

# 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

The Cyprus Rarities Committee comprises Jane Stylianou (chair), Melis Charalambides, Stavros Christodoulides, Chris Stavrou, Martin Hellicar, Johannes Honold and Filippos Georgiades. A full list of Cyprus birds requiring rarity descriptions and rare bird report forms are available from Jane Stylianou janesty@yahoo.co.uk to whom claims should be sent. CRC has accepted the following records since the report in *Sandgrouse* 40(1).

**Horned Grebe** *Podiceps auritus*. Two offshore Kouklia (Paphos) 16 November–5 December 2017 with one remaining until 7 February 2018 (A McArthur, Plate 1). Third record.

**Levant Sparrowhawk** *Accipiter brevipes*. An adult Anarita park 16 April 2017 (J Willson). A juvenile Timi 16 September 2017 (M Smith) and another juvenile

Phasouri 2 October 2017 (R Howard, K Howard, P Chambers, A Chambers).

**Pacific Golden Plover** *Pluvialis fulva*. One adult Larnaca sewage treatment plant (STP) 21 October 2017 (S Christodoulides). Ninth record.

**Terek Sandpiper** *Xenus cinereus*. One Larnaca STP 31 August 2017 (C Rixen, C Rueffler). 14th record since 2000.

**Black-winged Pratincole** *Glareola nordmanni*. One Polis Chrysochou bay 28 April 2017 (R Dobbins) and another Larnaca STP area 26 October 2017 (S Christodoulides). Rare, less than annual passage migrant.

**Black-legged Kittiwake** *Rissa tridactyla*. An adult Paphos headland 12 November 2017 (T Drew). Eighth record.

**Oriental Turtle Dove** *Streptopelia orientalis*. One Mandria (Paphos) 22 March 2017 (C Richardson). Second record.

**Little Swift** *Apus affinis*. One Afrendika 17 March 2017 (D Bratt), one Oroklini marsh 18 March 2017 (M Lanaway, S Bosworth) and two 15 September 2017 (C Richardson). 20th–22nd records.

**Steppe Grey Shrike** *Lanius (excubitor) pallidirostris*. One Armou hills 23



Plate 1. Horned Grebe *Podiceps auritus* 16 December 2017, Kouklia, Paphos, Cyprus. © Dave Walker



**Plate 2.** Bar-tailed Lark *Ammomanes cinctura* 13 April 2017, cape Greco, Cyprus. © Jane Stylianou

September 2017 (C Richardson). 16th record.

**Bar-tailed Lark** *Ammomanes cinctura*. One cape Drepanum 7 April 2017 (S Mann) and another cape Greco 12–14 April 2017 (B Hafbauer, C Hafbauer, E Roy, Plate 2). 5th–6th records.

**Yellow-browed Warbler** *Phylloscopus inornatus*. One ringed Prodromos 24 October 2017 (M Moysi) and one Armou hills 31 October 2017 (C Richardson). 18th–19th records.

**Marsh Warbler** *Acrocephalus palustris*. Two ringed individuals: one Kouklia (Paphos) 23 September 2017 (C Lamsdell, D Lamsdell) and another Neo Horio 24 September 2017 (M Moysi). Rare, less than annual passage migrant.

**Asian Desert Warbler** *Sylvia nana*. Two Akrotiri salt lake 25 February 2017 (N Papanikolas). 17th record.

**White-throated Robin** *Irania gutturalis*. A male cape Greco 22 April 2017 (F Georgiades). 20th record.

**European Pied Flycatcher** *Ficedula hypoleuca*. One Troodos 12 September 2017 (I Bloomer, K Bloomer). Passage migrant, rare in autumn.

**‘Caspian Stonechat’** *Saxicola maurus hemprichii*. One Avakas coast, Paphos 27 March 2017 (A Saunders), one Polis 30 March 2017 (R Dobbins) and another

Paphos STP 30 October 2017 (T Drew, E Drew). Rare, less than annual passage migrant.

**Western Siberian Stonechat** *Saxicola maurus*. One Kouklia (Paphos) 5 November 2017. (T Drew, E Drew). Rare, less than annual passage migrant.

**Rock Sparrow** *Petronia petronia*. One cape Greco 2 November 2017 (T Drew, E Drew). At least 12th record.

**Yellow-headed Wagtail** *Motacilla (flava) lutea*. One Agia Napa football fields 3 September 2017 (C Rixen, C Rueffler). 9th recent record.

