufinus* 11 November 2016, Irkaya farm, Qatar. © Gavin Farnell





**Plate 15.** Sociable Lapwing *Vanellus gregarius* 29 November 2016, Irkaya farm, Qatar © Simon Tull

**Plate 16.** Bimaculated Lark *Melanocorypha bimaculata* 11 November 2016, Irkaya farm, Qatar. © Gavin Farnell

**Plate 17.** Yellow-browed Warbler *Phylloscopus inornatus* 30 September 2016, Al Ruwais park, Qatar. © Gavin Farnell

**African Sacred Ibis** *Threskiornis aethiopicus*, presumed an escape, West Saliya 7 Jul. First record **Indian Pond Heron** *Ardeola grayii* Doha golf course, first seen 29 Feb, remained until year's end.

A **Crested Honey Buzzard** *Pernis ptilorynchus* Doha golf course 27 Sep (second record). Single **Black-winged Kites** *Elanus caeruleus* IF 22 Jul and Doha golf course 8 Sep (ssp *vociferus*) (fifth and sixth records, first *vociferus*). Four sightings **Short-toed Snake Eagle** *Circaetus gallicus* IF 2 Oct–2 Dec. **Long-legged Buzzards** *Buteo rufinus* all IF: one rufous type 11–18 Nov (Plate 14), a pale morph 14–31 Dec and a dark morph 11–26 Nov and 29 Dec. Juvenile **Greater Spotted Eagles** *Clanga clanga* IF 15 and 29 Oct, and adjacent lagoons 10 Dec. One **Water Rail** *Rallus aquaticus* IF 24

Nov while two **African Swampheens** *Porphyrio madagascariensis* IF lagoons 31 Oct. 34 **Crab Plovers** *Dromas ardeola* Al Ruwais 2 Sep was a high number and c90 **Northern Lapwings** *Vanellus vanellus* IF 25 Nov was much larger number than usually recorded. A **Spur-winged Lapwing** *V. spinosus* IF lagoons 12 Nov. One **Sociable Lapwing** *V. gregarius* IF 1–10 Dec at least (Plate 15). Two **White-tailed Lapwings** *V. leucurus* IF lagoons 12 Nov, one of which seen intermittently from 21 Sep. A record 15 **Caspian Plovers** *Anarhynchus asiaticus* IF 20 Sep, one of which still present 21 Oct. An **Arctic Skua** *Stercorarius parasiticus* Wakra beach 9–23 Aug.

20–25 **Crowned Sandgrouse** *Pterocles coronatus* NW Qatar 25 Jun (unusual sighting). A **Western Barn Owl** *Tyto (a.) alba* IF 6 Dec

(rare). One **Little Swift** *Apus affinis* IF 18 Nov. Up to seven **Hypocolius** *Hypocolius ampelinus* Umm Bab Nov. Two **Bimaculated Larks** *Melanocorypha bimaculata* IF 11–12 Nov (Plate 16) and a possible **Calandra Lark** *M. calandra* there 12 Nov. **Bar-tailed Larks** *Ammomanes cinctura* successfully bred three sites southern Qatar earlier in year and one IF 27 Nov. A **Yellow-browed Warbler** *Phylloscopus inornatus* Al Ruwais park 30 Sep (Plate 17). Eighth record **Desert Whitethroat** *Sylvia minula* (two birds) IF 3–31 Dec. One **Ring Ouzel** *Turdus torquatus* reported shot dead North farm 29 Nov. Influx of **Black-throated Thrushes** *Turdus atrogularis* with one IF 18 Nov gradually increasing to c30, some birds remaining until 31 Dec. A **Caspian Stonechat** *Saxicola maurus hemprichii* IF 10 Dec together with unseasonal **Eastern Black-eared Wheatear** *Oenanthe (hispanica) melanoleuca*. A **Red-breasted Flycatcher** *Ficedula parva* Sheraton hotel, Doha, 6 Dec. Four **Yellow-throated Sparrows** *Gymnoris xanthocollis* Al Ruwais 9 Sep. One **Masked Wagtail** *Motacilla alba personata* Al Shamal park 14 Oct was third record, but first for three years. A **Richard's Pipit** *Anthus richardi* IF 28 Oct.

