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# Dutch Birding



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Afrikaanse Woestijngrasmus / African Desert Warbler *Sylvia deserti*, Polder Gnephhoek, Alphen aan den Rijn, Zuid-Holland, 29 november 2014 (*Julian Bosch*)

Out of Africa! Als er één fenomeen is dat het vogelen en twitchen in Nederland in de afgelopen vijf jaar extra kleur heeft gegeven dan is het de opkomst van dwaalgasten uit Noord-Afrika. Dat zeldzaamheden uit Afrika in Europa konden belanden was wel bekend maar daarbij ging de blik van vogelaars meestal niet voorbij de noordkusten van de Middellandse Zee. Verder noordelijk in West-Europa dacht men niet zo aan mogelijke dwaalgasten uit Noord-Afrika, hoewel er wel een paar voorbeelden waren (denk aan Renvogel *Cursorius cursor*, Witkruintapuit *Oenanthe leucopyga* en Woestijnvink *Bucanetes githagineus*). De meeste landvogels die in Noord-Afrika broeden staan bekend als standvogel en de Middellandse Zee vormt een serieuze barrière voor zwervers. Recente waarnemingen van Afrikaanse zangvogels in bijvoorbeeld Iberisch Schiereiland, Italië en Malta en incidentele uitschieters verder noordelijk veranderden daar weinig aan. Dat dwaalgasten zich (gelukkig) niet altijd aan onze inzichten houden toonde deze Afrikaanse Woestijngrasmus, één van de minst verwachte en minst voorspelde nieuwe soorten voor Nederland, die in november-december 2014 in de weilanden (!) bij Alphen aan den Rijn verbleef. Minstens zo onvoorspeld en onverwacht was het mannetje Seebohms Tapuit *O seebohmi* dat een paar jaar later, op 22 mei 2017, bij Den Haag, Zuid-Holland, opdook. Vogelaars doen er dus verstandig aan om voortaan soorten als Rosse Woestijnleeuwerik *Ammomanes cinctura*, Diadeemroodstaart *Phoenicurus moussieri* en Atlasgrasmus *S deserticola* op hun netvlies te hebben als ze het veld in gaan...

Out of Africa! If one phenomenon has added colour to birding and twitching in the Netherlands in the past five years, it is the rise of vagrants from North Africa. It was known that African rarities may turn up in Europe but the birders' perspective usually did not stretch beyond the northern border of the Mediterranean. Further north, not much attention was given to possible vagrants from North Africa, despite a few known examples (eg. Cream-colored Courser *Cursorius cursor*, White-crowned Wheatear *Oenanthe leucopyga* and Trumpeter Finch *Bucanetes githagineus*). Most North African breeding species are considered to be non-migrating while the Mediterranean Sea is a serious barrier for wanderers. Recent observations of African songbirds in, for example, the Iberian peninsula, Italy and Malta, and occasional overshoots further north hardly changed that idea. That vagrants (fortunately) don't always follow our fixed ideas was illustrated by this African Desert Warbler, one of the least expected and least predicted new species for the Netherlands, that stayed in agricultural meadows (!) near Alphen aan den Rijn in November-December 2014. The male Seebohms Wheatear *O seebohmi* a few years later, on 22 May 2017, near Den Haag, Zuid-Holland, was equally unexpected and unpredicted. Modern-day birders are therefore advised to put species such as Bar-tailed Lark *Ammomanes cinctura*, Moussier's Redstart *Phoenicurus moussieri* and Tristram's Warbler *S deserticola* on their radar when going out into the field...

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# Lincoln's Sparrows, Prairie Warbler, Yellow-throated Warbler and Eastern Wood Pewees on Corvo, Azores, in 2010-16

David Monticelli, Peter Alfrey, Josh Jones, Graeme Joynt, Eric Didner, Hugues Dufourny, Vincent Legrand & Pierre-André Crochet

Situated in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean, nearly halfway between Portugal and Newfoundland, Canada, the tiny island of Corvo, together with neighbouring Flores, Azores, constitutes the westernmost piece of land in Europe. It is therefore no surprise that since 2005, when Peter Alfrey discovered the potential of the island as a rarity hunting ground, the island has acquired a reputation as the best location for Nearctic vagrants in the Western Palearctic (WP) (Alfrey 2005, 2006, Alfrey et al 2010, Monticelli et al 2015). Up to 2017 (13 years), 64 species of Nearctic landbirds have been recorded on Corvo (Monticelli et al 2015, Alfrey et al 2018), of which five had not been previously recorded anywhere else in the WP. While the first five-year period (2005-09) produced only one new WP species, White-eyed Vireo *Vireo griseus* (three records; Alfrey et al 2012), no fewer than four new additions were made over the following six-year period (2010-15). This paper documents the occurrence of the latter four species. All records reported here have been approved by the Portuguese rarities committee (Comité Português de Raridades (CPR); Muchaxo et al 2011; Pedro Ramalho pers comm).

## Lincoln's Sparrow

*Middle Fields, 12-13 October 2010: first WP record*  
Encouraged by the fact that 2009 had produced many rarities from late September onwards, plenty of birders had already reached Corvo by the end of the first week of October 2010 and, in the wake of hurricane 'Otto', several stragglers had already been discovered. At Middle Fields, situated above Vila do Corvo, a Scarlet Tanager *Piranga olivacea*, a Bobolink *Dolichonyx oryzivorus* and two Baltimore Orioles *Icterus galbula* had been found. In the late afternoon of 12 October, Hugues Dufourny was birding Middle Fields when he came across a small American sparrow in over-

grown vegetation. The bird was initially flushed from the ground at a short distance. Within minutes of the initial discovery, a handful of nearby birders alerted by HD relocated the bird and obtained decent, albeit brief, views. Still without decent photographs, the sparrow was tentatively identified as Song Sparrow *Melospiza melodia* (a potential first for the Azores), with news being released on SMS and walkie-talkie. A large group of 20+ birders soon relocated the bird. Now, better views were obtained as it was feeding in fallow fields covered with tall herbs and fennels. It was photographed and a sharp *chip* call was heard when it raised its crest being alarmed.

However, not every birder was convinced about the identification. Back in the guesthouse and armed with good quality photographs, a look at Sibley (2000) revealed a few features not fitting Song Sparrow. Lincoln's Sparrow *M lincolni* seemed a much better match based on the very small and sharp bill, subtle plumage differences compared with Song (including grey stripes on head), the call and typical habit of raising its crest when alarmed. PA contacted Peter Pyle and David Sibley and sent them the photographs. Shortly after dinner that night, DS commented: 'A Lincoln's Sparrow without question! Congratulations. Among many other things the crisp fine streaks, relatively uniform and pale appearance, pale eyering, and so on rule out Song, Savannah [*Passerculus sandwichensis*] and Swamp Sparrow [*M georgiana*], which would be the three main contenders'. The bird was still present the next day, giving prolonged views and photographic opportunities.

*Power Station, 17-18 October, and Middle Fields, 31 October 2012: second WP record*

With 26 American landbird species reported in autumn (from late September to early November), 2012 remained the most productive year so far (Jones & Legrand 2013). Among the plethora of

rarities during that 'big year', Lincoln's Sparrow was again one of the highlights. With almost constant westerlies during the first two weeks of October, the Corvo birders had already been largely rewarded by mid-month with several 'mega' discoveries, including Wood Thrush *Hylocichla mustelina* (9-17 October) and Golden-winged Warbler *Vermivora chrysoptera* (12-13 October), when, on 17 October, everyone gathered to look for Corvo's first American Robin *Turdus migratorius* at High Fields. The robin had been showing well for a few hours when Eric Didner and David Monticelli decided to slowly make their way down to the village. Shortly after reaching the main concrete road, they abruptly stopped when they glanced a compact passerine hopping close to ground level along the edge of a cornfield, and quickly disappearing out of view. Many birders nearby were alerted immediately. At first, only a handful of them managed to get very brief views in poor light, as the bird seemed to move further down into the fields. Opinions on its identification varied, although Josh Jones pointed out that he suspected it to be a Lincoln's. After a few hours, the bird eventually offered the first decent views close to the site where it had been discovered and photographs were soon obtained, confirming its identity as Lincoln's. Further attempts to relocate it near the power station were only successful on 18 October but not thereafter, despite intensive searching. On 31 October, however, Richard Bonser and Arthur Geilvoet discovered a Lincoln's in the fields close to the village, several 100 m away. Initially suspected to be a different individual, careful examination of the photographs suggested that it was the same bird and the CPR accepted this sighting as probably relating to the same individual (Pedro Ramalho pers comm; contra Haas 2017).

*Middle Fields, 31 October 2016: fourth WP record*  
With only 12 Nearctic species, 2016 features as one of Corvo's least productive years on record. Only the autumns of 2006 and 2007 had lower numbers, with nine and seven species, respectively (cf Monticelli et al 2015). Despite intense coverage by visiting birders, 'Nearctic activity' was low during an autumn predominated by easterly winds. The main highlights came in October in the form of a Canada Warbler *Cardellina canadensis* on 4 October, followed by a female Northern Flicker *Colaptes auratus* on 19 October. On 31 October, DM had decided to stay around the village to concentrate on the gardens and fallow fields. At c 10:00, while scanning the large flocks of House

Sparrows *Passer domesticus*, he noticed a smaller, sparrow-like bird sitting towards the top of a fig tree c 25 m ahead of him. It was chased off by a Eurasian Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla* but the sighting, albeit brief, had been clear enough to conclude that he had just seen an American sparrow – most likely a Song Sparrow or Lincoln's Sparrow. Without any photographs obtained, DM was tempted to try and relocate the bird alone. However, with so few discoveries on Corvo that autumn and due to the potential importance of the 'tick' for all 10 birders still present, he opted for an immediate release of news. After more than an hour of unsuccessful searching, DM opted for a more thorough search of all nearby fields with the help of playback. Within 30 minutes, a small sparrow popped out of the overgrown vegetation, obviously triggered by the playback. It stayed on view for a protracted period, allowing DM to confirm that he had indeed found a Lincoln's. This individual lingered in and around the same field for most of the afternoon – often feeding on wild fennel seeds – and, despite proving elusive at times, was subsequently observed by all birders but one present on the island. Attempts to relocate it the next morning were unsuccessful.

#### *Identification, ageing and sexing*

Although the identification of Lincoln's Sparrow may be rather straightforward for North American birders, it initially proved to be a challenging task in the WP context. In fact, it is mainly thanks to the combination of high-quality photographs obtained in 2010 (plate 384; cf Dutch Birding 32: 421, plate 595, 2010), together with some behavioural traits noted (including the alarm call) that other closely related sparrow species could be ruled out (cf Byers et al 1995, Sibley 2000). Noticeable features were the overall greyish-brown plumage colour with chestnut wing-coverts and rusty edges on wing and tail, broad buffy chest-band with fine, black streaking continuing down the flank, contrasting with a whitish belly, and the peculiar head pattern with a grey supercilium contrasting with a rusty cheek-patch. The small and fine bill was also obvious in the field. This combination of features is unique among North American sparrows, differing for instance from the congeneric Song Sparrow that typically shows coarser brownish streaking on the breast and flanks and a heavier bill. Close examination of the head pattern on the photographs revealed more features: buffy submoustachial stripe (white in Song) with black malar stripe (brown in Song), the typically broad grey supercilium and crown pattern showing a narrow grey



**384** Lincoln's Sparrow / Lincolns Gors *Melospiza lincolni*, Middle Fields, Corvo, Azores, 12 October 2010  
(David Monticelli)

**385** Lincoln's Sparrow / Lincolns Gors *Melospiza lincolni*, Middle Fields, Corvo, Azores, 31 October 2012  
(Richard Bonser)





**386** Lincoln's Sparrow / Lincolns Gors *Melospiza lincolnii*, Middle Fields, Corvo, Azores, 31 October 2016  
(Stanisław Czyż)

median stripe bordered with a large brown lateral stripe. The 2010 individual was also heard, calling a soft *chip* (not recorded) when alarmed, which did not match calls of Song. Most plumage features reported above for the 2010 Lincoln's were also apparent on the photographs of the other two in 2012 and 2016 (plate 385-386; cf Dutch Birding 34: 415, plate 586, 2012, 38: 457, plate 696, 2016).