**Asian Crimson-winged Finch** *Rhodopechys sanguineus*. One rescued from pet shop in Limassol. It had been trapped previously there and was ringed and released Phasouri 14 February 2017 (CRC). 4th record.

**Trumpeter Finch** *Bucanetes githagineus*. One cape Greco 22 April 2017 (S Christodoulides), one Akrotiri gravel pits 13 May 2017 (S Christodoulides) and another Tomb of the Kings archaeological site, Paphos 4 November 2017 (T Drew, E Drew).

**Little Bunting** *Emberiza pusilla*. One ringed Polis reedbeds 4 April 2017 (R Dobbins) and another Latchi 3 November 2017 (T Drew, E Drew). 5th–6th records.

## EGYPT

The Egyptian Ornithological Rarities Committee comprises Sherif Baha El Din (chairman), Pierre André Crochet (vice chairman), Frédéric Jiguet (secretary), Lukasz Lawicki (joint secretary), Wed Abdou, Richard Bonser, Andrea Corso, Andrew Grieve, Richard Hoath and Manuel Schweizer. Claims should be sent to eorc.secretary@gmail.com. See also [www.chn-france.org/eorc/eorc.php](http://www.chn-france.org/eorc/eorc.php) where a list of rare species is given and where claim forms can be downloaded, in addition to fuller information on the following reports. EORC has accepted the following records since the report in *Sandgrouse* 36(2).

**Balearic Shearwater** *Puffinus mauretanicus*.  
One Zaraniq, east end of Bardawil lagoon, North Sinai, 17 August 1981 (U Sørensen, I Petersen). First record.

**African Openbill** *Anastomus lamelligerus*.  
Two river Nile 20 km north of Kom Ombo, 31 May 2013 (J Quilter). Second record.

**Yellow Bittern** *Ixobrychus sinensis*. Two trapped Wadi Lahami, Red sea, 26 April

2012 and one trapped 9 May 2012 (M Päckert, J Hering *et al*). Two males trapped in 2012 subsequently trapped July 2013 and found to have brood patches; three nests found, with egg shells. First record and first breeding record.

**Wahlberg's Eagle** *Hieraetus wahlbergi*. One pale morph juvenile Ras Shukeir, Red sea coast, 3 May 2013 (Ahmed Waheed, Ibraheem Saad). First record.

**Tawny Eagle** *Aquila rapax*. One juvenile between Marsa Alam and Edfu, 8 May 2015 (Lars Andersen & Martin Thomsen, Plate 3). First record.

**Chestnut-bellied Sandgrouse** *Syrrhaptes exustus*. *Sandgrouse* 36(2) reported the rediscovery of this species in March 2012 near Sandafa in Minya governorate, subsequently confirmed by numerous observations. Following this discovery, an observer living in Elba national park reported five birds of this species coming to drink in mixed sandgrouse flocks (with *Pterocles coronatus* and *P. senegallus*) at Jebel Elba in the Halaib Triangle in June 2013 with subsequent observations 2014–2017 (maximum 50 October 2014 and April 2015) (Ali Dourah). EORC considers that



**Plate 3.** Tawny Eagle *Aquila rapax* 8 May 2015 between Marsa Alam and Edfu, Egypt. © Lars Andersen

this species is regularly present in the national park.

**‘Siberian’ Buff-bellied Pipit** *Anthus (rubescens) japonicus*. *Sandgrouse* 35(1) reported the acceptance of the first record of an individual at Naama Bay sewage works, Sharm el Sheikh, Sinai 11–13 January 2009. Photographic evidence subsequently submitted has enabled EORC to accept that there were three individuals rather than a single bird present at the site during this period. There are therefore three records of ‘Siberian’ Buff-bellied Pipit in Egypt, involving six individuals.

**Pied Crow** *Corvus albus*. One Gebel Elba, Elba national park, Halaib Triangle, 2–3 April 2015 (Ali Dora). First record.

**Black Scrub Robin** *Cercotrichas podobe*. One Wadi Kiraaf, Hadarba, Gebel Elba, Elba national park, 23 November and 13 December 2014 (Ali Dora). Not attributed to subspecies, either *podobe* breeding across the Sahel or *melanoptera* on the Arabian peninsula. Sixth record.

