

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

Cyprus Rarities Committee: Jane Stylianou (chair), Melis Charalambides, Stavros Christodoulides, Chris Stavrou, Martin Hellicar, Johannes Honold, Filippas Georgiades. 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 (IBRC) comprises Abolghasem Khaleghizadeh (recorder), Mohammad Tohidifar, Ali Adhami-Mirhosseini, Seyed Babak Musavi, Meysam Ghasemi, Ramezanali Ghaemi, Ali Sangchooli, Mohammad Safrang, Parviz Bakhtiari, Mohammad E Sehhatiasabet, Abbas Ashoori, Alireza Hashemi and Ahmad Barati plus Derek Scott, Magnus Ullman, Raffael Ayé, Ian Harrison, Mike Blair and Richard Porter as external consultants when necessary. Claims should be sent to Abolghasem Khaleghizadeh:

akhaleghizadeh@gmail.com. IBRC has accepted the following records. (Records of species locally common in an Iranian region but rare in other Iranian regions are not presented here.)

Red-breasted Goose *Branta ruficollis*. One Qara-Qeshlaq wetland, East Azarbaijan province 6 November 2016 (B Nabighadim).

Lesser White-fronted Goose *Anser erythropus*. 11–24 individuals Boujagh national park, Gilan province, 27 October–3 November 2016 (A Ashoori, M Mehro, S Hosseini). 60 Qara-Qeshlaq wetland, East Azarbaijan province, 7–10 November 2016 (B Nabighadim, M Safrang, D Mojab). Five Zaribar lake, Kordestan province 26 December 2016 (S Hosseini, J Pezeshk).

Goliath Heron *Ardea goliath*. One southern part of Hour-al-Azeem wetland, Khuzestan province, 17 March 2016 (R Nikfalak). One Khour-e Khalasi, Hormozgan province, 27 March 2016 (Y Sadafzadeh, D Mojab, R Haqqani, M Barmudeh).

African Darter *Anhinga [melanogaster] rufa*. One 5 January 2016, one 8 March 2016, two 23 March 2016 and one 19 December 2016, all southern part of Hoor-al-Azeem wetland, Khuzestan province (R Nikfalak).

White-breasted Waterhen *Amaurornis phoenicurus*. One Bandar-e Lengeh coast, Hormozgan province, 5 August 2016 (S Mohtarami).

Demoiselle Crane *Grus virgo*. One Meighan wetland, Markazi province, 7 August 2016 (M Kolnegari).

Great Snipe *Gallinago media*. One Behesht-e Masoumeh wetland, Qom province, 7 April 2016 (A Sangchooli, R Aliasl, S Mokhtari).

Great Knot *Calidris tenuirostris*. Seven Golshahr, Bandar Abbas, Hormozgan province, 19 January 2016 rising to 71 26 January 2016 (M & M Ullman, S Musavi, P Klunderud).

Mediterranean Gull *Ichthyophaga melanocephalus*. One (adult) Salehieh wetland, Alborz province, 22 April 2016 (G-A Hajiabadi).



Plate 1. Western Brown Fish Owl *Bubo (zeylonensis) semenowi* 20 November 2016, Khaez protected area, Kohgiluyeh & Buyer-Ahmad province, Iran. © H Dideban

Namaqua Dove *Oena capensis*. One Mehran, Iran/Iraq border, Ilam province, 5 June 2016 (A Mohammadzadeh, E Golabpash, S Hosseini).

Great Spotted Cuckoo *Clamator glandarius*. One Abshineh, Hamedan province, May 2016 (M Roniasi).

Asian Koel *Eudynamys [scolopaceus] scolopaceus*. One Tiss, Chabahar, Sistan & Baluchestan province, 13 March 2016 (H Talebloo).

Western Brown Fish Owl *Bubo (zeylonensis) semenowi*. One Rafsanjan, Kerman province, 12 October 2016 (D Mojab, N Safaei, F Sanjideh, A Askari). One 20 Nov 2016 Khaez protected area, Kohgiluyeh & Buyer-Ahmad province (H Dideban, Plate 1).

Omani Owl *Strix [butleri] butleri*. One Champeh, Bandar-e Lengeh, Hormozgan province, 26 August 2016 (Hasan Pishvaei). One Bafgh, Yazd province, 5 January 2016 (S Musavi).

