

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: Jane Stylianou (chair), Melis Charalambides, Stavros Christodoulides, Hugh Buck, Chris Stavrou, Martin Hellicar, Johannes Honold. A full list of Cyprus birds requiring rarity descriptions, and rare bird report forms, are available from Jane Stylianou janestycy@yahoo.co.uk to whom claims should be sent.

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 where claim forms can be downloaded.

IRAN

The Iran Bird Records Committee comprises Abolghasem Khaleghizadeh (recorder), Mohammad Tohidifar, Parviz Bakhtiari, Seyed Babk Miusavi, Mohammad E Sehhatiasabet, Meysam Ghasemi, Ali Khani, Abbas Ashoori and Ahmad Barati plus Derek Scott, Richard Porter and Ian Harrison as external consultants as and when necessary. Claims should be sent to Abolghasem Khaleghizadeh at akhaleghizadeh@gmail.com. The committee accepted the following records in 2015.

Taiga Bean Goose *Anser fabalis*. One Mamloodam, Tehran province, winter–7 March 2015 (A Hashemi, D Mojab). Ninth record.

Socotra Cormorant *Phalacrocorax nigrogularis*. One Bushehr, Bushehr province, 3 March 2015 (M Ghasemi, M Tohidifar). Apparently 42nd record.

White-breasted Waterhen *Amaurornis phoenicurus*. One Chabahar bay, Sistan & Baluchestan province, November 2015 (A Hosseini). Third record.

Glaucous Gull *Larus hyperboreus*. One juvenile Koor-e Tiab, Hormozgan province, 22 January 2015 (M Ghasemi, B Nezami, A Sangchooli). First record.

Namaqua Dove *Oena capensis*. One Zanjan, Zanjan province, 2 May 2015 (A Sangchooli). Apparently third record outside Khuzestan province (where it is increasing).

Great Spotted Cuckoo *Clamator glandarius*. Two Ilam, 2 April 2015 (Y Sadafzadeh). Eighth record.

Western Brown Fish Owl *Ketupa zeylonensis*. One Bashagard, Hormozgan province, 9 September 2015 (G Ghader). Tenth record.

Omani Owl *Strix butleri*. One Mashhad, Khorasan-e Razavi province, 21 January 2015 (S Musavi, A Khani). One Jam, Bushehr province, July 2015. One Mehriz, Yazd province, 13 October 2015 (T Ghadirian). First–third records.

Sooty Falcon *Falco concolor*. One Damavand, Tehran province, July 2015 (M Kashfi). Apparently eighth record.

Long-tailed Shrike *Lanius schach*. A pair with a juvenile, Ferdows, South Khorasan province, 27 July, 3 & 5 August 2015 (H Ostovari). Seventh record (and first breeding record).

Wire-tailed Swallow *Hirundo smithii*. Two juveniles Aji-Gol, Golstan province, 27 December 2015 (H-R Rezaie). First record.

Kurdish Wheatear *Oenanthe xanthopyrma*. One Oraman, Kordestan province, September 2015 (P Bakhtiari). Apparently fifth record.

ISRAEL

The Israel Rarities and Distribution Committee comprises Avner Cohen (secretary), Barak Granit, Yosef Kiat and Yoav Perlman. Claims should be sent to Avner Cohen at israbirding@gmail.com. See also 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.

Crested Honey Buzzard *Pernis ptilorhynchus*.
One adult Aqaba bird observatory, 12 April 2015 (J Sykes, D Dridi, A Mustafa,

A Dodd, J & A Luker, R Sinclair & A Edwards). First record.

Black-winged Kite *Elanus caeruleus*. Three individuals (one adult, two juveniles) Jordan valley, 25 June 2015 (F Khoury, R Massis, Plate 1). Second record.

Eurasian Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*. Two Aqaba bird observatory, 26 April 2015 (F Rahahleh, Plate 2). One Aqaba bird observatory, 26 May 2015 (F Rahahleh, Plate 3). Ninth & tenth records.

