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Sexing of juvenile Montagu's Harrier

Andrea Corso

The identification (including ageing and sexing) of Montagu's Harrier *Circus pygargus* has been discussed in a number of publications (eg, Forsman 1995, 1999, Clarke 1996, Lontkowski 1995). Nevertheless, sexing of juveniles is still primarily based on the eye colour, without utilizing structural or plumage characters. During a study of breeding Montagu's Harriers in Italy, differences in structure and plumage between juvenile male and female were found which may be useful for sexing a juvenile without necessarily determining the eye colour. The established sex differences are based on observations of juveniles of c 35 breeding pairs of Montagu's Harrier studied in central and northern Italy and on examination of more than 200 specimens.

Juvenile male

Structure

The wing-tip reaches the tail-tip or falls short only a few millimetres, resulting in no or a very short tail projection in juvenile male. The legs and talons are less strongly built and structurally smaller than in juvenile female.

Plumage

The dark ear-covert patch is usually smaller and paler (not solidly dark-brown or black) than in juvenile female. Normally, the white area around the eye is larger and more contrasting than in juvenile female, especially above and behind the eye. Often, there is a collar, generally paler and more obvious than in juvenile female. The centre of neck and the upperbreast are paler and more uniform, without dark streaks (or with only a few spaced and diffuse ones). The wings are darker, more solidly black, although the outer primaries ('fingers') are usually paler, less solidly black. Generally, the primary base is more evenly barred, with more distinct and darker bars. On the underwing, the dark secondaries have a grey wash, with more obvious pale and dark bars. On the upperwing, the primary base is paler than in juvenile female, with a grey wash; consequently, in flight, the primary base appears paler than in juvenile female, contrasting more with the dark secondaries which are often also more uniform, with less obvious dark bars. The best and most reliable character is found in the axillaries and the greater underwing-coverts. These parts are nearly unpatterned without obvious marks in juvenile male but with often conspicuous dark marks in juvenile female. As a result, these parts are uniform in juvenile male, with only occasionally traces of dark shaft-streaks. However, some juvenile males show darker and more obvious shaft-streaks but these are always thinner and less obvious (or not at all) than in juvenile female. Instead, a juvenile female shows contrasting thick dark shaft-streaks, combined with two or three large dark spots, on the axillaries, forming bars or anchor-shaped marks. The white rump-patch is often less extensive, narrower than in juvenile female. The rectrices show less obvious dark bars, with often a grey wash on the central rectrices (which, in most cases, are also paler than in juvenile female).

Bare parts

The iris is distinctly paler than in juvenile female, ranging from pale-grey(ish) to yellow(ish). In nestlings, the iris is pale- to dark-grey(ish), clearly contrasting with the pupil; after fledging, the iris becomes paler and, by autumn, it is already yellow(ish) (cf Clarke 1996, Forsman 1999).

Juvenile female

Structure

The wing-tip falls well short of the tail-tip in most cases, resulting in a longer tail projection than in juvenile male. The legs and talons are more strongly built and structurally larger than in juvenile male.

Plumage

The dark ear-covert patch is generally darker and larger than in juvenile male. Often, the white area around the eye is smaller than in juvenile male. The sides of the breast are darker than in most juvenile males. The dark streaks on the neck and upperbreast are more obvious and more numerous than in juvenile male. They extend much more often onto the flanks, a pattern rarely seen in juvenile male (and, when present in juvenile male, the dark streaks are more diffuse and less numerous). The outer primaries ('fingers') are more solidly black. The primary base usually has, but not always, bars which are less uniformly dis-

199 Montagu's Harrier / Grauwe Kiekendief *Circus pygargus,* juvenile female, Valli di Ferrara, Italy, September 1996 *(Maurizio Azzolini & Andrea Corso)*

200 Montagu's Harrier / Grauwe Kiekendief *Circus pygargus,* juvenile female, Valli di Ferrara, Italy, September 1996 *(Maurizio Azzolini & Andrea Corso)*

201 Montagu's Harrier / Grauwe Kiekendief *Circus pygargus*, juvenile male, Valli di Ferrara, Italy, September 1996
(Maurizio Azzolini & Andrea Corso)

202 Montagu's Harrier / Grauwe Kiekendief *Circus pygargus*, juvenile male, Valli di Ferrara, Italy, September 1996
(Maurizio Azzolini & Andrea Corso)

tributed and less evenly spaced, creating a pale 'boomerang' (like in juvenile Pallid Harrier *C macrourus*) more often than in juvenile male. The dark secondaries are darker on the underside and, on average, also darker on the upperside, with more obvious dark bars. On the upperwing, the primaries are generally darker, with a less grey wash and less obvious pale primary base; consequently, in flight, there is a less obvious contrast between the dark secondaries and the pale primary base. As already described, the axillaries and the greater underwing-coverts have distinct dark marks. Only rarely, these marks are less distinct, with a pattern similar to that of juvenile male. The white rump-patch is normally more extensive, broader than in juvenile male. The tail is in most cases darker than in juvenile male, with darker rectrices having darker and more obvious bars, especially on the outer rectrices. The central rectrices never show a grey wash as in juvenile male.

Bare parts
The iris is distinctly darker than in juvenile male, ranging from dark-brown to warm-brown or blackish-brown. In nestlings, the iris is perhaps similarly coloured as the pupil or a shade paler; after fledging, the iris becomes gradually paler but, throughout the first year, it is still brown (cf Clarke 1996, Forsman 1999).

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Juvenile plumage of Javan Crested Honey Buzzard, with comments on mimicry in south-eastern Asian *Pernis* and *Spizaetus* species

S (Bas) van Balen, Resit Sözer, Vincent Nijman, Rona Dennis, Eric Meijaard & Paul R Jepson

On 16 October 1995, when travelling between Pelabuhanratu and Bogor, West Java, Indonesia, Rona Dennis and Eric Meijaard discovered an immature raptor at a roadside bird market. Initially, the bird was thought to be an immature Javan Hawk-eagle *Spizaetus bartelsi* and, because of the protected status of raptors in Indonesia in general and of this rare raptor endemic to Java in particular, it was photographed for documentation and identification purposes. Three weeks later, the bird was still present and Paul Jepson took additional photographs. However, examination by Bas van Balen and Reflit Sözer of the taken photographs showed that it was not an immature Javan Hawk-eagle or another *Spizaetus* (or *Hieraaetus*) eagle but a juvenile Javan Crested Honey Buzzard *Pernis ptilorhyncus ptilorhyncus*, another (very) rare raptor

endemic to Java which, according to del Hoyo et al (1994), may be close to species threshold.

As no descriptions or illustrations of the juvenile plumage of Javan Crested Honey Buzzard are available in the literature, and in view of its confusing resemblance to the immature plumage of the sympatric Javan Hawk-eagle, it seems useful to publish the compiled description of the photographed juvenile Javan Crested Honey Buzzard and to discuss its identification. Furthermore, it seems appropriate to comment on mimicry in south-eastern Asian *Pernis* and *Spizaetus* species.

The data presented in this article are largely derived from observations done during field studies by the authors throughout the Indonesian part of the ranges of Crested *P ptilorhyncus* and Barred Honey Buzzards *P celebensis* (ie, Bali, Java, Kalimantan, Sulawesi and Sumatra) in the period of 1980-98.

Description

The description is based on the photographs taken of the juvenile Javan Crested Honey Buzzard. Also, comparisons were made with skins of Javan and other Crested Honey Buzzards in the collections at the National Museum of Natural History, Leiden, the Netherlands, and at the Museum Zoologicum Bogoriense, Bogor, Indonesia.

STRUCTURE Head long and narrow, with long and erect crest. Tail (very) short, apparently still growing. Bill weak. Tibia feathered ('trouser'); tarsus short (about as long as middle toe) and unfeathered, talon slightly curved.

HEAD Forehead with white frontal band. Crown much darker than in any Javan Hawk-eagle, forecrown predominantly sooty-black and hindcrown (especially more central part) distinctly paler and browner. Crest sooty-black, shorter feathers with brown tip and longer ones with whitish tip. Nape and rest of neck buff-brown, feathers with dark centre (shaft-streak) (approaching buff-cinnamon of underparts). Lore whitish, lore-feathers seemingly scaly (not clearly visible on the photographs). Ear-coverts brownish, with black 'crescent' below eye and black spot at rear edge, and surrounded by white line, running from rear corner of eye down around ear-coverts to base of bill. Chin and throat whitish, showing traces of black outline or mesial stripe typical of adult Javan Crested Honey Buzzard (chin- and throat-feathers seemed to be damaged or were moulting).

UPPERPARTS Dark brown, feathers with pale brownish fringe.

UNDERPARTS Plain buff-cinnamon, feathers with slightly darker shaft-streak. 'Trouser' pale buff to whitish.

WING Primaries blackish-brown. Secondaries, tertials and wing-coverts dark brown with pale brown fringe.

TAIL Undertail-coverts buff-cinnamon. Base of underside of tail white (rest of tail hardly visible on photographs).

BARE PARTS Iris brown, no obvious contrast with pupil. Orbital ring white to dirty-white. Upper mandible greyish; lower mandible whitish, greyish towards tip; cere bright yellow. Tarsus and foot pale yellow, talon black.

Identification

The unfeathered tarsus and the long narrow head excluded the possibility that the photographed raptor was a Javan Hawk-eagle or another *Spizaetus* (or *Hieraaetus*) eagle. In fact, the short unfeathered tarsus, the long narrow head with the weak bill and the yellow cere only fitted Crested Honey Buzzard. The long, sooty-black and pale-tipped crest was typical of juvenile Javan Crested Honey Buzzard. Presumably, it was a recently fledged bird on account of the 'simultaneously growing' crest-feathers and 'very short' tail (Kees Roselaar pers comm). The partly sooty-black head and the plain buff-cinnamon underparts strongly resembled those of immature Malaysian Crested Honey Buzzard *P p torquatus* (of which skins were studied at Museum Zoologicum Bogoriense). The white pattern on the head is also found in immature Siberian Crested Honey Buzzard *P p orientalis*. Apart from the long crest, Javan and Malaysian Crested Honey Buzzards differ from the almost-crestless Siberian Crested Honey Buzzard by the structure of the feathers of the upperneck: broad and rounded in Javan and Malaysian Crested Honey Buzzards and long and lanceolate in Siberian Crested Honey Buzzard (M E G Bartels in litt in van Heurn & van Heurn 1923).

The sooty-black pattern on the head and the sooty-black crest were more like an adult Blyth's Hawk-eagle *S alboniger* or even a Rufous-bellied Eagle *H kienerii* but the buff-brown neck (including the nape) made the bird look more like a Javan Hawk-eagle, especially when seen from aside or from behind.

Status on Greater Sundas

As already mentioned, Javan Crested Honey Buzzard is endemic to Java. There are only two skins of Javan Crested Honey Buzzard among the 50 skins of Crested Honey Buzzard in the Bartels collection from Java brought together between 1898 and 1942 (René Dekker pers comm), suggesting that Javan Crested Honey Buzzard has always been (very) rare. However, van Heurn & van Heurn (1923) reported the presence of no less than 14 skins (and one egg) of Javan Crested

Honey Buzzard in the Bartels collection (now at National Museum of Natural History). The 12 missing skins may have got lost during World War II. Four skins of Javan Crested Honey Buzzard are at Museum Zoologicum Bogoriense. It should also be pointed out that well-documented field records of Javan Crested Honey Buzzard are rare.

Convergent evolution or mimicry

Immature Javan Crested Honey Buzzard may cause confusion with immature Javan Hawk-eagle. Apart from the above-described similarities in plumage, the flight silhouettes are also similar. Both raptors are confined to Java and have not been recorded on any of the off-lying islands like, for instance, Bali, Kangean and Madura. Although few data are available, Javan Crested Honey Buzzard and Javan Hawk-eagle seem to be confined to primary and secondary rain forests. Their altitudinal ranges largely overlap although, in the (upper) montane forest zone, only Javan Hawk-eagle is recorded, albeit infrequently. Although Javan Crested Honey Buzzard and Javan Hawk-eagle occur largely in the same habitat and show similarities in plumage and flight silhouette, there is little resemblance in morphology or hunting and flight behaviour. Bill, head, foot and talon differ markedly in morphology. Javan Hawk-eagles feed on vertebrates taken from either perches inside the forest or by soaring close to the canopy. Javan Crested Honey Buzzards mainly prey on social insects, including larvae, taken both from forest and non-forest areas. Hawk-eagles have a higher wing-loading (tail included) than Crested Honey Buzzards, 34-39 and 22-23 Newton per square metre, respectively (eg, Gamauf et al 1998b). In general, a higher wing-loading is associated with a more rapid flight (Burton 1989). Javan Crested Honey Buzzard flies with deep wing-beats and Javan Hawk-eagle with more shallow ones (Nijman & Sözer 1998).

In conclusion, the resemblance between Javan Crested Honey Buzzard and Javan Hawk-eagle may represent mimicry rather than convergence, similar to other *Pernis-Spizaetus* pairs discussed below.

Mimicry in south-eastern Asian *Pernis* and *Spizaetus* species

Despite the fact that mimicry is a frequently discussed phenomenon, it has been verified by few studies and until now has been scarcely taken into consideration in raptors. As pointed out by Gamauf et al (1998a), members of the genus *Pernis* exhibit the highest local variability in plumage colour and pattern among raptors world-wide, including dark morphs in some taxa (del Hoyo et al 1994). The general trend of this variation in Crested Honey Buzzards is for the taxa inhabiting tropical forests to be darker or more richly barred in adults, with a crest and a black gorget surrounding a whitish throat to be common; immatures are paler than adults but browner than in the more northern taxa (Brown & Amadon 1968).

As first described for Sulawesi by Meyer & Wigglesworth (1898), in the Indo-Malayan and Philippine archipelagos, plumage colour and pattern of geographically distinct populations of Barred and Crested Honey Buzzards closely resemble those of sympatric hawk-eagles, either in adult plumage, as on Borneo and Sumatra, or in immature plumage, as on Java, or in both plumages, as in the Philippines and on Sulawesi. Five mimetic species pairs can be distinguished. Similarities in these species pairs extend to flight silhouette, presence of crest (pairs 1-4 with crest and pair 5 without crest), breast and belly coloration and tail pattern (with a broad pale bar).

1 Malaysian Crested Honey Buzzard *P p torquatus* (adult dark morph) and Blyth's Hawk-eagle *S alboniger*: Borneo and Sumatra
2 Malaysian Crested Honey Buzzard *P p torquatus* (adult normal morph) and Wallace's Hawk-eagle *S nanus*: Borneo and Sumatra
3 Javan Crested Honey Buzzard *P p ptilorhyncus* (immature) and Javan Hawk-eagle *S bartelsi* (immature): Java
4 Barred Honey Buzzard *P celebensis steerei/winkleri* (adult and immature) and Philippine Hawk-eagle *S philippensis*: Philippines
5 Barred Honey Buzzard *P c celebensis* (adult and immature) and Sulawesi Hawk-eagle *S lanceolatus*: Sulawesi

Mimic or model?

The central question now lies in identifying in what direction the mimicry has evolved, ie, which species is the mimic and which is the model. Crested Honey Buzzard as a mimic may take advantage from the fierceness of hawk-eagle whereas especially immature hawk-eagles as mimics may gain from the innocence of Crested Honey Buzzards.

Gamauf et al (1998a) proposed that, at least in the Philippines, the 'weak' Barred Honey Buzzard is, through its similarity, protected against attacks by the 'aggressive and dominant' hawk-eagles. This is because the latter would avoid aggressive interactions with similarly coloured

203-204 Javan Crested Honey Buzzard / Javaanse Wespendief *Pernis ptilorhyncus ptilorhyncus*, juvenile, roadside bird market between Pelabuhanratu and Bogor, West Java, Indonesia, 16 October 1995 *(Rona Dennis)* **205** Javan Crested Honey Buzzard / Javaanse Wespendief *Pernis ptilorhyncus ptilorhyncus*, adult, Taman Safari Zoo, Cisarua, West Java, Indonesia, 10 December 1994 *(Bas van Balen)* **206** Javan Hawk-eagle / Javaanse Havikarend *Spizaetus bartelsi*, immature, Taman Safari Zoo, Cisarua, West Java, Indonesia, 10 December 1994 *(Bas van Balen)*

207 Javan Hawk-eagle / Javaanse Havikarend *Spizaetus bartelsi*, adult, Taman Safari Zoo, Cisarua, West Java, Indonesia, 10 December 1994 *(Bas van Balen)* **208-209** Javan Hawk-eagle / Javaanse Havikarend *Spizaetus bartelsi*, adult, bird market, Jakarta, Java, Indonesia, 5 July 1989 *(Arnoud B van den Berg)*

competitors to avert injury in escalated fights. The coloration may protect Barred Honey Buzzard also from being attacked by other birds. A prediction that arises from this hypothesis is that hawk-eagles would always avoid confrontations with conspecifics whereas other raptors are normally attacked. Although hawk-eagles may appear fierce, no aggressive interactions between Javan Hawk-eagles and other raptors were observed (cf Nijman & Sözer 1995). Also, other bird species with good powers of flight did not seem to be alarmed by the presence of Javan Hawk-eagles, in contrast to their reaction to patrolling falcons or accipiters (Mooney 1997). Compared with Javan Hawk-eagle, other Indonesian hawk-eagles were less intensively studied but no aggressive interactions between them and other raptors were observed either. The more abundant a mimic relative to the model, the less well-protected a mimic is (Calow 1998). Furthermore, the model should have larger or at least equal geographical and ecological distributions. On Sulawesi, Barred Honey Buzzard is slightly more abundant than Sulawesi Hawk-eagle (Meyburg & van Balen 1994) but, on Java, Javan Crested Honey Buzzard is far less often recorded than Javan Hawk-eagle. Siberian Crested Honey Buzzard is an abundant visitor to Java in the northern winter (it is largely a passage migrant on Borneo and Sumatra while there are no records on Sulawesi). This abundance would make the less abundant model less useful. It must be noted, however, that Siberian Crested Honey Buzzards may only superficially resemble Javan Hawk-eagles, ie, in flight but less so perched as they lack a crest and have different coloration of the underparts.

An alternative explanation for the observed instances of mimicry is that the hawk-eagle is actually the mimic. Mimicking Crested Honey Buzzards might be advantageous for hawk-eagles because of the innocuousness of the former. This type of mimicry was described by Jensen (in prep) to explain the mimetic relationship between Wallace's Hawk-eagle and Malaysian Crested Honey Buzzard on Kalimantan. Especially, immature Wallace's Hawk-eagles would take advantage of this as they are ill-experienced hunters and may mislead potential prey animals in this way ('a wolf in sheep's clothing'). On Java, immature Javan Hawk-eagle may profit from the abundance of Siberian Crested Honey Buzzards in the northern winter.

Interestingly, on Java (unlike on the other islands), only immature Javan Crested Honey Buzzards mimic immature Javan Hawk-eagle whereas adult Javan Crested Honey Buzzards do not seem to have a model. This may be because a different situation is prevalent on Java, either through the influx of Siberian Crested Honey Buzzards, in which case the second explanation would come in force (as there would not be enough models for the first explanation), or because, on Java, the adult Javan Crested Honey Buzzard's model has gone extinct through large-scale forest destruction on Java. As it is unlikely that Blyth's Hawk-eagle ever occurred sympatrically with Javan Hawk-eagle (both form allospecies within one superspecies) on Java, the existence may be suspected of an unknown dark crested hawk-eagle that stood model for adult Javan Crested Honey Buzzard. This explanation would still be consistent with the higher (temporary) abundance of Siberian Crested Honey Buzzards as in ancient times the birds would be more dispersed over the then-existing forest.

