

# FROM THE RARITIES COMMITTEES

Ian Harrison (compiler)

Observers who have had a country first record accepted by a rarities committee are encouraged to write it up as a note or paper for publication.

## CYPRUS

BirdLife Cyprus Rarities Committee members: Colin Richardson (chair), Melis Charalambides, Stavros Christodoulides, Jeff Gordon, Hugh Buck, Nigel Cottle. A full list of Cyprus birds requiring rarity descriptions and rare bird report forms are available from Colin Richardson richar@cytanet.com.cy to whom claims should be sent. The committee has accepted the following records since the report in *Sandgrouse* 36(2).

**Egyptian Goose** *Alopochen aegyptiaca*. One adult Asprokremmos dam 18 June–17 September 2014 (A Stöcker). In good condition, un-ringed and untagged, with some wear on the tail. Suspicions aroused about its origins when it became less shy after a few weeks, but this was deemed typical for the species and it was accepted as the fourth record.

**Striated Heron** *Butorides striata*. One juvenile Zakaki marsh 23 October 2014—at least 31 December (M Philippou). Ship-assistance ruled out as main reason for its arrival after Royal Naval Birdwatching Society checked their record database and found no precedent. Placed in Category A. First record.

**Bar-tailed Godwit** *Limosa lapponica*. One Silver beach, Famagusta, 15 September 2014 (N Pegler). 22nd record.

**Daurian Shrike** *Lanius isabellinus*. One Mandria 30 September 2013 (A Crane).

**Turkestan Shrike** *Lanius isabellinus phoenicuroides*. One Agia Napa sewage treatment plant 30 July 2014 (M Easterbrook). 11th record. Historical records under review.

**Yellow-browed Warbler** *Phylloscopus inornatus*. One Mandria 25 September 2014 (J Stapley). 14th record.

**Paddyfield Warbler** *Acrocephalus agricola*. One Polis reed-beds 16 September 2014 (A Crabtree, MA Preston). Second record.

**Marsh Warbler** *Acrocephalus palustris*. One Paphos sewage treatment plant 27 September 2013 (C Richardson). 30th record.

**Ménétriés' Warbler** *Sylvia mystacea*. One Agia Napa sewage works 30 July 2014 (M Easterbrook). Second record.

**Masked Wagtail** *Motacilla (alba) personata*. One Mandria 1–3 March 2014 (C Richardson). Fourth record.

**Buff-bellied Pipit** *Anthus (rubescens) japonicus*. One Akhna dam 17 November 2013 (S Christodoulides). Third record.

**Western Cinereous Bunting** *Emberiza cineracea*. Two Agia Napa sewage treatment plant 30 August–3 September 2014 (S Christodoulides).

## EGYPT

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

## ISRAEL

The Israel Rarities and Distribution Committee comprises Avner Cohen (secretary), Barak Granit and Yoav Perlman. Claims should be sent to Avner Cohen at [israbirding@gmail.com](mailto:israbirding@gmail.com). See also [www.israbirding.com/irdc](http://www.israbirding.com/irdc) where claim forms can be downloaded.

## JORDAN

The Jordan Bird Records Committee comprises Fares Khoury (secretary), Richard Porter, Ian Andrews, Feras Rahahleh and Khaldun Al-Omari. Claims should be sent to Fares Khoury at [avijordan2000@yahoo.com](mailto:avijordan2000@yahoo.com). JBRC has accepted the following records since the report in *Sandgrouse* 36(2).

**Black-winged Kite** *Elanus caeruleus*. One Aqaba 24 March 2013 (G Wichmann & G Zeyringer). First record.

**Ruddy Turnstone** *Arenaria interpres*. One Aqaba bird observatory, 10 April 2014 (F Rahahleh, Plate 1). First record for ten years.

**Common Myna** *Acridotheres tristis*. A pair Kafrein, Jordan valley, April 2014 (M Asfour). Fourth record. Two northeast of Kafrein 30 July 2014 (Plate 2) with three



**Plate 1.** Ruddy Turnstone *Arenaria interpres* 10 April 2014, Aqaba bird observatory, Jordan. © F Rahahleh



**Plate 2.** Common Mynas *Acridotheres tristis* 30 July 2014, northeast of Kafrein, Jordan valley, Jordan. © F Khoury



**Plate 3.** Olive-backed Pipit *Anthus hodgsoni* 17 December 2013, Aqaba palm beach, Jordan. © F Rahahleh



**Plate 4.** Olive-backed Pipit *Anthus hodgsoni* 17 December 2013, Aqaba palm beach, Jordan. © F Rahahleh

at the same site 30 August 2014 (both sightings F Khoury). Fifth record.