According to Pyle (1997), ageing in autumn is tricky and based on the shape of the primary coverts and rectrices. None of the Corvo birds were photographed well enough to assess these characters, so it is safer not to age them. The 2010 bird showed an overall buffer-toned plumage with broader flank streaking compared with some adults observed in Newfoundland in summer (Bruce Mactavish pers comm). While these features would fit a first calendar-year, lack of examination of other important plumage features in the hand precludes reaching a definite conclusion on the bird's age.

Three subspecies of Lincoln's Sparrows are generally recognized: *M l lincolnii* (northern transcontinental birds), *M l gracilis* (Alaska, USA) and *M l alticola* ('Mountain Lincoln's Sparrow' ranging from Rocky mountains to mountains in California

and Oregon, USA; Ammon 1995). However, some authors treat *lincolnii* and *alticola* as synonyms due to their morphological similarity. These subspecies are all very similar which makes the identification of the three Corvo individuals to subspecies level challenging, if not impossible. No sexual dimorphism is reported in this species (Pyle 1997).

#### *Distribution and vagrancy*

Lincoln's Sparrow has a wide boreal distribution in North America, ranging from Alaska to Newfoundland, Canada. In autumn, it migrates southward to winter in the southernmost USA states (from southern California to Florida) and in Central America (eg, Mexico, Nicaragua, Guatemala; Ammon 1995). No vagrancy pattern outside its normal distribution range has been described so far. Therefore, it is worth noting that the four Lincoln's Sparrows in the WP over the last six years (apart from the three in the Azores there was one in Iceland from 7 December 2013 to 19 April 2014, the latter still under evaluation by the Icelandic rarities committee; Yann Kolbeinsson pers comm; cf Dutch Birding 36: 52, plate 61, 2014) may constitute a new pattern for this species, ie, a propensity to vagrancy during autumn migration.

As further evidence for this, the birds on Corvo were found on 12, 17 and 31 October, clearly matching the migration period in North America. For instance, a 32-year (1970-2001) mist-netting scheme in coastal Massachusetts (north-eastern USA) reported passage dates in autumn (breeders from Labrador/Newfoundland and New England) from 3 September to 29 October (mean 1 October; Lloyd-Evans & Atwood 2004).

### Prairie Warbler

*Lighthouse Valley, 20-23 October 2012: first WP record*

The autumn of 2012 had been one of the best so far in term of quality, with Wood Thrush, Golden-winged Warbler, Magnolia Warbler *Setophaga magnolia* and Dickcissel *Spiza americana* already seen by everyone on the island. Many birders left Corvo on 19 October so when ED and Pierre-André Crochet headed the following morning to the famous Lighthouse Valley, the northernmost wooded ribeira on the eastern side of Corvo, they had the whole area for themselves. Upon arrival after the short walk from the taxi drop point, they split up with ED walking down the southern side of the valley towards the large *Juniperus* patch while

PAC continued to check a minor gully with some cover a few 100 m north. That spot is far enough from the Lighthouse Valley to make radio contact between the two areas impossible, so only after PAC had started walking back to the Lighthouse Valley he heard his radio cracking. ED had found two American warblers in the *Juniperus* bushes but was still unsure of their identification, so PAC hastily made his way towards ED. Upon arrival, PAC had a look at the images on the back of ED's camera: one of them was an American Yellow Warbler *S. aestiva* but the other one was a bird he had not seen before and, quite clearly, which had never been seen on Corvo. Although unable to put a name on the bird, it was clearly a tick for everyone on the island. With that spectacular news, all the birders quickly converged. DM, Vincent Legrand and Darryl Spittle were the first to arrive and quickly identified it as a Prairie Warbler *S. discolor* from the photographs on ED's camera: not only a first for Corvo but a first for the WP! Fortunately, it was not very mobile and extremely showy; it was feeding most of the time on the outside of the *Juniperus* bushes and very soon everyone had good views of the bird and of the accompanying American Yellow. While searching, Holger Lauruschkus even found a Myrtle Warbler *S. coro-*

**387** Prairie Warbler / Prairiezanger *Setophaga discolor*, first-year male, Lighthouse Valley, Corvo, Azores, 21 October 2012 (Vincent Legrand)





388 Prairie Warbler / Prairiezanger *Setophaga discolor*, first-year male, Lighthouse Valley, Corvo, Azores, 23 October 2012 (Eric Didner)

*nata*, making it the first time three American warblers were seen together on Corvo. The Prairie remained in the area until 23 October. It was always seen in or around the open *Juniperus* bushes and did not use the denser wood in the adjacent valley, in line with its ecology in America where it is described as a bird of shrubby habitats (Nolan et al 2014).

#### Identification, ageing and sexing

As the accompanying photographs show (plate 387-388; cf Dutch Birding 34: 413, plate 581, 2012), identification is straightforward (cf Curson et al 1994, Sibley 2000). No other species of American warbler shows the combination of uniform yellow-green upperparts and wing with broad yellow wing-bar, yellow underparts with brown streaks on flank, grey cheeks and typical elongated dark spot in the malar area. The long tail was frequently held slightly cocked and regularly flicked, showing its extensively white undertail and outer rectrices. The broad and distinct flank-streaks and well-marked malar spot indicated a male while the dull and abraded primary coverts, grey auricular and reduced amount of chestnut on the back indicated a first calendar-year (cf Pyle 1997).

#### Distribution and vagrancy

With an eastern North American breeding distribution and wholly migratory strategy, the nominate subspecies of Prairie Warbler was an expected addition to the WP list, although its breeding range lies further south than many other species seen more regularly in Europe. It breeds in the eastern seaboard of the USA, east of the Great Lakes and in the Mississippi basin, but its range barely enters Canada at its northernmost extension. It winters in the Caribbean islands and adjacent coastal areas, so is not a very long-distance migrant, another factor that could explain its rarity in the WP. There is also a sedentary subspecies in the mangroves of Florida, *S d paludicola*, but its vagrancy potential must be close to zero. The species is declining throughout most of its range at an estimated rate of 2% per year (BirdLife International 2017).

#### Yellow-throated Warbler

*Poço d'Água, 16-17 October 2013: first WP record*  
Josh Jones' third annual visit to 'The Rock' (colloquial name of Corvo) had proven another mixed affair. Although there had been plenty of great birds to enjoy, and with the end of JJ's trip just a couple of days away, he craved for a find of true



**389** Yellow-throated Warbler / Geelkeelzanger *Setophaga dominica*, first-year, Poço d'Agua, Corvo, Azores, 17 October 2013 (*David Monticelli*)

**390** Yellow-throated Warbler / Geelkeelzanger *Setophaga dominica*, first-year, Poço d'Agua, Corvo, Azores, 17 October 2013 (*Vincent Legrand*)



quality for himself. It was not for the lack of trying – up to then he had been putting in many hours for little more than a Red-eyed Vireo *V olivaceus*. After a couple of days of inclement weather, 16 October dawned sunny and calm – exactly the combination which rarity finders long for on Corvo. The upper parts of Poço d'Água are characterised by open *Juniperus*, brambles and low laurel bushes – and, looking so similar to the famous *Juniperus* copse in the Lighthouse Valley, it seemed perfect to host a mega one day. JJ worked his way to the bottom of this fancied patch but just a couple of Eurasian Blackcaps were to show for the effort. Somewhat disappointed, he turned to the final juniper bush and caught his first glimpse of 'it'. With a naked-eye view of a flying bird, he knew straight away it was not a blackcap. It dived into cover but his suspicions that it was an American warbler were quickly confirmed, as through binoculars he registered two white wing-bars on a heavily obscured bird. The striking manner in which it was creeping around the branches instantly reminded him of Black-and-white Warbler *Mniotilta varia* but, through the foliage, the upperparts seemed a more uniform greyish, so he assumed it might be a skulking Myrtle Warbler. Then, the warbler suddenly popped its head out from behind the foliage to reveal an utterly shocking black, white and yellow head pattern, which JJ instantly recognised as Yellow-throated Warbler *S dominica*.

JJ's camera was several metres away in his bag, so he fumbled for his radio and started hysterically repeating 'Yellow-throated Warbler' in the hope that someone might be nearby. 'Can you repeat the species?' came a reply. 'Yellow-throated Warbler, upper Poço d'Água, get here NOW!', JJ shrieked back. In these adrenaline-filled few seconds, the bird had disappeared and JJ was left claiming a WP first without any sort of proof. People started searching and thankfully Michael Fricke found it 100 m back up the valley some 45 min after the initial observation. It was seen well by almost everyone before disappearing for the rest of the day and at last JJ was able to relax and soak up the moment. The few unfortunate enough to have missed it on the first day were relieved when it was still present the following morning, though this also proved to be its final showing. It really gave itself up on the second day, showing to within just a few metres of the assembled 'crowd' (no more than five).

#### *Identification, ageing and sexing*

An absolute show-stopper, the bird was easily identified by its unique appearance (plate 389-

390; cf Dutch Birding 35: 402, plate 509, 2013; cf Curson et al 1994, Sibley 2000). The population from Bahamas, previously considered a subspecies of *S dominica*, has been recently accorded species status (Bahama Warbler *S flavescens*; McKay & Hall 2012). The latter has a yellow wash extending all the way from throat to vent with little or no white on the belly, which markedly differs from the Corvo individual, and the bill is decidedly longer in Bahama. The Corvo bird was aged as a first-winter due to a distinct brown wash to the flank and remiges but was not sexed conclusively. In contrast with many Nearctic warblers, Yellow-throated has little sexual dimorphism.

#### *Distribution and vagrancy*

Yellow-throated Warbler is one of the more southerly breeding warblers in North America, being restricted to the south-east of the USA. Some birds, in Alabama and Florida, are resident, although most are short-distance migrants, wintering south to Nicaragua and the Caribbean. A smooth clinal variation in characters is observed throughout its breeding range, with western birds (*S d albiflora*) predominantly showing a clean white lore while eastern birds (*S d dominica*) show variable yellow in the lore (McKay & Hall 2012). With its yellow lores, the Corvo bird clearly best matched *dominica*, which is the most likely form to occur as a vagrant in the WP. Given its relatively short-distance movements and fairly restricted range in the USA, Yellow-throated was one of the warblers considered less likely to occur on Corvo and this record gives hope that several other species with a similar range (eg, Worm-eating Warbler *Helminthos vermivorum* and Swainson's Warbler *Limnothlypis swainsonii*), may also be seen in the future.

#### **Eastern Wood Pewee**

*Lighthouse Valley, 18-24 October 2015: first WP record*

The autumn of 2015 will be remembered by all who were on Corvo as the year of 'the Big Fall'. The season had been very quiet and 17 October seemed to start no different, with very light westerlies and an extremely low mist leaving just the village clear, with periods of light rain. However, that day produced the biggest fall of American landbirds on Corvo since 2005, with no fewer than 20 individuals of 10 species found, including Philadelphia Vireo *V philadelphicus*, Ovenbird *Seiurus aurocapilla* and Blue-winged Warbler *V cyanoptera*. Most remarkably, all birds were seen around the village and the airport, in the lower fields.





**391** Eastern Wood Pewee / Oostelijke Bospiewie *Contopus virens*, first-year, Lighthouse Valley, Corvo, Azores, 20 October 2015 (Vincent Legrand). First bird.