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Samenvatting

JUVENIEL VERENKLEED VAN JAVAANSE WESPENDIEF, MET COMMENTAAR OP MIMICRY BIJ ZUIDOOST-AZIATISCHE *PERNIS*- EN *SPIZAETUS*-SOORTEN In oktober-november 1995 werd een juveniele Javaanse Wespendief *Pernis ptilorhyncus ptilorhyncus* gefotografeerd op een vogelmarkt tussen Pelabuhanratu en Bogor, West-Java, Indonesië. Javaanse Wespendief is een (zeer) zeldzame en op Java endemische roofvogel. De structuur, het verenkleed en de naakte delen van de gefotografeerde vogel worden beschreven. De gelijkenis van onvolwassen Javaanse Wespendief en onvolwassen Javaanse Havikarend *Spizaetus bartelsi* wordt besproken. Dit in verband met het mogelijke bestaan van een mimetische relatie tussen Javaanse Wespendief en Javaanse Havikarend zoals die ook wordt gevonden bij andere *Pernis-Spizaetus*-soortparen in het Indo-Maleise gebied en op de Filippijnen. Javaanse Havikarend komt eveneens alleen op Java voor.

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Varia

Churchill

Churchill, a small village in north-eastern Manitoba, Canada, is often advertised as the 'Polar Bear Capital of the World'. It is, however, much more than that. Because of its unique location on the shore of Hudson Bay, where taiga and tundra converge, it is a birdwatcher's paradise and in summer large numbers of Beluga Whales *Delphinapterus leucas* gather at the mouth of the Churchill River. Although Churchill's location is not extremely far north (58:46 N), the prevailing winds coming over the Hudson Bay, which is ice-covered for nine months of the year, give the place a truly 'arctic' look and atmosphere.

The first migrants appear in mid-April, but the peak time of migration is late May and early June. During the third week of June most birds start nesting and hatching reaches its peak in early July. Beluga Whales arrive when the river breaks up in June, usually around the second week, and their numbers steadily increase until there are as many as 3000 in the area by the end of July. Polar Bears *Ursus maritimus* come ashore from the sea ice from late July to early November; their presence is almost guaranteed during the last two weeks of October and the first week of November. In autumn, as many as 150 Polar Bears pass close to or even through Churchill. Sometimes a lone individual or even a mother with cubs may be present in spring or early summer. Churchill's bird list has well over 200 species, an unusual high number for such a subarctic location. A visit during the second and third week of June is best, when migration is still in progress and most local birds have arrived. Because of the diversity of habitats, visiting birders can expect to see a wide range of birds.

Wildfowl includes Whistling Swan *Cygnus columbianus*, Snow Goose *Anser caerulescens* and small numbers of Ross's Goose *A rossii*, Green-winged *Anas carolinensis* and Blue-winged Teals *A discors*, American Wigeon *Mareca americana*, King Eider *Somateria spectabilis* (rare), Harlequin Duck *Histrionicus histrionicus*, Long-tailed Duck *Clangula hyemalis*, Black *Melanitta americana*, Surf *M perspicillata* and White-winged Scoters *M deglandi* and Bufflehead *Bucephala albeola* (rare). Pacific Loon *Gavia pacifica*, American Bittern

210 Tundra landscape near Churchill, Manitoba, Canada, June 1994 *(Chris Schenk)*

211 Pacific Loon / Pacifische Parelduiker *Gavia pacifica*, Churchill, Manitoba, Canada, June 1994 *(Chris Schenk)*

212 Hudsonian Godwit / Rode Grutto *Limosa haemastica*, Churchill, Manitoba, Canada, June 1996 *(Chris Schenk)*

213 White-rumped Sandpiper / Bonapartes Strandloper *Calidris fuscicollis*, Churchill, Manitoba, Canada, June 1996 *(Chris Schenk)*

214 Semipalmated Sandpiper / Grijze Strandloper *Calidris pusilla*, Churchill, Manitoba, Canada, June 1996 *(Chris Schenk)*

215 Semipalmated Plover / Amerikaanse Bontbekplevier *Charadrius semipalmatus*, Churchill, Manitoba, Canada, June 1994 *(Chris Schenk)*

216 Short-billed Dowitcher / Kleine Grijze Snip *Limnodromus griseus*, Churchill, Manitoba, Canada, June 1996 *(Chris Schenk)*

217 Ross's Gull / Ross' Meeuw *Rhodostethia rosea*, Churchill, Manitoba, Canada, June 1994 *(Chris Schenk)*

218 American Hawk Owl / Amerikaanse Sperweruil *Surnia ulula caparoch*, Churchill, Manitoba, Canada, June 1994 *(Chris Schenk)* **219** Great Grey Owl / Laplanduil *Strix nebulosa*, Churchill, Manitoba, Canada, June 1994 *(Chris Schenk)* **220** Bonaparte's Gull / Kleine Kokmeeuw *Larus philadelphia*, Churchill, Manitoba, Canada, June 1996 *(Chris Schenk)*

Botauris lentiginosus, Bald Eagle *Haliaeetus leucocephalus* (rare), Spruce Grouse *Dendragapus canadensis*, Willow Ptarmigan *Lagopus lagopus*, Sora *Porzana carolina* and Sandhill Crane *Grus canadensis* can all be seen, although the grouse can be notoriously hard to find. Churchill is especially rich of breeding and passing waders, such as American Golden Plover *Pluvialis dominicus*, Semipalmated Plover *Charadrius semipalmatus*, Killdeer *C vociferus*, Greater *Tringa melanoleuca* (rare) and Lesser Yellowlegs *T flavipes*, Solitary Sandpiper *T solitaria*, Spotted Sandpiper *Actitis macularia*, Hudsonian Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus hudsonicus*, Hudsonian Godwit *Limosa haemastica*, American Dunlin *Calidris alpina hudsonica*, Semipalmated *C pusilla*, Least *C minutilla*, White-rumped *C fuscicollis* (migrant), Baird's *C bairdii* (migrant) and Pectoral Sandpipers *C melanotos*, Stilt Sandpiper *Micropalama himantopus*, Short-billed Dowitcher *Limnodromus griseus*, Wilson's Snipe *Gallinago delicata* and Wilson's *Phalaropus tricolor* (rare), Red *P fulicaria* (rare migrant) and Red-necked Phalaropes *P lobatus*. Long-tailed Jaegers *Stercorarius longicaudus* can be seen off Cape Merry in small numbers among the common Parasitic Jaegers *S skua*. Regular gulls include Bonaparte's *Larus philadelphia* (nesting in trees), Ring-billed *L delawarensis*, Thayer's *L glaucoides thayeri*, American Herring *L smithsonianus*, Glaucous *L hyperboreus* and Sabine's Gulls *L sabini* (migrant). The best spot for the larger gulls is, of course, the rubbish dump east of the airport. Other non-passerines include Short-eared *Asio flammeus*, American Hawk *Surnia ulula caparoch* and Great Grey Owls *Strix nebulosa* (rare), Belted Kingfisher *Ceryle alcyon*, Three-toed Woodpecker *Picoides tridactylus* and Northern Flicker *Colaptes auratus*.

Several passerine species breed around Churchill (with very few species migrating to breed further north), such as Tree Swallow *Tachycineta bicolor*, Grey Jay *Perisoreus canadenis*, Boreal Chickadee *Parus hudsonicus*, Grey-cheeked Thrush *Catharus minimus*, Bohemian Waxwing *Bombycilla garrulus* and Great Grey Shrike *Lanius excubitor*. Breeding warbler species are Orange-crowned *Vermivora celata*, Yellow *Dendroica petechia*, Myrtle *D coronata*, Palm *D palmarum* and Blackpoll Warblers *D striata* and Northern Waterthrush *Seiurus noveboracensis*. Breeding sparrows include American Tree *Spizella arborea*, Savannah *Passerculus sandwichensis*, Fox *Passerella iliaca*, White-crowned *Zonotrichia leucophrys* and Harris's Sparrows *Z querula*. Dark-eyed Junco *Junco hyemalis* is common and Smith's Longspur *Calcarius pictus* can be found at the right spots without too much trouble. Breeding finches are rather poorly represented but include Pine Grosbeak *Pinicola enucleator*, White-winged Crossbill *Loxia leucoptera leucoptera* and both Mealy *Carduelis flammea* and Arctic Redpolls *C hornemanni*. When you visit Churchill in October for the Polar Bears, most birds have left, although Willow and Rock Ptarmigans *L mutus* (the latter being absent in summer) and their predators, Snowy Owl *Nyctea scandiaca* and Gyr Falcon *Falco rusticolus*, remain. Of the passerines, only Grey Jay, Common Raven *Corvus corax*, Boreal Chickadee, Arctic Redpoll and the non-native House Sparrow *Passer domesticus* stay all-year round.

Numbers are low, but after a few years of near-absence there were again two Ross's Gulls *Rhodostethia rosea* in 1998. In the 1980s, Churchill became famous as the first easily accessible place in the world to see, study and photograph this species.

Churchill can only be reached by air or rail from Winnipeg, Manitoba; there is no road connection to the outside world. The 38 h train ride is said to be an unforgettable experience, in the true sense of the word. There are several hotels and some less expensive bed & breakfast addresses. With a rental car you can drive the 80 km of paved and unpaved roads from which you can explore the various habitats on your own. Mountain bikes can also be rented and enable you to reach most areas, although the mosquitos, black-flies and other insects that become abundant from late June can be a nuisance. If you plan to go, get a copy of the ABA birdfinding guide *A birder's guide to Churchill* (Chartier 1994) to prepare your visit. Also worth reading is de Knijff (1993), who summarized the main birding spots, with excellent photographs of several characteristic species. It is also a good idea to spend a day birding with Churchill Wilderness Encounter, run by Bonnie Chartier, the author of the birdfinding guide. She can show you the birds that are on the top of your wanted-list and can tell you where to find all the other species. She can be reached by telephone (+204-675-2248) and by e-mail (BChartier@compuserve. com).

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Fuegan Snipe

In the southern summer of 1988, we made a trip with the *Society Explorer* to the Antarctic Peninsula. After embarking in Puerto Williams (67:39 W, 54:56 S), Antártica Chilena, Chile, we steamed straight to the Historic Cape Horn (67:15 W, 55:58 S), Antártica Chilena, where we made a landing in the early morning of 8 December. After walking c 500 m through the tussocks, we observed a snipe *Gallinago* showing a peculiar behaviour. It was walking continuously through the small corridors between the tussock grass and refused to take flight. A few photographs and c 5 min of video film were made. Intrigued by the bird's behaviour, we consulted some literature back home (mainly, Hayman et al 1986) but did not reach a conclusion on its identity although we strongly suspected the bird to be a Fuegan Snipe (also named Cordilleran or Strickland's Snipe) *G stricklandii*.

During a special wader trip to Gabon and Cameroon in 1998, organized by Dave Rosair and ourselves, we were joined by Tony Prater and Don Taylor. After many discussions about waders all over the world, we forwarded a copy of the video to TP and DR. Both were of the opinion that the bird was a Fuegan Snipe. However, we were still not completely convinced because the description and some illustrations of Magellan Snipe *G magellanica* look very similar to our Fuegan (eg, Hayman et al 1986). Magellan mainly differs from Fuegan by its shorter wings and bill (eg, Blake 1977; note that measurements given by Hayman et al 1986 differ considerably from those given by Blake 1977). The pale grey-yellowish legs and the clear facial pattern of 'our' bird are very unlike the available illustrations and descriptions of Fuegan Snipe in del Hoyo et al (1996). We therefore seeked help from Theunis Piersma and C S (Kees) Roselaar who were asked to examine the photographs. From CSR's conclusions, the remaining doubts disappeared and the identification as Fuegan Snipe was established beyond doubt. Important features are the round, 'kiwi-like' body, the deep-based bill, the short wings in relation to the tail and the lack of a broad chestnut subterminal tail band seen in other snipe species in this region. Because the bird refused to fly but remained walking, it was not possible to see its woodcock *Scolopax*-like wing shape. It is clear that the

221 Fuegan Snipe / Vuurlandsnip *Gallinago stricklandii*, Historic Cape Horn, Antártica Chilena, Chile, 8 December 1988 *(Jacob & Tiny Wijpkema)*

available illustrations of this species in Hayman et al (1986), Woods (1988) and del Hoyo et al (1996) are inaccurate and thus not very helpful. This was one of the reasons why it took so long to establish a firm identification and to publish this photograph. Photographs of Fuegan Snipe are extremely rare and, as far as we know, have been published before only in Rosair & Cottridge (1995).

Cordilleran Snipe was formerly placed in a separate (sub)genus, *Chubbia*, together with Andean Snipe *G jamesoni* and Imperial Snipe *G imperialis* (Hayman et al 1986), although the latter was once given its own (sub)genus, *Homoscopolax*. These poorly known species share a heavy woodcock-like posture and lack a white belly patch. Imperial Snipe is by far the rarest; for a century, it was known from only two specimens collected near Bogota, Colombia, but was rediscovered in 1968 at one locality in southern Peru and was since seen elsewhere in Peru and in Bolivia and Ecuador (Terborgh & Weske 1972). It lives at above 3000 m, around the tree-line, in damp, mountainous, forested country. Andean Snipe occurs in the Andes from Colombia to Bolivia in marshy areas where montane forest grades into grassland, mainly at 3000-3500 m. Fuegan Snipe occurs c 2000 km south of the most southerly breeding Andean Snipes, in a narrow zone in southern Chile and southern Argentina down to Tierra del Fuego, from 3000 m in central Chile down to almost sea-level in the south. It is most common in the southern part of its range, often appearing on quite small islands. It is very rare in the Falklands, where there are no documented breeding records nor recent sightings (Hayman et al 1986, Woods 1988). Magellan Snipe is the only other snipe taxon occurring this far south in South America and therefore the main confusing species. In the southern winter, Magellan Snipe migrates north to northern Argentina and Uruguay.

We are grateful to the people mentioned for their help in identifying this bird. Oscar van Rootselaar helped us to obtain information about Fuegan Snipe.

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Corrigendum

In het artikel over de Dwergooruil *Otus scops* in de Ooypolder, Ubbergen, Gelderland, in mei-juni 1998 (Dutch Birding 21: 148-149, 1999) is in de inleiding per abuis niet de correcte locatie vermeld. De exacte locatie waar de vogel zich bevond was: langs de Ooijse Bandijk c 1.5 km ten noorden van Tiengeboden en c 1.5 km ten westen van de Bisonbaai (atlasblok 40-43-41). Dit is c 6 km westelijk van de in het artikel aangegeven locatie. REDACTIE

In the article on the European Scops Owl *Otus scops* at Ooypolder, Ubbergen, Gelderland, the Netherlands, in May-June 1998 (Dutch Birding 21: 148-149, 1999), the locality of the bird was given incorrectly in the Dutch text. The exact locality was along Ooyse Bandijk, c 1.5 km north of Tiengeboden and c 1.5 km west of Bisonbaai. EDITORS

Trends in systematics

Relationships among gulls: new approaches

The gulls are currently classified in five to eight genera. All except one of these genera are very small. Ross's Gull *Rhodostethia rosea*, Ivory Gull *Pagophila eburnea* and Swallow-tailed Gull *Creagrus furcatus* are currently placed in monotypic genera and the two species of kittiwake are separated in the genus *Rissa*. Additional genera (ie, *Xema*, *Gabianus* and *Leucophaeus*) are sometimes recognized for Sabine's Gull *Larus sabini*, Pacific Gull *L pacificus* and Dolphin Gull *L scoresbii*, respectively. The remaining species are classified in *Larus*. However, the genus *Larus* is morphologically extremely diverse and includes disparate species such as Little Gull *L minutus* and Great Black-backed Gull *L marinus*. Nevertheless, the current generic classification of the gulls of the Northern Hemisphere has been more or less stable during the past 20 years which is primarily due to the influential lists of Voous (1973, 1977). Voous (1975, 1992) pointed out that the classification of gulls should be consistent with that of the terns (and vice versa). He argued that placing most species of gulls in *Larus* is consistent with the facts only if a similarly wide genus *Sterna* is recognized for widely disparate species of terns, including Caspian Tern *S caspia* and Little Tern *S albifrons*.

Voous' list and other contemporary classifications of gulls were not based on the phylogenetic methods that later became dominant in avian systematics. The recognition of several monotypic or otherwise small genera was based on the presence of unique characters (such as a collar or elongated central tail-feathers) and differences that were judged to be 'important' in these species (such as a forked tail or a strong and thick bill). However, groupings resulting from this procedure do not necessarily represent natural, monophyletic units. Wolters (1971) was among the first ornithologists to recognize the problems of placing some distinctive species in monotypic

222 Dolphin Gulls / Dolfijnmeeuwen *Larus scoresbii*, Falkland Islands, December 1990 *(René Pop)*

genera and the remaining taxa in large variable genera. Wolters (1971), who emphasized the importance of natural, monophyletic higher taxa, suggested that large variable genera should be split into smaller, less variable groups to reduce the risk of recognizing unnatural (para- and polyphyletic) taxa. In his classification, Wolters (1975-82) accepted 12 genera of gulls, many of which containing only one to three species. Wolters' classification did not enter mainstream ornithology because leading ornithologists did not like his large number of small genera (Bock & Farrand 1980, Voous 1992). Among phylogenetic systematists, Wolters' work did not become popular as well because it appeared to suffer from the same problem as Voous' and other classifications, namely the lack of a detailed character analysis.

The introduction of computers in systematics in the 1960s facilitated the analysis of massive data sets. The first quantitative study of gull relationships was a major and ground-breaking study by Schnell (1970). His study grouped the gulls according to levels of overall similarity. This study, however, remained unsuccessful in resolving evolutionary relationships because it did not separate similarity based on shared derived character states (which are informative of evolutionary relationships) from similarity due to convergence or the retention of primitive characters (which are not informative of relationships). Schnell's study nevertheless represented a major advance in the evolutionary study of gulls and set the stage for a series of modern studies.

Since the late 1970s, a number of attempts have been made using molecular, cytological and other data sets, including chromosomes (Ryttman et al 1979), immunological data (Ryttman et al 1980a), proteins (Ryttman et al 1980b, Ryttman & Tegelström 1981, Snell 1991) and mitochondrial DNA (Baker 1991, Wink et al 1994). Most of these analyses involved the 'large white-headed gull' complex. However, many of these studies had limited success in resolving relationships because most species of gulls turned out to be extremely similar and insufficient characters could be identified to perform phylogenetic analysis. Moreover, none of these studies included representatives of all currently recognized genera. The broader picture of gull relationships thus remains unclear and generic limits still lack adequate documentation.

A new study by Philip Chu (1998) now provides a detailed analysis of the phylogenetic relationships among gulls. His elaborate study overcomes several problems that have plagued previous studies, such as a lack of a phylogenetic framework, insufficient characters and small numbers of taxa. Chu used 64 plumage characters and 117 skeletal characters; these data represent the most extensive evolutionary study ever undertaken on gulls. A large body of literature was covered to assess moult and plumage characters, including numerous references to articles and photographs in the birding literature (Dutch Birding, Birding, Birding World and British Birds). Chu assessed the relationships of 58 gull taxa, which include all species that were recognized by the early 1990s plus a number of diagnosable forms not (yet) recognized as species. Together, these forms represent nearly all valid taxa of gulls, although a few interesting Palearctic and Australasian taxa were not included (see below).

Evolutionary relationships of gulls

The new data strongly suggest that the gulls form a natural, monophyletic group, a conclusion supported by 11 derived character states. Though the monophyly of gulls is perhaps not surprising, it had not been tested before. In the study, the closest relatives of the gulls are the terns, skuas and jaegers, which again is not surprising. What was surprising, however, was that the skuas and jaegers turned up *among* the terns as a sister group of the noddies *Anous*, with Inca Tern *Larosterna inca* as the closest relative of the noddy-skua group. This 'skuas-as-modified-terns' hypothesis is supported by features associated with a dark plumage as well as a series of skeletal similarities. Some of the similarities between noddies and skuas were previously noted by Verheyen (1959). It would be interesting to see if this alliance between skuas and terns will be confirmed by further, perhaps molecular, phylogenetic assessments.