Common Myna *Acridotheres tristis*. At least 26 birds at six sites (Amman, Na'ur, Dead sea road, Dead sea hotel area, Wadi Bahhath, east of Na'ur), 3 April–30 May 2015 (F Khoury, R Massis). Sixth–18th records. This species apparently now well established in parts of Jordan and claims no longer required by JBRC.

Rose-coloured Starling *Pastor roseus*. One adult Aqaba bird observatory, 23 June 2015 (F Rahahleh, Plate 4). Seventh record.



Plate 1. Juvenile Black-winged Kite *Elanus caeruleus* 25 June 2015, Jordan valley, Jordan. © Fares Khoury

Plate 2. Eurasian Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus* 26 April 2015, Aqaba bird observatory, Jordan. © Fares Rahahleh

Plate 3. Eurasian Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus* 26 May 2015, Aqaba bird observatory, Jordan. © Fares Rahahleh

Plate 4. Rose-coloured Starling *Pastor roseus* 23 June 2015, Aqaba bird observatory, Jordan. © Fares Rahahleh

Rustic Bunting *Emberiza rustica*. One Petra, 30 November 2014 (O Jonsson, K Jonsson, E Sivencrona, H Sivencrona). Second record.

The following claim was rejected: Ruppell's Vulture *Gyps rueppellii* (12 May 2014 Dana).

KUWAIT

The Kuwait Ornithological Rarities Committee comprises Mike Pope (chair), AbdulRahman Al-Sirhan (secretary), Markus Craig, Neil Tovey and Humoud Al-Shayji. Oscar Campbell and Peter Kennerley are both external adjudicators with voting rights. Claims should be sent to the secretary at alsirhan@alsirhan.com or the chair at mikeinq8@gmail.com.

Greater White-fronted Goose *Anser albifrons*. Two Jahra Pools reserve (JPR), 20 January 2015 (H Bouresli). Fourth record.

Red-breasted Merganser *Mergus serrator*. One on sea off JPR, 11–14 February 2015 (M Craig). Second record.

Sooty Shearwater *Puffinus griseus*. A single moulting bird Mina Al Zour, 23 May 2015 (M Pope) and two birds offshore JPR 25 May (O Al Shaheen) are considered as the fourth record.

Striated Heron *Butorides striata*. One Khiran Marchina, 21 February 2015 (M Pope). Fourth record.

Masked Booby *Sula dactylatra*. One flying north at coast JPR area, 1 April 2015 (O Al Shaheen). First record.

Spur-winged Lapwing *Vanellus spinosus*. Two JPR, 3 March 2015 (O Al Shaheen). 14th record.

Great Snipe *Gallinago media*. One JPR, 13 April 2015 (M Craig, N Tovey). 13th record.

Grey Phalarope *Phalaropus fulicarius*. One winter plumage Jahra bay off Entertainment City, 28 February 2015 (A Al Sirhan) and a different bird Jahra East outfall 16 April 2015 (M Craig). Eighth & ninth records.

Sabine's Gull *Xema sabini*. One JPR, 31 July–1 August 2015 (M Pope, N Tovey, Plate 5). First record.

Little Gull *Hydrocoloeus minutus*. One JPR, 1 April 2015 (M Craig). Sixth record.

Arctic Tern *Sterna pardisaea*. Two JPR, 13 June 2015 (O Al Shaheen). Sixth record.



Plate 5. Sabine's Gull *Xema sabini* 31 July–1 August 2015, Jahra Pools reserve, Kuwait. © Mike Pope

Long-tailed Skua *Stercorarius longicaudus*. One offshore JPR, 1 July 2015 (O Al Shaheen). Fourth record.

Pallid Scops Owl *Otus brucei*. One Green island, 30 January 2015 (N Tovey). One Al Abra, 3 February 2015 (M Craig). One Al Liyah, 5 February 2015 (A Al Jeraiwi, O Al Shaheen). 12th–14th records.

Hooded Crow *Corvus cornix*. One JPR, 7 February 2015 (M Craig). Second record.