The following day, a small team of Corvo regulars (PAC, René-Marie Lafontaine, VL and DS) headed to the Lighthouse Valley first thing in the morning with great expectations, as this valley has one of the best records in terms of extreme rarities on the island. After checking both sides of the bottom of the valley, they started to walk their way back up along the stream through the small *Pittosporum* wood. DS had just moved 20 m ahead when PAC noticed a movement in the dense undergrowth of *Hydrangea* on the other side of the stream. He raised his binoculars and was delighted to see a Northern Parula *S americana* feeding silently in the midst of the dense bushes. The next 30 sec were spent (in vain) trying to grab a record shot, while making calls on the radio, and soon the other three arrived on the spot. PAC was sent out of the valley to get radio and telephone signal and spread the news about the parula, the first one for a few years and a tick for many on the island. PAC did not get far, however: just as he was emerging from the wood, a bird flycatching on the top of a lone tree immediately stopped him in his tracks. He raised his binoculars to see a bird he knew immediately he had never seen before: a flycatcher-type bird, vaguely reminiscent of a Spotted Flycatcher *Muscicapa striata* but with a long tail and prominent wing bars. Panic set in! Another frantic radio call to tell the others about 'an American flycatcher', another quick look at the bird to note uniform underparts with dark chest-sides, and that was it. With a short flight, the bird had dropped into the dense vegetation of the stream side and

had disappeared, just as the anxious face of DS emerged from the wood...

The next few hours were every birder's worst nightmare... Confident at first that a bird that was flycatching from the top of a tree would soon reappear, the four birders in the valley waited for the bird to come back. They then started to spread out and explore further away. After an hour or so, it was decided that PAC would finally get to a point with radio signal and put the news out. The brief views were enough for him to be confident that it was not a European species and neither one of the *Empidonax* flycatchers that had made it to Europe before. So news was sent of the parula and 'an American flycatcher, not Least, not Acadian, not Alder'. Birders on the island made their way quickly to the valley but it was now more than two hours since the bird had vanished. By this time, PAC had paged through Sibley (2000) and identified his bird: the long tail, obvious wing-bar, grey coloration and dark breast-side could only belong to a pewee *Contopus*, a first for the WP! On his 10th autumn on the island, PAC had finally found a first for the WP but it had disappeared without documentation and a firm identification; all he could do was share his thoughts on the identity with the gathered crowd and hope that it could be re-found.

After an hour waiting in the area of the original sighting, Graeme Joynt decided to wander further afield. He descended the slope that follows the side of the stream down towards the coastal cliffs and took up a position with a good view across the



**392** Eastern Wood Pewee / Oostelijke Bospewie *Contopus virens*, first-year, Poço d'Água, Corvo, Azores, 23 October 2015 (David Monticelli). Second bird.

valley. At this point, GJ knew only that PAC had seen 'an American flycatcher' and assumed that he was looking for an *Empidonax*, so when he heard a clear *pee-a-wee* call from the dense vegetation, he realised immediately that the bird was actually an Eastern Wood Pewee *C. virens*, a species he was familiar with from many trips to North America. A quick blast of the tape and out came three birds: a Eurasian Blackcap, then a Common Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs* and finally, incredibly, an Eastern Wood Pewee! The bird sat in the top of a small dead tree, giving excellent views and allowing the identification to be confirmed. GJ quickly got on the radio and said 'I've got the bird further down the valley and it's an Eastern Wood Pewee'. Panic ensued and birders started to run down the slope eventually flushing the bird, which promptly disappeared again before anyone else had seen it! Another anxious hour passed but GJ again managed to relocate the bird, now back at PAC's original spot. This time it stayed put and gave excellent views to all birders present. Lots of excellent photographs were taken and sound-recordings obtained, nailing the identification beyond doubt and making PAC in particular a very happy man. This bird was last seen on 24 October.

*Poço d'Água, 20-23 October 2015: second WP record*

Climbing up and down the valleys and the walls of Corvo had taken its toll on PA over the years and left him with an injured knee, which means twitching birds in the Lighthouse Valley is always a chal-

lenge. However, the Eastern Wood Pewee, a first for the WP, was a must-see so he set off with DS on the morning of 20 October to twitch the bird and just hoped he would not need to be air lifted out. João, the taxi man, dropped them off right at the end of the Lighthouse Road and agreed to pick them up at 12:00, so they had the morning to get the bird and get back for a lift back to the village. They successfully saw the Lighthouse Valley bird and also heard and recorded the diagnostic call. With the bird in the bag they set off back to the rendezvous point. Unfortunately, João was nowhere to be seen so PA and DS had to start making the journey back to the village on foot. When they approached the Poço d'Água bridge, PA stopped complaining about João and his knee for long enough to look up and see a bird sitting on top of a dead branch. PA immediately said to DS 'It's the pewee, it's followed us here, I could have seen this from the taxi!'. They let out the news that the pewee was at Poço d'Água but then received a message that other birders had just seen the bird at Lighthouse Valley. They continued to watch the Poço d'Água bird and DS also sound recorded it giving the diagnostic high-pitched long, drawn-out call. Then João appeared and they got their lift back to the village. There, they compared photographs of the Poço d'Água bird with the Lighthouse Valley bird and viewed the times recorded on the cameras, proving that there were two separate birds! The next day, both birds were simultaneously seen again at their respective locations and, on close inspection, there were subtle plumage

differences too (plate 391-392). This bird was last seen on 23 October.

#### Identification, ageing and sexing

This medium-sized Nearctic flycatcher is greyish-olive brown above and pale below with slightly darker wash on breast and breast-side, dark brown wing-coverts and tail, and two pale whitish wing-bars on greater and median wing-coverts. It is distinguished from *Empidonax* flycatchers by, eg, its larger size and slightly longer and more pointed wing. Separation from the closely related Western Wood Pewee *C sordidulus* from western North America and Tropical Pewee *C cinereus* of Central and South America is more complicated (McCarty 1996). Formerly considered conspecific with Western Wood, the two species can only be reliably told apart by their distinctive song and calls (McCarty 1996). Tropical has a pale lore and also a very distinct song. Fortunately, the Corvo individuals were quite vocal, frequently calling a clear *pee-a-wee* or a rapid, shrill *peeeee*, thereby unequivocally revealing their identity as Eastern Wood, later confirmed during the examination of sonagrams (Magnus Robb pers comm; figure 1-2).

According to McCarty (1996) and Pyle (1997), juvenile and first-winter Eastern Wood Pewee display duller brown plumage with broader pale brown edging to the wing-coverts than adults. Hence, despite some apparent differences in plumage details between the two Corvo individuals (plate 391-392; cf Dutch Birding 37: 403, plate 620, 417, plate 649, 2015), both were aged as first calendar-year on the basis of the very broad pale tips to the median and especially greater wing-coverts. Ageing the first bird as a first calendar-year was straightforward based on the set of juvenile-retained characters: the overall duller plumage tone than in adult plumage, broad pale-brown edging to the wing-coverts and pointed rectrices

(plate 391). Ageing the second bird proved more complicated but the worn and broad pale tips to the greater, median and lesser wing-coverts still suggested a first calendar-year. However, the overall paler appearance of this bird with pale grey throat, belly and flanks, and yellowish tinge on the vent, which are 'pro-adult' features, may indicate that it had already undergone a more complete post-juvenile moult than the first bird (plate 392). Males and females are alike, hence sexing was not possible.

#### Distribution and vagrancy

Eastern Wood Pewee breeds in central and eastern North America from Saskatchewan eastwards to Nova Scotia, Canada, in the north and from Texas, USA, to north Florida in the south, while the overwintering range comprises parts of Central and South America. The two Eastern Wood Pewees found in 2015 were the sole Nearctic flycatchers discovered in the Azores in 12 years of intensive autumn coverage. This fits with the notion that Nearctic flycatchers are extremely rare vagrants outside their normal range, with only five other species (Eastern Phoebe *Sayornis phoebe*, Acadian Flycatcher *E virescens* (two WP records), Alder Flycatcher *E alnorum* (four), Least Flycatcher *E minimus* (one) and Eastern Kingbird *Tyrannus tyrannus* (three)) having found their way onto the WP list (Haas 2012, 2017).

#### Acknowledgements

The authors thank the many keen birders who by visiting Corvo since 2006 have made it possible to accumulate such an impressive amount of exciting records. Special thanks are due to the Rita family for welcoming us each year at Comodoro Guest House, where many of us now feel 'at home'. As the number of visiting birders increased

FIGURE 1 Eastern Wood Pewee / Oostelijke Bospiewie *Contopus virens*, Lighthouse Valley, Corvo, Azores, 20 October 2015 (Darryl Spittle). Call of first bird.

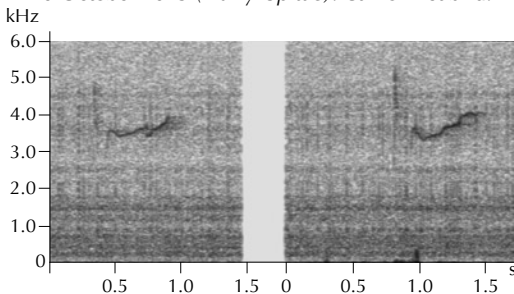
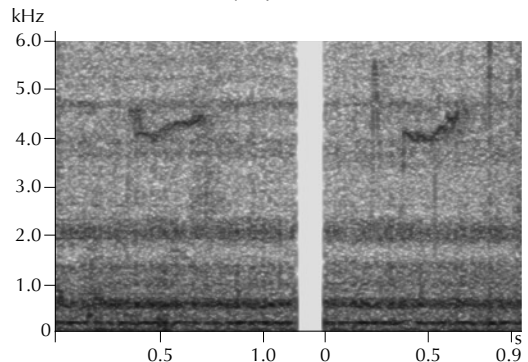


FIGURE 2 Eastern Wood Pewee / Oostelijke Bospiewie *Contopus virens*, Poço d'Agua, Corvo, Azores, 20 October 2015 (Darryl Spittle). Call of second bird.



since 2006, we are indebted to Câmara Municipal do Corvo for support with logistic organization and to the local inhabitants for their tolerance and open mindset regarding birding activities annually taking place on their island during the autumn season. We also thank Pedro Ramalho from the Comité Português de Raridades for sharing with us record status information, yet to be published by the CPR.

## Samenvatting

LINCOLNS GORZEN, PRAIRIEZANGER, GEELKEELZANGER EN OOSTELIJKE BOSPIEWIES OP CORVO, AZOREN, IN 2010-16 Dit artikel beschrijft de gevallen van vier Nearctische zangvogelsoorten op Corvo, Azoren, in 2010-16 die na aanvaarding door de Portugese zeldzaamhedencommissie als nieuwe soorten aan de lijst van West-Palearctische (WP) vogels zijn toegevoegd. Lincolns Gorzen *Melospiza lincolni* werden vastgesteld op 12-13 oktober 2010, 17-18 en 31 oktober 2012 en 31 oktober 2016; een Prairiezanger *Setophaga discolor* op 20-23 oktober 2012; een Geelkeelzanger *S. dominica* op 16-17 oktober 2013; en twee Oostelijke Bospiewies *Contopus virens* in oktober 2015. De determinatie in het veld van de twee Amerikaanse zangers was eenvoudig door hun onmiskenbare verenkleed, maar de herkenning van de Lincolns Gors in 2010 was aanvankelijk onderwerp van discussie; zorgvuldige bestudering van het beschikbare fotomateriaal was nodig om gelijkende Amerikaanse gorzen uit te sluiten. De herkenning in het veld van de Oostelijke Bospiewie, die in verenkleed sterk lijkt op Westelijke Bospiewie *C. sordidulus*, was alleen mogelijk nadat de roep was gehoord en na zorgvuldige bestudering van sonogrammen. Tot de zomer van 2018 is van deze vier nieuwe WP-soorten alleen Lincolns Gors elders nog in de WP vastgesteld: IJsland, 7 december 2013 tot 19 april 2014.