The gulls sorted into two major groups (figure 1). One group is formed by small and medium-sized gulls that may be characterized as tern-like. This group, which Chu has termed 'the sternine gulls', includes Ivory, Sabine's and Swallow-tailed Gulls, the kittiwakes, Little Gull and Ross's Gull and the small hooded gulls. The second major group is formed by medium- to large-sized gulls and may be referred to as 'the larine gulls' (for gull-like). Many species in this group have a white head but the group also includes dark-headed species such as Mediterranean Gull *L melanocephalus*, Pallas's Gull *L ichthyaetus*, Relict Gull *L relictus*, Hemprich's Gull *L hem-*

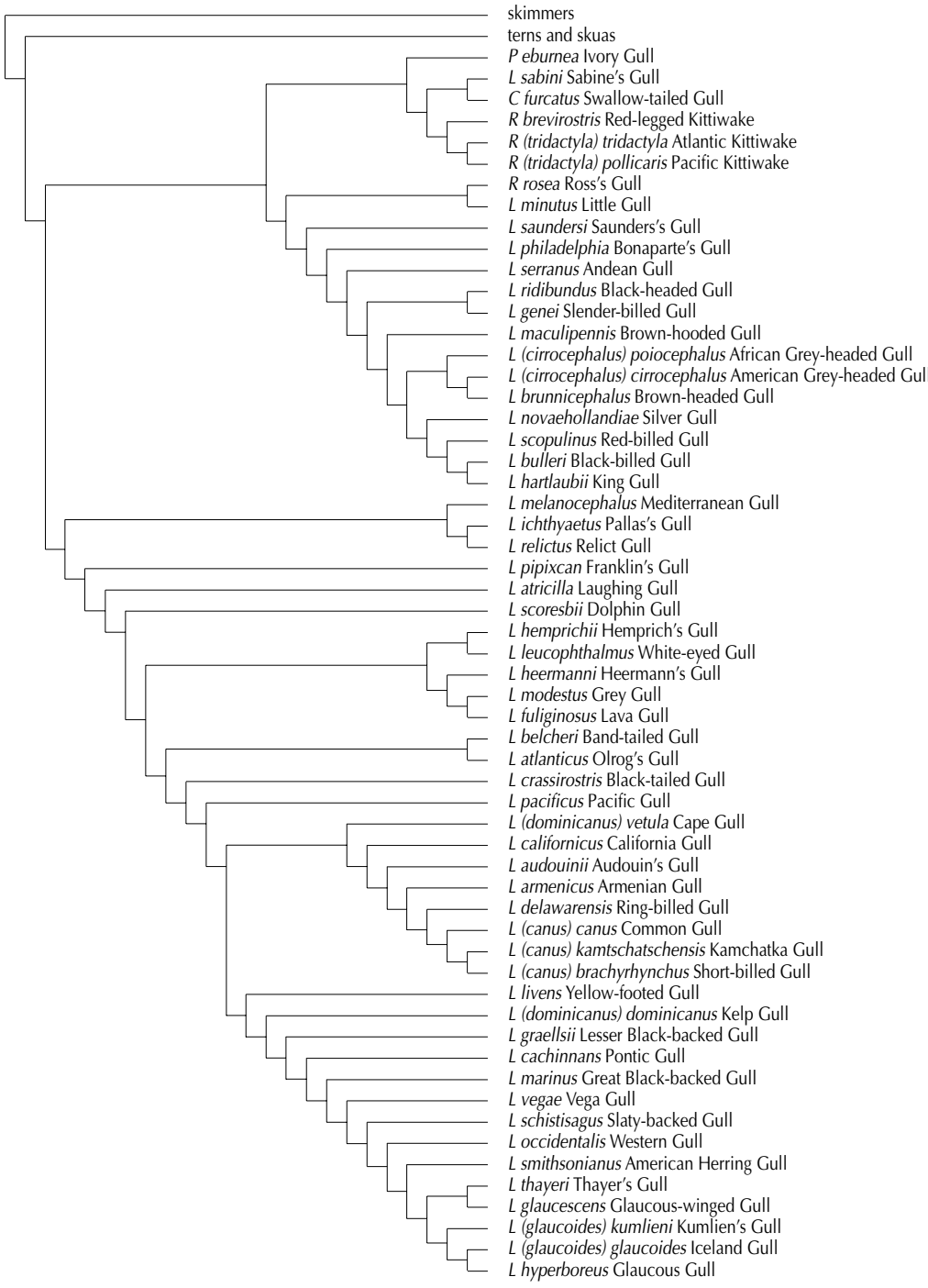

FIGURE 1 Evolutionary relationships among gulls, as inferred from morphological characters (Chu 1998). For clarity, geographic designations in Chu (1998) have been substituted by taxon names

prichii and White-eyed Gull *L leucophthalmus*, and gulls with largely dark bodies, including Heermann's Gull *L heermanni*, Grey Gull *L modestus* and Lava Gull *L fuliginosus*.

Chu (1998) points out that, among gulls, the dark hood is a primitive character – a character inherited from a common ancestor that has been lost or modified in other descendant species. Because some species have lost the dark hood and others have retained it, hoodedness is not a reliable indicator of phylogenetic relationships among gulls.

Note that the evolutionary tree (figure 1) places Ross's Gull as the sister-species of Little Gull, a relationship that was previously suspected on the basis of behavioural and other characteristics (Moynihan 1959, Cramp & Simmons 1983). This means that the current designation of a monotypic genus *Rhodostethia* for Ross's Gull is no longer warranted.

The tree depicts the genus *Larus* as a polyphyletic group – a group that has two or more independent evolutionary origins. In other words, the data indicate that the genus *Larus* does not constitute a natural group and needs revision. In such cases, taxonomists basically have two options: the limits of *Larus* may be expanded to a larger group that encompasses other gulls that are presently classified in separate genera, or the name *Larus* may be restricted to a smaller monophyletic group (see below).

Taxonomy

The taxonomic name of an organism (or group of organisms) has a dual function. First, a name provides information about the evolutionary relationships of the organism(s) as determined by systematic analysis. Second, an organism's name is 'the key to its literature' and helps biologists to retrieve information about that taxon. There is some tension between these functions because a well-known scientific name of a species might not accurately reflect the evolutionary relationships of that species.

Taxonomists differ in the priority they assign to these functions. Voous (1992) suggested that the recognition of genera should not be considered a necessary means of expressing evolutionary relationships, a presumption that he considered to be 'an unwelcome heritage of 19th century thinking'. Voous (1992) believed that the general public is more interested in the name of a genus than in the genus itself. He suggested that pragmatic rather than scientific values should be attached to bird genera and their naming. Phylogenetic taxonomists, on the other hand, suggest that taxonomy should be fully consistent with current knowledge of evolutionary relationships, even if this might lead to some species being reclassified (eg, Sibley 1996, Sangster et al 1998). To phylogeneticists, representation of evolutionary relationships is paramount to the stability of names.

A third aspect that merits consideration is the quality of the phylogeny that is used to construct a taxonomy. Systematists seek to establish phylogenies that are both well-resolved and well-supported. A well-resolved phylogeny is completely dichotomous, which means that all branches in the tree split into no more than two descendant branches. A well-supported phylogeny means that all branches are based on reliable evidence. The present phylogeny of gulls is well-resolved, thus satisfying one criterion of a good phylogeny. However, most branches in the phylogeny were not well-supported by the data, which means that not too much confidence should be placed in the groupings depicted in figure 1. This should be taken into consideration when the new phylogeny is translated into taxonomy.

Chu's work resolved the genus *Larus* as a polyphyletic group and, therefore, some taxonomic adjustments are necessary to let nomenclature reflect current knowledge of evolutionary relationships. He suggested three alternative taxonomic treatments which differ in the number of recognized genera. One way to express phylogenetic relationships is to recognize six genera:

1 genus *Pagophila* (Ivory Gull)
2 genus *Xema* (Sabine's and Swallow-tailed Gull)
3 genus *Rissa* (the kittiwakes)
4 genus *Hydrocoloeus* (Little and Ross's Gull)
5 genus *Chroicocephalus* (Saunders's Gull to King Gull, figure 1)
6 genus *Larus* (the larine gulls)

This arrangement preserves four of the five to eight currently used genus names. It also preserves information about some of the major groupings in Chu's study. A drawback of this arrangement is that several species would become known by a different name. Little and Ross's Gulls would become known as *Hydrocoloeus minutus* and *Hydrocoloeus roseus*, respectively; most of the remaining smaller gulls, including Saunders's Gull *L saundersi*, Bonaparte's Gull *L philadelphia*, Black-headed Gull *L ridibundus* and Slender-billed Gull *L genei*,

223 Brown-hooded Gull / Patagonische Kokmeeuw *Larus maculipennis*, Falkland Islands, December 1990 *(René Pop)*

224 Short-billed Gull / Amerikaanse Stormmeeuw *Larus (canus) brachyrhynchus*, Vancouver Island, Canada, 17 September 1998 *(René Pop)*

225 Red-billed Gull / Roodsnavelmeeuw *Larus scopulinus*, New Zealand, January 1997 *(Theo Roersma)* **226** Black-billed Gull / Zwartsnavelmeeuw *Larus bulleri*, New Zealand, January 1997 *(Theo Roersma)* **227** King Gull / Hartlaubs Meeuw *Larus hartlaubii*, Namibia, 30 March 1999 *(Arnoud B van den Berg)*

would be placed in the genus *Chroicocephalus*. Another drawback of this arrangement is that several of these groups are poorly supported by the data.

A second way to express phylogenetic relationships is to recognize two genera:

1 genus *Xema* (the sternine gulls)
2 genus *Larus* (the larine gulls)

In this classification, the name *Xema* (which currently is sometimes used for Sabine's Gull only) would become the generic name for close to half the number of species of gulls, which most ornithologists would probably find undesirable. More importantly, both groups are poorly supported by the data.

A third possibility is to expand the genus *Larus* to include all species of gulls. This is the option that Chu (1998) prefers. He argued that even though this alternative does not provide information about the basic groups of gulls, it is preferable to the other two arrangements because it does not recognize any poorly supported groups and minimises the number of species reassigned to another genus. This alternative thus promotes the stability of names, and is still consistent with the phylogenetic tree obtained. The placement of all species in *Larus* is not unprecedented; based on behavioural similarities, Moynihan (1959) also suggested this treatment.

Gull species

The study by Chu (1998) provides information on the relationships of many forms, which provides a test of the monophyly of several putative 'polytypic' species. Most 'polytypic' species taxa were recognized on the basis of gross similarity and may not represent natural, monophyletic groups. The new work by Chu (1998) suggests that several previously accepted polytypic species do not represent monophyletic groups. However, as with any phylogenetic study, the relationships inferred in Chu's (1998) study represent hypotheses, which are subject to further testing.

The analysis suggests that Grey-headed Gulls in South America (*L cirrocephalus cirrocephalus*) are not sister to those in Africa (*L c poiocephalus*); instead they appear more closely related to Brown-headed Gull *L brunnicephalus*. Differences in the external morphology of the two Grey-headed Gulls are not impressive (*L c poiocephalus* is smaller, has darker grey upperparts and wings and has more black on the wing-tips than *L c cirrocephalus*). These differences were considered to barely justify recognition of these taxa (Cramp & Simmons 1983) but Chu (1998) was able to discern differences in several anatomical and plumage characters.

Silver Gulls *L novaehollandiae* from Australia (*L n novaehollandiae*) and New Zealand (*L n scopulinus*) did not emerge as each other's closest relatives. Instead, those from New Zealand lined up with Black-billed Gull *L bulleri* and King (or Hartlaub's) Gull *L hartlaubii* whereas those from Australia assumed a more basal position (figure 1). Another study based on mitochondrial DNA (Baker 1991) also associated the New Zealand population with Black-billed Gull and placed Australian birds at the base (King Gull was not included in this study). The fact that two studies failed to document a sister-relationship between the two Silver Gull taxa lend some support to recent views (del Hoyo et al 1996, Sibley 1996) that the New Zealand bird should be treated as a full species: Red-billed Gull *L scopulinus*.

Surprisingly, Kelp Gulls *L dominicanus* in South Africa (ie, *L d vetula*) did not associate with South American Kelp Gulls (ie, *L d dominicanus*). The South African and South American forms of Kelp Gull were separated as recently as 1979 (Brooke & Cooper 1979) but now appear only distantly related. If the non-sister-relationship among kelp gulls is correct and these lineages represent independent branches in the gull tree, then there is no reason to keep them as subspecies in a single species. Chu's study suggests that the characters that were originally used to include them in the same species (dark upperparts, limited streaking on head in winter plumage, greenish or yellowish legs and feet) are primitive and hence are no valid basis for grouping them.

The new data also suggest that herring gulls from north-eastern Asia (ie, Vega Gull *L vegae*) and North America (ie, American Herring Gull *L smithsonianus*) are not sister taxa (figure 1). Further studies must determine how closely Vega Gull and American Herring Gull are related to, eg, Heuglin's Gull *L heuglini* and European Herring Gull *L argentatus*. The latter two species were not included in Chu's study.

Evidence for Thayer's Gull's *L thayeri* evolutionary relationship to other gulls has been contradictory, with previous studies variously aligning it with (American) Herring Gull, Glaucous-winged Gull *L glaucescens* and Iceland Gull *L glaucoides*. Chu's study (figure 1) suggests that Thayer's Gull is more closely related to Glaucous-winged Gull than either is to Iceland

228 African Grey-headed Gull / Afrikaanse Grijskopmeeuw *Larus (cirrocephalus) poiocephalus*, Namibia, July 1997 *(Peter Scova Righini)*

229 Cape Gull / Kaapse Meeuw *Larus (dominicanus) vetula*, Namibia, July 1997 *(Peter Scova Righini)*

Gull. Given the limitations imposed by the specimens that Chu examined, the treatment of Thayer's Gull as a variant or subspecies of Iceland Gull is not supported. Instead, Thayer's Gull is grouped with Glaucous-winged Gull, a relationship first suggested by Bishop (1944).

Another striking result was that Iceland Gulls from Greenland (ie, Iceland Gull *L g glaucoides*) and Canada (ie, Kumlien's Gull *L g kumlieni*) did not emerge as sister-taxa. *L g glaucoides* and Glaucous Gull *L hyperboreus* appear more closely related to each other than either is to *L g kumlieni* (figure 1). The characteristics by which *L g glaucoides* and *L g kumlieni* are currently grouped – limited melanism on the primaries in adult winter plumage, purplish eye-ring in adult summer plumage and relatively small size – are inferred as primitive within the pale-winged gull complex and are thus not informative for grouping (Chu 1998). The grouping of Iceland Gull with Glaucous Gull is a consequence of the additional reduction in primary pigmentation that these species share (Chu 1998). The significance of this result is that no hybridization scenario has to be invoked to explain the morphological characters of Kumlien's Gull. The current classification suggests that Iceland and Glaucous Gulls independently evolved all-white adult plumages and many ornithologists believe that the plumage characters of Kumlien's Gull are the result of past hybridization of Thayer's and Iceland Gulls (Weber 1981, Garner & McGeehan 1998). Chu's study allows a simpler scenario. The common ancestor of Kumlien's, Iceland and Glaucous Gulls had limited black on the primaries. This black was subsequently lost in the lineage leading to Iceland and Glaucous Gulls but was retained in the lineage leading to Kumlien's Gull. Put another way, the white primaries of adult Iceland and Glaucous Gulls evolved only once and evolved after Kumlien's Gull branched off. Note, however, that Chu's study does not falsify a hybrid origin of Kumlien's Gull; phylogenetic analyses are designed to reconstruct a diverging (branching) pattern of relationships and are not capable of testing converging patterns of relationships such as those of hybrid taxa. The above hypothesis should be viewed as a viable alternative to the current hybridization scenario. Subsequent studies should determine which of these ideas provides the best explanation for the variation observed in this group.

Chu (1998) noted that in each of the above cases the species name refers to an assemblage that is demonstrably para- or polyphyletic (ie, unnatural). If one rejects such assemblages as species, then none of the above assemblages can be treated as a single species, at least given the evidence assembled in Chu's study. In other words, if the phylogenetic relationships inferred by Chu are correct, all the aforementioned taxa should be treated as full species. This would result in the recognition of several additional species taxa: African Grey-headed Gull *L poiocephalus*, Red-billed Gull *L scopulinus*, Cape Gull *L vetula*, and Kumlien's Gull *L kumlieni*. Only Red-billed Gull is sometimes accepted as a distinct species (del Hoyo et al 1996, Sibley 1996), whereas recognition of African Grey-headed Gull and Cape Gull as full species would be novel. To my knowledge, Sutton (1968) has been the only recent author to support species status for Kumlien's Gull. However, given the controversial status, origin and relationships of Kumlien's Gull, and the rather small differences beween the Grey-headed Gull taxa and between Kelp and Cape Gulls, these changes are unlikely to be accepted without corroboration by further evidence.

The evolutionary tree (figure 1) also indicates that Mew Gulls *L canus* in eastern Asia (ie, Kamchatka Gull *L c kamtschatschensis*) are more closely related to those in North America (ie, Short-billed Gull *L c brachyrhynchus*) than either is to those in Europe (ie, Common Gull *L c canus*). Sibley (1996) treated Short-billed Gull as a separate species based on DNA comparisons (Zink et al 1995). If Short-billed Gull is regarded as a separate species, the new findings imply that Kamchatka Gull should also be treated as a full species because it is closer to Short-billed Gull than to Common Gull. Interest in this group is likely to grow as diagnostic differences in immature plumages have recently been documented for Common, Kamchatka and Short-billed Gulls (Carey & Kennerley 1996; see also Tove 1993) and because vagrants have been reported on other continents (Kwater 1992, Tove 1993, Carey & Kennerley 1996).

An unexpected result was that Armenian Gull *L armenicus* did not line up with Pontic Gull *L cachinnans* but with the Mew Gull complex and Ring-billed Gull *L delawarensis*. Until the mid-1980s, Armenian Gull was not even recognized as a valid taxon and was regarded as a synonym of the yellow-legged group of gulls in the southern part of the Palearctic. Subsequent work, both in the field (Dubois 1985, Buzun 1993) and the museum (Cramp & Simmons 1983), has shown that Armenian Gull is a diagnosable species. The alliance of Armenian Gull

with Mew and Ring-billed Gulls is unconventional and needs further corroboration.

Western Gull *L occidentalis* and Glaucous-winged Gull form a broad hybrid zone in western North America (Bell 1996, 1997) but did not emerge as sister-taxa in Chu's analysis. Extensive hybridization between distantly related taxa undercuts the use of hybridization as a basis for lumping taxa. Thus, contrary to past practice, hybridization alone can no longer be cited as evidence that gull taxa are conspecific.

Discussion

Taken at face value, Chu's (1998) report suggests the need for a thorough taxonomic revision of the gulls. It remains to be seen whether such a revision will become quickly and widely accepted by mainstream ornithology. A major challenge for ornithologists will be to overcome biases about relationships suggested by traditional taxonomies. For instance, at first glance, the differences between adult Ross's and Little Gulls in breeding plumage seem considerable, and on this basis it may appear that they are not closely related. Indeed, the recognition of the genus *Rhodostethia* for Ross's Gull is entirely based on differences from other gulls. However, the basis for establishing phylogenetic relationships and, hence, the recognition of genera, is not the existence of differences but of derived similarities, of which in the case of Ross's and Little Gulls there are several (Chu 1998). It is the new discovery, through phylogenetic analysis, of such derived similarities (*synapomorphies* in systematists' jargon) that forms the basis for new ideas of relationships.