## SAUDI ARABIA

Four **Eastern Greylag Geese** *Anser a. rubrirostris* KAUST, north of Jeddah, 19 Nov. A pair of **Greater Flamingos** *Phoenicopterus roseus* with two recently hatched young, 12 Aug (first breeding record for the Kingdom). Unprecedented influx of **Eurasian Bitterns** *Botaurus stellaris* November with fifteen 30 km east of Zulfi 8 Nov, six together 40 km north of Zulfi 11 Nov, 40 at Sakaka near Al Jouf 6–12 Nov and one KAUST golf course 16 Nov (eventually found dead 19 Nov). One **Goliath Heron** *Ardea goliath* KAUST 22 Oct until at least 5 Nov presumed to be Goliath Heron there 16 Jan–14 May. One **Short-toed Snake Eagle** *Circaetus gallicus* Sabkhat Al Fasl 7 Oct and one Al Asfar lake, Al Hassa, 18 Nov. Two winter plumaged **Red-necked Phalaropes** *Phalaropus lobatus* SAF 7 Oct. Saudi Arabia's largest ever flock of **Spur-winged Lapwings** *Vanellus spinosus* Haradh 14 Oct when over 150 were recorded. One **Sociable Lapwing** *V. gregarius* KAUST 21 Nov—at least 6 Dec.

A **Eurasian Scops Owl** *Otus scops* KAUST 1–2 Oct (first record for site) while a **Short-**

**eared Owl** *Asio flammeus* Zulfi 15 Nov. One **Pied Cuckoo** *Oxylophus jacobinus* Al Mehfar park, Tanoumah, 7 Jul with another well north of its normal range at Wadi Thee Gazelle 25 Jun. Two male **Diederik Cuckoos** *Chrysococcyx caprius*, first reported 30–31 May still at Al Mehfar park, Tanoumah, 7–8 Jul. **Egyptian Nightjars** *Caprimulgus aegyptius* SAF throughout summer until 16 Sep, max 13. Min three **Montane Nightjars** *C. poliocephalus* Al Mehfar park, Tanoumah, 7–8 Jul.

One **White-throated Kingfisher** *Halcyon smyrnensis* SAF 28 Oct. A **Pied Kingfisher** *Ceryle rudis* KAUST 23 Sep–6 Dec at least (third documented record from west coast) while four SAF 28 Oct–11 Nov with at least one remaining to 2 Dec. Five **Arabian Magpies** *Pica (pica) asirensis*, two adults and three juveniles, Al Mehfar park, Tanoumah, 8 Jul (Plate 18) with six at nearby Sallal al-Dahna 28 Oct.

Four **Blanford's Larks** *Calandrella blanfordi* Talea'a valley, including adults and juveniles, 6 and 9 Jul (Plate 19). Four **Oriental Skylarks** *Alauda gulgula* SAF 11 Nov. A **Fieldfare** *Turdus pilaris* at farm near Zulfi 21 Nov. A



**Plate 18.** Arabian Magpie *Pica (pica) asirensis* 8 July 2016, Al Mehfar park, Tanoumah, Asir mountains, Saudi Arabia. © Jem Babbington





**Plate 19.** Blanford's Lark *Calandrella blanfordi* 9 July 2016, Talea'a valley, Asir mountains, Saudi Arabia. © Jem Babbington

**European Robin** *Erithacus rubecula* on west coast at KAUST 11 Nov and another, same day, on the east coast at SAF. Eight **African Pipits** *Anthus cinnamomeus eximius* including two adults feeding young Al Mefah park, Tanoumah, 7–8 Jul with another in song flight Talea'a valley 9 Jul.