Pale Crag Martin *Ptyonoprogne obsoleta*. One and then two Jal Al Zour ridge, 14–25 January 2015 (O Al Shaheen, A Jamal). Ninth record.

Plain Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus neglectus*. One Mutla'a ranch, 15–19 April 2015 (M Craig). First record.

Black Scrub Robin *Cercotrichas podobe*. One Kuwait zoo, 9 May 2014 (F Al Nomas). One Al Dhahar area (southern Kuwait), 24 April 2015 (M Shah). Third & fourth records.

Masked Wagtail *Motacilla (alba) personata*. One Jahra East outfall, 15 February 2015 (N Tovey). Fifth record.

Desert Finch *Rhodospiza obsoleta*. Eight 21 February 2015, Khiran (south of khor) (A Al Jeraiwi, M Pope), two north of khor 7 March 2015 (M Pope), three north of khor 23 May 2015 (A Al Jeraiwi, M Pope). 12th–13th records (small localised population).

Grey-necked Bunting *Emberiza buchanani*. One Al-Abraq, 23–24 January 2015 (M Craig, H Bouresli). Fourth record.

Red-headed Bunting *Emberiza bruniceps*. One male Mutla'a ranch, 24 April 2015 (M Craig). Sixth record.

OMAN

The Oman Bird Records Committee comprises Jens Eriksen (recorder), Ian Harrison, Dave Sargeant, Graham Searle, John Atkins, Peter Cowan, Waheed Al Farsi, Zahran Al Abdulasalam and 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* 37(2).

Brahminy Kite *Haliastur indus*. One adult
Wadi Darbat, 20 November 2015 (G Sahlstrand). First record.

Cinereous Vulture *Aegypius monachus*. One
Wadi Aydam, 10 February 2015 (B De Schutter). Fifth record.

Eleonora's Falcon *Falco eleonora*. A 2nd
calendar year bird Jarziz farm, Salalah,
12–14 June 2015 (T Pedersen *et al*). First
record.

Watercock *Gallicrex cinerea*. One Khawr
Taqah, 16 November 2015 (D Gustafsson).
Sixth record.

Greater Painted-snipe *Rostratula benghalensis*.
Adult female Raysut sewage treatment
plant, 26–28 August 2015 (R Tovey, H & J
Eriksen). Seventh record.

Asian Dowitcher *Limnodromus semipalmatus*.
One Al Ansab wetland, Muscat, 3
November 2015—at least 5 January 2016 (T
Epple, M Al Kindi *et al*). First record.

Red Knot *Calidris canutus*. One breeding
plumage Barr Al Hikman, 12 November
2015 (J van de Kam & R Bom). Seventh
record.

Black Tern *Chlidonias niger*. One Khawr
Dhurf, 10 February 2015 (A B Kristensen).
Tenth record.

Long-tailed Skua *Stercorarius longicaudus*.
One off Bandar Khayran, 29 May 2015
(P Batty) and two off Al Qurm park,
Muscat, 19 September 2015 (G Kirwan, N
Redman). Seventh & eighth records.

South Polar Skua *Stercorarius maccormicki*.
One The Wave, Muscat, 24 June 2015 (H &
J Eriksen, Plate 6). Fifth record.

White-throated Kingfisher *Halcyon
smyrnensis*. One Hilf, Masirah, 2
November–13 December 2015 (B
Vandenbergh, H & J Eriksen). First record.

Malachite Kingfisher *Corythornis cristatus*.
One Khawr Rawri, 11 June 2015 (T
Pedersen *et al*) and up to two there 25



Plate 6. South Polar Skua *Stercorarius maccormicki* 24 June 2015, The Wave, Muscat, Oman. © H & J Eriksen



Plate 7. Malachite Kingfisher *Corythornis cristatus* 1 November 2015, Khawr Rawri, Oman. © H & J Eriksen

October 2015—at least 12 January 2016
(C Lazaro *et al*, Plate 7). Ninth & tenth
records.