Given the similarities between *dominicanus* and *vetula* Kelp Gulls and between Kumlien's and Iceland Gulls, what are birders to make of the suggestion that the members of these pairs are not closely related? A common theme in Chu's study is that several of the characters that were previously used by taxonomists are not indicative of evolutionary relationships because they are primitive. A central tenet of phylogenetic systematics is that it is not enough for organisms to share characteristics; two species may share a great number of characters and still not be considered members of the same group. Consider a kangaroo, a monkey and a whale. The kangaroo and monkey are both terrestrial, are largely covered by hair and have two fully-developed hind legs, and one might therefore suppose a close relationship. These similarities, however, do not indicate phylogenetic relationships because the whale and monkey are more closely related to each other than either is to the kangaroo. All three characteristics are believed to have been present in the common ancestor of living mammals and are thus not helpful to infer relationships because all three species belong to the mammals. Such shared primitive characters are known as *symplesiomorphies* in systematists' jargon. Whales are different from the other two groups but these characteristics arose after they branched off from the common ancestor of whales and monkeys. These newly evolved characters are called *apomorphies* by systematists. Apomorphies (such as the unique characters of Ross's Gull) and symplesiomorphies (such as the similarities of the two Kelp Gulls, and Kumlien's and Iceland Gulls) are invalid characters to group taxa; only synapomorphies are evidence of a common evolutionary history.

Though phylogenetic systematics is simple in theory, in practice it can be difficult to find enough characters that unambiguously indicate relationships. Chu's study is methodologically sound and well-executed, yet due to the variability of many characters several parts of his tree are poorly supported and must be treated with caution. This need not depress us: systematists are in the business of erecting hypotheses. Chu's study is the first modern hypothesis of the relationships among gulls, and others will soon follow. Molecular analyses are now under way in at least four laboratories. These will focus on both the basic structure of the tree and the parts that have attracted special attention such as the 'large white-headed gull' complex of which coverage in the present study has been incomplete. When key taxa, such as Herring Gull, Baltic Gull *L fuscus*, Heuglin's Gull, Atlantic Yellow-legged Gull *L michahellis atlantis*, Mediterranean Yellow-legged Gull *L m michahellis* and Baraba Gull *L cachinnans barabensis*, are added it will become possible to address issues that so far remained unresolved. For instance, *1* does the southern Palearctic yellow-legged group of taxa represent a natural, monophyletic group?; *2* is Atlantic Yellow-legged Gull more closely related to Lesser Black-backed Gull *L graellsii* (as suggested by its head-streaking in winter and its original description as a subspecies of the latter) than to Mediterranean Yellow-legged Gull?; *3* is Armenian Gull sister to Heuglin's Gull (as suggested by Bourne 1993), to Baraba Gull (which in the Arabian Gulf has been confused with Armenian Gull) or to the Mew Gull complex (as suggested by Chu's study)?; and *4* is Heuglin's

Gull a member of the Baltic Gull-Lesser Black-backed Gull group, as suggested by some classifications (Cramp & Simmons 1983)?

Gull systematics now increasingly focuses on phylogenetic relationships, yet in some cases the taxonomic status of basal taxa has not been elucidated. For instance, very little attention has been paid to the distinctive New Caledonian form of Silver Gull *L n forsteri*, and to the western subspecies *L p georgii* of Pacific Gull. These forms are distinct in plumage and bare parts, respectively (Higgins & Davies 1996) and deserve further appraisal. The status of Thayer's Gull and Kumlien's Gull, in contrast, has received considerable attention from ornithologists and birders but so far no consensus has been reached. A fundamental concern is whether Thayer's Gull, Kumlien's Gull and Iceland Gull are discrete taxa in the first place (Howell 1998). In the past, the question of whether Thayer's Gull, Kumlien's Gull and Iceland Gull are valid taxa has been confused with several other relevant questions, such as: *1* what is the evolutionary origin of these taxa, and of Kumlien's Gull in particular?; *2* how are the three forms phylogenetically related?; *3* should these taxa be ranked as species or as subspecies?; *4* what are the interactions (if any) of Thayer's Gull, Kumlien's Gull and Iceland Gull on the breeding grounds?; *5* how can Thayer's Gull, Kumlien's Gull and Iceland Gull be identified in the field? Unless these issues are treated separately, interpretations of the status and relationships of these forms are likely to remain controversial.

Studies into gull phylogeny and taxonomy proceed at full tilt and birders are likely to witness a change in the number of species of gulls as well as changes in the scientific names of some species. In the meantime, birders should continue to closely study little-known plumages and taxa, the results of which have already produced many important insights (Carey & Kennerley 1996, Garner & Quinn 1997, Klein & Gruber 1997, Jonsson 1998). Because such descriptions are likely to be used by systematists, progress in field identification of gulls will be particularly gratifying to the many gull aficionados who are increasingly asking evolutionary questions.

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DBA-nieuws

Uitverkochte nummers van Dutch Birding De inzamelingsactie van uitverkochte nummers van Dutch Birding (cf Dutch Birding 20: 242, 299, 1998) is een groot succes geworden. Inclusief het volgende nummer zijn exact 100 nummers van Dutch Birding verschenen en tot voor kort stonden 52 daarvan te boek als zijnde uitverkocht. Wij zijn erin geslaagd van ieder uitverkocht nummer exemplaren te bemachtigen en geïnteresseerden verwijzen wij naar de mededeling en advertentie in het volgende nummer van Dutch Birding.

Out-of-stock back issues of Dutch Birding The request for out-of-stock back issues (cf Dutch Birding 20: 243, 299, 1998) has been very successful. Including the next issue, exactly 100 issues of Dutch Birding have been published. Of these, 52 were officially out-of-stock, but we managed to obtain copies of every one of them. Those interested are referred to the announcement and advertisement which will appear in the next issue of Dutch Birding.

Gunter De Smet nieuw redactielid Met ingang van 1 juli 1999 is Gunter De Smet uit Gentbrugge, België, als nieuw lid toegetreden tot de redactie van Dutch Birding; voorheen leverde GDS al met enige regelmaat bijdragen als lid van de redactieadviesraad. GDS is voorzitter van het Belgisch Avifaunistisch Homologatie-Comité (BAHC) en verder bekend als redactielid van Oriolus en als actief vogelaar in België en ver daarbuiten. Met deze personele uitbreiding hoopt de redactie onder meer de banden met het Belgische vogelen verder te versterken. De volledige bezetting van de redactie is te vinden in het colofon.

Gunter De Smet new editorial member From 1 July 1999, Gunter De Smet from Gentbrugge, Belgium, has joined the editorial board of Dutch Birding. GDS is chairman of the Belgian rarities committee (BAHC) and well-known as an active birder in Belgium and far abroad. The complete line-up of the editorial board can be found on the inside of the cover.

Aankondigingen & verzoeken

BOU Records Committee completes its Taxonomic Sub-committee There was a good response to the recent invitation for applicants to join the Taxonomic Sub-committee (TSC) of the British Ornithologists' Union Records Committee (BOURC). Two new members have been appointed to bring the TSC up to its increased strength of six members, chaired by Tony Marr. The new members are Martin Collinson (Scotland) and George Sangster (Netherlands).

Martin Collinson is a genetics researcher at the Medical School of Edinburgh University. He is a keen birdwatcher and amateur ornithologist, well-travelled in the Middle East, Africa and the Americas. He has been a member of the editorial board of British Birds since June 1998 and recently wrote the lead article 'Subspecies – more than meets the eye?' He will be known to many as a regular and responsible contributor to UKBirdNet (Internet discussion group) debates and discussions.

George Sangster, one of Dutch Birding's editors, is well known as an active member of the Dutch committee for avian systematics (CSNA) who has prepared most of the taxonomic summaries and proposals which have been published in Dutch Birding since early 1996. In that connection, he has documented all relevant literature on species concepts, classifications, taxonomy and population genetics of Western Palearctic birds which will be very helpful to the TSC in its discussions. A keen proponent of the Phylogenetic Species Concept, his contributions to the TSC will undoubtedly lead to lively and constructive debate and help to build bridges between the PSC and the Biological Species Concept.

The full membership of the TSC is now Martin Collinson, Andreas Helbig, Alan Knox, David Parkin, Tony Prater and George Sangster.

Andreas Helbig joined the TSC in January 1999 and is well-known as a member of the German rarities committee for 12 years. He is editor of Vogelwelt and serves on the editorial boards of Limicola and Journal für Ornithologie (in 1985, he was also one of Dutch Birding's editors). He is a research scientist at the University of Greifswald and director of Vogelwarte Hiddensee. His research interests are in bird migration, orientation and, more recently, molecular phylogeny and population genetics of birds. He has a particular interest in ornithological systematics, species concepts and those complexes of bird species that are at the transition between subspecies and species, such as large gulls, chiffchaffs and some other warblers. He has published many papers on these topics.

Tony Marr will chair the TSC until December 1999, when he will hand over the chairmanship to Tony Prater while continuing as chairman of the BOURC.

The TSC now includes all the members of the Taxonomic Sub-committee of the Association of European Rarities Committees (AERC), who are Andreas Helbig, Alan Knox, David Parkin and George Sangster. This should help to consolidate and accelerate the work being carried out by AERC in (amongst others) producing an agreed European list of species.

The BOURC now has a strong taxonomic team on board, well equipped and well placed to try to meet the expectations of both the scientific and birding communities. We will do our best to do so. An Action Plan is being prepared which will be finalized and published soon after the biennial meeting of the AERC in September. This will include an agreed species definition; a list of the species on which the new TSC is working; and when results can be expected.

For further information please contact: Tony Marr (chairman), BOURC, c/o The Natural History Museum, Akeman Street, Tring, Hertfordshire HP23 6AP, telephone +44-1263741313, fax +44-1442890693, e-mail bourc.chair@bou.org.uk.

Recensies

MARK BEAMAN & STEVE MADGE 1998. *The handbook of bird identification for Europe and the Western Palearctic*. Christopher Helm/A&C Black, 35 Bedford Row, Londen WC1R 4JH, UK. 868 pp. ISBN 0-7136-3960-1. GBP 65.00.

Reeds in 1979 hoorde ik van een op stapel staand boek dat alle soorten van de WP in één deel zou bevatten en dat de afmetingen zou krijgen van het toen net verschenen deel 1 van *Birds of the Western Palearctic*. Jarenlang werd er niets van vernomen, behalve af en toe een aankondiging dat er aan werd gewerkt, en op een gegeven moment een bericht dat de beide auteurs ruzie zouden hebben en elk hun eigen vogelreisbureau gingen leiden: Mark Beaman Birdquest en Steve Madge Limosa.

Maar in 1997 kon je het bestellen onder de wel zeer pretentieuze titel *Handbook of Bird Identification* (HBI). De verschijningsdatum werd enige malen uitgesteld, maar eind 1998/begin 1999 kwam het eindelijk beschikbaar na een vooral in de Britse tijdschriften zeer groot opgezette reclamecampagne. Vooral in deze tijdschriften was de euforie groot, maar tegelijkertijd verschenen er bijvoorbeeld op het 'Euro Bird Net' negatieve berichten over grove onvolkomendheden. Na enig geblader was ik zelf nogal teleurgesteld en aanvankelijk wilde ik een recensie schrijven waarbij de pen in gif zou zijn gedoopt.

HBI zou over identificatie gaan en inderdaad wordt er een 32 pagina's tellende introductie gegeven over identificatie maar er is geen diepgang wat betreft moeilijke identificatievraagstukken, althans niet de diepgang van de tegenwoordig bekende tijdschriften die zich met identificatieproblematiek bezighouden.

Een vluchtige blik op de verspreidingskaarten laten veel fouten of onvolkomenheden zien: Kwak *Nycticorax nycticorax* broedt niet in Denemarken of Zweden; Porseleinhoen *Porzana porzana*, Kwartelkoning *Crex crex* en Grote Karekiet *Acrocephalus arundinaceus* broeden niet in België; Morinelplevier *Charadrius morinellus* zou nog steeds in de Flevopolder broeden; de nooit geverifieerde broedgevallen van Bergfluiter *Phylloscopus bonelli* eind jaren 1970 op de Zuidwest-Veluwe leven ook hier nog voort; en de vestiging van Zwartkopmeeuw *Larus melanocephalus* in Nederland is de auteurs ontgaan.

Naarmate ik meer in het boek las werd me duidelijk dat er iets anders aan de hand was. Een van de redacteuren van Dutch Birding vertelde me dat de tekst al in de jaren 1980 gereed was en kijkend naar de platen werd dat toen meteen duidelijk. De Engelse Laurel Tucker overleed in 1986, maar toch is een groot deel van de platen van haar hand. Peter Hayman zou in 1986 zijn voorlopige hoogtepunt bereiken met *Shorebirds*, Hilary Burn in 1988 met *Wildfowl*, gevolgd door *Crows & jays* in 1994. De tekeningen in HBI lijken duidelijk een voorstudie te zijn voor bovengenoemde werken, want in HBI komen ze houterig, oppervlakkig en tweedimensionaal over. De tekeningen van Laurel Tucker (in mijn ogen toch na die van Dan Zetterström de beste in HBI) zijn een afspiegeling van wat toen bekend was over deze soorten. Ter illustratie: Siberische Sprinkhaanzanger *Locustella certhiola* mist de lichte puntjes op de tertials, iets wat wel in de tekst ter sprake komt; het kenmerk werd pas in 1991 gepubliceerd. De tekeningen van Martin Elliott lijken van latere datum, omdat de recent afgesplitste Siberische Heuglins Meeuw *L heuglini* als aparte soort aandacht krijgt (wat taxonomie betreft volgen de auteurs Beaman's eigen *Palearctic birds: a checklist of the birds of Europe, North Africa and Asia north of the foothills of the Himalayas* uit 1994). Echter, de afgebeelde platen én de tekst van de tegenwoordig populaire taxa als *L fuscus*, *L cachinnans* en *L heuglini* zullen niet leiden tot een toename van meldingen in bijvoorbeeld Nederland of Engeland; de tekenaar lijkt met name geïnspireerd te zijn door de veeldelige videoserie van Bob Ross (die van die landschappen, vorig jaar nog op TV10 te zien...)

Daarom maakte mijn teleurstelling en scepsis snel plaats voor een milder oordeel en besloot ik het boek maar te nemen zoals het is: een historisch overzicht van wat halverwege de jaren 1980 bekend was over herkenning en voorkomen van soorten uit de WP (ondanks latere toevoegingen zoals bijvoorbeeld Aziatische Wespendief *Pernis ptilorhyncus*).

Slotconclusie: een mooi boek met redelijke platen en een redelijke tekst, maar 10 jaar te laat verschenen. De titel van het boek zou voor mij dan ook de toevoeging mogen hebben: 'As seen through the eyes of the 1980s' of 'An historic overview of the years 1800-1986' Voor ingewikkelde identificatievraagstukken blijf ik vooralsnog vertrouwen op de op pagina 853 genoemde 'birding journals'. JAN VAN DER LAAN

DICK FORSMAN 1999. *The raptors of Europe and the Middle East: a handbook of field identification*. T & AD Poyser Ltd, 24-28 Oval Road, London NW1 7DX, UK. 589 pp. ISBN 0-85661-098-4. GBP 29.95.

The identification of Western Palearctic raptors has received some special attention in recent decades. It started off with the then ground-breaking *Flight identification of European raptors* by R F Porter, Ian Willis, Steen Christensen and Bent P Nielsen (first published 1974), followed by *Raptors of north-western Europe* by Dick Forsman (first published 1980) and *Birds of prey of Britain & Europe, North Africa and the Middle East* by Benny Gensbøl (first published 1984). Dick Forsman has now crowned his decades-long study of raptors with the publication of a book that makes (or should make) all previous ones redundant. It covers all 43 raptor species (with Steppe Buzzard *Buteo buteo vulpinus* and Barbary Falcon *Falco (peregrinus) pelegrinoides* receiving separate 'species' accounts) regularly breeding in the WP. To some, it may be a disappointment that some species breeding on the verge of the WP or occurring as vagrants only (and therefore of special interest from an identification point of view) are not treated, such as Crested Honey Buzzard *Pernis ptilorhyncus*, Tawny Eagle *Aquila rapax*, Verreaux's Eagle *A verreauxi*, Amur Falcon *F amurenis*, Shikra *Accipiter badius* and (other) species from Morocco and the Cape Verde Islands. However, Forsman has clearly chosen to present only those species which he has studied himself extensively, with Egypt being the only African country covered by this book. He is currently working on a book covering the African raptors (which explains his regular trips to Ethiopia), which may in time solve the problem partially – and if Asia follows next, there should in the end be little to complain about for WP birders!

Because of these geographical limitations (curiously, according to the title page, the Netherlands are not included!), there is sometimes a lack of reference to possible extralimital confusion species which may cause problems. For instance, when naming possible confusion species of Eurasian Griffon Vulture *Gyps fulvus*, I think it would have been wise to at least mention a number of Asian and African species that can look very similar, especially in immature plumage. The recent records of Rüppell's Griffon Vultures *G rueppellii* in Spain (from whatever origin) indicate that a broader scope is sometimes essential to achieve the correct identification.

The book covers each species with text and colour photographs. The choice of the 737 (!) photographs and their general quality is excellent and each series mostly depicts all subsequent plumages from juvenile

to adult. In this way, Forsman stresses the importance to always (try to) age a raptor during the process of identification. Most photographs are of birds in flight – which is obviously how most raptors are seen and studied – but perched birds are illustrated in one or more photographs for every species and in-hand photographs are sometimes added to illustrate finer details. Remarkably, there are no flight photographs of Spanish Imperial Eagle *A adalberti* which is illustrated with four photographs only (three of immatures in captivity and a well-known one of two adults on the nest). A few distinctive (sub)species (eg, Yellow-billed *Milvus (migrans) aegyptius* and Black-eared Kite *M (m) lineatus*) are also illustrated. Most photographs were taken in the WP, especially in Israel, but for some species, such as Black-winged Kite *Elanus caeruleus* and Lammergeier *Gypaetus barbatus*, the majority comes from outside the WP. Apart from a few sketches illustrating flight actions or plumage details, there are no plates in the book.

This book is a true (photographic) identification guide, with limited text covering such aspects as distribution, habitat, population and movements and the bulk of the text devoted to species identification, moult and sexing & ageing. As could be expected from Forsman, the text is very thorough, complete and written in a rather scholary fashion, with emphasis on information and not on entertainment. Combined with the rather old-fashioned lay-out (including type face), which takes up some extra space, this makes the book not 'easy to swallow' – but what else would you expect with a difficult group like this? The only 'frivolities' in the text are the useful colour-marked identification and ageing summaries, which allow quick reference, before reading the text in full. Personally, I think this lay-out somewhat reduces the appeal of the book but this is more a matter of taste than of true criticism.

In all, this is most probably the ultimate guide on raptor identification in the WP for many years to come, written by what is without doubt one of the most expert authors, if not *the* most expert, in this field at the moment. However, raptor-*afficionados* will eagerly await the soon-to-be-published *Field guide to the raptors of the Western Palearctic* by William S Clark and N John Schmitt (which contains 48 colour plates, for a difference, and also many colour photographs) to compare both and then give their final judgement. ENNO B EBELS

JELLE SCHARRINGA 1999. *Birds of tropical Asia – sounds and sights* (CD-ROM, Windows 3.1/95/98/NT). Bird Songs International BV, Wierengastraat 42, 9969 PD Westernieland, Netherlands, internet http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/bird_songs_international, e-mail 101363.650@compuserve.com. ISBN 90-75838-02-6. EUR 45.00 (c USD 48.00); EU residents add 17.5% VAT.

From the early 1980s, the author has explored the bird life of the Oriental region. This was when birding became booming 'business' and increasing numbers of twitchers focussed on their country lists. By then, only few ventured far away and Jelle Scharringa recognized and promoted the vast potential of the orient for western birders. During his trips, he recorded a large number of bird sounds and this collection became the start for a new CD-ROM which provides easy access to a large number of bird sounds and images.

This CD-ROM combines 800 sound recordings (477 species) with 200 photographs (160 species) from the Oriental region, which consists of the Indian subcontinent and South-East Asia (including southern China, the Philippines, Taiwan and Indonesia without its easternmost islands). Additional information on the place, time and background sounds are given for each separate recording. Several persons have contributed to the sounds and images.