Red-footed Falcon *Falco [vespertinus] vespertinus*. One juvenile Malekshahi

city, Ilam province, 10 November 2016 (M Mami).

Amur Falcon *Falco [vespertinus] amurensis*. One Anarestan, Bushehr province, 31 October 2016 (S Fakouriyan).

Ashy Drongo *Edolius leucophaeus*. One Jihad park, Bandar Abbas, Hormozgan province, 19, 23, 26 January 2016 (M & M Ullman, S Musavi, P Klunderud, M Ghasemi, A Sangchooli, F Goodarzi, A Mousavian, T Shahi).

Bohemian Waxwing *Bombycilla garrulus*. One Astara, Gilan province, April 2016. One dead Talesh, Gilan province, 23 November 2016 (F Naziri). Two Ashuradeh, Miankaleh, Golestan province, 9 December 2016 (F Roshanaei). One Natanz, Esfahan province, 23 December 2016 (M Ebrahimi). 80 Bajestan, Khorasan-e Razavi province, December 2016. Four Golmakan, Khorasan-e Razavi province, December 2016 (M Mirsaiyyar). One Abbas-Abad wildlife refuge, Naein, Esfahan province, December 2016 (J Najafi, F Heidari).

Black-crowned Sparrow-lark *Eremopterix nigriceps*. Eight Kish island, Hormozgan province, 22–23 December 2016 (D Mojab).

Dusky Warbler *Phylloscopus fuscatus*. One Ghaleh-Bin wetland, Talesh, Gilan province, 30 December 2016 (F Naziri).

Pallas's Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus [proregulus] proregulus*. One Rig Yalan, Bam, Kerman province, 11 November 2016 (A Akbarian, M Mostafaei).

Hume's Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus humei*. Two Jahad park, Bandar Abbas, Hormozgan province, 19 January 2016 (Magnus Ullman, Seyed Babak Musavi, Mattias Ullman and Per Klunderud). Two Bahmani, Minab, Hormozgan province, 25 January 2016 (M & M Ullman, S Musavi, P Klunderud).

Paddyfield Warbler *Acrocephalus agricola*. Two Zaribar lake, Kordestan province, 31 August and 2 September 2016 (S Hosseini, J Pezeshk, S Amini).

Zitting Cisticola *Cisticola juncidis*. One Hashilan wetland, Kermanshah, Kermanshah province, 28 November 2016 (M Ahmadvandi).

Brahminy Starling *Sturnia pagodarum*. Two Kish island, Hormozgan province, 3–4 February 2016 (D Mojab, S Jebeli).

Kurdistan Wheatear *Oenanthe [xanthopyrmyna] xanthopyrmyna*. One Garin mountain, Hamedan-Lorestan border, 3 June 2016 (F Kazemi).

Forest Wagtail *Dendronanthus indicus*. One Jahad park, Bandar Abbas, Hormozgan province, 30 November 2016 (M Ghasemi, S Musavi, M Nahvi, E Salari Soheila Haghighi-Gharib).

Richard's Pipit *Anthus richardi*. Two Del Goraz, Hormozgan province, 21–23 January 2016 (M & M Ullman, S Musavi, P Klunderud).

Olive-backed Pipit *Anthus hodgsoni*. Two Bahmani, Minab, Hormozgan province, 25 January 2016, two Jahad park, Bandar Abbas, Hormozgan province, 26 January 2016 (M & M Ullman, S Musavi, P Klunderud). One Eram garden, Shiraz, Fars province, 15–23 November 2016 (E Sheniti, M Jalali, K Taheri).

Eurasian Bullfinch *Pyrrhula (pyrrhula) pyrrhula*. One female (dead) Chalus, Mazandaran province, 10 December 2016 (A Musavi). One male Nahar-Khoran forest, Gorgan, Golestan province, 30 December 2016 (B Galeshi). One female

Jamshidieh park, Tehran, December 2016 (M Tohidifar, S Musavi, J Karimizadeh, M Mallah).

Red Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra*. One adult and two juveniles Orumieh, West Azarbaijan province, three weeks December 2016 (R Azari).

Eastern Cinereous Bunting *Emberiza (cineracea) semenowi*. Six Tatteh turn, Sarv-Abad, Iran-Iraq border, Kordestan province, 12 May 2016 (D Mojab, M Safrang).