## TURKEY

A cold December brought in a number of northern species with single **Red-breasted Geese** *Branta ruficollis* Trabzon 9 Dec, Kızılırmak delta 18 Dec and two 19 Dec Manyas Gölü. 12 **Egyptian Geese** *Alopochen aegyptiaca* Mogan Gölü 29 Jul indicates an established population in the area. One **Black Swan** *Cygnus atratus* Karacabey Longozu 16 Sep (escape). Two possible **Greater Scaups** *Aythya marila* Ağaçlı, İstanbul, 22 Oct, five Karacabey Longozu 13 Nov and one Sapanca Gölü 6 Nov. Record count 9070 **White-headed Ducks** *Oxyura leucocephala* lake Manyas (currently most important wintering site for the species) 14 Dec. One **Mandarin Duck** *Aix galericulata* Fethiye 23 Oct (escape). A **Long-tailed Duck** *Clangula hyemalis* Enez, Edirne, (Aegean sea) 25 Dec. Record count 100 **European Storm Petrels** *Hydrobates pelagicus* pelagic trip off Didim 27 Aug. Single **Horned Grebes** *Podiceps auritus* Trabzon 8 Dec, Çanakkale 4

Dec and group of four Gümüşhane 9 Nov. Seven **Sociable Lapwings** *Vanellus gregarius* 9 Oct between Diyarbakır and Batman while three **Pacific Golden Plovers** *Pluvialis fulva* on Black sea coast at Cernek 30 Oct, probably the same three 2 Dec Kızılırmak delta and a single Trabzon 4 Dec. One adult **Great Black-backed Gull** *Larus marinus* Küçükçekmece, İstanbul, 18 Dec. A juvenile **Black-legged Kittiwake** *Rissa tridactyla* Galata bridge, İstanbul, 16 Dec and a single Samandağ Hatay 19 Nov.

A male **Namaqua Dove** *Oena capensis* near Bozova, Şanlıurfa, 26 Oct. One **Plum-headed**



**Plate 20.** Black-throated Thrush *Turdus atrogularis* 14 November 2016, Yüksekova, Hakkari, Turkey. © Emrah Kayhan

**Parakeet** *Psittacula cyanocephala* Maçka Parkı, İstanbul, 18 Dec (escape). Three Central Asian shrikes recorded during autumn migration: a **Daurian Shrike** *Lanius (i.) isabellinus* Rize 27 Oct, a **Turkestan Shrike** *Lanius (i.) phoenicuroides* Hatay 11 Oct and a **Steppe Grey Shrike** *Lanius (meridionalis) pallidirostris* Yüksekova Hakkari 5 Sep. Two **Sand Martins** *Riparia riparia* accompanied six **Barn Swallows** *Hirundo rustica* Subaşı, Hatay, 1–21 Dec (very late date). Four **Bohemian Waxwings** *Bombycilla garrulus* shot by hunters (allegedly **Common Starlings** *Sturnus vulgaris*) Sarp Artvin 23 Nov. A **Dusky Warbler** *Phylloscopus fuscatus* ringed Kızılırmak delta 12 Oct fourth record. Eight **Yellow-browed Warblers** *P. inornatus* seen or ringed Kızılırmak delta 26 Sep–22 Oct, and one Trabzon 1 Oct. First **Blyth's Reed Warbler** *Acrocephalus dumetorum* not mistnet-caught 16 Aug Değirmendere, Trabzon and one ringed Kızılırmak delta 10 Aug. Probable range expansion of **Iraq Babbler** *Turdoides altirostris*: small group 100 km from Birecik at Atatürk dam lake. A late **Barred Warbler** *Sylvia nisoria* Riva, İstanbul, 29 Oct. Three **Asian Desert Warblers** *S. nana* along the Black sea coast: two Trabzon 13 Nov and one at neighbouring Rize 22 Oct.

Third record **Black-throated Thrush** *Turdus atrogularis* Yüksekova, Hakkari, 14 Nov (Plate 20). A very late **Collared Flycatcher** *Ficedula albicollis* until 2 Dec, Hacettepe University campus, Ankara. One **Red-breasted Flycatcher** *F. parva* Subaşı, Hatay, 3–16 Dec. Single **Desert Wheatears** *Oenanthe deserti* Hatay 8 Oct, Riva, İstanbul, 18 Nov and Yumurtalık lagoons, Adana, 27 Nov. A **Richard's Pipit** *Anthus richardi* 11 Dec Riva, İstanbul (rare away from regular wintering sites southern Turkey). Up to five **Tree Pipits** *A. trivialis* daily Subaşı, Hatay, until 21 Dec. Fourth **Olive-backed Pipit** *A. hodgsoni* 21 Nov Subaşı village, Antakya (same location as third record). Two **Snow Buntings** *Plectrophenax nivalis* Karaburun, İstanbul, 12 Dec.