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# Nearctic vagrants on Corvo, Azores, in 2005-17

Peter Alfrey, David Monticelli, Vincent Legrand & Corvo Birders

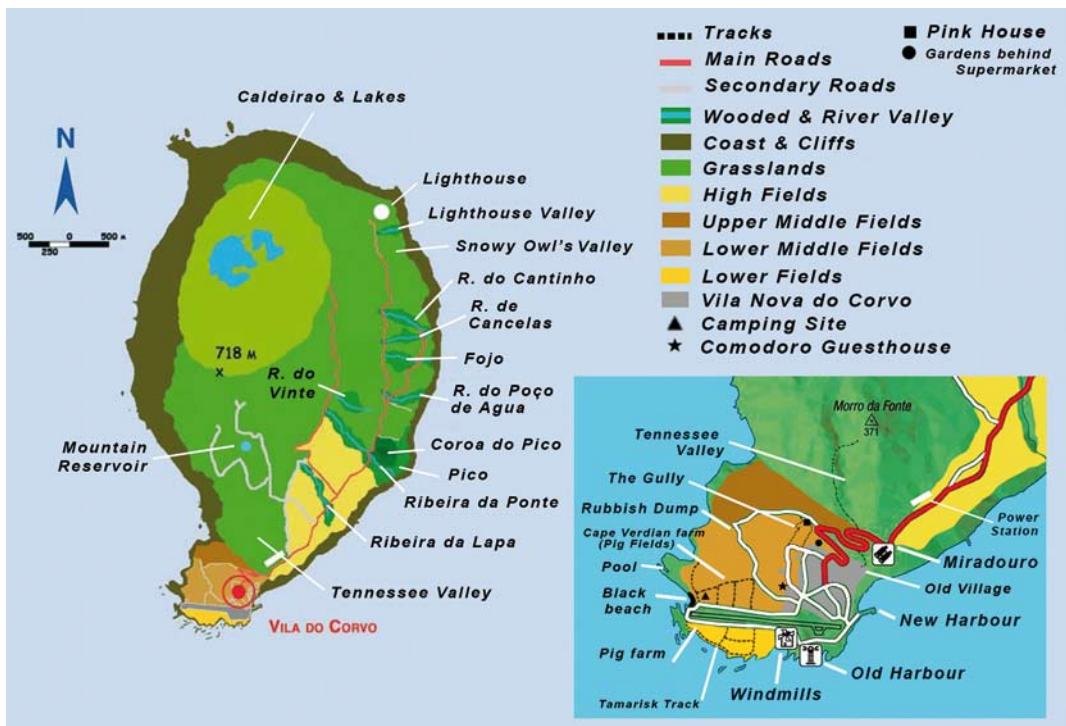
The best hot spot in the Western Palearctic (WP) for Nearctic vagrants is without doubt Corvo, Azores (figure 1). Every autumn, many European birders keep an eye on this small island in the Atlantic, waiting for news about new discoveries (cf Alfrey 2005, 2006ab, 2008ab, Alfrey et al 2010, Jones & Legrand 2013, Monticelli et al 2015, 2018). For an introduction to the island, its avifauna, birding locations and logistics, and analyses of its vagrants in 2005-09, see a previous paper in Dutch Birding (Alfrey et al 2010; cf figure 1). In this paper, we limit ourselves mainly to Nearctic vagrants recorded in 2010-17, and we make comparisons with earlier years (cf Monticelli et al 2015).

## Vagrancy patterns

### Species richness and composition

In 2005-17, 105 Nearctic species have been recorded on Corvo, of which 64 concerned landbirds (appendix 1, figure 2). The number of vagrants (both waterbirds and landbirds) found each autumn varied quite a lot from year to year (figure 3). The most productive year was 2017, with 155 individuals of 48 species. Other good years, particularly for landbirds, were 2012 and 2015, and poor years were 2014 and 2016. Productive years for landbirds were also productive for waterbirds, although 2007 proved to be an exception with an above-average showing of waterbirds in a poor

FIGURE 1 Birding site locations on Corvo, Azores (© Vincent Legrand & Daniele Occhiato)



*Nearctic vagrants on Corvo, Azores, in 2005-17*



FIGURE 2 Cumulative number of Nearctic landbird species on Corvo, Azores, in 2005-17

landbird year. Interestingly, since 2010 there have been more landbird than waterbird species each year, which contrasts with the 2005-09 period when more waterbird than landbird species were tallied in some years (eg, in 2006-07; figure 3). The annual proportion of waterbirds and landbirds

varied; for instance, 2015 was indeed a good year for vagrant landbirds but it was also one of the least productive years for waterbirds, whereas 2012 and 2017 were good for both (figure 3). In fact, in 2012, phenomenal numbers of waders were found (appendix 1); below, we look at some of the factors which may be attributed to this.

After 13 years of getting data for Corvo, interesting vagrancy patterns start to emerge. For instance, it becomes clear that some vagrant landbird species are encountered with some regularity. The only one that has been recorded in every autumn since 2005 is Red-eyed Vireo *Vireo olivaceus*. Common Yellowthroat *Geothlypis trichas* turned up in all but one year. After these two, the most frequently recorded species were, eg, Yellow-billed Cuckoo *Coccyzus americanus*, Philadelphia Vireo *V philadelphicus*, American Cliff Swallow *Petrochelidon pyrrhonota*, Grey-cheeked Thrush *Catharus minimus*, American Buff-bellied Pipit *Anthus rubescens rubescens*, Scarlet Tanager *Piranga olivacea*, Rose-breasted Grosbeak *Pheucticus ludovicianus*, Indigo Bunting *Passerina cyanea*, Bobolink *Dolichonyx oryzivorus*, Black-and-white



FIGURE 3 Annual number of Nearctic species on Corvo, Azores, in 2005-17



**393** Cedar Waxwing / Cederpestvogel *Bombycilla cedrorum*, first-year, Middle Fields, Corvo, Azores, 12 October 2013 (Vincent Legrand) **394** American Bittern / Noord-Amerikaanse Roerdomp *Botaurus lentiginosus*, Fojo, Corvo, Azores, 29 October 2013 (Richard Bonser) **395** Yellow-crowned Night Heron / Geelkruinkwak *Nyctanassa violacea*, first-year, Lower Fields, Corvo, Azores, 1 October 2011 (Vincent Legrand)





FIGURE 4 Number of record years of Nearctic landbirds on Corvo, Azores, in 2005-17

Warbler *Mniotilta varia* and Northern Parula *Setophaga americana*, all seen in over 50% of autumns since 2005 (figure 4). On the other hand, no less than 18 American landbird species and one subspecies (American Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus tundrius*) have only been recorded in one autumn, indicating that the chance to find a new species each autumn is high (figure 4).

Comparison with western Europe

It is interesting to compare the Nearctic landbirds' vagrancy pattern and species composition of Corvo (ie, mid-Atlantic) with those elsewhere in western Europe, particularly the British Isles. The most striking difference is that Myrtle Warbler *S coronata* has only been recorded five out of 13 autumns on Corvo, in a frequency similar to that of extreme vagrants as Black-throated Blue *S caerulescens* and Black-throated Green Warbler *S virens* (although the cumulative number of Myrtle Warblers is larger with more than one in some autumns; cf Mitchell 2017). Another striking difference concerns the regular occurrence of Indigo Bunting on Corvo, with a total of 39 records (50+ individuals) in 11 autumns, while there have only been two in the British Isles (Mitchell 2017). Philadelphia Vireo is another species recorded in a higher frequency on Corvo than in the rest of Europe, whereas Swainson's Thrush *C ustulatus* is an example of a species recorded less frequently on Corvo than further north-east in western Europe.

In figure 5, the frequency of American waterbird records in autumn on Corvo is shown. This pattern is similar to that elsewhere in western Europe with species such as American Golden Plover *Pluvialis dominica*, White-rumped Sandpiper *Calidris fuscicollis*, Pectoral Sandpiper *C melanotos*, Lesser Yellowlegs *Tringa flavipes* and, to a lesser extent, Blue-winged Teal *Anas discors* being amongst the most often seen. American Black Ducks *A rubripes* or its hybrids in figure 5 concern a resident population (appendix 1). There are noticeable differences with respect to numbers of Semipalmated Plover *Charadrius semipalmatus* and Wilson's Snipe *Gallinago delicata*, as both are more regular as vagrants in the Azores than further north-east in western Europe. Great Blue Heron *Ardea herodias* is another example of a Nearctic vagrant occurring more frequently in the Azores whereas, in proportion, Baird's Sandpiper *C bairdii* and Long-billed Dowitcher *Limnodromus scolopaceus* are recorded less frequently here (cf Mitchell 2017).





FIGURE 5 Number of record years of Nearctic waterbirds on Corvo, Azores, in 2005-17

These variations in occurrence are presumably related to varying migration strategies in different species. Factors like timing, routes and susceptibility to weather-related events may determine whether species tend to show an emphasis on vagrancy to the mid-Atlantic (Corvo) or all the way transatlantic (Britain and the rest of Europe). The southerly location of the Azores may favour the arrival of migratory species with a more southerly distribution in North America such as, eg, Yellow-crowned Night Heron *Nyctanassa violacea*, White-eyed Vireo *V. griseus* and Yellow-throated Warbler *S. dominica*.

Waders and ducks (waterbirds) are known to migrate at considerable height, so the effects of jet streams are often considered to be a more determining factor for them than for smaller landbirds that may migrate at lower elevations and are more influenced by pressure systems (Elkins 1995, Newton 2008). Besides, waterbirds like ducks, gulls, terns and sometimes waders can of course rest on the sea surface and, consequently, adopt a more versatile migration strategy – passerines (landbirds) have less options, so their migration strategies are presumably more constrained (Newton 2008). However, a new study shows that some species of landbirds also migrate at heights of 4000 m asl (Sjöberg et al 2018).

*Timing of arrival and discovery*

The peak time for Nearctic vagrants on Corvo is late September to early November. Within this period, it is difficult to decide what are actually the best weeks. Observers' effort is a major factor and both late September and early November have been poorly covered as most birders have focused on mid-October. Most vagrants have been discovered between 6 and 26 October and the weeks with the highest results are 13-19 and, especially, 20-26 October (figure 6-7). The actual peak arrival times vary from year to year (figure 6) and are likely to be influenced by weather conditions. In 2015, few vagrants were recorded before 17 October after a period of prolonged easterly winds. Until that date, it had been such a 'bad' autumn that some birders left Corvo earlier than planned to fly home while others cancelled their visits (see also below). However, after 17 October, it became one of the best autumns on record (figure 6).

Nearctic vagrants on Corvo, Azores, in 2005-17



**396** American Tundra Peregrine Falcon / Amerikaanse Toendraslechtsvalk *Falco peregrinus tundrius*, juvenile, High Fields, Corvo, Azores, 3 October 2013 (David Monticelli) **397** Rough-legged Hawk / Amerikaanse Ruigpootbuizerd *Buteo lagopus sanctijohannis*, Pico, Corvo, Azores, 14 October 2013 (Vincent Legrand) **398** Todd's Canada Goose / Todds Canadese Gans *Branta canadensis interior*, subadult, Lower Fields, Corvo, Azores, 16 October 2012 (Vincent Legrand) **399** American Herring Gull / Amerikaanse Zilvermeeuw *Larus smithsonianus*, subadult, Lower Fields, Corvo, Azores, 22 October 2012 (Vincent Legrand) **400** Surf Scoter / Brilzee-eend *Melanitta perspicillata*, juvenile, New Harbour, Corvo, Azores, 17 October 2017 (Daniele Occhiato) **401** Solitary Sandpiper / Amerikaanse Bosruiter *Tringa solitaria*, Mountain Reservoir, Corvo, Azores, 8 October 2012 (Vincent Legrand)



**402** Bay-breasted Warbler / Kastanjezanger *Setophaga castanea*, first-year male, Lighthouse Valley, Corvo, Azores, 22 October 2017 (*David Monticelli*) **403** American Northern Shrike / Amerikaanse Noordelijke Klapekster *Lanius borealis borealis*, first-year, Lighthouse Valley, Corvo, Azores, 18 October 2014 (*David Monticelli*) **404** Blue-winged Warbler / Blauwvleugelzanger *Vermivora cyanoptera*, first-year male, Ribeira da Ponte, Corvo, Azores, 6 October 2011 (*Vincent Legrand*) **405** Northern Flicker / Gouden Grondspecht *Colaptes auratus*, male, High Fields, Corvo, Azores, 15 October 2010 (*Vincent Legrand*) **406** Blackburnian Warbler / Sparrenzanger *Setophaga fusca*, first-year male, Tennessee Valley, Corvo, Azores, 15 October 2017 (*Vincent Legrand*) **407** Golden-winged x Blue-winged Warbler ('Brewster's Warbler') / Geelvleugelzanger x Blauwvleugelzanger *Vermivora chrysoptera* x *cyanoptera*, first-year female, Ribeira da Ponte, Corvo, Azores, 21 October 2015 (*Vincent Legrand*)

*Nearctic vagrants on Corvo, Azores, in 2005-17*



FIGURE 6 Discovery dates of Nearctic landbirds on Corvo, Azores, in 2005-17



FIGURE 7 Number of Nearctic landbirds discovered in each week from late September to late November on Corvo, Azores, in 2005-17 (all years pooled)



FIGURE 8 Number of Nearctic vagrants on Corvo, Azores, in relation to number of cyclonic events in North Atlantic in 2005-17. Annual totals of cyclonic events (tropical storms and hurricanes) observed during hurricane season (1 June-30 November) in North Atlantic extracted from [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Accumulated\\_cyclone\\_energy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Accumulated_cyclone_energy).