Rustic Bunting *Emberiza rustica*. One Khoosheh Mehr village, Bonab, East Azarbaijan province, 23 October 2016 (B Nabighadim).

ISRAEL

The Israel Rarities and Distribution Committee comprises Avner Cohen (secretary), Barak Granit, Yoav Perlman. Claims should be sent to Avner Cohen 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), Feras Rahahleh, Richard Porter and Ian Andrews. Claims should be sent to Fares Khoury at avijordan2000@yahoo.com. See also www.jordanbirdwatch.com/jbr.html.

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.

LEBANON

The Lebanon Bird Records Committee comprises Ghassan Ramadan-Jaradi (executive director & recorder), Georges Tohme, Gaby Khalaf, John Waterbury

and Ryad Sadq. Claims should be sent to Ghassan Ramadan-Jaradi (grjaradi@hotmail.com) from whom claim forms can be obtained.

OMAN

The Oman Bird Records Committee comprises Jens Eriksen (recorder), Ian Harrison, Dave Sargeant, Graham Searle, John Atkins, Peter Cowan, Waheed Al Fazari, Zahrán Al Abdulsalam 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* 39(1).

Cinereous Vulture *Aegypius monachus*. One Arift, 14 December 2016 (E Hirschfeld). Seventh record.

Ruddy-breasted Crake *Porzana fusca*. One Wadi Darbat, 4–7 May 2017 (D Mouton, C Lazaro). Second record.

Pied Kingfisher *Ceryle rudis*. Female Khawr Rawri, 1 November–30 December 2016 (D Mouton, C Lazaro). Eighth record.

European Robin *Erithacus rubecula*. One Qatbit, 13 December 2016 (A Burgas). Eighth record.

Red-throated Thrush *Turdus ruficollis*. One Sayq plateau, 29 January 2017 (H & J Eriksen). First record.

Taiga Flycatcher *Ficedula albicilla*. One Ayn Tobroq, 11 December 2016 (E Hirschfeld). Eighth record.

QATAR

Qatar Bird Records Committee members are Neil G Morris (secretary), Richard F Porter (honorary president), Jonathan Hardacre and Gavin C Farnell (recorder). Claims should be sent to gavinfarnell@yahoo.co.uk. QBRC has accepted the following records since the report in *Sandgrouse* 39(1) (IF=Irkayya farm, IL = Irkayya lagoons).

Black-winged Kite *Elanus caeruleus vociferus*. IF, 24–25 February 2017 (G Farnell, J Hardacre, G Saunders). Eighth record and third of eastern race *vociferus*.

Short-toed Snake Eagle *Circaetus gallicus*. A sub-adult IF, 20 February 2017 and the same bird there, 26 March 2017 (both J

Van Duffelen). Juvenile IF, 27 April 2017 (J Van Duffelen). 18–19th records.

Crested Honey Buzzard *Pernis ptilorhynchus*. One juvenile, Doha golf course, 22 March 2017 (J Van Duffelen). Fourth record.

Bonelli's Eagle *Aquila fasciata*. A 2cy bird IF, 13 May 2017 (J Hardacre, G Saunders). Seen again IL 10–16 June 2017 (J Hardacre, G Farnell). Third record.

Black Kite *Milvus [migrans] migrans*. Minimum 14 birds in a single kettle (record count), displaying characteristics of **Black-eared Kite** *Milvus (migrans) lineatus*, Al Shamal, 5 May (G Farnell).

Long-legged Buzzard *Buteo [rufinus] rufinus*. An overwintering pale morph bird IF and one dark morph IF, 16 January 2017 (J Van Duffelen), two pale morph birds IF, 4 March 2017 (G Farnell) and one in a kettle Al Shamal, 5 May 2017 (G Farnell). 22–25th records.

Steppe Buzzard *Buteo buteo vulpinus*. One IF, 12 May 2017 (D Kumar). Fifth record.

Shikra *Accipiter (badius) cenchroides*. Shamal coast, 13 May 2017 (G Farnell). First record.

Corncrake *Crex crex*. One Al Ruwais park, 13–20 May 2017 (G Farnell), one Shamal park and one Saudi border, 20 May 2017 (both G Farnell). Eighth–tenth records.

Allen's Gallinule *Porphyrio alleni*. One juvenile IF, 11 January 2017 (K Hamad). First record.