## TURKMENISTAN

These observations made during a southeast Turkmenistan visit. Counts mainly of wintering waterbirds at Tallymerjen and Zeyit-Kelif IBAs, close to the Turkmen-Uzbek border and at Hanhowuz reservoir IBA, near Mary. c10 000 **Greater White-fronted Geese**

*Anser albifrons* Tallymerjen 14–16 Dec, the majority roosting on Talimerzhan reservoir IBA in Uzbekistan. This species has increased significantly in numbers at these two sites in recent years. An adult **Red-breasted Goose** *Branta ruficollis* Tallymerjen 14 Dec. One **Black-throated Diver** *Gavia arctica* at Hanhowuz reservoir 19 Dec was the first record for the site. At least 584 **Dalmatian Pelicans** *Pelecanus crispus* feeding Zeyit reservoir 17 Dec (internationally important count representing significant increase in numbers at this IBA). At least 5000 **Pygmy Cormorants** *Microcarbo pygmeus* flying from Kelif lakes towards Zeyit reservoir at dawn on 18 Dec (internationally important count and significant increase in numbers at this IBA). Over 4200 '**Continental**' **Great Cormorants** *Phalacrocorax (carbo) sinensis* roosting and feeding Zeyit reservoir 17 Dec (significant increase in numbers at this IBA). What appears to be first record of **Brown Shrike** *Lanius cristatus* (a female) along the western shore of Zeyit reservoir 17 Dec.

## UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

Two **Eastern Greylag Geese** *Anser a. rubrirostris* Al Warsan lakes, Dubai, 10 Dec. 18th record **Red-crested Pochard** *Netta rufina* Al Ain 29 Nov–31 Dec (and into 2017). Pelagic trips off Kalba August–October produced much lower numbers than in 2015 of **Swinhoe's Petrels** *Oceanodroma monorhis* and **Jouanin's Petrels** *Bulweria fallax*. A **Black-winged Kite** *Elanus caeruleus* Khudhairah 12 Oct, 16th record **European Honey-Buzzard** *Pernis apivorus* Wamm farm 30 Sep and up to 12 **Lappet-faced Vultures** *Torgos tracheliotus* Al Qudra October with others at Saih al Salam 18 Nov together with an **Eastern Imperial Eagle** *Aquila heliaca*.

The origin of a **Little Bustard** *Tetrax tetrax* Wamm farms 1–4 Dec uncertain (possibly a genuine vagrant though un-ringed birds have been released by NARC since 2007). One **Water Rail** *Rallus aquaticus* Sila'a 24 Oct, a juvenile **Little Crane** *Porzana parva* Al Ain 17 Oct (25th record) while a late migrant **Baillon's Crane** *Porzana pusilla* Sila'a 26 Nov and one Al Ain 14–18 Dec. A juvenile **Common Crane** *Grus grus* (ninth record, second since 1998) Zakkher lake 8–10 Oct. Ninth & tenth records **Spur-winged Plover** *Vanellus spinosus* Zakkher lake and near Abu Dhabi, both 9 Nov, while





**Plate 21.** Savi's Warbler *Locustella luscinioides* 27 September 2016, Mushrif palace gardens, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates. © Oscar Campbell

**Plate 22.** Eversmann's Redstart *Phoenicurus erythronotus* 13 November 2016, Emirates Palace hotel, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates. © Oscar Campbell



**Plate 23.** Little Bunting *Emberiza pusilla* 13 November 2016, Emirates Palace hotel, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates.  
© Oscar Campbell

two **Eurasian Golden Plovers** *V. apricaria* Wamm farm 26 Oct, one staying to 4 Nov. A **Red Knot** *Calidris canutus* Khor al Beida 13 Sep (12th record, first since 2013). A **Cream-coloured Courser** *Cursorius cursor* WF 4 Nov.