**Black Scrub Robin** *Cercotrichas podobe*. One Aqaba Moevenpick resort, Tala bay, 12 April 2014 (E Hirschfeld). Fourth record.

**Olive-backed Pipit** *Anthus hodgsoni*. Two different birds, Aqaba palm beach, 17 December 2013. (F Rahahleh, Plates 3 & 4). Fifth record.

## KUWAIT

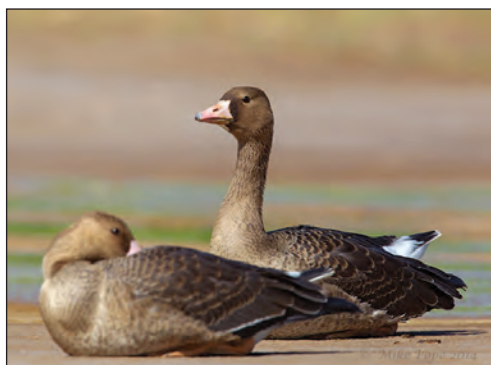
The Kuwait Ornithological Rarities Committee comprises Mike Pope (chair), AbdulRahman Al-Sirhan (secretary), Pekka Fagel, Oscar Campbell (external adjudicator), Peter Kennerley (external adjudicator), Brian Foster (honorary member). Claims should be sent to AbdulRahman Al-Sirhan at alsirhan@alsirhan.com. KORC has accepted the following records since the report in *Sandgrouse* 36(2).

**Sand Partridge** *Ammoperdix heyi*. One Sabhan 3 August 2014 (S Al Nouri). First record, but considered an escape.

**Greater White-fronted Goose** *Anser albifrons*. Seven 1st year birds seen Jahra bay (large influx many Gulf states including Oman, UAE, Saudi Arabia and Qatar) 1 November 2014 (O Al Shaheen, R Al Hajji, Plate 5). Third record.

**Striated Heron** *Butorides striatus*. One Jahra pools reserve 17 October 2014 (M Hamza Askar). Third record.

**Demoiselle Crane** *Anthropoides virgo*. One killed by hunter Kuwait city, 12 September 2014. Ninth record.



**Plate 5.** Greater White-fronted Geese *Anser albifrons* | November 2014, Jahra bay, Kuwait. © M Pope

**Red Knot** *Calidris canutus*. One JPR 7 August 2014 (R Al Hajji). Third record.

**Grey Phalarope** *Phalaropus fulicarius*. One JPR 2 September 2014 (K Al Ghanem). Seventh record.

**Black Tern** *Chlidonias niger*. One bird Jahra East outfall 25 July 2014 (O Al Shaheen). 14th record.

**Rufous Turtle Dove** *Streptopelia (orientalis) meena*. One JPR 9 October 2014 (O Al Shaheen). 12th record.

**Pallid Scops Owl** *Otus brucei*. One Al Abraq 23 October 2014 (H Bourseli, M Khorshed). Tenth record.

**Thick-billed Lark** *Ramphocoris clotbey*. Two Abuliyah KOC reserve 19 August 2014 (H Al Shajji). Seventh record.

**Paddyfield Warbler** *Acrocephalus agricola*. One JEO 25 August 2014 (R Al Hajji). One Al Abraq 9 September 2014 (H Bourseli). Third & fourth records.

## OMAN

The Oman Bird Records Committee comprises Jens Eriksen (recorder), Ian Harrison, Dave Sargeant, Graham Searle, John Atkins, Peter Cowan, Simon Tull, Waheed Al Farsi, Zahran Al Abdulasalam, Manal Al Kindi. Claims should be sent to Jens Eriksen hjoman@gmail.com from whom claim forms can be obtained. OBRC has accepted the following records since the report in *Sandgrouse* 36(2).

**Lesser Whistling Duck** *Dendrocygna javanica*. One Raysut 27 November, moving to Al Mughsayl 29 November–5 December (D Forsman & Robert Tovey). Fifth record.

**Great Crested Grebe** *Podiceps cristatus*. One Al Qurm park 3 October and 12–21 November 2014 (W Al-Fazari & D Forsman). Seventh record (first since 1995).

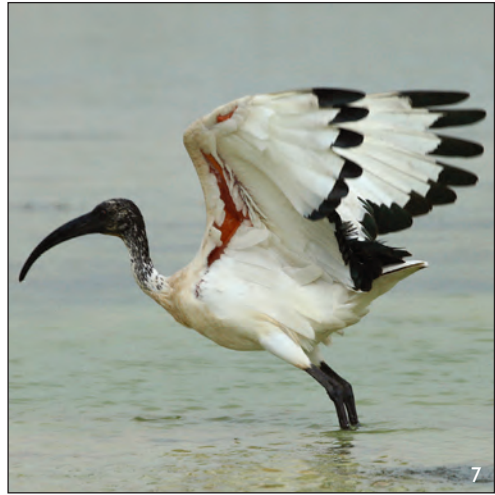
**Dwarf Bittern** *Ixobrychus sturmii*. One Raysut 1 November 2013 (M Kuhn). First record.