Spur-winged Lapwing *Vanellus spinosus*. One west Sailiya STP, 23 March–9 June 2017 (J Van Duffelen, G Farnell) and a second bird present, 24 March 2017 (G Farnell). Fourth record.

Sociable Lapwing *Vanellus gregarius*. One adult IF, 7 January 2017 (G Farnell). Ninth record.

Eurasian Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria*. Two IF, 24 February–4 March 2017 (G Farnell, D Bishop, S Tull). Fourth record.

Amur Falcon *Falco amurensis*. A female west Sailiya STP, 9–13 June 2017 (G Farnell). Fifth record.

Brown-necked Raven *Corvus ruficollis*. One Al Kharsaah, 17–22 January 2017 (M Al Thani, S Odeh, S Al Aseeri, G Farnell, J Van Duffelen). First record.

Basra Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus griseldis*. Single bird, Al Ruwais, 20 May 2017 (G Farnell, J Hardacre, G Saunders). First record.

Hume's Whitethroat *Sylvia althaea*. One IF, 11 April 2017 (J Hardacre). Tenth record.

Thrush Nightingale *Luscinia luscinia*. One Al Ruwais park, 13 May 2017 (G Farnell). 12th record.

Caspian Stonechat *Saxicola maurus hemprichii*. A pair IF, 24 February 2017 (D Bishop, G Farnell), two individuals IF, 4 March 2017 (S Tull, G Farnell). Seventh and eighth records.

Richard's Pipit *Anthus richardi*. One IF, 18 April 2017 (J Hardacre, G Saunders). Seventh record.

Trumpeter Finch *Bucanetes githagineus*. One Al Zowair north, 19 April 2017 (H AbdulRahman Al Thani). Fourth record.

TURKEY

The Turkish Bird Records Committee comprises Kerem Ali Boyla (secretary), Kiraz Erciyas, Korhan Özkan, Kuzey Cem Kulaçoğlu, Mustafa Erturhan, Nizamettin Yavuz, Ömrül Ünsal Özkoç and Ali Atahan (observer). Claims should be entered as a sighting at the eBird portal (<http://ebird.org>).

More information can be found at www.kustr.org/kuskayitkomitesi.

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

The Emirates Bird Records Committee comprises Oscar Campbell (chair), Mark Smiles (secretary), Simon Lloyd, Huw Roberts and Neil Tovey (all voting members) plus Tommy Pedersen (UAE bird recorder), Ahmed al Ali, Peter Hellyer and Jacky Judas (all 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 2010–2015. Claims, preferably on the downloadable report forms, should be sent to ebrcuae@gmail.com or to Tommy



Plate 2. Roseate Tern *Sterna dougallii* 5 May 2017, Fujairah port beach, United Arab Emirates. © OJ Campbell

Pedersen at tommypepe63@gmail.com. EBRC has accepted the following records since the report in *Sandgrouse* 39(1).

Red-crested Pochard *Netta rufina*. One female Al Ain cement factory quarries and nearby sites, 28 November 2016–6 January 2017 (P Arras). Two females Al Wathba wetland reserve, 14 January–4 February 2017 (OJ Campbell, M Smiles *et al.*). One female Al Warsan lakes, 17 February 2017 (M Smiles, M & C Hurben). 18–20th records, last 2015.

Eastern Cattle Egret *Bubulcus coromandus*. A series of records at Wamm farms 2009–2017 were recently re-evaluated and considered to be returning individuals including two there 19–27 May 2017 (M Smiles, J Judas) and therefore constitute one record. One Ajman STP, 1 April 2017 (S Taylor). Fifth record.

Dalmatian Pelican *Pelecanus crispus*. One Umm Al Quwain, 1 March 2017 (J Betleja), and then Ra's al-Khor wildlife reserve, 4 March 2017 (V Sharma, A Sarkar). Third record, last 1980.

Little Bustard *Tetrax tetrax*. One Wamm farms, 1–3 December 2016 (J Judas *et al.*). First record of an individual considered to be of wild origin.

Common Crane *Grus grus*. One juvenile Zakher lake, 8–10 October 2016 (NP Williams *et al.*). Ninth record, last 2013.

Spur-winged Lapwing *Vanellus spinosus*. One Khalifa city, 9 November 2016 (A Bailey). One Zakher lake, 9–26 November 2016 (A Arias de la Torre *et al.*). Ninth & tenth records, last February 2016.