## Weather, observer effort and vagrancy analysis

### Overall trend: 2005-17

The causes of vagrancy are complex (Gilroy & Lees 2003, Alfrey 2008ab). They can relate to genetic pre-determination, trauma and anthropogenic, behavioral or environmental factors. Birders on Corvo use the internet (eBird) to check the flow of migration along the eastern coasts of North America as a direct correlation is expected between the numbers of birds on the move and the potential for vagrancy. More work should be done to investigate possible correlations between vagrancy occurrences on Corvo in the past and annual fluctuations in numbers in North America. Such correlations, if established, could be useful in short-term predictions.

However, the most important variable for vagrancy is weather (figure 8). Weather conditions leading to mid-Atlantic vagrancy appear to be different from those leading to transatlantic vagrancy (Elkins 1995). Fast-moving depressions are less of a factor for the Azores (ie, mid-Atlantic) and more so is the presence of mid-latitude depressions (not necessarily deep or fast moving) or simply a weak to moderate westerly airflow. The association of tropical cyclones is not a pre-requisite (but there is a correlation) for mid-Atlantic vagrancy: 2009, 2013 and 2015 were all good years on Corvo while Atlantic cyclonic activity was low during these years (figure 8). Tropical cyclones are usually contributory factors but, importantly, the cyclones need to disrupt migrations along the eastern shores of the USA while coinciding with a westerly mid-latitude air flow to deflect disoriented birds into the Atlantic. A hurricane that moves across the Atlantic from western Africa and collides with the Florida area, then moves inland, is unlikely to express any impacts on the Azores, especially in the absence of a westerly airflow towards the islands.

Other factors include observer coverage and the quality of that coverage. It is clear that 2005 is an exception (figure 8). This can be explained by the fact that, in 2005, PA was the sole observer on Corvo being the first to discover the island's full potential for Nearctic vagrants. PA 'only' recorded 28 Nearctic species but it is possible to extrapolate from the best fit line that there were actually between 40 and 45 Nearctic species on the island that year, ie, that PA only found 66% of the species present.

Of course, it is not so that each additional observer will double the discovery rate, ie, the fact that one observer can find 66% of the species does not mean that two will find 100%. It would be in-

teresting to estimate the optimum number of observers required to maximize the chance to discover every species present. It is not easy though, as some species are more difficult to discover than others, and not everyone has the same skill to find rarities. For instance, of 80 birders present on Corvo in autumn 2017, some would not have discovered any of the 148 Nearctic birds that year.

Interestingly, anthropogenic factors are considered so important on Corvo that there is a daily routine of checking the main maritime routes and the density of ships passing nearby. A large ship passing by is considered just as encouraging as some promising weather systems; see, eg, Alfrey (2008b) for more information on ship-assisted arrivals by birds.

### Annual trend: 2012, 2015 and 2017 – the fat years

The years 2012, 2015 and 2017 were the 'best' for American landbird vagrants on Corvo. For all Nearctic vagrants combined (waterbirds and landbirds) 2012 and 2017 were the best, but 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2013 were good years too, with more Nearctic waterbirds and landbirds combined than in 2015. However, most birders come to Corvo for landbirds, so here we pay extra attention to the best landbird years.

#### 2012

In terms of quality birds, 2012 was outstanding with Wood Thrush *Hylocichla mustelina*, Dickcissel *Spiza americana*, Lincoln's Sparrow *Melospiza lincolni*, Golden-winged Warbler *Vermivora chrysoptera*, Magnolia Warbler *S. magnolia* and Prairie Warbler *S. discolor* (first for the WP) – amongst a total of 42 Nearctic species (26 landbird species). There was also a major wader invasion in the Azores (appendix 1) so, presumably, there were favourable jet streams in addition to favourable lower altitude weather systems. Following a rather slow start in the first days of October the pace started to pick up from 6 October onwards with a pressure system pulling in north-westerly winds from the western Atlantic. Though not particularly deep or fast moving (figure 9), the system kept on producing birds. There was a further influx of Nearctic vagrants on 16 October. An examination of the synoptic charts for that date shows no cyclonic activity at all, in fact there was a high-pressure system producing a light westerly breeze on its northern flank (figure 10).

#### 2015

2015 was an interesting year. As mentioned earlier, it was so quiet in the first two weeks of October that birders started to cancel their trips, while others left



**408** Hermit Thrush / Heremietlijster *Catharus guttatus*, first-year, Mountain Reservoir, Corvo, Azores, 24 October 2015 (Daniele Occhiato)

**409** Swainson's Thrush / Dwerglijster *Catharus ustulatus*, first-year, Lighthouse Valley, Corvo, Azores, 20 October 2015 (Daniele Occhiato)





**410** Northern Waterthrush / Noordse Waterlijster *Parkesia noveboracensis*, first-year, Cape Verdian Fields, Corvo, Azores, 10 October 2012 (Vincent Legrand)

**411** American Robin / Roodborstlijster *Turdus migratorius*, first-year, High Fields, Corvo, Azores, 18 October 2012 (David Monticelli)



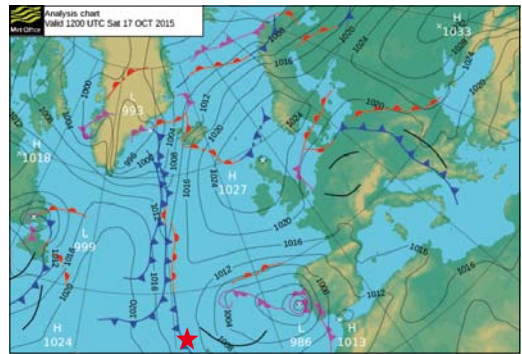
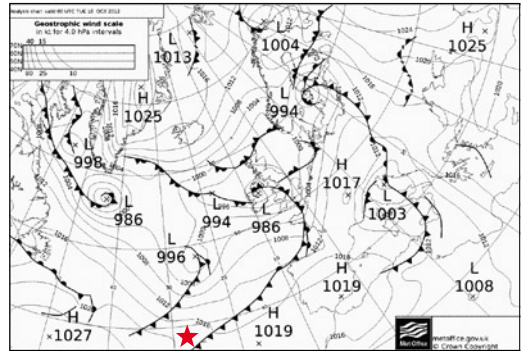


FIGURE 9 Synoptic chart for 7 October 2012 (*Met Office*). Westerly airflows were generated fairly consistently throughout October 2012. In this case, a relatively weak low pressure system was involved.

FIGURE 10 Synoptic chart for 16 October 2012 coinciding with an influx of Nearctic vagrants (*Met Office*). This is a case of high pressure generated mid-Atlantic vagrancy with a westerly air breeze on the northern flank of a high pressure. The often quoted causes of European trans-Atlantic vagrancy, fast moving depressions and hurricanes, play a relatively minor role in vagrant occurrence on Corvo (see text for more details).

FIGURE 11 General situation prior to 17 October 2015 (*Met Office*). The Azores high was well established through much of early October 2015.

FIGURE 12 Synoptic chart for 17 October 2015, the day of a Nearctic fall (*Met Office*). Just a slight re-orientation of a system with a shift from northerly to north-westerly winds produced a remarkable effect.

In all charts, position of Azores indicated by ★.

the island. Figure 11 shows the synoptic chart for early October, when a high pressure system centred well north of the Azores was bringing in a light northerly wind. However, on 17 October, there was a slight shift with a north-westerly component (figure 12) and, completely unexpectedly, there was a major fall! By the end of the day, a Grey-cheeked Thrush, an American Robin *Turdus migratorius*, three American Buff-bellied Pipits, two Philadelphia Vireos, seven Red-eyed Vireos, three Scarlet Tanagers, four Rose-breasted Grosbeaks, two Indigo Buntings and an Ovenbird *Seiurus aurocapilla* were discovered (mainly around the village), but the star of the day was a stunning Blue-winged Warbler *V cyanoptera*. In the aftermath of this event more birds were discovered.

## 2017

2017 was by far the most productive Corvo season so far, with 48 Nearctic species and 155 individuals (figure 3). The birds were spread out across the season (figure 13) including an atypical peak in late September (only in 2008 there was a similar interesting early period). The late September influx coincided with early autumn cyclonic activity (figure 14). This was followed by a 'dead spell' in perfect anticyclonic weather with no wind and clear, starlit nights (figure 15). Then, the vagrants started to appear again with the establishment of a westerly airflow from around 14 October onwards (figure 16). When hurricane Ophelia appeared on the weather maps around 15 October, it was noted as an unusual feature being the most easterly





FIGURE 13 Daily totals of Nearctic species on Corvo, Azores, in autumn 2017

formed hurricane in the North Atlantic since 1980. The forecast was for the hurricane to track north towards Britain. At no point would it get anywhere near the USA. Therefore some birders were not expecting it to have much impact on Nearctic vagrancy. However, the hurricane would act as a massive vacuum, dragging a westerly airflow across the Atlantic – and with it came the vagrants (figure 17). Weather conditions in the immediate aftermath on Corvo were characterised by strong winds and also an elusive Blackburnian Warbler *S fusca* and a Yellow-throated Vireo *V flavifrons* had distracted most bird finders. By 20 October, when the wind had calmed and most birders had seen the Yellow-throated and Blackburnian, significant finds were made. This peak on 20 October (figure 13), is an example of an observer-generated peak as a result of observer effort and (good) finding conditions rather than directly related to weather. The log for that day (<http://birdingcorvo2013.blogspot.co.uk>) had four Yellow-billed Cuckoos, eight Red-eyed Vireos, single Grey-cheeked Thrush, Scarlet Tanager, Dickcissel, Rose-breasted Grosbeak and Indigo Bunting, three Blackpoll Warblers *S striata*, single Ovenbird, Black-and-white Warbler, Tennessee Warbler *Oreothlypis peregrina*, Hooded Warbler *S citrina*

and Black-throated Green Warbler, and three Common Yellowthroats – an amazing day!

#### Annual trend: 2014 and 2016 – the lean years

Two years ‘stand out’ as very poor on Corvo – 2014 and 2016. They offer more insight into the conditions that do not lead to Nearctic vagrancy. 2016 will long be remembered as the nightmare year, sandwiched in between the two epic years of 2015 and 2017. What made it worse was that, in Britain and continental Europe, the autumn of 2016 probably was the best for eastern vagrants ever, so birders ‘stuck’ on Corvo could only watch with envy. The same climatic conditions that generated a major eastern vagrant influx, including that of Siberian Accentors *Prunella montanella* in north-western Europe (Stoddart 2018), was also responsible for the poor Corvo autumn. A major high pressure system centred over Scandinavia was dragging in easterly winds from across the whole of Eurasia (figure 18). This had the effect of pushing the Azores high pressure north-west with resulting calm to weak easterly wind conditions. The system was very stable and the conditions were maintained through much of October. As expected, it was also winds prevailing from the north and east that caused a poor year in 2014. However, even in

Nearctic vagrants on Corvo, Azores, in 2005-17



FIGURE 14 Synoptic chart for 23 September 2017 (*Met Office*). A major depression swept past the Azores with a westerly airflow generated to the Azores from the eastern seaboard of the USA. Peter Stronach and company found Black-throated Blue Warbler *Setophaga caerulescens*, Black-throated Green Warbler *S. virens* and Canada Warbler *Cardellina canadensis* during this early autumn trip.