Pale Martin *Riparia diluta*. One Raysut sewage
treatment plant, 7 January 2015 (H & J
Eriksen). Fourth record.

Streak-throated Swallow *Petrochelidon
fluvicola*. Adult Raysut 6–11 December
2015 (H & J Eriksen, Plate 8). Sixth record.



Plate 8. Streak-throated Swallow *Petrochelidon fluvicola* | 1 December 2015, Raysut, Oman. © H & J Eriksen

Dusky Warbler *Phylloscopus fuscatus*. One Al Mughsayl 9–12 November 2015 (H & J Eriksen). Third record.

Forest Wagtail *Dendronanthus indicus*. One Qatbit, 14–21 November 2015 (P Berglin *et al.*). One Dhahariz park, Salalah, 21 November—at least 12 January 2016 (D Gustafsson *et al.*). Tenth & eleventh records.

Amur Wagtail *Motacilla (alba) leucopsis*. One Sohar, 15 September 2015 (J Atkins). Fourth record.

Eurasian Siskin *Spinus spinus*. One Dawkah farm, 14 November 2015 (Stig Holmstedt). Ninth record.

QATAR

Qatar Bird Records Committee members are Jamie A Buchan (recorder), Neil G Morris (secretary), Richard F Porter (honorary president), Keith Betton and Simon J Tull. Claims should be sent to jamie_buchan@yahoo.com. QBRC has accepted the following records since the report in *Sandgrouse* 37(1).

Greater White-fronted Goose *Anser albifrons*. Six Doha golf club, 17 November 2014–11 February 2015 (S Price). Ninth record.

Black-winged Kite *Elanus caeruleus*. One Irkayya farm 18 & 24 November 2014 (S Al Aseeri, S Price, Sheikh M A Al Thani, J Thompson). Fourth record.

European x Crested Honey Buzzard *Pernis apivorus* × *P. ptilorhynchus*. One Doha golf club 17 November 2014–9 Mar 2015 (S Price). The only Crested Honey Buzzard in Qatar was recorded 13 May 2014.

Short-toed Snake Eagle *Circaetus gallicus*. All records Irkayya farm. One 6 July 2013 (D Kumar, T Chirakuzhi). Tenth record. One 8 March 2014 (D Kumar, T Chirakuzhi, S Kalliparambil). 12th record. One 22 April 2015 (D Kumar). 14th record. One (a juvenile), 7 November 2015 (D Kumar). 15th record.

Eastern Imperial Eagle *Aquila heliaca*. Juvenile Irkayya farm, 6 November 2015, relocated Sailiya (west) lagoon (aka Al Riffa), 16 November 2015 (P Shellard, J Thompson, S Tull *et al.*). Fifth record.

Steppe Buzzard *Buteo buteo vulpinus*. One Irkayya farm, 1–13 November 2015 (A Everester, S Price). Fourth record.

Corncrake *Crex crex*. One Al Shamal park, 10 October 2015 (D Bishop, D Colbourne). Eighth record.

Spur-winged Lapwing *Vanellus spinosus*. One Sailiya (west), 11 November 2014 (S Al Aseeri, S Odeh, Sheikh MA Al Thani *et al.*). Second record.

White-tailed Lapwing *Vanellus leucurus*. One Sailiya (west), 22 April 2015 (S Price). 15th record.

Arctic Skua *Stercorarius parasiticus*. One pale phase Al Wakrah, 28 March 2015 (S Al Aseeri). Ninth record.

Pin-tailed Sandgrouse *Pterocles alchata*. A small breeding population discovered, 3 June 2015 (S Al Aseeri, Sheikh MA Al Thani *et al.*). Considered probably wild, not feral. First record.

Barbary Falcon *Falco (peregrinus) peregrinoides*. One Sailiya (west), 4 November 2014 (S Al Aseeri, A Al Khulaifi, Sheikh MA Al Thani). Second record.