Great Snipe *Gallinago media*. One Wamm farms, 18 February 2017 (M Smiles). Twelfth record, last 2011.

Black-legged Kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla*. One Umm Al Quwain harbour, 3 February 2017 (J Lidster, N Moran *et al.*). Seventh record, last 2014.

Roseate Tern *Sterna dougallii*. One adult Fujairah port beach, 5 May 2017 (M Smiles, OJ Campbell, S Lloyd, D Lobo, Plate 2). 11th record, last 2014.

Great Spotted Cuckoo *Clamator glandarius*. One adult Wamm farms, 4 February 2017 (J Lidster, N Moran *et al.*). Fifth record, last 2015.

Omani Owl *Strix butleri*. One heard calling Wadi Wurayah NP (waterfall area), 20 March 2017 (A Stoquaert, E Sansault).

Second record, first recorded at this site 2015.

Ashy Drongo *Dicrurus leucophaeus*. One Al Mamzar park, 29–30 October 2016. Tenth record but possibly returning bird from 2015.

Wire-tailed Swallow *Hirundo smithii*. One Al Warsan lakes, 3 February–21 March 2017 (M Smiles). One Wamm farms, 3 February 2017 (OJ Campbell). Two Al Ain cement factory quarries, 14–20 March 2017 (P Arras, A de la Torre). 16–18th records, last 2015.

Dusky Warbler *Phylloscopus fuscatus*. One Mushrif Palace gardens, 12–13 November 2016 (SP Lloyd). Eighth record, last 2013.

Yellow-browed Warbler *Phylloscopus inornatus*. One Al Mamzar park 29 October–19 November 2016 (M Smiles) with two 30 October (M Ullman *et al.*). One Emirates Palace hotel, 5–12 November 2016 (A Ward, OJ Campbell). One Dubai desert conservation reserve, 23 November 2016 (S Bruijllants *et al.*). 14–16th records, last 2014.

Redwing *Turdus iliacus*. One Mushrif Palace gardens, 3–4 February 2017 (A Bailey *et al.*). Ninth record, last 2012.

Taiga Flycatcher *Ficedula albicilla*. One Al Mamzar park, 30 October 2016 (M Ullman *et al.*). Eighth record, last 2015.

Common Linnet *Carduelis cannabina*. One male Safa park, 25 April 2017 (H Heaton). Fifth record, last 2005.

White-capped Bunting *Emberiza stewarti*. One at a private estate near Green Mubazzarah, Al Ain, 16–22 November 2016 (P Arras *et al.*). Second record, last 1992.

Little Bunting *Emberiza pusilla*. One Emirates Palace hotel, 12–13 November 2016 (A Ward *et al.*). 18th record, last 2012.

Common Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus*. One male Al Wathba wetland reserve, 18 March 2017 (OJ Campbell). Ninth record, last 2000.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The following assisted in the compilation of this review: Abolghasem Khaleghizadeh (Iran), Jens Eriksen (Oman), Gavin Farnell (Qatar), Oscar Campbell, Tommy Pedersen (United Arab Emirates).

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OBITUARY

Terry Rogers & Frank Walker

It was with sadness that I learnt, belatedly, that two of Arabia's founding birders and long-time members of OSME, had bowed out between the end of 2015 and early 2016. Terry Rogers was well known for his work on Bahrain birds from 1969 and later in respect of Masirah island, Oman, and died on 7 December 2015. On 11 February 2016 Frank Walker died, he was active in Oman in the 1970s and northern Saudi Arabia in the 1980s.

Terry Rogers who worked for the UK Meteorological Office spent a number of years on ocean weather ships in the Atlantic building up a vast store of knowledge of seabirds before working in the Gulf region, first to Bahrain and then later to Masirah island for a number of years, during which time he visited Dhofar and several other places in the region. Bahrain 1969 was also my own introduction to Arabian birds and I well remember the quiet enthusiasm and knowledge Terry brought to our motorcycle gang of birders on the island. Well there were three of us, Chris Griffiths the third member who Terry collaborated with a lot on Gulf and Oman publications, died young in the 1970s. We were all part of the great flowering of birding activity on Bahrain at that period anchored by the late Mike Gallagher. We scoured the islands almost every day looking for migrants until the end of 1971. I suppose we were proto-twitchers (although there was not yet a term for it), as soon as one of us found a new species for the island the others would jump on their Honda to rush off and see it. Terry contributed much to Mike Gallagher's monthly *Gulf Birdwatchers Newsletter* and Mike collaborated with him on a new list of Bahrain birds in 1973 as well as an important paper on breeding birds on the island in 1978. Terry, Chris and myself joined Exercise Tayur Watch to the UAE in 1970 (which Mike Gallagher set up for his bird watching friends at the UK taxpayer's expense) and the later Exercise Lapwing, also to the UAE (or the Trucial States as we knew it at the time), which put the Khor Kalba race of the White Collared Kingfisher *Halcyon chloris kalbaensis* on the map. Unfortunately I could