FIGURE 15 Synoptic chart for 9 October 2017 (*Met Office*). Completely calm conditions over Corvo – a rarity seeker’s nightmare.

FIGURE 16 Synoptic chart for 14 October 2017 (*Met Office*). A high pressure is involved again here in generating a westerly airflow to the Azores and subsequent arrival of vagrants.

FIGURE 17 Synoptic chart for 16 October 2017 (*Met Office*). Hurricane Ophelia moves north from the Eastern Atlantic and drags a conveyor belt of westerly winds across the Atlantic producing dramatic vagrancy effects on Corvo.

FIGURE 18 Synoptic chart for 15 October 2016 (*Met Office*). A high-pressure cell centred over Scandinavia creates a large conveyor of easterly air across Eurasia generating an unprecedented invasion of Siberian vagrants. The same system was responsible for a blocking high over the Western Atlantic, resulting in a very low Nearctic vagrant activity on Corvo.

In all charts, position of Azores indicated by ★.



**412** Ruby-crowned Kinglet / Roodkroonhaan *Regulus calendula*, first-winter, Lighthouse Valley, Corvo, Azores, 1 November 2015 (David Monticelli) **413** Dickcissel / Dickcissel *Spiza americana*, first-year male, Middle Fields, Corvo, Azores, 16 October 2012 (David Monticelli) **414** Veery / Veery *Catharus fuscescens*, first-year, Fojo, Corvo, Azores, 15 October 2015 (Vincent Legrand) **415** White-throated Sparrow / Witkeelgors *Zonotrichia albicollis*, first-year male, fields between Mountain Reservoir and Caldeirao, Corvo, Azores, 16 October 2013 (Kris De Rouck)

these poor years there were still 14 Nearctic land-bird vagrants recorded in 2016 and 16 in 2014. So, visiting birders, especially those who visit Corvo for the first time, always stand a good chance of seeing Nearctic vagrants ‘new for their lists’ even in the worst years.

### Conclusion

Since 2010, there have been four ‘firsts’ for the WP discovered on Corvo: Eastern Wood Pewee *Contopus virens* (two records), Lincoln’s Sparrow (three records), Yellow-throated Warbler and Prairie Warbler (Monticelli et al 2018). Additionally, there have been other significant WP discoveries including, eg, Yellow-crowned Night Heron, Rough-legged Hawk *Buteo lagopus sanctijohannis*

(four records), Northern Flicker *Colaptes auratus* (two records), Purple Martin *Progne subis*, Ruby-crowned Kinglet *Regulus calendula*, Wood Thrush, Dickcissel, Golden-winged Warbler, Blue-winged Warbler (two records), Bay-breasted Warbler *S. castanea* and Blackburnian Warbler. Perhaps most significant of all was the first WP record of a hybrid of Golden-winged x Blue-winged Warbler *Vermivora chrysoptera* x *cyanoptera* (so-called ‘Brewster’s Warbler’).

Figure 2 shows that there has been no let-up in the number of new species recorded year on year. One can only speculate as to what the next new species for Corvo will be. As mentioned in Alfrey et al (2010) the next important development in ‘Corvo birding’ is the expansion onto the neigh-



**416** Golden-winged Warbler / Geelvleugelzanger *Vermivora chrysoptera*, first-year male, Lighthouse Valley, Corvo, Azores, 13 October 2012 (Vincent Legrand)

**417** Magnolia Warbler / Magnoliazanger *Setophaga magnolia*, first-year male, Ribeira da Ponte, Corvo, Azores, 19 October 2017 (Vincent Legrand)



bouring island of Flores. This expansion has taken a step back as in recent years the facilities for birders on Corvo increased. However, even the newly available housing is getting all filled. If there are groups or individuals who have not been able to book a place on Corvo, please contact PA to arrange accommodation and boat transport between Flores and Corvo. Without doubt the story so far, is not even half the story. When the birding community grows both on Corvo and Flores in the coming years, more and more birds will be found, our understanding of how vagrancy works will increase, and we will get a bigger and bigger WP list.

### Acknowledgements

Thanks to the people of Corvo for tolerating the c 10% increase in their population every autumn caused by visiting birders. We are especially grateful to Kathy Rita, Manuel Rita, the Mayor of Corvo and many others who transport us around the island, feed us, supply beer and open up their houses to accommodate us. This paper is the result of the hard work of all Corvo Birders that have visited the island during the study period and a tribute to that birding effort. Particular thanks to Josh Jones for improvements to the text of this paper.

### Samenvatting

NEARCTISCHE DWAALGASTEN OP CORVO, AZOREN, IN 2005-17 Het eiland Corvo, Azoren, is de beste plek in de WP voor Nearctische dwaalgasten. In de periode 2005-17 zijn er 105 Nearctische soorten vastgesteld, waarvan 64 soorten landvogels. Ieder najaar is verschillend en tot nu toe was 2017 het productiefste jaar met 155 individuen van 48 soorten.

Vergeleken met elders in West-Europa zijn soorten als Dwerglijster *Catharus ustulatus* en Mirtezanger *Setophaga coronata* – wellicht verrassend – relatief schaars op Corvo, terwijl daarentegen in de rest van West-Europa zeer zeldzame dwaalgasten als Philadelphiavireo *Vireo philadelphicus* en Indigogors *Passerina cyanea* op Corvo tot de meest frequent vastgestelde Nearctische zangvogels behoren. Deze variaties hebben vermoedelijk te maken met verschillende trekstrategieën en met de zuidelijke ligging van de Azoren.

Er zijn Nearctische dwaalgasten vastgesteld tussen eind september en begin november maar de beste periode is tussen 13 en 26 oktober.

Weerscondities die het voorkomen van Nearctische dwaalgasten op de Azoren beïnvloeden verschillen van die bij noordtransatlantische dwaalgasten in West-Europa. Snel trekkende oceaandepressies spelen een geringere rol terwijl depressies op lagere breedtegraden belangrijker zijn. De activiteit van tropische cyclonen zijn eveneens van belang maar het is vooral de exacte route van deze cyclonen en de wisselwerking met andere weersystemen die het verschijnen van middenatlantische dwaalgasten beïnvloeden.

In de hier besproken periode waren 2012, 2015 en 2017 de beste jaren en de minst productieve jaren



418 Wood Thrush / Amerikaanse Boslijster *Hylocichla mustelina*, first-year, Fojo, Corvo, Azores, 9 October 2012 (Vincent Legrand)

waren 2014 en 2016; deze laatste werden gekenmerkt door overwegend oostelijke winden.

### Online sources

Bird news from the Azores: <http://azores.avesdeportugal.info>.

Azores bird database: [www.sr-oland.se/azores/index.html](http://www.sr-oland.se/azores/index.html).

Corvo blog: [www.birdingcorvo2013.blogspot.co.uk](http://www.birdingcorvo2013.blogspot.co.uk).

Corvo Birders Facebook: [www.facebook.com/groups/1047984388554518](http://www.facebook.com/groups/1047984388554518).

Azores Nature: [www.azoresnature.co.uk](http://www.azoresnature.co.uk).

Azores Choice Travel Agency: [www.azoreschoice.com](http://www.azoreschoice.com).

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APPENDIX 1 Number of records (with number of individuals in parentheses) of Nearctic vagrants on Corvo, Azores. Data sourced from Birding Azores archived data (up to and including 2012), Azores Bird Sightings, Aves dos Açores and the Azores rare and scarce bird reports 2013 and 2014 (Azores Bird Club 2014, 2015) and 2015, 2016 and 2017 (Azores Bird Club in preparation). Pre-2010 records are sourced from table 1 in Alfrey et al (2010). Not all records listed have been processed by the Portuguese rarities committee, yet.

Species	Pre-2010	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	Total number of records
Todd's Canada Goose <i>Branta canadensis interior</i>				1	1 (2)					2
Surf Scoter <i>Melanitta perspicillata</i>									2	2
Hooded Merganser <i>Lophodytes cucullatus</i>	1									1
Ring-necked Duck <i>Aythya collaris</i>	5							1 (2)	4	10
Blue-winged Teal <i>Anas discors</i>	4	1	1	1	1		1	1	3 (6)	13
American Wigeon <i>Anas americana</i>	3					1			1 (4)	5
American Black Duck <i>Anas rubripes</i> (resident birds including hybrids)	5 (15-27)		1	3 (4)	1		1	1 (+5 hybrids)	2 (6)	14
Green-winged Teal <i>Anas carolinensis</i>	1	1		1 (2)					1 (3)	4
Wood Duck <i>Aix sponsa</i>	2									2
Pied-billed Grebe <i>Podilymbus podiceps</i>	1									1
American Mourning Dove <i>Zenaida macroura</i>	1			1	2					4
Common Nighthawk <i>Chordeiles minor</i>	3							1		4
Chimney Swift <i>Chaetura pelagica</i>	3		1			1	1			6
Black-billed Cuckoo <i>Coccyzus erythrophthalmus</i>		1								1
Yellow-billed Cuckoo <i>Coccyzus americanus</i>	9		2			2		2 (4)	3 (6)	18
Sora <i>Porzana carolina</i>							1			1
Yellow-crowned Night Heron <i>Nyctanassa violacea</i>			1							1
American Bittern <i>Botaurus lentiginosus</i>			1		1					2
Great Blue Heron <i>Ardea herodias</i>	3	1		1	1					6
American Great Egret <i>Ardea egretta</i>	2		1						1	4

Nearctic vagrants on Corvo, Azores, in 2005-17

Species	Pre-2010	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	Total number of records
Double-crested Cormorant <i>Phalacrocorax auritus</i>	2-3	1								3-4
American Golden Plover <i>Pluvialis dominica</i>	3	1	2	3 (4)		1	1 (2)	1	1 (2)	13
Killdeer <i>Charadrius vociferus</i>	1	2 (3)								3
Semipalmated Plover <i>Charadrius semipalmatus</i>	10	1		3 (11)					1	15
Upland Sandpiper <i>Bartramia longicauda</i>	1							1	1	3
Hudsonian Whimbrel <i>Numenius hudsonicus</i>	4									4
Baird's Sandpiper <i>Calidris bairdii</i>		2								2
White-rumped Sandpiper <i>Calidris fuscicollis</i>	11	4 (12)	3 (7)	3 (55+)	2 (6)	3 (10)	2 (10+)		6 (11)	34
Least Sandpiper <i>Calidris minutilla</i>	2		2		1					5
Buff-breasted Sandpiper <i>Calidris subruficollis</i>	1	2 (3)	2	1	1		1			8
Pectoral Sandpiper <i>Calidris melanotos</i>	12	4	3	2		2	2	1 (3)	2	28
Semipalmated Sandpiper <i>Calidris pusilla</i>	5	3 (5)	2 (3)	3 (4)	1 (2)			1 (5)	3	18
Wilson's Phalarope <i>Phalaropus tricolor</i>	1									1
Spotted Sandpiper <i>Actitis macularius</i>	5		2		1	1		1	3	13
Solitary Sandpiper <i>Tringa solitaria</i>		1		1					1	3
Greater Yellowlegs <i>Tringa melanoleuca</i>	1	2						1	1	5
Lesser Yellowlegs <i>Tringa flavipes</i>	4	2 (3)	2 (3)	1	2	1		1	2 (3)	15
Short-billed Dowitcher <i>Limnodromus griseus</i>	1							1		2
Long-billed Dowitcher <i>Limnodromus scolopaceus</i>	1					1				2
Wilson's Snipe <i>Gallinago delicata</i>	6	4		1	2	2	1	1	2	19
Bonaparte's Gull <i>Chroicocephalus philadelphia</i>									1	1
Laughing Gull <i>Larus atricilla</i>	3		1	2						6
Ring-billed Gull <i>Larus delawarensis</i>	1	1								2
American Herring Gull <i>Larus smithsonianus</i>		1	1	1						3
American Black Tern <i>Chlidonias niger surinamensis</i>	1									1
Forster's Tern <i>Sterna forsteri</i>	1									1
Northern Harrier <i>Circus hudsonius</i>	1		1				1			3
Rough-legged Hawk <i>Buteo lagopus sanctijohannis</i>					1				2	3
Belted Kingfisher <i>Megasceryle alcyon</i>									1	1
Northern Flicker <i>Colaptes auratus</i>		1						1		2
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker <i>Sphyrapicus varius</i>	1									1
American Tundra Peregrine Falcon <i>Falco peregrinus tundrius</i>					1					1