**Menetries’s Warbler** *Sylvia mystacea*. One male Wadi Gemal, 12 March 2015 (A Bujanowicz). Sixth record.

## IRAN

The Iran Bird Records Committee 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](mailto:akhaleghizadeh@gmail.com).

## 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 [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), Feras Rahahleh, Richard Porter and Ian Andrews. Claims should be sent to Fares Khoury at [avijordan2000@yahoo.com](mailto:avijordan2000@yahoo.com). See also: [www.jordanbirdwatch.com/jbrc.html](http://www.jordanbirdwatch.com/jbrc.html).

## KUWAIT

The Kuwait Ornithological Rarities Committee (KORC) comprises Neil Tovey (chair), AbdulRahman Al-Sirhan (secretary), Markus Craig 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](mailto:alsirhan@alsirhan.com) or the chair at [neiltovey@gmail.com](mailto:neiltovey@gmail.com). KORC has accepted the following records since the report in *Sandgrouse* 39(1).

**Eastern Cattle Egret** *Bubulcus coromandus*.

One 13 May 2008, Sabah Al Ahmad Natural Reserve (SAANR) (A Al Sirhan). One Jahra Pools Reserve (JPR) 24 April 2018 (M Craig). First and second records.

**Golden Eagle** *Aquila chrysaetos*. Two SAANR 15 December 2017 (R Al Hajji). Eleventh record.

**White-tailed Eagle** *Haliaeetus albicilla*. One JPR, 27 December 2017 (R Lebrun). Fifth record.

**Sociable Lapwing** *Vanellus gregarius*. 13 Pivot fields, 13 December 2017 (D Pointon, P Stronach). Tenth record.

**Eurasian Golden Plover** *Pluvialis apricaria*. One Pivot fields, 6 January 2018 (M Craig). Thirteenth record.

**Pin-tailed Snipe** *Gallinago stenura*. One Pivot fields, 6 January 2018 (M Craig). First record.

**Little Gull** *Hydrocoloeus minutus*. One JPR, 7 May 2018 (M Craig, O Al Shaheen). Eighth record.

**Stock Dove** *Columba oenas*. One Pivot fields, 16 January 2018 (M Craig, N Tovey). Tenth record.

**Pallid Scops Owl** *Otus brucei*. Two JPR 10 January 2017 (H Boerseli). 19th record.

**Long-eared Owl** *Asio otus*. Two Mutla’a ranch, 17 November 2017 (P Jansen, M Kviesgaard), two Al Abraq 17 February 2018 (Sajan). Eighth–ninth records.

**Mesopotamian Crow** *Corvus (cornix) capellanus*. One Pivot fields, 17 February 2018 (M Pope). Third record.

**Grey-throated Martin** *Riparia paludicola*. One JPR, 24 November 2017 (M Craig). First record.

**Pale Martin** *Riparia diluta*. Three JPR, 26 November 2017 (M Craig, N Tovey). First record.

**Plain Leaf Warbler** *Phylloscopus neglectus*. One SAANR, 1 May 2008 (A Al Sirhan). First record.

**Collared Flycatcher** *Ficedula albicollis*. One Jahra farms, 4 May 2018 (B Jummaa). Second record.

**Purple Sunbird** *Cinnyris asiaticus*. One Mutla'a ranch, 17 November 2017 (A Al Sirhan and tour group). Third record.

**Olive-backed Pipit** *Anthus hodgsoni*. One Jahra farms 10 November 2017 (B Jummaa), one Mutla'a ranch 17 November 2017 (H Dufourney), one Jahra farms 4 May 2018 (B Jummaa). 11th–13th records.

**Hawfinch** *Coccothraustes coccothraustes*. One Jahra East outfall, 15 November 2017 (R Al Hajji), one Mutla'a ranch 18 November 2017 (N Tovey). Third–fourth records.

#### **Breeding records:**

**Dalmatian Pelican** *Pelecanus crispus*. First breeding record January 2017, Boubyan island (bred unsuccessfully there March 2018).

**Common Woodpigeon** *Columba palumbus*. First breeding record March 2018, Abdaly farms.

**Pharaoh Eagle Owl** *Bubo ascalaphus*. Now established as an annual breeder typically in protected areas such as Wafra oil field and SAANR.