While multimedia and the Internet define the world of information technology, paper books and journals, supplemented with the occasional video and set of bird sound tapes, dominate the stream of ornithological information. Too many birders appear to suffer from a hidden fear for computer system freezes, crashes, or failures, and rely on their traditional sources. Few try to become 'digital' because most believe it to be useless 'in the field'. But, the changes are here. The Internet has become a serious medium for ornithological data, newsgroups and the presentation of travel reports, and CD-ROMs like *Birds of tropical Asia* demonstrate the dynamics of combined sounds and images.

This CD-ROM was tested on a Pentium 200 MMX pc with 64 MB of S-DRAM and 32 speed CD-ROM, controlled by Microsoft Windows 98. The sounds were played on 32 Watt speakers connected to the sound card, as well as on a stereo set through an audio connection cable with plug and phono jacks. The initial installation occurred without problems and operation went relatively smoothly. Now and then, time delays occurred when sound fragments were activated through the mouse click and sometimes sounds suffered from brief interruptions. For my own convenience, I composed a travel tape from the CD-ROM by recording important sound fragments on cassette. (Analog players are still the cheapest option and efficient in the tropics. This may change, though.) This approach in transferring sounds from a digital source to analog tape proved extremely handy.

At first hearing and sight, the CD-ROM presents a tremendously large collection of sounds and images, and listening to the sounds upon clicking the mouse is a fantastic learning experience for those trying to become familiar with oriental bird sounds. The screen is user friendly, allowing the user to browse and select the sounds and images of interest. However, the interface seems to lack a certain feel of style in an era where attractive looks have become a standard. Most users will be primarily interested in the sounds of (song)birds. Therefore, it may be argued that the customer's interest will be in the recordings and that the images are just a supplementary feature. For this reason, this review focuses mainly on the sounds. The quality of the sounds

is generally good, but some could be replaced with better recordings. Sound fragments generally last 0.5-2 min and there seems to be no consistency in their length and loudness. Most birders will be interested in those sounds that are valuable for bird identification. Therefore, it seems inappropriate to include three heron and one duck species, as well as six species of raptor, where there should either be a tendency for completeness or a deliberate choice for the relevant bird families.

In conclusion, this CD-ROM is a valuable tool for anyone interested in oriental birding. The author has made a huge effort to make a large collection of sounds and images available for a reasonable price. It is a pleasure to play the sounds and watch the images at the click of the mouse. The number of sounds is truly impressive and representative for the region. The challenge will be to complete the CD-ROM with sounds of the remaining species, including the most sought-after specialities of the region. Hopefully, the customers will make their contribution by making their own recordings. J J (HAN) BLANKERT

PETER BOESMAN 1999. *Birds of Venezuela / Aves de Venezuela* (CD-ROM, Windows 3.1/95/98/NT). Bird Songs International BV, Wierengastraat 42, 9969 PD Westernieland, Netherlands, internet http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/bird_songs_international, e-mail 101363.650@compuserve.com. ISBN 90-75838-03-4. EUR 55.00 (c USD 58.00); EU residents add 17.5% VAT.

Venezuela, for most of us the nearest South American birding destination, with a great variety of tropical and Andean habitats, is relatively well served with publications for birders. It has its own field guide (Meyer de Schauensee & Phelps), there is a nice birdfinding guide of the local Audubon Society, and now we have a CD-ROM with bird sounds, photographs and distribution maps. It has been prepared by Peter Boesman from Belgium who lived in Venezuela for several years, collecting sounds and distribution data, as well as making photographs. He wrote papers on new distribution data of several species in Cotinga, the journal of the Neotropical Bird Club. The field guide of birds of Venezuela dates from 1978 and only gives distribution data in the text. For the songbirds, *The birds of South America* (Ridgely & Tudor) gives distribution maps on the scale of the whole continent, although on a more detailed scale for regional endemics.

On the CD-ROM we have more precise and up-to-date distribution maps for 878 of the Venezuelan bird species. Range extensions of species are commonplace in the South American birding adventure, just like the now almost yearly discovery of new species. So, for the distribution maps alone this CD-ROM is worth while, eg, when planning a trip or to compare with your trip list. It is a pity that the maps are only given for the 878 species of which also sounds and/or photos are included. However, the sounds are the prime goal of publishing this CD-ROM.

There are 1306 sounds of 674 species, which is a major achievement for any publication of bird sounds of South America. These sounds are good for about eight hours playing time, thanks to the use of compression techniques and the choice of a rather strong compression rate. The latter means some loss of sound quality, but the author has deliberately chosen for this and to include as many recordings as possible on one CD-ROM. Also, for several species he has chosen to include less good field recordings, if no better ones were available. Recording bird sounds in the Neotropics is often far from easy, so you will end up with several interesting ones of lower quality.

Not all sound recordings are from Venezuela itself. This is clearly indicated for the species concerned, but it should be stressed that regional differences in the sounds of bird species in South America can be considerable (and sometimes leads to splitting of species). In the introduction, the author says that he has tried not to include such sounds with regional differences, but he is not sure about it for all cases. The percentage of recordings from outside Venezuela is stated to be very low, but a random selection of 100 revealed 14 from other countries, mainly Ecuador and Peru.

Like in its predecessor on birds of Bolivia by the same publisher, the CD-ROM contains bird species and even families whose sounds have not been published at all before. The archives of Cornell University Laboratory of Ornithology (CLO) and other bioacoustic laboratories may be filled with many of these species, but these are published at a slow rate, often only when a bird family is nearly complete. (This situation could change drastically when these labs would facilitate downloading their sound recordings from the Internet...) Examples of new material in the Venezuelan CD-ROM are found in, eg, the large families of antbirds and flycatchers, many of which also occur outside Venezuela. So, this CD-ROM is useful as well for other countries in South America, even if one possesses the cassettes or CD's published by CLO and others. To be true, the combination of the Bolivian and the Venezuelan CD-ROMs covers a good deal of what you normally need when birding in the northern half of South America. Personally, on such trips I like to bring a cassette or nowadays a minidisc with a regional reference collection of sounds, and with the Venezuelan CD-ROM the specific sound files can easily be downloaded on your computer for further processing.

Finding an unidentified sound with the help of the CD-ROM is easier than with those lengthy cassettes or even CD's, but you still have to go through very many sound tracks, even if you know roughly that the sound should be of an antbird or woodcreeper. Especially in the Neotropics, often more birds are heard than seen. Sonagrams of the sounds would certainly help in identifying your sound recordings, especially when these diagrams are displayed with many others together on one screen. This may be a suggestion for a next edition of this publication. The author, in his introduction, says that he will go on with this project and will work on a larger collection of sounds and photos, to be published

later with newer techniques of compression or storage. He hopes people will send him material for this (like I happened to do myself with four recordings for the present publication).

The 700 photographs on the CD-ROM (of 450 species) are from various birders, and again this is a stunning collection. It probably is the largest published collection of South American bird photographs so far (that is, of birds in the wild; Dunning published a book with over 1400 photos of captured birds of South America). For several species, the CD-ROM will be the first readily available publication of a photograph anyway. Again, as with the sounds, not all photographs are of premium quality (and again not all are from Venezuela), but most are impressive enough. A nice feature of the user interface of this CD-ROM is the 'Show', allowing a random display of photos with time interval of your choice and with or without the names of the birds displayed. So if you like, you can set up your own mystery bird competition!

By now it should be clear that, notwithstanding some critical remarks, this CD-ROM is certainly worth while for anybody interested in the birds of South America! I am still amazed by the sheer quantity of work that has been put into it. Readers with no interest in the birds of South America (is that possible for the 'bird continent'?) should at least be tempted to have a look at the user interface. It is really easy, and has some nice features besides the Show. You can get a static impression of the user interface by visiting the web site of the publisher at http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/bird_songs_international. There too, a species list of the CD-ROM is given with information of what is included (sound and/or photo). JOHN VAN DER WOUDE

Masters of Mystery

Solutions of third round 1999

The solutions of mystery photographs V and VI of the third round of the 1999 competition (Dutch Birding 21: 171, 1999) appear below.

V The general structure, greyish-brown plumage, and scapulars and wing-coverts with dark centres and pale fringes (without notching) of the wader in this photograph narrow the choice down to the stints or sandpipers of the genus *Calidris* in winter plumage. Of these, there are only five with distinct greenish legs (although one should beware of the occasional black-legged *Calidris* with greenish or greenish-looking legs): Least Sandpiper *C minutilla*, Long-toed Stint *C subminuta*, Temminck's Stint *C temminckii*, Pectoral Sandpiper *C melanotos* and Sharp-tailed Sandpiper *C acuminata*. The latter two are easily ruled out since these species show, for instance, a heavier bill, more pointed scapulars, a less grey winter plumage and completely dark centres to the wing-coverts and scapulars. Temminck's Stint is much more uniform grey in winter plumage, lacking the mystery bird's relatively heavily marked scapulars and wing-coverts. Temminck's also has a complete and uniform grey breast-band (unlike the distinctly streaked breast sides of the mystery bird) and a typical plain head. So we are left with Long-toed Stint and Least Sandpiper. This is also supported by the bill shape, being rather straight, but slightly decurved, and smoothly narrowing towards the fine tip, the very short primary projection and the relatively brown winter plumage. The separation of these two is a classic identification problem and can be quite difficult in all ages and plumages, but here we are faced with the most challenging task: a bird in winter plumage.

Starting with structural differences, a well-known difference between the two is that Long-toed Stint often appears more *Tringa*-like with longer neck and legs than Least Sandpiper. Although this can be evident in the field, it is of less value when judging a single photograph. Of course, the long-necked and long-legged appearance of Long-toed strongly depends on the bird's activities and posture and Long-toed can adopt Least's often more hunched posture. This said, the mystery bird does not show a long neck and looks neither particularly long- nor short-legged. In the hand, the long tarsi of Long-toed are an important difference with Least. In the field and especially on photographs, this difference can be used in relation to the bill length (which is about equal in the two species), although variation in both demands this feature to be used with care. In Least, the length of the tarsi is about equal to the bill length (but can be slightly long-

er), while in Long-toed the tarsi are normally longer than the bill. The tarsi of the mystery bird are longer than the bill, thus suggestive of Long-toed. Long-toed's extremely long middle toe is of no use here since its length can not be judged in the photograph.

Another well-known difference between the two is the bill colour: Least Sandpiper has an all-black bill, while Long-toed Stint normally shows a pale base to the lower mandible. The bill of the mystery bird is all-black and this could well be interpreted as indicative of Least. The pale bill base of Long-toed is, however, in fact a feature typical of juvenile and summer plumage (although it may sometimes be fairly inconspicuous), but not of winter plumage when Long-toed often has an all-dark bill like Least. Therefore, the mystery bird's all-dark bill can not be used to identify this mystery bird.

Differences in head patterns are also important when separating both species. This is especially true for the crispy juveniles, but generally less so for birds in summer and, even less so, winter plumage. Nevertheless, differences are normally still visible in birds in winter plumage. The mystery bird shows a dark streaked crown which gives the bird a rather capped appearance, emphasized by a pale grey nape and a pale supercilium. This capped appearance combined with a paler nape is often seen in winter-plumage Long-toed Stint, whereas winter-plumage Least Sandpiper normally lacks a distinct and well-demarcated darker crown and usually shows a slightly duller supercilium as well as just some slight contrast between crown and nape.

The mystery bird also shows a fairly prominent pale spot just above the lores. While both species can show a clear pale supra-loral spot, Long-toed Stint usually has this spot so prominent that it seems to be pushed into the dark loral stripe, thereby narrowing the centre of the loral stripe to a thin dark line. The result is a loral stripe that starts broad in front of the eye and becomes very narrow below the pale spot. This pattern is also shown by the mystery bird. In Least Sandpiper, the dark loral stripe is more evenly broad throughout its length and usually the most prominent mark in the face.

In Long-toed Stint, the dark crown typically runs down to the base of the upper mandible, unlike Least Sandpiper which has the supercilia meeting over the bill. In the mystery bird, there is no dark visible that runs down from crown to bill-base. This fits Least nicely, but head-on views are needed to judge this feature well since the dark crown reaching the bill in Long-toed is often very difficult to see when viewed from the side as in the mystery photograph.

As a rule, Long-toed Stint is the more obviously patterned species of the two, also in winter plumage, and this difference is perhaps best illustrated on the upperparts, scapulars and wing-coverts. In winter plumage, one of the best ways to separate the two is the pattern of the scapulars. Winter-plumage Long-toed generally has a bolder scapular pattern consisting of broader and more contrasting blackish feather centres. In classic individuals, these dark centres are clear-cut from the broad pale brown edges. The resulting pattern is usually most noticeable on the rearmost scapulars. In contrast, winter-plumage Least Sandpiper normally shows narrow darker centres to these feathers, often confined to just a dark shaft-streak, resulting in a more uniform appearance. Some Least, however, can show rather large darker centres approaching a less well-marked Long-toed in this respect. Looking at the mystery bird, several scapulars can be seen to have broad clear-cut black centres contrasting with pale edges. Although this pattern is not obvious on all scapulars, it is most obvious on the upper row of scapulars and those more towards the tertials (the mystery bird's rearmost scapulars are, unfortunately, not visible). This scapular pattern is an important indicator of Long-toed.

Winter-plumage Long-toed Stint tends to be slightly stronger streaked on hind neck and breast sides, whereas Least Sandpiper is in general more diffusely streaked on these areas. Also, the flanks of Long-toed are on average a bit more marked than those of Least which often show just a few fine streaks. The mystery bird fits Long-toed best in these respects since hind neck and breast sides are conspicuously streaked and there are some broad markings present continuing down the flanks.

None of these features are fully diagnostic on their own, but the combination of the features mentioned identifies the mystery bird as a Long-toed Stint, although some of them would suggest Least Sandpiper rather than Long-toed Stint. In particular, the all-black bill and the crown which can not be seen to reach the bill made this a tricky Long-toed and a difficult mystery bird. It was photographed at Tsim Bei Tsui, Hong Kong, China, on 27 September 1987 by Ray Tipper. Interestingly, a large majority of the entrants (78%) identified this bird as a Least. There were a few entries mentioning other *Calidris* sandpipers,

but just 10 entrants (11%) identified it correctly as a Long-toed.

VI Surely, many entrants will have found themselves puzzled about this bird's identity while seeking through their field guides which bird on earth (or in the Western Palearctic) could show the combination of features depicted in the mystery photograph. The opinions differed largely about this bird and the proposed solutions included no less than 27 different species.

What catches the eye immediately is a conspicuous yellow throat and this feature attracted 10% of the entrants to Common Yellowthroat *Geothlypis trichas*. This species is, however, eliminated by, amongst others, its pale flesh-coloured legs, since those of the mystery bird are black. Several other Nearctic warblers were mentioned but the combination of black legs, uniform upperparts, lack of wingbars and yellow throat does not fit any of the colourful New World warblers. For a male Red-breasted Flycatcher *Ficedula parva* (mentioned by 14% of the entrants), the throat should be orange-red rather than yellow, while the tail of the mystery bird lacks the white sides to the base of the tail characteristic of this species (although some readers were wondering if what looks like the tail was really the tail and not part of the tree). It is also important to notice that not only the throat is yellow, but that there is also some yellow present on the lores, forehead and central breast. Above and just in front of the eye, the yellow forms a hint of a supercilium and this could suggest a *Phylloscopus* warbler, in particular Common Chiffchaff *P collybita* (13%), because of the black legs but the supercilium is too weak and the bill is a bit too stubby for this genus. The very yellow throat contrasting with the white remainder of the underparts does not fit Common Chiffchaff either. In fact, there is not a single Western Palearctic species matching all the features shown in the mystery photograph...

So there is something wrong here. One of the features must not be what it seems to be, but which one? It is indeed the yellow present on throat, breast and head, which is not of the bird itself but actually caused by pollen from the flowers the bird has been foraging on! Once the confusion caused by the yellow is taken away, the pieces of the puzzle fall into place. Cold brown upperparts with brown edges to the wing-coverts, tertials and secondaries, whitish underparts, black legs, a dark, rather stubby bill, a blue-grey tinge to the head and a pale eye-ring just visible: it is a Lesser Whitethroat *Sylvia curruca*! Or, as appropriately named by one entrant, a 'lesser yellowthroat'. It was photographed at Kibbutz Lotan, Israel, in March 1999 by René van Rossum. Interestingly, Lesser Whitethroat is known to occasionally 'drink' nectar and eat anthers from flowers. Individuals with partially yellow or orange heads are observed in Israel during spring migration with some regularity, but also more rarely in western Europe, and then often cause great confusion about their identity. The confusion was also great with this mystery bird since only 19 entrants (20%) solved this mystery correctly. Incorrect answers, besides the ones already mentioned, included Melodious Warbler *Hippolais polyglotta*, Wood Warbler *P sibilatrix*, Iberian Chiffchaff *P brehmii*, Mugimaki Flycatcher *F mugimaki*, Tennessee Warbler *Vermivora peregrina* and many others.

230 Lesser Whitethroat / *Sylvia curruca*, Kibbutz Lotan, Israel, March 1999 *(René van Rossum)*

This round was clearly very difficult and just 94 entries were received, which is significantly less than in the two previous rounds. 29 of them contained one correct identification; no one identified both mystery birds correctly. From these 29 entrants, Chris van Rijswijk was drawn as the winner of a copy of *The handbook of bird identification* by Mark Beaman and Steve Madge, donated by Christopher Helm (Publishers) Ltd.

After this round, there are 13 entrants in the lead who have each identified five mystery birds correctly: Max Berlijn, Jan Bisschop, Johan van 't Bosch, Sander Bot, Jaap Eerdmans, Marc Guyt, Harri Kontkanen, Sander Lagerveld, Arnout Linckens, Bert-Jan Luijendijk, Roef Mulder, Gert Ottens and Casper Zuyderduyn.

Fourth round 1999

Please, study the rules (Dutch Birding 21: 52-53, 1999) carefully and identify the birds in mystery photographs VII and VIII. Solutions can be sent in three different ways:

- by *postcard* to Dutch Birding Association, Postbus 75611, 1070 AP Amsterdam, Netherlands
- by e-mail to d.s.kok@students.chem.uu.nl
- by Internet via the homepage of the Dutch Birding Association, http://www.dutchbirding.nl

Entries for the fourth round have to arrive by **25 October 1999**. From those entrants having identified both mystery birds correctly, one person will be drawn who will receive a copy of *The handbook of bird identification* by Mark Beaman and Steve Madge, donated by Christopher Helm (Publishers) Ltd. Swarovski Benelux will award a pair of the highly acclaimed Swarovski SLC 7x42 B binoculars to the overall winner at the end of the competition (after six rounds).

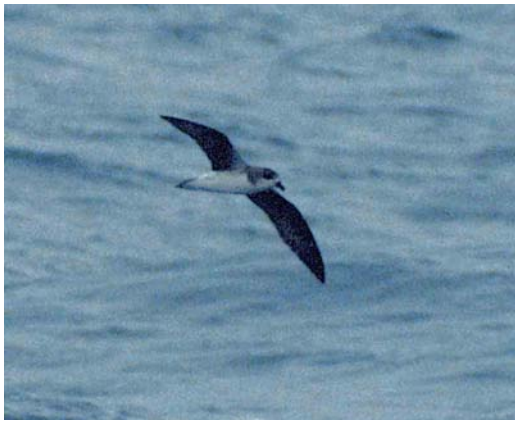
Diederik Kok, Pelmolenweg 4, 3511 XN Utrecht, Netherlands (d.s.kok@students.chem.uu.nl)
Nils van Duivendijk, Guldenhoeve 34, 3451 TG Vleuten, Netherlands (duivendijk@multiweb.nl)

WP reports

This review lists rare and interesting birds reported in the Western Palearctic mainly in **July-August 1999** and focuses on north-western Europe. The reports are largely unchecked and their publication here does not imply future acceptance by the rarities committee of the relevant country. Observers are requested to submit records to each country's rarities committee. Corrections are welcome and will be published. Sound-recordings of some of the rarities in the Netherlands can be heard on http://www.dutchbirding.nl/sounds.