Nearctic vagrants on Corvo, Azores, in 2005-17

Species	Pre-2010	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	Total number of records
Eastern Wood Pewee <i>Contopus virens</i>							2			2
White-eyed Vireo <i>Vireo griseus</i>	3									3
Yellow-throated Vireo <i>Vireo flavifrons</i>	2								1	3
Philadelphia Vireo <i>Vireo philadelphicus</i>	2		2	2	2	1	2	2	3	16
Red-eyed Vireo <i>Vireo olivaceus</i>	12	7	4 (5)	7 (9)	7 (8)	8 (11)	6 (13+)	6 (7+)	11 (24+)	68
American Northern Shrike <i>Lanius borealis borealis</i>						1				1
Ruby-crowned Kinglet <i>Regulus calendula</i>							1			1
Tree Swallow <i>Tachycineta bicolor</i>	3			1	1					5
Purple Martin <i>Progne subis</i>	1		1							2
American Barn Swallow <i>Hirundo rustica erythrogaster</i>	1		1	1			1			4
American Cliff Swallow <i>Petrochelidon pyrrhonota</i>	1		1	2 (4)	2	2	1	1 (2)		10
Cedar Waxwing <i>Bombycilla cedrorum</i>		1			1				1	3
Wood Thrush <i>Hylocichla mustelina</i>				1						1
Hermit Thrush <i>Catharus guttatus</i>	1						1			2
Swainson's Thrush <i>Catharus ustulatus</i>			1				1	1	1	4
Grey-cheeked Thrush <i>Catharus minimus</i>	2	1	2	2	1		5 (7)		2 (3)	15
Veery <i>Catharus fuscescens</i>							1			1
American Robin <i>Turdus migratorius</i>				1	1		1		1	4
American Buff-bellied Pipit <i>Anthus rubescens rubescens</i>	3	2 (3)	1	2 (3)	1 (2)	3 (7)	2 (5)		1	15
Summer Tanager <i>Piranga rubra</i>	1	1	1							3
Scarlet Tanager <i>Piranga olivacea</i>	3	2			1	2 (3)	2 (5)	1	4	15
Dickcissel <i>Spiza americana</i>			1	2					1	4
Rose-breasted Grosbeak <i>Pheucticus ludovicianus</i>	6			2 (3)	3	2	2 (7)	1	4	20
Indigo Bunting <i>Passerina cyanea</i>	14	4	1	8 (12)	3 (4)	2	4 (10+)		3	39
Savannah Sparrow <i>Passerculus sandwichensis</i>	1									1
Lincoln's Sparrow <i>Melospiza lincolni</i>		1		1				1		3
White-crowned Sparrow <i>Zonotrichia leucophrys</i>	1	1			1					3
White-throated Sparrow <i>Zonotrichia albicollis</i>					1					1
Bobolink <i>Dolichonyx oryzivorus</i>	5	2		3	3	1	1	1	1	17
Baltimore Oriole <i>Icterus galbula</i>	3	2 (3)	2							7
Ovenbird <i>Seiurus aurocapilla</i>	3		1				1		5	10
Northern Waterthrush <i>Parkesia noveboracensis</i>		1		2				1	5 (6)	9



Nearctic vagrants on Corvo, Azores, in 2005-17

Species	Pre-2010	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	Total number of records
Golden-winged Warbler <i>Vermivora chrysoptera</i>				1						1
Blue-winged Warbler <i>Vermivora cyanoptera</i>			1				1			2
Golden-winged x Blue-winged Warbler <i>Vermivora chrysoptera x cyanoptera</i>							1			1
Black-and-white Warbler <i>Mniotilta varia</i>	1	1		2	3	3 (4)	2		5	17
Tennessee Warbler <i>Oreothlypis peregrina</i>	1		1	1					1	4
Common Yellowthroat <i>Geothlypis trichas</i>	6	1	2	2	3	1	2	1 (3)	4	22
Hooded Warbler <i>Setophaga citrina</i>	2								2	4
American Redstart <i>Setophaga ruticilla</i>	3	1			1		2			7
Northern Parula <i>Setophaga americana</i>	2	1	4	1	3	3	2			16
Magnolia Warbler <i>Setophaga magnolia</i>				1					2	3
Bay-breasted Warbler <i>Setophaga castanea</i>									1	1
Blackburnian Warbler <i>Setophaga fusca</i>									1	1
American Yellow Warbler <i>Setophaga aestiva</i>	1	1	2	1						5
Chestnut-sided Warbler <i>Setophaga pensylvanica</i>	1									1
Blackpoll Warbler <i>Setophaga striata</i>	1	1		3		1	1 (2)		6 (8)	13
Black-throated Blue Warbler <i>Setophaga caerulescens</i>	3				1		2		1	7
Myrtle Warbler <i>Setophaga coronata</i>	6		1	3						10
Yellow-throated Warbler <i>Setophaga dominica</i>					1					1
Prairie Warbler <i>Setophaga discolor</i>				1						1
Black-throated Green Warbler <i>Setophaga virens</i>	3				1	1			3	8
Canada Warbler <i>Cardellina canadensis</i>	1							1	1	3
Total records**	221	67	59	82	60	46	59	33	115	
Total species	71 (*27)	38	37	42	36	24	35	26	48	
Total landbird species	38 (*15)	20	22	26	24	16	27	14	29	
Total waterbird species	33 (*12)	18	15	16	12	8	8	12	19	

\*Annual average 2005-09 (Alfrey et al 2010)

\*\*Any deviation in the total number of records between this table and other references are due to the degree of ambiguity inherent in assigning number of records compared with numbers of individuals

# Assortative mating of Dark-bellied Brent Goose and Black Brant at Olenyok delta, Russia, in July 2016

Alexander Hellquist, Mats Waern & Mattias Gerdin

The Olenyok river delta, situated between the Lena river delta and the Taimyr Peninsula on the Laptev Sea coast of Siberia, Russia, was identified by Syroechkovskiy et al (1998) as an area of overlap in the breeding distributions of two brent goose taxa, Dark-bellied Brent Goose *Branta bernicla* (hereafter *bernicla*) and Black Brant *B nigricans* (hereafter *nigricans*). The authors visited three colonies in the delta in 1997, and found c 132 pairs of brent geese; 87 of these were studied in order to determine the taxon of the involved birds. 43 pairs consisted of *bernicla*, 36 of *nigricans*, and eight pairs were mixed or consisted of birds showing intermediate plumage features (Syroechkovskiy et al 1998). Based on these findings, and observations of additional mixed breedings in the westernmost part of the Lena river delta, Syroechkovskiy et al (1998) questioned earlier suggestions to treat *bernicla* and *nigricans* as distinct species (cf Stepanyan 1990, Millington 1997, Sangster et al 1997). However, the identity of the birds in the photographs put forward by Syroechkovskiy et al (1998) was challenged by Sangster (2000), Bloomfield & McCallum (2001) and Martin (2002); see also the reply by Zöckler et al (2000) that was published adjacent to Sangster (2000).

FIGURE 1 Olenyok river delta, Siberia, Russia, with islands indicated where brent geese *Branta* were found breeding in 2016 (© Google)



## Observations in 2016

On 8 and 10 July 2016, we briefly visited the same three islands in the north-western part of the delta that were surveyed in 1997: Shvet-Mayaktah-Aryta, Golub-Terior-Aryta and Eppet (figure 1). Here, we counted 95 *bernicla* pairs and four *nigricans* pairs. Unfortunately, we did not have time to survey the colonies thoroughly, and the total number of breeding pairs on the islands was probably higher. The *nigricans* pairs were found on the islands of Shvet-Mayaktah-Aryta and Golub-Terior-Aryta, where they bred side by side with *bernicla* pairs (plate 419-421). No mixed pairs were seen. We experienced no difficulties in assigning the observed birds to either taxon, with one exception (plate 422-424). This bird showed a plumage consistent with variation in *nigricans* but we perceived the back and belly as slightly paler than in the other *nigricans* individuals present (although direct comparison was not possible), and the flank patch as less contrasting. We believe that it was a slightly atypical *nigricans* but we cannot rule out the possibility of an intergrade. The bird is not included in the figures given above. It was worried by our presence, so it might have been associated with a nest, but it was not close to other brent geese during our short observation.

We noted a difference in the breeding phenology of these two taxa: three of the four *nigricans* pairs, all seen on 8 July, had small chicks, probably a few days old. The fourth pair did not seem to be associated with a nest. By contrast, all but one breeding *bernicla* pairs still seemed to be incubating. Only one pair seen on 10 July had small chicks.

## Reflections on possible taxonomic implications

Ringing recoveries from Olenyok river delta and westernmost Lena river delta (Syroechkovskiy et al 1998) show that a migratory divide between birds wintering in western Europe (*bernicla*) and along the west coast of North America and eastern Asia (*nigricans*) runs through the area. It is plausible that this divide is a result of expansion along post-glacial colonization routes in the two taxa, as in many other bird populations (eg, Irwin & Irwin



**419** Dark-bellied Brent Geese / Rotganzen *Branta bernicla*, pair (female on left), Olenyok river delta, Siberia, Russia, 8 July 2016 (Alexander Hellquist). Typical plumages with slate grey hue to body. **420** Black Brants / Zwarte Rotganzen *Branta nigricans*, pair with chicks, Olenyok river delta, Siberia, Russia, 8 July 2016 (Alexander Hellquist) **421** Dark-bellied Brent Geese / Rotganzen *Branta bernicla* and Black Brants / Zwarte Rotganzen *B nigricans*, Olenyok river delta, Siberia, Russia, 8 July 2016 (Alexander Hellquist). *Bernicla* pair on left and *nigricans* pair on right. These pairs, that did not seem associated with nests, were grazing and passed by each other without visible interactions. Note slightly stockier neck and squarer head profile in rightmost *nigricans* compared with leftmost *bernicla*. We could see this difference in several birds at Olenyok river delta, although these features are obviously subject to individual variation and posture of birds.

2005, Ruegg et al 2006). For some passerines, it has been suggested that differences in breeding phenology caused by divergent spring arrival timing might work as an isolating mechanism across migratory divides (eg, Bearhop et al 2005, Ruegg et al 2012). It is uncertain to what extent this could also be relevant in brent geese. It has not yet been demonstrated when and where pair bonds are established (Lewis et al 2013). Studies of some populations suggest that most birds are already paired upon arrival to breeding grounds (eg, Barry 1962, Reeber 2015). That brent geese show high natal fidelity in females and dispersal in males also suggests pair formation away from breeding areas

(Lindberg et al 1998), which would reduce the importance of breeding timing as an isolating factor.