**Lesser Frigatebird** *Fregata ariel*. Immature Hiql, Masirah, 3 November 2014 (H Buss, Plate 6). Sixth record.

**African Sacred Ibis** *Threskiornis aethiopicus*. One Hadbin 19 January 2014 and one East Khawr 8 April—at least 6 December 2014 (H Cook, H & J Eriksen *et al*, Plate 7). Seventh & eighth records.



**Plate 6.** Lesser Frigatebird *Fregata ariel* 3 November 2014, Hiql, Masirah island, Oman. © H Buss



**Plate 7.** African Sacred Ibis *Threskiornis aethiopicus* 22 August 2014, Dhofar, Oman. © H&J Eriksen



**Plate 8.** Watercock *Gallicrex cinerea* 24 February 2014, Al Mughsayl, Oman. © H&J Eriksen



**Plate 9.** Dusky Thrush *Turdus eunomus* 1 March 2014, Qatbit, Oman. © H&J Eriksen

**Cinereous Vulture** *Aegypius monachus*. One Tawi Atayr 25 November 2014 (D Forsman). Fourth record.

**Lesser Spotted Eagle** *Clanga pomarina*. One Raysut 9 December 2010 (D Forsman). Tenth record.

**Merlin** *Falco columbarius*. One Sahnawt farm, Salalah 25 November–5 December 2014 (D Forsman *et al.*). Fifth record.

**Watercock** *Gallicrex cinerea*. One Al Mughsayl 21 January–21 February 2014 (H Cook, H & J Eriksen, Plate 8). Fifth record.

**Eurasian Woodcock** *Scolopax rusticola*. One Ad Duqm 1 January 2014 (F Guepner *et al.*). Third record.

**Great Spotted Cuckoo** *Clamator glandarius*. Juvenile Taqah 7 November 2014 (H Buss). Third record.

**Grey-throated Martin** *Riparia chinensis*. One Sun Farms, Sohar 23 November 2013 (J Atkins). Eighth record.

**Dusky Thrush** *Turdus eunomus*. One Qatbit 24 January–1 March 2014 (H Cook, H & J Eriksen, Plate 9). Fifth record.

**Eastern Bonelli's Warbler** *Phylloscopus orientalis*. One Al Balid farm 20 November 2013 (I Festari). Sixth record.

**Taiga Flycatcher** *Ficedula albicilla*. One Dawkah farm 23 January 2014 (H Cook). Fifth record.

**Forest Wagtail** *Dendronanthus indicus*. One Ayn Hamran 10 November 2013 (T Epple). Ninth record.

**Eastern Yellow Wagtail** *Motacilla tschutschensis taivana*. One Sun Farms, Sohar 20 September 2013–22 February 2014 (J Atkins). Fifth record.

**Red-headed Bunting** *Emberiza bruniceps*. One Sun Farms, Sohar 28 March 2014 (J Atkins). Sixth record.

## QATAR

Qatar Bird Records Committee members are Keith Betton, Jamie A Buchan (Recorder), Neil G Morris (Secretary), Richard F Porter (Hon President), Simon J Tull. Claims should be sent to jamie\_buchan@yahoo.com. The Qatar List defines a rarity (which requires a rare bird report to be submitted) as a taxon that has been recorded on no more than twenty occasions in the wild in Qatar. QBRC has accepted the following claims since the report in *Sandgrouse* 36(2).

**Greater White-fronted Goose** *Anser albifrons*. Up to six Doha golf course 17 November 2014—at least 14 January 2015 (S Price). Ninth record.

**Black-winged Kite** *Elanus caeruleus*. One Irkaya farm 18–24 November 2014 (S Price *et al*). Fourth record.

**Short-toed Snake Eagle** *Circaetus gallicus*. One Irkaya farm 8 March 2014 (D Pushpangadhan, S Kalliparambil). Twelfth record.

**Amur Falcon** *Falco amurensis*. One juvenile Irkaya farm 27 October 2013 (A Sharif, J Thompson). Fifth record.

**Barbary Falcon** *Falco pelegrinoides*. One juvenile west Sailiyah 4 November 2014 (S Al Aseeri). Second record.

**Spur-winged Plover** *Vanellus spinosus*. One west Sailiyah 11 November 2014 (D Pushpangadhan *et al*). Second record.

**Long-tailed Shrike** *Lanius schach*. One Al Shamal park 25 October 2014 (G Farnell). Second record.

**Eastern Black-headed Wagtail** *Motacilla (flava) melanogrisea*. Various records and

locations of birds showing characteristics of this form: one west Sailiyah 25 February 2013 (NG Morris); one Sealine beach resort 8 April 2013 (NG Morris); one at latter location 22 March 2014 (NG Morris). First-third Qatar records.

## UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

The Emirates Bird Records Committee comprises the following voting members: Oscar Campbell (chair), Mark Smiles (secretary), Simon Lloyd, Huw Roberts, Neil Tovey and Tommy Pedersen (UAE bird recorder). Ahmed Al Ali and Peter Hellyer are non-voting members. Records are circulated and assessments published three times per year according to the timetable outlined at [www.uaebirding.com/ebr.html](http://www.uaebirding.com/ebr.html). Decisions on assessments, plus EBRC's constitution and information about the assessment process and downloadable report forms are all available at the same location. Claims, preferably on the report forms, should be sent to [ebrcuae@gmail.com](mailto:ebrcuae@gmail.com) or to Tommy Pedersen [tommypepe63@gmail.com](mailto:tommypepe63@gmail.com). UAE Bird Checklist, in both short and annotated forms, is available at [www.uaebirding.com/uaechecklist.html](http://www.uaebirding.com/uaechecklist.html) together with recently published reports for 2010–2013. EBRC has accepted the following records since the report in *Sandgrouse* 36(2).

**Cory's Shearwater** *Calonectris (diomedea) borealis*. One seen during pelagic trip off Khor Kalba 30–31 May 2014 (A Alzaabi, SP Lloyd, OJ Campbell *et al*) and another 20 June 2014 (M Smiles, OJ Campbell *et al*). Third & fourth records, last 2011. In addition, a Cory's/Scopoli's Shearwater *Calonectris (diomedea) borealis/diomedea* recorded 13 September 2014 (A Alzaabi).

**Wedge-tailed Shearwater** *Puffinus pacificus*. One during pelagic trip off Khor Kalba 4 July 2014 (SP Lloyd *et al*). Seventh record, last 2013.

**Black-winged Kite** *Elanus caeruleus*. One Dubai pivot fields 15 September 2014 (M Smiles) and one Hamranyah fields 19 September 2014—at least early December (M Smiles). Sixteen previous records (last 2013) but only one previous September record (1994) and one previous October record (2001); most records mid November–late February.



**Plate 10.** Black Tern *Chlidonias niger* 12 September 2014, Fujairah port beach, UAE. © S Lloyd

**Lesser Noddy** *Anous tenuirostris*. One during pelagic trip off Khor Kalba 19 July 2014 (M Smiles *et al*). Eighth record.

**Roseate Tern** *Sterna dougallii*. One adult Fujairah port beach 19 July 2014 (M Smiles *et al*) and another 30 July 2014 (D Wilby). Ninth & tenth records. One adult and one juvenile Fujairah port beach 13 September 2014 (M Smiles *et al*). Eleventh record. Previous records mainly from marked influx September–October 2013.

**Black Tern** *Chlidonias niger*. One Fujairah port beach 12–13 September 2014 (SP Lloyd, M Smiles, OJ Campbell *et al*, Plate 10). 16th record.

**Long-tailed Skua** *Stercorarius longicaudus*. One adult during pelagic trip off Khor

Kalba 20 June 2014 (OJ Campbell *et al*) and another off Fujairah port beach 14 July 2014 (J Judas). One immature during pelagic trip off Khor Kalba 19 July 2014 (M Smiles *et al*). 18th–20th records.

**Pacific Swift** (*sensu lato*) *Apus pacificus*. One Wamm farms 12 September 2014 (OJ Campbell, M Smiles, SP Lloyd) which showed characteristics strongly indicative of *Apus (p.) pacificus*. Third record; last 2002. EBRC reviewed the previous two records of Pacific Swift (September 1999, January 2002). The identification of each was not in doubt, however, despite detailed descriptions on file, it was not possible to assign either record definitively to taxon, although the September 1999 record showed characteristics broadly indicative of *Apus (p.) pacificus*.

**Moustached Warbler** *Acrocephalus melanopogon*. One Wamm farms 20 September 2014 (OJ Campbell, SP Lloyd, M Smiles). 17th record, but six weeks earlier than any other autumn/early winter record.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The following assisted in the compilation of this review: Colin Richardson (Cyprus), Fares Khoury (Jordan), Jens Eriksen (Oman), Neil Morris and Jamie Buchan (Qatar), Oscar Campbell and Tommy Pedersen (United Arab Emirates).

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