If accepted, an eclipse male **Barrow's Goldeneye** *Bucephala islandica* at Sättunaviken, Östergötland, from 28 July to 19 August will be the first for Sweden. The third **Pied-billed Grebe** *Podilymbus podiceps* for the Netherlands was a (suppressed) adult staying for a few weeks in late May/early June at Kampina, Boxtel, Noord-Brabant. A presumed fourth-year **Black-browed Albatross** *Diomedea melanophris* was photographed 16 km off Looe, Cornwall, England, on 19 June. The third for Denmark was possibly the same individual staying for three hours on 20 July behind a fishing vessel 17 km north-west of Hanstholm, Nordjylland. In south-western Ireland, this season's first four **soft-plumaged petrels** *Pterodroma feae/madeira/mollis* were seen on 17 August; on the same day, one was seen in Devon, England. In May, the first two breeding colonies known for **Jouanin's Petrel** *Bulweria fallax* were located on Socotra, Yemen. In August, there were c 20 **Wilson's Storm-petrels** *Oceanites oceanicus* seen off

231 Fea's Petrel / Gon-gon *Pterodroma feae*, between Madeira and Desertas, 6 July 1999 *(Gerben van den Berg)* **232** Wilson's Storm-petrel / Wilsons Stormvogeltje *Oceanites oceanicus*, 51:36:53 N; 05:47:10 W, Wales, 16 August 1999 *(Arfon Williams)* **233-234** Black-browed Albatross / Wenkbrauwalbatros *Diomedea melanophris*, immature, 17 km north-west of Hanstholm, Nordjylland, Denmark, 20 July 1999 *(Flemming Frøstrup)*



the British Isles, including the fourth for Wales photographed off south-west Dyfed on 16 August (a week later, c 5 were seen here). In the Hortobágy, Hungary, 100 pairs of **Pygmy Cormorant** *Microcarbo pygmeus* bred in six colonies during June, representing a significant increase. In July, a **Great White Pelican** *Pelecanus onocrotalus* stayed at Sandillon, Loiret, France. In the Netherlands, **Little Egrets** *Egretta garzetta* bred successfully not only at Braakman, Terneuzen, Zeeland (one pair), and Quackjeswater, Westvoorne, Zuid-Holland (five pairs; first breeding here in 1994 or 1995), but also on Schiermonnikoog, Friesland, possibly constituting the species' northernmost breeding record. Fossil data have shown that, 4000 years ago, **Greater Flamingo** *Phoenicopterus roseus* occurred along the Dutch North Sea coast (Archaeofauna 2: 67-74, 1993).

The first three nesting pairs of **White-tailed Eagle** *Haliaeetus albicilla* for Austria failed to raise young this summer. In Poland, a record 500 breeding pairs were counted. Four re-introduced pairs of **Lammergeier** *Gypaetus barbatus* bred in the Alps during this spring and summer. In Haute Savoie, France, one pair raised one young (in 1997 and 1998, one young fledged here, both still being alive). In Stelvio NP, Bormio, Italy, two pairs bred this spring; however, both were unsuccessful with one young dying five weeks after hatching, probably due to an excess of melting snow running into the nest (in 1998, one young fledged here, still being alive). The fourth pair occupied a Golden Eagle *Aquila chrysaetos* nest in Vanoise NP, France; however, the clutch was destroyed by snowfall. This means that, if the only 1999 young at Haute Savoie survives, there are now four individuals in the Alps which were raised under natural circumstances (ie, not in cages) in the past three years. In 1997-99, there are also six reports of immatures reaching the Netherlands, two each year in 1997-99 (one of the 1997 birds was also seen in northern Germany); in addition, one was seen at Skagen, Nordjylland, Denmark, on 12-15 June (cf *Rare birds of the Netherlands* (1999); Dutch Birding 21: 172, 1999). The two reports this summer in the Netherlands concerned one flying east over De Bol, Texel, Noord-Holland, on 25 July and a third-calendar-year flying past Philipsdam, Zeeland, on 21 August. Unlike the June bird at Skagen, the identity of those two as released birds could not be determined (the identity of the second 1998 Dutch bird also remains unsolved). After the occurrence of a **Eurasian Griffon Vulture** *Gyps fulvus* on 1-3 June in Zeeland, the Netherlands, singles were seen in Germany on 29 June at Bohnenburg, Niedersachsen, and near Halberstadt, Sachsen-Anhalt, on 1 July. The Dutch bird wore a white ring with black inscription *PE* on its left leg (cf Dutch Birding 21: 180, 184, plate 197, 1999). It appeared to have been ringed as chick on 16 April 1998 at Gorges de la Jonte, Cévennes NP, France. The population at Cévennes NP now numbers at least 75 breeding pairs which had 61

235 Baillon's Crake / Kleinst Waterhoen *Porzana pusilla*, Grove Ferry, Kent, England, July 1999
(Rob Wilson)

chicks in 1999; there are also six pairs of **Eurasian Black Vultures** *Aegypius monachus* of which one pair had a chick in 1999. In north-western France, a **Pallid Harrier** *Circus macrouros* summered at Mardrick, Nord, from 25 June to 27 July. The eighth **Long-legged Buzzard** *Buteo rufinus* for Sweden was a pale adult at Strömsund, Jämtland, on 11-12 August. The first breeding of **Golden Eagle** for Denmark at Lille Vildmose, Aalborg, Nordjylland, was successful. In Northern Ireland, a pale-morph **Booted Eagle** *Hieraaetus pennatus* relocated on Rathlin Island, Antrim, on 22 August remained until 24 August. A flock of five **Eleonora's Falcons** *Falco eleonorae* in eastern Rhodope mountains on 10 June was the largest ever recorded for Bulgaria. One was seen at Travaillan, Vaucluse, France, on 18 July. This summer, a pair of **Ospreys** *Pandion haliaetus* bred for the first time in Luxemburg. The second singing **Baillon's Crake** *Porzana pusilla* for Britain in this century remained at Grove Ferry, Kent, England, from 6 June to 20 July . In Sweden, one was calling at Hunna, Huseby, Småland, from 20 June to 12 July. It was the best summer in decades for **Corn Crakes** *Crex crex* in Switzerland, where 50 calling males were counted during June-July, mostly in the Jura mountains. In Poland, a survey resulted in an estimate of 44 000 males in May and 38 000 males in June. This summer, **Common Cranes** *Grus grus* built this species' first nest since at least 1800 for the Netherlands at Fochtelooërveen, Drenthe (however, no eggs were laid). In Ardeola 46: 97-100, 1999, evidence is presented on the last breeding record for Spain of **Demoiselle Crane** *Anthropoides virgo,* in Badajoz in 1923-24.

The first twitchable **Black-winged Pratincole** *Glareola nordmanni* for Denmark since 1987 stayed from 26 June to at least 24 July at Bygholm Vejle, Thisted, Nordjylland. On 17-27 July, 3-6 August, and again from 29 August, an adult summer was present at Cley, Norfolk, England. On 29 August, one was discovered at Linden, Cuijk, Noord-Brabant, the Netherlands. The fourth **Greater Sand Plover** *Charadrius leschenaultii* for Scotland (and the 12th for Britain) was a male photographed at Belhaven, Lothian, on 6-7 June (Birding World 12: 236-237, 1999; Dutch Birding 21: 175, plate 181, 1999). If accepted, a presumed female **Lesser Sand Plover** *C mongolus* at Nieuwpoort and Bredene, West-Vlaanderen, Belgium, on 4-5 August will be the first for the Benelux. However, there is still debate whether the bird could have been an Anatolian Sand Plover *C l columbinus*. On 7 August, it flew past Dunkerque and landed at Hemmes de Marq, Nord, France, where it stayed until at least 10 August. From 29 August, this (or another) Lesser Sand Plover stayed at Baie de Seine, Le Havre, Seine-Maritime, France. From 7 July to 19 August, four **Pacific Golden Plovers** *Pluvialis fulva* were reported in Sweden in Södermanland, Uppland, Östergötland and Gotland. There was also an adult **American Golden Plover** *P dominicus* on Öland on 22 July. During 1-16 August, three Pacific Golden Plovers were reported in Norway in Vestfold, Hordaland and Rogaland. The third-ever Pacific for Spain was at Silla marshes, Valencia, on 26-27 August. An adult **Sociable Lapwing** *Vanellus gregarius* photographed on 5 July at Backamo airstrip, Ljungskile, Bohuslän, was the sixth for Sweden. The fourth **White-tailed Lapwing** *V leucurus* for Italy was seen in May in the north-east. On 11 July, the fourth for Hungary was near Dunatetétlen. The first for Belgium stayed on 14-16 July near Zeebrugge, West-Vlaanderen. In Ireland, an adult **Semipalmated Sandpiper** *Calidris pusilla* was seen at Ballycotton, Cork, on 9-13 July and then at Tacumshin, Wexford, on 21-22 July. On 13-21 August, a juvenile stayed at Belfast Harbour, Down, Northern Ireland. The first **Least Sandpiper** *C minutilla* for Sweden was an adult at Gannarveviken, Gotland, on 8 August. Adult **White-rumped Sandpipers** *C fuscicollis* stayed at Tacumshin, Wexford, Ireland, on 22 July; in Dorset, England, from 26 July; near Clauen, Kreis Peine, Niedersachsen, Germany, on 27-28 July; at Den Oever, Noord-Holland, on 1-8 August (the sixth for the Netherlands); and presumably a juvenile on Røst, Nordland, Norway, on 11 August. The fifth **Sharp-tailed Sandpiper** *C acuminata* for Sweden was an adult summer at Lund, Skåne, on 19-20 August. Also in Sweden, a **Lesser Yellowlegs** *Tringa flavipes* was seen at Visingsö, Småland, on 9 July. An adult stayed near Dundee, Angus, Scotland, from 26 July to 2 August. The fifth for the Netherlands was an adult on 7, 11 and 14 August at Lauwersmeer, Groningen (the same locality as the fourth in July 1998). An adult **Wilson's Phalarope** *Phalaropus tricolor* stayed at Dundalk, Louth, Ireland, on 25-26 July. A small influx of **Red-necked Phalaropes** *P lobatus* occurred from 21 August onwards in the Netherlands, with a maximum of 22 in one day (22 August) and a largest flock of seven. In eastern Poland, a **Parasitic Jaeger** *Stercorarius parasiticus* was reported at Siemianowka on 24 June. A party of 39 was harrying a Sandwich Tern *Sterna sandvicensis* colony at Pomorie, Bulgaria, on 29 July; it also included the second **Long-tailed Jaeger** *S longicaudus* for Bulgaria. At Fanel, on 30 May, **Slender-billed Gull** *Larus genei* was recorded for the eighth time in Switzerland (and for the third consecutive year). On 29 August, for the third consecutive year, an adult **Ring-billed Gull** *L delawarensis* had returned to the area near Goes, Zeeland, the Netherlands. Also in the Netherlands, this year's first five juvenile **Pontic Gulls** *L cachinnans cachinnans* turned up at surprisingly early dates from 16 to 28 July in Groningen, Groningen, and Wijster, Drenthe. The first juvenile for England was at Southwold, Suffolk, on 24 August. A first-summer **Heuglin's Gull** *L heuglini* was photographed on 14-15 June at Stainkoeln dump in Groningen, Groningen. At the Hortobágy, Hungary, an adult **Great Black-backed Gull** *L marinus* was seen on 23 August. One **Royal Tern** *S maxima* was near Cape Clear, Cork, on 17 July and an adult winter was briefly seen at Thorntonloch and Musselburgh, Lothian, on 9 August. On Oléron, France, an adult **Lesser Crested Tern** *S bengalensis* with a hybrid young was found on 8 August. An **Elegant Tern** *S elegans* stayed at Lady's Island Lake, Wexford, Ireland, on 8-19 July (cf Birding World 12: 275-280, 1999). The first **Roseate Tern**

236 Lesser Yellowlegs / Kleine Geelpootruiter *Tringa flavipes*, adult, with Marsh Sandpiper / Poelruiter *T stagnatilis*, adult, and Common Snipe / Watersnip *Gallinago gallinago*, Lauwersmeer, Groningen, Netherlands, 7 August 1999 *(Jan van Holten)* **237** Black-winged Pratincole / Steppevorkstaartplevier *Pratincola nordmanni*, adult summer, Norfolk, England, July 1999 *(Rob Wilson)* **238** Black-headed Wagtail / Balkankwikstaart *Motacilla feldegg*, male, Mayland, Essex, England, June 1999 *(Rob Wilson)* **239** Elegant Tern / Sierlijke Stern *Sterna elegans*, adult, with Sandwich Terns / Grote Sterns *S sandvicensis*, Lady Island's Lake, Wexford, Ireland, July 1999 *(Rob Wilson)*

S dougallii for the Cape Verde Islands concerned a bird in exhausted condition that could be caught by hand on the beach at Santa Maria, Sal, on 14 April 1998; it was released after photographs were taken. In England, a second-calendar-year **Forster's Tern** *S forsteri* remained from 29 May to at least 22 August at Tollesbury Fleet, Kent. The first **Bridled Tern** *S anaethetus* for Sweden was an adult at Söskär, Orust, Bohuslän, from 30 June to 4 July and again on 9-10 July. The second for Denmark was an adult at Langli and Herting Lob, Esbjerg, Vestjylland, from 28 July to 4 August. (A previous report from Sweden was on 30 June near Göteborg; in Germany, one or two singles were seen during 1-4 June in northern Niedersachsen and on Helgoland, Schleswig-Holstein; cf Dutch Birding 21: 176, 1999; Limicola 13: 141, 1999). In Cyprus, a **Tawny Owl** *Strix aluco* was present at Paphos on 11 August. A singing **Hume's Owl** *S butleri* discovered at Sho'ab, western Socotra, on 23 May was c 1000 km south of its known range. If accepted, a **Pacific Swift** *Apus pacificus* at Getterön, Halland, from 13:17 to 13:30 on 6 July will be the first for Sweden; possibly, the same bird was also seen an hour earlier at Breared, Varberg, Halland. The second **Pallid Swift** *A pallidus* was seen at Segerstads fyr, Öland, on 24 July. A **European Roller** *Coracias garrulus* turned up at Furillen, Gotland, on 11 July. In the Netherlands, a **Black Woodpecker** *Dryocopus martius* seen on 21 August on Terschelling, Friesland, must have crossed at least a 17 km stretch of open Wadden Sea from the Frisian mainland (the nearest regular breeding grounds are c 55 km away).

The second breeding record of **Red-rumped Swallow** *Hirundo daurica* for Sicily, Italy, occurred at Vendicari in late July. In England, a male **Black-headed Wagtail** *Motacilla feldegg* occupied a territory at Mayland, Essex, from 24 May to at least 24 June. The first breeding of **Red-spotted Bluethroat** *Luscinia svecica svecica* for the Netherlands concerned a male paired with an unidentified Bluethroat producing a nest with five eggs (three had hatched on 18 July) in a potato field at Zuiderweg, Veendam, Groningen (cf Dutch Birding 21: 177-178, plate 185, 1999). An adult male **Red-flanked Bluetail** *Tarsiger cyanurus* was found at Åtmyrsjön, Västerbotten, Sweden, on 15 July. A **Rufous-tailed Rock Thrush** *Monticola saxatilis* was reported at Eke, Småland, on 12 August (this year, there was also one in Småland on 14 May). **Zitting Cisticolas** *Cisticola juncidis* occurred again in the south-west of the Netherlands, where up to 10 pairs were present in July-August in Zeeuws-Vlaanderen, Zeeland, of which eight at Verdronken Land van Saeftinghe; in addition, a single individual was present in August at Makkumer Noordwaard, Friesland. During July-August, one was also singing at the observation tower of Katinger Watt (near Tönning), Schleswig-Holstein, Germany, probably constituting the northernmost record for Europe. In Finland, three singing **Lanceolated Warblers** *Locustella lanceolata* were found during July. In northern Norway, a **Paddyfield Warbler** *Acrocephalus agricola* stayed from 21 July to 3 August on Hornøya, Vardø, Finnmark. A trapped **Eastern Olivaceous Warbler** *A pallidus elaeicus* stayed at Portland Bill, Dorset, on 4-5 July. The first **Spectacled Warbler** *Sylvia conspicillata* for Belgium was a male singing from mid-June to early August at Maasmechelen, Limburg. It was trapped, photographed and videoed, and seen by c 15 birders. In July, two juveniles were seen as well, but their identity remains unclear. Fossilized remains of **Azure-winged Magpies** *Cyanopica cyanus* from coastal caves in Gibraltar show that this species has been present in Iberia for at least 44 000 years; this finding contradicts the idea that it had been introduced by the first spice traders from China (Birdwatch 86 (August 1999): 24-25). In the Netherlands, the first **House Crow** *Corvus splendens* for Noord-Holland was an adult at Muiden on 24 August. In northern Norway, no less than four single **Rose-coloured Starlings** *Sturnus roseus* were seen between 25 June and 14 August. For the first time since at least 1965, perhaps even since 1954, **Spanish Sparrow** *Passer hispaniolensis* has bred in north-eastern Spain; the nest was found in July near Lleida town. In northern Italy, one bird was reportedly seen at Ravenna on 6 July. If accepted, a **Trumpeter Finch** *Bucanetes githagineus* at Rogazce on 15 June will be the first for Bulgaria. Three male **Black-headed Buntings** *Emberiza melanocephala* were seen at La Verdière, Var, France, on 1 July. On 10-11 July, a male stayed on Farne Islands, Northumberland, England.

240 Lanceolated Warbler / Kleine Sprinkhaanzanger *Locustella lanceolata*, Pielavesi, Finland, 18 July 1999 *(Henry Lehto)*

241 Roseate Tern / Dougalls Stern *Sterna dougallii*, adult, Santa Maria, Sal, Cape Verde Islands, 14 April 1998 *(Clifford M Anderson)*

For a number of reports, publications in Birding World, Birdwatch, British Birds, Limicola, Vår Fågelvärld and Winging It were consulted. News from Britain was kindly supplied by Birdline (0891-700-222 or 0891-700-242) and Rare Bird News (0881-888-111). I wish to thank Luc Bekaert, Rolf Christensen, Tony Clarke (Canarian Nature Tours), Anton Conings, Jo Cooper, Andrea Corso, Eric Dempsey, Gunter De Smet, Jochen Dierschke (Germany), Gerald Driessens, Hugues Dufourny, Marc Duquet, Enno Ebels, Bertrand Eliotout, Peter Fraser (UK), Hans Frey, Steve Gantlett, Jeff Gordon (Cyprus), Marcello Grussu, Morten Günther, Ricard Gutiérrez, Cornelis Hazevoet, Martin Helin, Remco Hofland, Klaus Hubatsch, Erling Jirle (Sweden), Martijn de Jonge, Marnix Jonker, Adrian Jordi, Guy Kirwan, Yann Kolbeinsson, Paul Lehman, André van Loon, Pierre Le Maréchal (France), Anthony McGeehan, Richard Millington, Rudy Offereins, Gerald Oreel, Otto Overdijk, René Pop (Cyprus), Palle Rasmussen, Magnus Robb, Kris de Rouck, Luciano Ruggieri, Jaap Schelvis, Bob Scott, Hadoram Shirihai, Peter Symens (Socotra), Ruud Vlek, Arfon Williams and Ricard Zink for their help in compiling this review.

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Recente meldingen

Dit overzicht van recente meldingen van zeldzame en interessante vogels in Nederland en België beslaat voornamelijk de periode **juni-juli 1999**. De vermelde gevallen zijn merendeels niet geverifieerd en het overzicht is niet volledig. Alle vogelaars die de moeite namen om hun waarnemingen aan ons door te geven worden hartelijk bedankt.

Waarnemers van soorten in Nederland die worden beoordeeld door de Commissie Dwaalgasten Nederlandse Avifauna wordt verzocht hun waarnemingen zo spoedig mogelijk toe te zenden aan: CDNA, Postbus 45, 2080 AA Santpoort-Zuid, Nederland. Hiertoe gelieve men gebruik te maken van CDNA-waarnemingsformulieren die eveneens verkrijgbaar zijn bij bovenstaand adres.