Single **Rufous Turtle Doves** *Streptopelia (orientalis) meena* WF 27 Oct and Abu Dhabi 20 Nov. An **Asian Koel** *Eudynamis [scolopaceus] scolopaceus* Al Ain 14–18 Dec (22nd record). A high count of 11 **Egyptian Nightjars** *Caprimulgus aegyptius* at Al Wathba camel racetrack 14 Nov. An **Alpine Swift** *Tachymarptis melba* over Zakkher lake 1 Sep while an adult male **Amur Falcon** *Falco amurensis* WF 4–16 Nov (22nd record). One **Bay-backed Shrike** *Lanius vittatus* Mamzar park 3–15 Sep and another Lulu island 1–11 Dec (30th–31st records but very unusual in autumn/winter, particularly on Gulf coast). A **Black Drongo** *Dicrurus macrocercus* Dubai polo and equestrian club 25 Sep (ninth record) and what was probably a returning bird to Mushrif park from 10 Oct to at least 18 Nov (there may be several birds resident in the Dubai area accounting for repeated sightings). Twelfth record **Ashy Drongo** *D. leucophaeus* Mamzar park 29 Oct (possibly also a returning

bird since an Ashy Drongo was in the same location Oct–Dec 2015. **Hypocolius** *Hypocolius ampelinus* were back at regular wintering sites of Yas links and Lulu island from 19 Nov.

The first **Bimaculated Larks** *Melanocorypha bimaculata* of the winter WF 4 Nov, almost a month earlier than 2015. Eighth record **Dusky Warbler** *Phylloscopus fuscatus* Abu Dhabi 12–13 Nov. Two **Yellow-browed Warblers** *P. inornatus* Mamzar park 29 Oct, one remaining to 19 Nov, with a third Yellow-browed Warbler 5 Nov (Emirates Palace hotel) and a fourth 23 Nov, Dubai desert conservation reserve (14th–16th records). One **Hume's Leaf Warbler** *P. humei* Sila'a 2 Dec. Single **Great Reed Warblers** *Acrocephalus arundinaceus* Dubai 5 Oct and WF 21 Oct while three **Blyth's Reed Warblers** *A. dumetorum* (12th record) in Mushrif palace gardens 19–26 Aug where a **Savi's Warbler** *Locustella luscinioides* remained 16 Sep–5 Oct (Plate 21).

A **Ring Ouzel** *Turdus torquatus* Emirates Palace hotel 13 Nov. Influx of **Black-throated Thrushes** *T. atrogularis* from 6 Nov (single Mamzar park) with records from many locations, including five 12–25 Nov Mamzar park, eight there 15 Nov (four remaining



to 19 Nov). A further influx occurred 1 Dec when ten were found Abu Dhabi island with 15 Lulu island 11 Dec and two Wadi Bih 31 Dec. One **Mistle Thrush** *T. viscivorus* Al Ain 9 Dec. **European Robins** *Erithacus rubecula* several locations November. A **Taiga Flycatcher** *Ficedula albicilla* (8th record) Mamzar park 30 Oct. Single **Eversmann's Redstarts** *Phoenicurus erythronotus* 10–12 Nov Sila'a, Emirates Palace hotel (Plate 22) and WF (to 24 Nov) and one Wadi Bih 31 Dec. A **Pied Stonechat** *Saxicola caprata* Al Ain 21 Sep and an Eastern **Mourning Wheatear** *Oenanthe lugens* there 9 Dec. Three **Siberian Buff-bellied Pipits** *Anthus (rubescens) japonicus* at the usual wintering ground, Hamraniyah, 10–31 Dec and into 2017 (birds have wintered until Feb at this site for several years). Up to three **Bramblings** *Fringilla montifringilla* Emirates Palace hotel 11–22 Nov. A **Little Bunting** *Emberiza pusilla* Abu Dhabi 12–13 Nov (Plate 23, 18th record second since 2001). One **Red-headed Bunting** *E. bruniceps* (ninth record) Mamzar park 3 Sep.

## UZBEKISTAN

Breeding range extension of **Desert Lark** *Ammomanes deserti* 20 May 2013, c255 m asl at western end Kuldjuktai mountain range (40°52' N, 63° 19' E) c2.5 km NW of Dzhangel'dy village, northern Bukhara province (c250 km SE of mapped breeding range).

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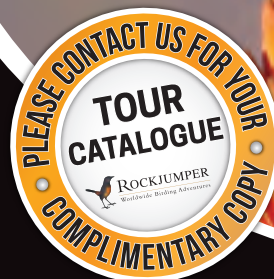
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