not join the second trip. After 1971 Terry went to Masirah island, Oman, for a number of years and regularly visited Dhofar province, and kept in touch with the region long after he retired to Shetland (UK). He took part in the important Oman government funded survey of the flora and fauna of Dhofar in 1977 and published a very well respected checklist of Masirah birds in 1988, through the Oman Bird Records Committee. Terry found a number of first records for Oman including Great Crested Grebe, Brown-throated Martin and Spur-winged Plover. He published a number of other papers on birds of Oman and the Gulf. On Shetland in retirement he got deep into micro-lepidoptera and added several new species to regional lists.

Frank Walker died on Malta aged 91. In his long Royal Air Force and birdwatching career he visited a huge number of countries and his achievements included playing a major part in setting up the Hong Kong Bird Club and the RAF Ornithological Society. After retiring from the RAF he spent some eight years in Arabia, first in Oman 1975–1979 with an equal amount of time in the north and Dhofar and then in Tabuk, northern Saudi Arabia, 1980–81. Frank found a number of first records for Oman including Demoiselle Crane, Little Swift and Eversmann's Redstart. Frank was a good correspondent and we enjoyed a long chain of letters starting well before the ABBA project and which continued well after the *Atlas* was published in 2010, to just before he died. A bachelor, he was birding round the globe well into his 80s with interesting letters from places as far away as Canada, Australia and Morocco, but especially from all corners of the Mediterranean which seems to have been his spiritual birding homeland. He provided a very comprehensive set of records for ABBA for all his Arabian days. I only met Frank once, in 1981, when I found him a very interesting character and enjoyed his conversation and attitude to life. I was impressed by his strong independent personality, with a straight talking attitude he seems to have always done his own thing to a high standard and expected

everyone else to come up to his standards. He could not abide pomposity and incompetence and had a deep rooted obstructive attitude if he felt he was being treated poorly, especially by those in authority. In Oman his personality brought him eventually into conflict with Mike Gallagher who was trying to closely control everything relating to birds in Oman at the time. Mike unfortunately never quite understood that to get the most out of volunteers *eg* amateur birders sending their records to the recorder regularly, required a minimum of tact and encouragement. Mike (also formerly military) tried to order Frank to submit his records to the Oman Bird Recorder. Mike especially objected to Frank publishing notes on Oman birds without clearing everything through him and to sending bird specimens to the 'wrong' museum! All this only encouraged Frank to eventually ignore Mike altogether. Frank published a number of papers on his time in Arabia, several by the RAF Ornithological Society and notably two long notes on the birds of Northern Oman

and Dhofar in 1981 in *Sandgrouse*. He also prepared, with Arthur Stagg, a very useful checklist of Tabuk birds in 1982. He wrote other papers on radar and bird movements and Gannets *Sula bassana* off Iberia.

Mike Jennings

Some relevant publications

- Gallagher, MD & TD Rogers. 1978. On the breeding birds of Bahrain. *Bonner Zoologische Beiträge* 29: 5–17.
- Gallagher, MD & TD Rogers. 1980. On some birds of Dhofar and other parts of Oman. *Journal Oman Studies Special Report* 2: 347–385.
- Rogers, TD. 1988. *A new list of the birds of Masirah Island, Sultanate of Oman*. Oman Bird Records Committee.
- Rogers, TD & MD Gallagher. 1973. *Birds of Bahrain. A check list*. Privately published.
- Stagg, AJ & FJ Walker. 1982. *A checklist of the birds of the Tabuk kingdom of Saudi Arabia*. Privately published.
- Walker, FJ. 1981. Notes on the birds of northern Oman. *Sandgrouse* 2: 33–55.
- Walker, FJ. 1981. Notes on the birds of Dhofar, Oman. *Sandgrouse* 2: 56–85.