Nederland

EENDEN TOT VALKEN Deze komkommertijdrubriek begint met een groep van maximaal 21 **Casarca's** *Tadorna ferruginea* vanaf 17 juli bij de Steile Bank, Friesland. Ook elders in Nederland verschenen kleine groepjes. Een groep van 17 **Krooneenden** *Netta rufina* zwom in juni in het Harderbroek, Flevoland. Een mannetje **Witoogeend** *Aythya nyroca* verbleef in juli op het Ringselven bij Budel-Dorplein, Noord-Brabant. De **Koningseider** *Somateria spectabilis* van Vlieland, Friesland, werd tot 12 juli gemeld. Er waren dit jaar weer verschillende broedgevallen van **Roodhalsfuut** *Podiceps grisegena*, waaronder ten minste drie te Diependal, Oranje, Drenthe. Eind mei en/of begin juni verbleef een **Dikbekfuut** *Podilymbus podiceps* op de Kampina, Noord-Brabant. Indien aanvaard is dit het derde geval voor Nederland en tevens het derde opeenvolgende jaar dat de soort werd aangetroffen. De karige zeetrek leverde het volgende op: **Grauwe Pijlstormvogels** *Puffinus griseus* op 20 juni langs Scheveningen, Zuid-Holland (één), twee op 28 juni langs Vlieland en drie op 21 juli langs Katwijk aan Zee, Zuid-Holland; **Noordse Pijlstormvogels** *P puffinus* op 9 juni twee en 21 juli vijf langs Scheveningen; en **Vale Pijlstormvogels** *P mauretanicus* werden gezien op 20 juni op Texel, Noord-Holland, op 28 juni op Vlieland en op 29 juli bij Camperduin, Noord-Holland. **Kuifaalscholvers** *Stictocarbo aristotelis* verbleven op 9 juni bij IJmuiden, Noord-Holland, op 18 juni en 4 juli twee bij de Oosterscheldekering, Zeeland, en op 23 juni bij Den Oever, Noord-Holland. Verrassend was de ontdekking (of herontdekking) van een **Dwergaalscholver** *Microcarbo pygmeus* op 12 juni voor de hut De Zeearend in de Oostvaardersplassen, Flevoland. Indien beschouwd als een ander dan die van 23-24 januari in Montfoort, Utrecht, is dit het tweede geval voor Nederland. De **Woudaap** *Ixobrychus minutus* van Uithoorn, Noord-Holland, bleef daar gezien en gehoord worden tot in juli. Ook onder meer bij Budel-Dorplein bleek dit jaar een broedpaar aanwezig. Een adulte **Kwak** *Nycticorax nycticorax* werd tot in juli waargenomen bij Alphen aan den Rijn, Zuid-Holland. Een onvolwassen vogel werd waargenomen op 18 juli bij Uithoorn. Op 29 juli vloog een **Ralreiger** *Ardeola ralloides* over de Deurnsche Peel, Noord-Brabant. Van de influx van **Koereigers** *Bubulcus ibis* bleef weinig over: van 17 tot 20 juni op Texel, van 10 tot 17 juli bij Meers, Limburg, en op 25 juli op het Rammegors, Zeeland. Er werden c 60 **Kleine Zilverreigers** *Egretta garzetta* doorgegeven, waarbij vooral in juli grote concentraties voorkwamen. Zo verbleven er op 24 juli 11 in de Blauwe Kamer, Utrecht, en nog eens twee aan de overkant bij Opheusden, Gelderland, en op 27 juli 29 in Zeeland waarvan alleen al 18 op de Slikken van Bommenede. Op Schiermonnikoog, Friesland, kwam dit jaar een paar tot broeden op de kwelder en bracht drie jongen groot. De soort broedde ook in de Braakman, Zeeland, en in het Quackjeswater, Westvoorne, Zuid-Holland (vijf paren). **Grote Zilverreigers** *Casmerodius albus*

242 Grauwe Kiekendief / Montagu's Harrier *Circus pygargus*, mannetje, Flevoland, mei 1999 *(Chris Schenk)* **243** Koereiger / Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis*, adult, Meers, Limburg, 10 juli 1999 *(Jeroen Gense)* **244** Baardgrasmus / Subalpine Warbler *Sylvia cantillans*, mannetje, Berkheide, Wassenaar, Zuid-Holland, 18 juli 1999 *(René van Rossum)*

245 Kleine Vliegenvanger / Red-breasted Flycatcher *Ficedula parva*, onvolwassen mannetje, Epen, Limburg, juni 1999 *(Karel Lemmens)* **246** Bonapartes Strandloper / White-rumped Sandpiper *Calidris fuscicollis*, adult, Den Oever, Noord-Holland, 5 augustus 1999 *(Jan den Hertog)* **247** Witwangsterns / Whiskered Terns *Chlidonias hybridus* met jong, Soerendonks Goor, Noord-Brabant, 3 juli 1999 *(René van Rossum)* **248** Klein Waterhoen / Little Crake *Porzana parva*, mannetje, Kampina, Noord-Brabant, 14 juni 1999 *(Tobi Koppejan)*

waren er de gehele periode in de Oostvaardersplassen en omgeving (maximaal vier), op 11 juni bij Wageningen, Gelderland, op 18 en 19 juni bij Alphen aan den Rijn, op 27 juni bij Bleskensgraaf, Zuid-Holland, op 4 juli bij Hazerswoude, Zuid-Holland, en op 24 juli bij Gouderak, Zuid-Holland. In totaal werden 19 **Zwarte Ooievaars** *Ciconia nigra* waargenomen, waarvan het merendeel in juli. De grootste groep **Ooievaars** *C ciconia* die gemeld werd omvatte 26 exemplaren en vloog op 29 juli over Kampen, Overijssel. Zomerse **Zwarte Wouwen** *Milvus migrans* werden gezien op 3 juni bij Gulpen, Limburg, op 5 juni in de Marnewaard, Groningen, op 13 juni over de Kampina en op 31 juli langs Huisduinen, Noord-Holland. Tot de eerste dagen van juni werden nog enkele **Rode Wouwen** *M milvus* vastgesteld en vanaf eind juni alweer 10. Ook dit jaar liet de **Lammergier** *Gypaetus barbatus* niet verstek gaan; op 25 juli vloog een onvolwassen exemplaar langs De Bol op Texel. De **Vale Gier** *Gyps fulvus* die op 1-3 juni werd gezien op Noord-Beveland, Zeeland, blijkt als nestjong te zijn geringd op 16 april 1998 in de Cevennen, Frankrijk. De waarneming van een **Slangenarend** *Circaetus gallicus* die op 19 mei werd gemeld bij Goes, Zeeland, is door de waarnemer ingetrokken. Naast enkele paren in de Flevopolders en het Lauwersmeer, Groningen, hebben naar verluidt c 20 paar **Grauwe Kiekendieven** *Circus pygargus* in Noordoost-Groningen gebroed. Vanaf 21 juni werden negen **Visarenden** *Pandion haliaetus* doorgegeven. **Roodpootvalken** *Falco vespertinus* werden nog gemeld op 1 juni op de Strabrechtse Heide, Noord-Brabant, op 3 juni over Terneuzen, Zeeland, op 18 juni in de Kennemerduinen, Noord-Holland, en op 19 juni bij De Koog op Texel. Dit jaar kende een record van ten minste vijf broedgevallen van **Slechtvalk** *F peregrinus* in alle hoeken van het land.

RALLEN TOT ALKEN Goed te horen en mooi waar te nemen was het mannetje **Klein Waterhoen** *Porzana parva* dat van 12 juni tot 8 juli op de Kampina verbleef. Na de waarneming in mei op Terschelling, Friesland, kwam in juni een kleine influx van **Kleinste Waterhoenders** *P pusilla* op gang: roepende exemplaren werden gehoord van 9 tot 13 juni bij Den Nul, Overijssel, van 12 tot 19 juni bij Opheusden, van 16 tot 19 juni bij Vianen, Gelderland, op 24 en 25 juni in de Blauwe Kamer, op 27 juni bij Rijssen, Overijssel, en bij Rijswijk, Gelderland, en tevens werd bekend dat er in juni drie werden gehoord in het Wormer- en Jisperveld, Noord-Holland. Hetgeen in de vorige rubriek werd voorspeld over de **Kraanvogel** *Grus grus* lijkt te zijn uitgekomen. Op het Fochtelooërveen, Drenthe, werd een nest zonder eieren van deze soort gevonden. Ook in de Oostvaardersplassen bleef de gehele periode een tweetal aanwezig. Geslaagde broedgevallen van **Steltkluut** *Himantopus himantopus* werden vastgesteld op en rond het Rammegors, bij Cillaarshoek, Zuid-Holland, en in de Ezumakeeg, Friesland. Eind juli werden zodoende op het Rammegors 40 exemplaren gezien, waaronder enkele juveniele. Bovendien werden er nog 32 op andere locaties opgemerkt. Een **Griel** *Burhinus oedicnemus* vloog op 7 juni langs het Kröller-Müller Museum op de Hoge Veluwe, Gelderland. De aanwezigheid van **Vorkstaartplevieren** *Glareola pratincola* in de zomer is de laatste jaren een terugkerend fenomeen. In deze periode was er één op 15 juni in de Ezumakeeg. Deze plek was ook goed voor een **Witstaartkievit** *Vanellus leucurus* die daar op 7 en 20 juni werd gezien. Vanaf 1 augustus verbleef een **Bonapartes Strandloper** *Calidris fuscicollis* bij Den Oever. De enige melding van **Gestreepte Strandlopers** *C melanotos* betrof die van twee vogels op 1 juni wederom in de Ezumakeeg. Na de waarnemingen in mei verbleven opnieuw **Breedbekstrandlopers** *Limicola falcinellus* bij Den Oever: van 9 tot 16 juli, met van 12 tot 14 juli zelfs twee. Hemelsbreed daar niet ver vandaan werd er op 20 juli één gemeld op het wad bij het Amstelmeer, Noord-Holland. Een **Poelsnip** *Gallinago media* vloog op 31 juli op in Berkheide, Wassenaar, Zuid-Holland. Het is moeilijk voor te stellen dat men in het midden van de jaren 1980 nog een reis ondernam om een **Poelruiter** *Tringa stagnatilis* te twitchen gezien de volgende waslijst: in de Lauwersmeer op 5 juni en 24 juli aan de Groningse kant en vanaf 19 juni één à twee aan de Friese kant, in het Rammegors en omgeving vanaf 26 juni maximaal vier, twee op 30 juni én op 30 en 31 juli bij de Starrevaart bij Leidschendam, Zuid-Holland, op 11 juli bij Zierikzee, Zeeland, van 14 tot 18 juli bij de Wevers Inlaag, Zeeland, op 23 en 29 juli bij de Eemshaven, Groningen, op 25 juli bij het Oostvoornse Meer, Zuid-Holland, en bij De Bol op Texel en op 28 juli langsvliegend bij Camperduin. **Grauwe Franjepoten** *Phalaropus lobatus* werden opgemerkt op 5 juni bij de Workumerwaard, Friesland, van 2 tot 6 juli op een bloembollenveld bij 't Zand, Noord-Holland, en op 16 juli in de Ezumakeeg. Een **Kleine Jager** *Stercorarius parasiticus* werd op 11 juli aangetroffen op de Kraaijenbergse Plassen bij Linden, Cuijk, Noord-Brabant. Een **Grote Jager** *S skua* vloog op 17 juli langs Camperduin. Op de vuilnisbelt nabij Groningen, Groningen, werd op 14 en 15 juni een waarschijnlijke eerste-zomer **Heuglins Meeuw** *Larus heuglini* gefotografeerd. Op 15 en 16 juni werd aldaar ook een onvolwassen **Baltische Mantelmeeuw** *L fuscus* gemeld. Zowel **Geelpootmeeuwen** *L michahellis* als ook **Pontische Meeuwen** *L cachinnans cachinnans* werden in kleine aantallen gemeld, voornamelijk in juli en met de Geelpootmeeuw licht in de meerderheid. Vanaf half juli werden in Noord-Nederland voor het eerst ook juveniele Pontische Meeuwen gezien. Na meldingen op 5 juni van drie langsvliegende bij Huisduinen en op 22 juni één bij Twisk, Noord-Holland, werd vanaf 4 juli een langzaam oplopend aantal **Lachsterns** *Gelochelidon nilotica* waargenomen op de bloembollenvelden bij 't Zand, met als maximum 29 (20 adulte en negen juveniele) op 31 juli. Daarnaast waren er meldingen op 9 juli in Groningen, op 26 juli twee bij het Balgzand, Noord-Holland, en op 29 juli twee in het Jaap Deensgat in de Lauwersmeer. **Reuzensterns** *Sterna caspia* werden gezien op 11 en 16 juli bij Den Oever, op 13 juli in de Ezumakeeg, op 16 juli één en op 31 juli drie in de Workumerwaard, op 25 juli bij de Steile Bank en op 29 juli in het Jaap Deensgat. Het broedgeval van de **Witwangsterns** *Chlidonias hybridus* in het Soerendonks Goor, Noord-Brabant, leverde één of twee jongen op die het helaas maar kort lijken te hebben uitgehouden. Waarschijnlijk hebben zij als snack voor een snoek gediend. Verder waren er waarnemingen op 1 juni in de Ezumakeeg, op 5 juni in de Eempolder bij Eemnes, Utrecht, en op 7 juni op de Strabrechtse Heide. Vanaf 4 juli werden maximaal zes **Witvleugelsterns** *C leucopterus* gezien bij Den Oever. Een juveniele werd op 19 juli opgemerkt bij Lelystad, Flevoland. Een **Papegaaiduiker** *Fratercula arctica* vloog op 18 juni langs Texel.

UILEN TOT GORZEN Ondanks geruchten blijft het vooralsnog onzeker of er een tweede broedgeval (twee jongen) van **Oehoe** *Bubo bubo* in Zuid-Limburg heeft plaatsgevonden. Ook deze zomer was er weer een waarneming van een **Alpengierzwaluw** *Apus melba*, en wel op 5 juni langs de Lek bij Honswijk, Utrecht. Er waren meldingen van roepende **Hoppen** *Upupa epops* op 2 juni op het Planken Wambuis, Gelderland, en op 13 juni bij het Soerendonks Goor. De **Noordse Nachtegaal** *Luscinia luscinia* van de Ooypolder, Gelderland, werd van 15 mei tot ten minste 5 juni gehoord. Naast een kortstondig aanwezige **Roodsterblauwborst** *L svecica svecica* op 1 juni bij Spijk, Groningen, verbleef een zingend mannetje vanaf 22 juni bij Veendam, Groningen, hetgeen resulteerde in een geslaagd broedgeval op die plek. De subspecifieke identiteit van de moeder is vooralsnog onbekend. **Beflijsters** *Turdus torquatus* werden nog gezien op 6 juni bij Katwijk aan Zee en op 12 juni in de AW-duinen, Noord-Holland. Vanaf 2 juli werden ten minste drie territoria van **Graszanger** *Cisticola juncidis* vastgesteld in de omgeving van Paal aan de rand van het Verdronken Land van Saeftinghe, Zeeland. Een **Krekelzanger** *Locustella flu-*

viatilis zong van 4 tot 6 juli in ontoegankelijk terrein nabij Den Nul. Van 15 juni tot 8 juli verbleef een **Orpheusspotvogel** *Hippolais polyglotta* in het IJzeren Bos bij Susteren, Limburg; enkele kleed- en zangkenmerken zouden echter mogelijk wijzen op een hybride oorsprong. Opmerkelijk is de vangst van een mannetje **Baardgrasmus** *Sylvia cantillans* op 18 juli in Berkheide, Wassenaar. Een onvolwassen **Kleine Vliegenvanger** *Ficedula parva* zong van 9 tot 13 juni in het Onderste Bos bij Epen, Limburg. Leuk voor de escape-twitchers is het feit dat er al vier jaar een kleine broedpopulatie diksnavelmezen *Paradoxornis* aanwezig is in de Moeselpeel bij Weert, Limburg; mogelijk gaat het om **Grijskeeldiksnavelmees** *P alphonsianus*. Een mannetje **IJsgors** *Calcarius lapponicus* werd gemeld, zingend en wel, op 12 en 16 juni bij Lopik, Utrecht. De **Ortolaan** *Emberiza hortulana* was nog maar recent als broedvogel in Nederland uitgestorven verklaard, of de eerste hoopvolle berichten kwamen weer los. Buiten een zangwaarneming half juni bij Wehl, Gelderland, waren drie paren aanwezig in Zuidoost-Groningen, tussen Ter Apel en Sellingen, en nog een vierde paar hier net over de grens in Duitsland.

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EENDEN TOT VALKEN De ontsnapte, gekleurringde **Witoogeend** *Aythya nyroca* bleef nog tot ten minste 11 juli bij Dendermonde, Oost-Vlaanderen. Het mannetje **Rosse Stekelstaart** *Oxyura jamaicensis* bleef trouw aan Blokkersdijk, Antwerpen, tot zeker 31 juli. Zowel in juni als in juli werden drie **Roodhalsfuten** *Podiceps grisegena* opgemerkt. Een mannetje **Woudaap** *Ixobrychus minutus* riep van 10 tot 13 juni op De Putten te Melsen, Oost-Vlaanderen. Uiteraard waren er ook de nodige broedgevallen: 1999 was een goed jaar, met als grootste concentratie c 12 territoria te Harchies, Hainaut. Een adulte en een onvolwassen **Kwak** *Nycticorax nycticorax* werden gedurende de gehele periode regelmatig gezien bij Willebroek, Antwerpen, op 14 juni verbleef er één te Lokeren, Oost-Vlaanderen, en op 22 juni één bij Destelbergen, Oost-Vlaanderen. Op 21 juli betrof het waarnemingen van één te Kruibeke, Oost-Vlaanderen, en twee bij Aalter, Oost-Vlaanderen. Op 27 juli vloog er één over Merksem, Antwerpen, en op 28 juli werd er één opgemerkt bij Viersel, Antwerpen. In Het Zwin te Knokke, West-Vlaanderen, kwamen weer twee paren **Koereigers** *Bubulcus ibis* tot broeden; vermoedelijk twee van deze vogels verbleven op 12 juni in de Achterhaven van Zeebrugge en één liep op 25 juli bij Damme, West-Vlaanderen. **Kleine Zilverreigers** *Egretta garzetta* werden gezien te Bredene, West-Vlaanderen (18 juli); te Damme (maximaal twee op 18 juni); te Doel, Oost-Vlaanderen (maximaal twee op 12 juli); te Gent, Oost-Vlaanderen (25 juli); te Harelbeke-De Gavers, West-Vlaanderen (drie op 19 juni); te Kallo-Melsele, Oost-Vlaanderen (vier op 1 juni); in Het Zwin te Knokke (vijf broedparen); te Mechelen, Antwerpen (vanaf 7 juli); te Oostkerke, West-Vlaanderen (4 juli); bij Ramskapelle, West-Vlaanderen (8 tot 20 juni); te Schulen, Limburg (22 juni); te Willebroek (4 en 31 juli); in de Uitkerkse Polders, West-Vlaanderen (maximaal zes op 31 juli); en te Zeebrugge-Achterhaven (maximaal 15 op 15 juli). Op 14 juni trok bovendien een groepje van zeven over Blokkersdijk. Op 24 juli trokken twee **Grote Zilverreigers** *Casmerodius albus* over het Kluizendok te Gent. In Vlaanderen werden **Zwarte Ooievaars** *Ciconia nigra* waargenomen te Kruishoutem, Oost-Vlaanderen, op 6 juni; te Paal-Beringen, Limburg, op 11 juni; en te Gooreind-Wuustwezel, Antwerpen, op 13 juni; bij Mechelen pleisterde een onvolwassen exemplaar op 9 en 10 juli dat later op 10 juli over Sint-Agatha-Rode, Vlaams-Brabant, vloog; over Blokkersdijk vlogen er drie op 18 en één op 20 juli; over Kruibeke op 21 juli; over Brecht, Antwerpen, op 29 juli; en over

249 Kleinst Waterhoen / Baillon's Crake *Porzana pusilla*, adult, Brecht, Antwerpen, juli 1999 *(Jef de Ridder)*

250 Witstaartkievit / White-tailed Lapwing *Vanellus leucurus*, adult, Zeebrugge, West-Vlaanderen, 15 juli 1999 *(Filip De Ruwe)*

251 Slangenarend / Short-toed Eagle *Circaetus gallicus*, Ben-Ahin, Liège, 2 juli 1999 *(Johan Buckens)*

Harelbeke op 30 juli. Op acht waarnemingsplaatsen werden in totaal 25 **Ooievaars** *C ciconia* geteld, met als maximum zes over Dessel-Retie, Antwerpen, op 26 juli. Er waren waarnemingen van **Rode Wouwen** *Milvus milvus* te Brecht (1 juni); te Bredene (30 juli); te Kuringen-Hasselt, Limburg (31 juli); te Muizen, Antwerpen (29 juli); en in de Uitkerkse Polders (31 juli). Op 23 juni vloog een (of de) **Slangenarend** *Circaetus gallicus* over het Schietveld te Brecht, op 30 juni verbleef hij op het Klein Schietveld te Brasschaat, Antwerpen, en op 9 en 10 juli verscheen hij weer kortstondig te Brecht. Verrassend genoeg was in de Steengroeve te Ben-Ahin, Liège, van 6 juni tot 11 juli een zeer bleek exemplaar aanwezig dat vaak zeer goed (en ook in zit) te zien was. Nog een andere pleisterde vermoedelijk reeds vanaf mei te Helchteren-Meeuwen, Limburg, en was daar in elk geval op 11 juli nog present. Op 17 juni werd te Rulles, Luxembourg, een laag overvliegende, lichte **Dwergarend** *Hieraaetus pennatus* waargenomen. Telkens één **Visarend** *Pandion haliaetus* werd gemeld te Belzele, Evergem, Oost-Vlaanderen, op 5 juni; te Willebroek op 10 juni en 27 juli; over de Kalkense Meersen, Oost-Vlaanderen, op 15 juni; en te Neerpelt, Limburg, op 10 juli. Eerste-zomer mannetjes **Roodpootvalk** *Falco vespertinus* vlogen op 1 juni over de Kalmthoutse Heide, Antwerpen, op 26 juni over Bredene, en op 10 juli over Hensies, Hainaut.