## **LEBANON**

The Lebanon Bird Records Committee comprises Ghassan Ramadan Jaradi (executive director & recorder), Georges Tohme, Gaby Khalaf, John Waterburry 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, Zahran Al Abdulasalam and Manal Al Kindi. Claims should be sent to Jens Eriksen hjoman@gmail.com from whom claim forms can be obtained.

## **QATAR**

The Qatar Bird Records Committee comprises 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.

## **TURKEY**

The Turkish Bird Records Committee comprises Kerem Ali Boyla (secretary), Kiraz Erciyas, Korhan Özkan, Kuzey Cem Kulaçoğlu, Mustafa Erturhan, Nizamettin Yavuz, Ömral 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](http://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) and 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](http://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](http://www.uaebirding.com/uaechecklist.html), along with annual reports for 2010–2015. The annotated



**Plate 4.** East Siberian Wagtail *Motacilla (alba) ocularis* 7 November 2017, Saadiyat island golf course, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates. © J Partridge

checklist was updated extensively in July 2016 with category definitions adjusted, categorisation of a number of species altered, and a number of records of certain species reviewed. 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* 40(1).

**Mute Swan** *Cygnus olor*. Two immatures Jebel Dhanna plantation 15 December 2017 (K Al Dhaheri). Fifth record, last 2003.

**Great White Pelican** *Pelecanus onocrotalus*. One juvenile Ra's al-Khor mangrove hide 24 February–12 May 2018 (C Valdez *et al*). Tenth record, last 2017.

**Spotted Sandgrouse** *Pterocles senegallus*. Six Saih al Salam oasis lakes 14 January 2018 (L Esselen) and two there 19 January (M Smiles). Sixth record, last 2009.

**Arabian Spotted Eagle Owl** *Bubo (africanus) milesi*. One Hajar mountains 1 November 2017 and two birds there 18 April 2018 (A Stoquert, S Majid, J Judas *et al*). First record, but subsequent fieldwork has established it as a scarce and inconspicuous resident in the Hajar mountains. c10 territories located by May 2018 (A Stoquert, J Judas *et al*).

**Black Drongo** *Edolius macrocercus*. One Mushrif national park 28 Oct 2017 onwards (N Riddiford), possibly the returning bird from 2015/2016. One Abu Dhabi golf club 3 December 2017 (S Lloyd). 10th–11th records, last 2016.

**Calandra Lark** *Melanocorypha calandra*. Eight Sila'a 2 December 2017 (S Lloyd). Two Wamm farms 8 December 2017–26 January 2018 (O Campbell, M Smiles *et al*). 10th–11th records, last 2015.

**Streak-throated Swallow** *Petrochelidon fluvicola*. One Al Zorah nursery 24 December 2017 (K Al Dhaheri) and probably same bird Ajman STP 29 December 2017 (M Smiles). Five Ajman STP 12 January 2018, last seen (one) 29 January 2018 (J Judas *et al*). 10th–11th records, last 2013.

**Yellow-browed Warbler** *Phylloscopus inornatus*. One Mushrif Palace gardens 25 October 2017 (S Lloyd), one Al Mamzar park 28 October 2017 (M Smiles, D Wadsworth), one Wadi Bih 21 January 2018 (Y Gisseleire). 17th–19th records, last 2017.

**Moustached Warbler** *Acrocephalus melanopogon*. One Saih al Salam, Al Qudra lake, 20 December 2017–4 Jan 2018 (R Khan *et al*). One Al Wathba wetland reserve 27 January 2018 (J Delannoy, N Moran *et al*). 18th–19th records, last 2014.

**Fieldfare** *Turdus pilaris*. One Jebel Dhanna housing area 18 November 2017 (K Al Dhaheri). Sixth record, last 1990.

**'Caspian Stonechat'** *Saxicola maurus hemprichii*. One Al Qudra pivot fields, 30 November 2017 (O Campbell). Rare but regular in spring, two previous autumn records.

**'East Siberian Wagtail'** *Motacilla (alba) ocularis*. One Saadiyat island golf course 7

November 2017 (J Partridge, Plate 4). First record of this subspecies.

#### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The following assisted in the compilation of this review: Jane Stylianou (Cyprus), Frédéric Jiguet, Lukasz Lawicki (Egypt), Mike Pope, AbdulRahman Al Sirhan, Neil Tovey (Kuwait), Oscar Campbell, Tommy Pedersen (United Arab Emirates).

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