

First record of Desert Finch *Rhodospiza obsoleta* for Cyprus

DAMLA BETON & HÜSEYİN YORGANCI

On 5 April 2017 HY found and photographed the first Desert Finch *Rhodospiza obsoleta* for Cyprus (Plate 1). He discovered it at the far northeastern tip of Cyprus, the tip of the Karpaz peninsula (35° 41.68' N, 34° 35.08' E). There was only a single, female, bird. There were no other bird species nearby. It was a very stormy day with a strong westerly wind. It was feeding nonstop on buds of small plants. When disturbed, it flew up and perched on an electricity line. After a short while it flew back to the ground. It fed for a couple of hours. It had a lot of white and pink on the wing and the photos (eg Plate 1) clearly show a Desert Finch.

Following this record, Desert Finches were again seen in 2017 in Cyprus but further south at cape Greco (34° 57.5' N, 34° 5.1' E): a single male 18 April and a pair 30 April–2 May (Jane Stylianou pers comm). Desert Finch is an Asian species with an expanding range that occurs in the Levant, relatively close to Cyprus (Porter & Aspinall 2010).

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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LITERATURE CITED

Porter, R & S Aspinall. 2010. *Birds of the Middle East*. Christopher Helm, London.

Damla Beton, Hüseyin Yorganci, *The North Cyprus Society for the Protection of Birds and Nature (KUŞKOR)*. info@kuskor.org, damlabeton@gmail.com, h-yorganci@hotmail.com



Plate 1. Female desert finch *Rhodospiza obsoleta*, tip of Karpaz peninsula, Cyprus, 5 April 2017. © Hüseyin Yorganci