Long-tailed Shrike *Lanius schach*. One Al Shamal park, 25 October 2014 (G Farnell). Second record. One Sheraton park, 16–17 October 2015 (D Colbourne, J Miles *et al*). Third record.

Eurasian Crag Martin At least eight Abu Nahkla, 28 March 2015 (D Bishop). At least three Irkayya farm, 3 April 2015 (N Morris). Thirteenth & fourteenth records.

Thrush Nightingale *Luscinia luscinia*. One Irkayya farm, 21 September 2015 (G Farnell *et al*). Two Sheraton hotel gardens, 16–at least 18 October 2015 (G Farnell, S Price *et al*). Eleventh & 12th records.

White-crowned Wheatear *Oenanthe leucopyga*. One Irkayya farm, 30 May–2 June 2015 (R Angwin, Sheikh MA Al Thani). Second record.

Kurdistan Wheatear *Oenanthe xanthopyrma*. One male Khasooma, 11 September 2015 (P Shellard, S Tull). Third record.

Masked Wagtail *Motacilla (alba) personata*. One Al Shamal park, 20 December 2014 (D Bishop). Second modern record.

Common Linnet *Linaria cannabina*. One female/first-winter Sailiya (west), 18 November 2015 (S Al Aseeri, Sheikh MA Al Thani). First record.

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

The Emirates Bird Records Committee comprises Oscar Campbell (chairman), Mark Smiles (secretary), Simon Lloyd, Huw Roberts and Neil Tovey (voting members) plus Tommy Pedersen (UAE bird recorder), Ahmed al Ali and Peter Hellyer (non-voting members). Records are circulated and assessments published three times per year, according to the timetable outlined at www.uaebirding.com/ebrc.html. Decisions on assessments, plus the EBRC's constitution and information about the assessment process and downloadable report forms are all available at the same location. The UAE Bird Checklist, in both short and annotated forms, is available at www.uaebirding.com/uaechecklist.html, along with annual reports for 2010–2013 inclusive. Claims, preferably on the downloadable report forms should be sent to ebrcuae@gmail.com or to Tommy Pedersen at tommypepe63@gmail.com. EBRC has accepted the following records since the report in *Sandgrouse* 37(2).

Cory's/Scopoli's Shearwater *Calonectris (diomedea) borealis/diomedea*. Singles pelagic trips from Khor Kalba 30 August and 14 September 2015 (A Alzaabi). Sixth & seventh records (four previous records attributed to Cory's Shearwater and one unspecified; last recorded 2014).

Amur Falcon *Falco amurensis*. One second calendar year male and female Wamm farms, 13–18 June 2015 with the female to 26 June 2015. A different second calendar year male with three second calendar year females there 3–4 July 2015 (M Smiles *et al*). 18th–19th records; last recorded 2014.

Jacobin Cuckoo *Oxylophus jacobinus*. One Wamm farms, 4 July 2015 (K Echtay *et al*). Fourth record; last recorded 2011.

Omani Owl *Strix butleri*. One heard calling and sound-recorded Wadi Wurayah national park, 8 and 13 March 2015 (E Miller, P Cabrera, J Judas). First record of this presumed elusive resident.

Black Drongo *Dicrurus macrocercus*. One Mushrif national park 10–16 June 2015 (M Francis *et al*) and presumed to be the same bird there 15 October–15 November 2015 (S Abdikhalyk, V Sharma *et al*). Seventh record, although a Black Drongo reported at several sites in the greater Dubai area from March 2014 might have been the same individual.

Green Warbler *Phylloscopus nitidus*. One Dubai pivot fields, 12 September 2015 (OJ Campbell, M Smiles, N Strycker). 14th record; last two autumn 2014 but prior to that not recorded since 2007.

Blyth's Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus dumetorum*. One Al Mamzar park, 4 September 2015 (M Smiles). 16th record but some older records are in the process of being re-evaluated. Last recorded 2012.

Collared Flycatcher *Ficedula albicollis*. One Al Mamzar park, 3–9 October 2015 (M Smiles *et al*). First record.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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