RALLEN TOT SPECHTEN Op 30 juli werd een **Porseleinhoen** *Porzana porzana* waargenomen bij Tienen, Vlaams-Brabant, en de volgende dag één te Lier. Een vermoedelijk **Klein Waterhoen** *P parva* pleisterde op 27 juni te Boorsem, Limburg. Op 15 juni liep een **Kleinst Waterhoen** *P pusilla* over de weg van het Schietveld te Brecht. Nachtelijke bezoeken leverden op 19 juni minimaal drie roepende mannetjes op. De eerste vogel werd vrijwel dagelijks op zijn vaste foerageerronde waargenomen. Op 3 juli werden voedselvluchten vastgesteld en op 5 juli werden vier van de zes pulli geringd. Het kroost kon nog twee weken lang bekeken worden. Geruchten van acht roepende vogels in de provincie Limburg bleken bij navraag serieus genomen te worden. Tussen 3 en 24 juni riepen maximaal twee **Kwartelkoningen** *Crex crex* in de Achterhaven van Zeebrugge. Van 6 tot 22 juni vertoefden hier maximaal twee **Steltkluten** *Himpantopus himantopus* en op 8 en 9 juni kwamen er daar twee bij. Op 6 juni trokken er twee over De Gavers te Harelbeke en op 16 juni pleisterden er twee op de Kalmthoutse Heide. Van 5 tot 25 juli waren er twee aanwezig op het Kluizendok bij Gent. Vanaf 17 juli pleisterde een groep van vier te Fontenoy, Hainaut, op 26 juli groeide het aantal eventjes aan tot zeven. Vanaf 26 juli liep een juveniele te Escanaffles, Hainaut. Terwijl België nog steeds wacht op zijn eerste echt twitchbare Steppekievit *Vanellus gregarius*, kon onverwacht de eerste **Witstaartkievit** *V leucurus* worden bekeken in de Achterhaven van Zeebrugge. Deze adulte vogel werd ontdekt op 14 juli en de volgende dag na uitgebreid zoeken teruggevonden. Op 16 juli vertrok hij 's avonds hoog in noordoostelijke richting. Vanaf 12 juli werden de eerste **Temmincks Strandlopers** *Calidris temminckii* voor het najaar opgemerkt. Een **IJslandse Grutto** *Limosa limosa islandica* werd gezien te Bredene van 12 tot 14 juli. Op 10 juli vlogen twee **Poelruiters** *Tringa stagnatilis* langs het Schietveld te Brecht. Verspreid over de periode werden 11 **Geelpootmeeuwen** *Larus michahellis* opgemerkt. Opvallend was de toename van zomerwaarnemingen van **Pontische Meeuwen** *L cachinnans cachinnans*: er waren waarnemingen te Gent-Kluizendok op 3 juli; te Gullegem, West-Vlaanderen, op 26 juni; te Bornem-Wintam, Antwerpen, op 24 juli; en twee in de Voorhaven van Zeebrugge op 21 juli. Op 18 juli verbleef kortstondig een adult-zomer **Lachstern** *Gelochelidon nilotica* in Het Zwin te Knokke. Een van de twee **Dougalls Sterns** *Sterna dougallii*, die reeds in mei werden waargenomen, bleek op 3 en 4 juli nog steeds aanwezig te zijn

in de Voorhaven van Zeebrugge. De gekleurringde hybride **Dougalls Stern x Visdief** *S dougallii x hirundo* die in 1995 te Zeebrugge broedde (cf Dutch Birding 19: 60-64, 1997) was dit jaar opnieuw gepaard met een Visdief *S hirundo*. De vogel bebroedde één ei maar het broedsucces is niet bekend. Op de Bergelenput te Gullegem joeg op 17 juni een **Witvleugelstern** *Chlidonias leucopterus*. Bij Orcq, Hainaut, werd op 10 juni een **Vale Gierzwaluw** *Apus pallidus* gedetermineerd, foeragerend in een groep van c 100 Gierzwaluwen *A apus*. Op 13 juni werd er één geclaimd boven Brussel-Schaarbeek. Een **Alpengierzwaluw** *A melba* vloog in de avond van 4 juni boven het Provinciaal Domein te Huizingen, Vlaams-Brabant.

PIEPERS TOT GORZEN Een **Duinpieper** *Anthus campestris* werd op 18 juli gemeld in de Achterhaven van Zeebrugge. Van 16 tot 19 juni was een zingend mannetje **Aziatische Roodborsttapuit** *Saxicola maura* aanwezig te Pommeroeul, Hainaut. Een zingende **Graszanger** *Cisticola juncidis* verbleef van 8 tot 24 juni te Kuringen-Hasselt en op 16 juni was kortstondig een exemplaar aanwezig bij de Oostdam te Heist, West-Vlaanderen. De soort bleef het goed doen en er doken nog meer zingende vogels op in Het Zwin te Knokke op 18 en 19 juli en bij de Kleiputten te Heist op 23 en 24 juli. De **Krekelzanger** *Locustella fluviatilis* van Zoerle-Parwijs, Antwerpen, bezette van 6-26 juni opnieuw zijn zangpost van het vorige jaar. Vanaf 21 juni lieten zingende **Snorren** *L luscinioides* zich horen in de Kleiputten te Heist; zij zouden op 6 juli een maximum van zes bereikt hebben. Elders waren er de typische verspreide waarnemingen. Bij Korbeek-Lo, Vlaams-Brabant, werd op 25 juli een eerstejaars grijs-en-witte **Kleine Karekiet** *Acrocephalus scirpaceus* geringd, waarvan men het aanvankelijk mogelijk achtte dat het om een Kaspische Karekiet *A fuscus* ging. **Orpheusspotvogels** *Hippolais polyglotta* zongen van 3 tot 13 juni bij Ronse, Oost-Vlaanderen, op 22 juni te Willebringen-Boutersem, Vlaams-Brabant, en op 9 juli te Knokke. Een zingend mannetje **Brilgrasmus** *Sylvia conspicillata* was vanaf half juni tot ten minste begin augustus aanwezig te Maasmechelen, Limburg. Op het einde van zijn verblijf werd de vogel gezien in het gezelschap van een vrouwtje Grasmus *S communis* en twee juveniele. Een mannetje **Roodmus** *Carpodacus erythrinus* zong op 11 juni in de Zwinbosjes te Knokke; naar verluidt werden er daar op 3 juni reeds twee gehoord.

Deze waarnemingslijst kwam tot stand met medewerking van Yves Baptiste (Harelbeke), Luc Bekaert (Oost-Vlaanderen), Peter Collaerts (Vlaams-Brabant), Frank De Scheemaeker (Mergus), Hugues Dufourny (Hainaut), Koen Leysen (Limburg), Dirk Symens (Vlavico), Willy Verschueren (Groenlink) en Didier Vieuxtemps (Luxembourg). Ook de hulp van al diegenen die (hun) waarnemingen inspraken op de Wielewaal-vogellijn (03-4880194) was hier onontbeerlijk.

Gerald Driessens, Pastoriestraat 16, 2500 Lier, België

DB Actueel

Determinatie eerste Mongoolse Plevier voor Benelux zo goed als rond Op 4 augustus 1999 zag Nicolas Selosse in de IJzermonding te Nieuwpoort, West-Vlaanderen, België, gedurende slechts vier seconden een plevier *Charadrius* met oranje borstband overvliegen. De bijzonder korte waarneming en de onmogelijkheid de soort te bepalen deden NS besluiten om de waarneming vooralsnog niet bekend te maken.

Kort voor de middag van 5 augustus zag Johan Buckens in het bijzijn van Bram en Miel Ferdinande een plevier met oranje borstband, zittend op de opgespoten terreinen van Bredene, West-Vlaanderen. Onmiddellijk plaatsten ze de waarneming op de semafoon onder de code van Woestijnplevier *C leschenaultii*. Tijdens het piepen was de vogel schijnbaar reeds verdwenen en werd daar de volgende uren, ondanks intensief zoeken, niet teruggevonden. Doordat de waarneming van Nieuwpoort intussen bekend was geraakt, besloot Ken Lossy de IJzermonding (hemelsbreed 19 km van Bredene) te controleren. Met succes, want hij vond de plevier omstreeks 15:00 foeragerend tussen Bontbekplevieren *C hiaticula* op de oevers van de IJzer. JB, BFen MF bevestigden dat het om de vogel van Bredene ging. De vóór 18:30 toegesnelde waarnemers konden de vogel op iets groter dan gewenste afstand bekijken. Velen van hen hadden gereageerd op twijfelcodes betreffende de determinatie én op de eerste zekere code van Mongoolse Plevier *C mongolus*. Het ging wel degelijk om een kleine plevier (iets groter dan Bontbekplevier) met een zeer kort 'klompig' snaveltje en een houding die doorgaans als rechtop bestempeld kon worden. Over de pootprojectie werd weinig gezegd omdat dit uitermate moeilijk was vast te stellen. Nadat de plevier met enkele Bontbekken boven de IJzer richting binnenland was gevlogen, werd nog hevig gedebatteerd over de determinatie. Voor velen bleek het knelpunt de grootte te zijn. Sommigen vonden hem minstens 10% groter dan Bontbekplevier. Als men onder grootte in de eerste plaats lichaamslengte verstaat, dan kwam de vogel echter weinig groter over dan Bontbekplevier. In lichaamsvolume viel het grootteverschil meer op, bovendien opgeblazen door het

blekere verenkleed en de hogere poten dan verwacht voor Mongoolse Plevier. Het opmeten van de videobeelden van Vincent Legrand diezelfde avond bevestigde de Mongoolse Plevier-structuur van de vogel. Zo bedroeg de snavellengte amper 0.7 keer de afstand van de teugelpunt tot de achterrand van het oog en de snavelvorm kwam goed overeen met Mongoolse Plevier (onder meer culmen met vrij abrupte neerwaartse knik nabij snavelpunt).

Christophe Gruwier slaagde erin om de vogel op 7 augustus langsvliegend te onderscheppen op de pier van Dunkerque, Nord, Frankrijk (30 km van Nieuwpoort). Sterker nog, enkele uren nadien wist Guy Flohart de vogel opnieuw te lokaliseren tussen enkele 100en Bontbekplevieren op het strand van Hemmes de Marck, bij Calais, Pas-de-Calais, Frankrijk (26 km van Dunkerque). Vermoedelijk door de afstand en/of belichting bestempelden zij de vogel als een adult mannetje Woestijnplevier, en 'dus' een ander dan dat van België. Zondag beseften enkele Brusselse vogelaars ter plaatse echter dat belichting hier parten had gespeeld; het was wel degelijk de Belgische vogel en ook nu leek het volgens hen om een Mongoolse Plevier te gaan. Een menigte Belgische twitchers reed met gezwinde spoed naar Marck en de vogel werd langdurig op c 50 m met perfect licht bekeken en gefotografeerd; ook de roep werd opgenomen voor verder onderzoek. Op deze locatie bleef de vogel tot 10 augustus aanwezig.

Ondanks de vele publicaties is het opvallend hoe weinig in de literatuur bekend is over deze materie, zeker als het niet om adult-zomer mannetjes gaat. Behalve structuur zijn er geen keiharde kenmerken bekend en vooral de teksten over vleugelstreep en staartpatroon zijn tegenstrijdig. Beide soorten hebben blijkbaar de tendens om een bepaald kenmerk te vertonen maar het grote probleem in de literatuur is dat men alle ondersoorten op een hoopje heeft gegooid en geen verband heeft gelegd tussen de structuurverschillen, verenkleedkenmerken en roepjes binnen bepaalde taxa/populaties. Zo zou het bijvoorbeeld zeer interessant zijn om te weten of de grotere ondersoorten van Mongoolse Plevier een grotere pootprojectie hebben dan de kleinere, en of de kleinere Woestijnplevieren dat in mindere mate vertonen dan de grotere...

Nader onderzoek moet uitwijzen of de Belgisch-Franse vogel inderdaad een Mongoolse Plevier is (en daarmee het eerste geval voor de Benelux betekent) of dat het toch om een Anatolische Woestijnplevier *C l columbinus*, de kleinste en 'fijnste' ondersoort van Woestijnplevier, kan gaan. GERALD DRIESSENS

252 Waarschijnlijke Mongoolse Plevier / probable Lesser Sand Plover *Charadrius mongolus*, Hemmes de Marck, Pas-de-Calais, Frankrijk, 8 augustus 1999 *(Marnix Vandegehuchte)*

SUMMARY A probable Lesser Sand Plover *Charadrius mongolus* was seen at Nieuwpoort, West-Vlaanderen, Belgium, on 4-5 August and at Dunkerque, Nord, and Hemmes de Marck, Pas-de-Calais, France, on 7-10 August 1999. The separation from Anatolian Sand Plover *C leschenaultii columbinus* is complicated. If accepted, this would be the first record for the Benelux.

Heuglins Meeuw in Groningen: nieuw voor Nederland? Op maandag 14 juni 1999 maakte Theo Bakker een van zijn regelmatige bezoeken aan de vuilstortplaats Stainkoeln in Groningen, Groningen. Omstreeks 13:30 ontdekte hij een eerste-zomer mantelmeeuw die opviel door een van de aanwezige Kleine Mantelmeeuwen *Larus graellsii* afwijkend postuur, de lichte kop- en onderdelen en afwijkend ruipatroon. Met name het afwijkende ruipatroon (binnenste zes handpennen nieuw en buitenste vier oud, geen actieve arm-, hand- of staartpenrui) deed vermoeden dat het om een mogelijke Heuglins Meeuw *L heuglini* ging. Omdat de vogel aanvankelijk slechts een enkele maal kort vliegend werd gezien en het in het veld erg lastig is om het ruipatroon precies te beoordelen werd getracht de vogel zo goed mogelijk in vlucht te fotograferen. De volgende ochtend om 11:00 was de vogel opnieuw aanwezig en werden dezelfde kenmerken vastgesteld als de dag ervoor. Nadat bovendien in de middag het ruipatroon goed op de zojuist ontwikkelde dia's bleek te staan en de inmiddels opgetrommelde Rik Winters enthousiast reageerde, werd het nieuws verspreid en vanaf 17:00 stroomden enkele 10-tallen vogelaars toe, hoofdzakelijk uit de omgeving. De vogel liet zich het merendeel van de tijd goed bekijken vanaf het fietspad of vanaf een pad aan de achterkant van de (niet vrij toegankelijke) vuilstort. Om 21:15 vloog de vogel in noordoostelijke richting weg naar een (onbekende) slaapplaats. Tegen die tijd was hij door c 50 vogelaars gezien, waaronder een beperkt aantal enthousiastelingen van buiten de noordelijke provincies en slechts één vogelaar uit de top 10. De volgende dag werd hij ondanks zoekpogingen niet meer teruggevonden.

De Heuglins Meeuw viel op door de witte kop en onderdelen, de licht gelige snavel met donkere subterminale band en iets lichtere punt, licht gelige poten (zelfde kleur als snavelbasis) en lichte, crèmekleurige ondervleugel. Al deze kenmerken en de tekening van de bovendelen passen goed op eerste-zomer Heuglins Meeuw, maar met alleen deze kenmerken is het moei-

253-254 Heuglins Meeuw / Heuglin's Gull *Larus heuglini*, eerste-zomer, Groningen, Groningen, 15 juni 1999 *(Theo Bakker/Cursorius)*

lijk om eerste-zomer Kleine Mantelmeeuw of Geelpootmeeuw *L michahellis* met zekerheid uitsluiten. Het hardste kenmerk was het ruipatroon: allemaal nieuwe armpennen, zes nieuwe binnenste en vier oude buitenste handpennen en een geheel uit tweede-generatie pennen bestaande staart. De vogel vertoonde bovendien geen actieve rui aan de arm-, hand- of staartpennen. Deze (zogenaamd versnelde) rui past, voor zover bekend, rond half juni alleen op Baltische Mantelmeeuw *L fuscus* of Heuglins Meeuw. Voor Baltische Mantelmeeuw was de vogel onder meer veel te licht op de bovendelen.

Het grootste probleem bij de determinatie van deze recent afgesplitste soort is dat er nog nauwelijks goede determinatieteksten zijn gepubliceerd en dat voor herkenning grotendeels moet worden vertrouwd op informatie van meeuwenmeetings, lezingen en veldervaring. De beoordeling door de CDNA zal daarom nog wel wat tijd en aandacht vergen; indien aanvaard betekent deze waarneming het eerste geval voor Nederland. Sinds enige jaren is er een stijgende aandacht voor de herkenning van dit taxon en is er een toenemend aantal meldingen in Nederland, waarvan de waarneming in Groningen de best gedocumenteerde tot nu toe is. De reacties uit Finland, waar veel ervaring met Heuglins Meeuw is opgedaan, zijn in ieder geval zeer positief. Van een uitgebreid determinatieartikel door Visa Rauste is onlangs het eerste deel gepubliceerd (Limicola 13: 105-128, 1999), dat naast algemene kenmerken ingaat op adult en juveniel kleed; de tussenliggende kleden (zoals van de Groningse vogel) komen in het tweede deel aan bod dat dit najaar gepubliceerd wordt. Volgend jaar wordt een artikel van Lars Jonsson over Heuglins Meeuw in Dutch Birding verwacht. THEO BAKKER

SUMMARY A first-summer Heuglin's Gull *Larus heuglini* was well observed and photographed at Groningen, Groningen, the Netherlands, on 14-15 June 1999. If accepted, this will be the first record for the Netherlands.

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Steltstrandloper / Stilt Sandpiper *Micropalama himantopus*, Cambridge Bay, Victoria Island, North-west Territories, Canada, juli 1997 *(Chris Schenk)*

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