At the same time, courtship among unmated brent geese has been noted on breeding grounds (eg, Barry 1956). Owen et al (1988) described a certain rate of ‘divorces’ and new pair formation in summer in Barnacle Geese *B leucopsis* and suggested that this could also be regular in related species. Further, extra-pair copulations (EPCs) and brood parasitism have been identified as important mechanisms for introgression in geese (Ottenburghs et al 2016) – also in cases where pair formation takes place in winter (eg, Syroechkovskiy et al 1994). It is not known to what extent intertaxon



**422-424** Black Brant / Zwarte Rotgans *Branta nigricans*, Olenyok river delta, Siberia, Russia, 8 July 2016 (Alexander Hellquist). Slightly atypical paler *nigricans*. Back was perceived as a bit paler and flank patch as less contrasting than in other *nigricans* in area. Although we cannot rule out possibility of intergrade with Dark-bellied Brent Goose *B bernicla*, in our view it falls well within variation shown by worn *nigricans* from other parts of breeding range (see plate 425-426). **425** Black Brant / Zwarte Rotgans *Branta nigricans*, southern Chukotka, Siberia, Russia, 18 June 2016 (Thomas Noah). Appearance of this bird is similar to paler bird from Olenyok river delta in plate 422-424, and quite common among *nigricans* on breeding grounds, with rather pale brown belly and thin worn down tips to flank-feathers. Back is still darker brown than in Dark-bellied Brent Goose *B bernicla* without slate cast, and necklace is prominent.

EPC and brood parasitism take place in brent geese but among *nigricans* nesting in Yukon delta in Alaska, USA, intrataxon EPCs occur regularly during egg-laying (Welsh & Sedinger 1990). Svete (1999) found that 6.5% of 108 examined offspring in 30 *nigricans* nests had resulted from EPCs, and 13.9% from intrataxon brood parasitism.

These results might imply that differences in timing of breeding between *bernicla* and *nigricans*, like the one noted by us in 2016, could reduce opportunities for intertaxon courtship, EPCs and brood parasitism, and thereby possibilities for gene flow. At the same time, it should be noted that the onset of nesting varies across years in brent geese

(eg, Lewis et al 2013), and it is possible that the timing of breeding of the two taxa coincides in some years.

It is also relevant to mention that substantial shifts in the distribution of the brent geese populations between the Lena river delta and Taimyr seem to have taken place over the last 75 years. *Nigricans* has declined and subsequently increased again since the 1940s as a result of, respectively, a decrease in the population wintering in Asia and a westward expansion of birds wintering in North America. On the other hand, *bernicla* declined in the 1970s but has been expanding eastwards since then (see Syroechkovskiy et al (1998) for details). It

is conceivable that these shifts have changed opportunities for interbreeding between *bernicla* and *nigricans* over time and between localities, eg, through a varying rate of dispersal of subadult males of one taxon into the breeding range and winter quarters of the other.

This dynamic relationship between *bernicla* and *nigricans* apparently differs compared with the situations in other areas of contact between brent goose taxa. *Bernicla* and Pale-bellied Brent Goose *B hrota* (hereafter *hrota*) are predominantly allopatric, even though two pairs of *hrota* have bred side by side with *bernicla* in Medusa Bay on the western Taimyr Peninsula in recent years (Mikhail Gennadevich pers comm). As for *hrota* and *nigricans*, genetic markers (Talbot et al 2013) indicate a zone of secondary contact on the high arctic islands of western Canada. Manning et al (1956) and Boyd & Maltby (1979) demonstrated that a majority of birds on Prince Patrick Island and Melville Island show plumages intermediate between *hrota* and *nigricans*, although a small share of birds matching typical birds of these respective taxa can also be found there. These studies refute earlier claims (eg, Handley 1950) that *hrota* and *nigricans* breed alongside in this region without mixing. Apart from the intermediate plumage, this population (known as Western High Arctic Brants or 'Grey-bellied Brants', cf Garner & Millington 2001, Reeber 2015) show some unique traits in terms of timing and habitat preference during migration (Boyd et al 2013). The genetic pattern of intermediate birds is consistent with dispersal of *nigricans* males into the range of *hrota* (Talbot et al 2013).

### Reflections on identification of *bernicla* and *nigricans*

Irrespective of the type and strength of isolating mechanisms between *bernicla* and *nigricans* at Olenyok river delta, we would have expected to encounter birds showing intermediate features, or at least atypical plumages, had there been significant hybridization between the taxa in the years prior to 2016. With reference to the one less typical bird we did encounter, we end this paper with a reflection on plumage variation in *nigricans* and implications for field identification of intergrades with *bernicla*, in particular in summer on breeding grounds. It is based on studies of *nigricans* in on-line photographs, the collection at the American Museum of Natural History, New York, USA, and in the field in Alaska (USA), Taimyr, Kamchatka and Chukotka (Russia) and Sweden.

In brent geese, moult and wear affect the colour of the belly and back as well as the appearance of the white necklace and the white flank patch – all important features for identification of *nigricans*. From late winter onwards until the onset of the complete moult, a significant share of adult (second-winter and older) *nigricans* photographed along the Pacific coast, in Alaska and in Chukotka, show a paler brown belly and less contrasting flank patches than in 'classic' *nigricans*. This is clearly an effect of bleaching, and of wear to the white tips of the flank-feathers (see examples in plate 425-426). To our eyes, some birds can be similar to *bernicla*. The body, in particular the back, is generally slightly darker and warmer brown than in most *bernicla*, which often show some faint slate grey hues even when worn. In ad-

**426** Black Brants / Zwarte Rotganzen *Branta nigricans*, breeding pair, Yukon river delta, Alaska, USA, 3 June 2015 (Jonas Bonnedahl). Other example of birds in worn plumage, paler brown and less contrasting than 'classic' *nigricans*. Broad neck-collars are typical.



dition, the necklace in most *nigricans* is more prominent than in *bernicla* in spring and summer. Only few *nigricans* show a narrower collar that is broken at the front (see numbers given in Martin 2002), overlapping with a small share of *bernicla* showing complete necklaces at the front. Still, we believe that the similarity of paler *nigricans* to *bernicla* poses a significant problem to field identification of potential intergrades between the taxa on breeding grounds.

That paler atypical *nigricans* can be seen alongside 'classic' dark individuals with contrasting flank patches on breeding grounds, can be attributed to the considerable variation in terms of when, where and how fast body-feather moult occurs (eg, Pyle 2008, Lewis et al 2013). Subadults, other non-breeders and failed breeders may commence their complete post-breeding moult earlier than breeders (eg, Baldassarre 2014). For example, Taylor (1995) showed that second calendar-year males in Alaska moult flank-feathers earlier than other age classes, already in mid-June. Early body moult should in turn cause abrasion to kick in earlier in winter and the subsequent spring.

That the North American winter range of *nigricans* stretches from Mexico and California to Alaska, with some non-breeders spending the summer at southern latitudes, should also substantially influence variation in wear. While southern birds are more exposed to sun bleaching, the description of a *nigricans* type bird in Crook (2002) illustrated that plumage wear should be considered also among northern winterers. This individual, depicted in plate 66 in Martin (2002), was seen in Britain during five consecutive winters 1998-2002. In the first few of these, it was perceived as having a slightly paler back and belly than a typical *nigricans*, with more contrast between the breast and the black neck. At the same time, this contrast became more obvious throughout winter, presumably because of wear. However, in the last winters, it was perceived as darker and more like a typical *nigricans*, and the plumage changed less throughout winter, indicating that age-related plumage variation should be considered as well.

For the sake of clarity, it should be added that in autumn and early winter, when brent geese show a largely fresh plumage, the problems involved in identification of *nigricans* and putative intergrades is partly different. The colour of the belly, upperparts and flank patch should be more reliable as field marks, even though some worn feathers may remain and the width of pale tips to flank-feathers varies individually. At the same time, late moult of neck-feathers in *nigricans* can temporarily make

the white collar less prominent, as described by Wynn (2003) in another wintering bird in Britain.

### Concluding remark

While we did not observe signs of interbreeding between *bernicla* and *nigricans* in the north-western part of Olenyok river delta in 2016, our small sample size prevents us from making general statements regarding their taxonomic rank. Records of mixed pairs with offspring in the winter range of *bernicla* demonstrate (cf Berrevoets & Erkmans 1993, Bakker & Ebels 2002) beyond reasonable doubt that interbreeding does occur to some extent. Earlier papers have highlighted intergrades as a pitfall for identification of *nigricans* in a European context. We suggest here that similarity in the plumage of pure birds might pose a challenge for identification of intergrades, in particular in spring and summer when the plumage is affected by wear. We therefore caution against confident labelling of birds that deviate slightly from 'classic' *nigricans* as intergrades with *bernicla*, as that might distort the understanding of the relationship between the two taxa.

More study is needed to determine if the assortative mating we noted is the norm across years and elsewhere in the contact zone. One area worth visiting would be the small islands in the south-eastern part of Olenyok river delta, where brent geese also breed according to locals. Unfortunately, strong winds prevented us from going there in 2016.

### Acknowledgements

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### Samenvatting

'ASSORTATIVE MATING' VAN ROTGANS EN ZWARTE ROTGANS IN OLENYOK-DELTA, RUSLAND, IN JULI 2016. In juli 2016 bezochten de auteurs drie eilanden in de Olenyok-delta, gelegen tussen de Lena-delta en het Taimyr-schiereiland aan de kust van de Laptevzee, Siberië, Rusland. Hier vonden ze 95 paren Rotgans *Branta bernicla* (hierna *bernicla*) en vier paren Zwarte Rotgans *B nigricans* (hierna *nigricans*) die naast elkaar broedden. Er werden geen gemengde paren vastgesteld en er werden geen intermediaire individuen gezien, hoewel de mogelijkheid van een hybride niet helemaal kon worden uitgesloten bij een iets lichter gekleurde *nigricans*. Er werd een verschil in broedfenologie tussen beide taxa genoteerd: drie van de vier *nigricans*-paren hadden kleine jongen terwijl vrijwel alle (op één na) *bernicla*-paren nog aan het broeden waren. Deze waarnemingen contrasteren met die van Syroechkovskiy et al (1998), die gedurende een onderzoek op dezelfde eilan-

den in 1997 verschillende gemengde broedparen aantroffen alsmede broedparen van intermediaire individuen. De mogelijke taxonomische implicaties van de in 2016 waargenomen duidelijke 'assortative mating' worden besproken. Met betrekking tot het waargenomen lichtere *nigricans*-type wordt ook ingegaan op de variatie in verenkleed bij *nigricans*. Ruistadium en slijtage zorgen er bij *nigricans* uit het reguliere verspreidingsgebied dikwijls voor dat ze in voorjaar en zomer meer op *bernicla* gaan lijken dan in najaar en winter. Daarom wordt gesteld dat het classificeren als hybride met *bernicla* van vogels die in uiterlijk slechts weinig afwijken van een 'klassieke' *nigricans* ongewenst is omdat ze een goed begrip van de relatie tussen beide taxa in de weg staan.

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## Aberrantly coloured Common Murre on Utsira, Norway, in 2016-17

On a boat trip off Utsira, Rogaland, Norway, on 7 May 2016, Arne Klovning and I noted a peculiar Common Murre *Uria aalge*. The bird was sitting on a ledge on Spannholmane, a small bird cliff close to the main island of Utsira, among half a dozen normally coloured individuals in full summer plumage. It was a striking bird, being totally white on the underparts and on the head. After navigating the boat closer, it soon became apparent that the bare parts were aberrantly coloured too. The bill, feet and legs were a bright orange-yellow. When the bird flew down to the water, it showed normal black upperparts and wings (including the white trailing edge to the secondaries), although 'peppered with white', especially on the mantle; the eyes were dark. During further trips on 29 May and 14 June 2016, it was still present (plate 427-428). The bird returned in 2017; in that year, it had developed a nearly all-white plumage while a tiny dark smudge on the bill tip noted in 2016 had disappeared (plate 429). This may be the result of the keratin layer having worn off but, more importantly, because no mel-

anin was formed anymore, the newly formed keratin was without melanin and thus orange (due to carotenoid still being present); the same holds for the melanin in the nails: in June 2016 (plate 428) they are still black, while in 2017 (plate 429) they are white (as there is no carotenoid in the nails) (Hein van Grouw in litt).

Because of the increasing amount of white feathers over the years, this Common Murre has a colour aberration of one of the forms of 'progressive greying' (cf van Grouw 2018). As both plumage and bare parts are affected in this Common Murre, a vitiligo related form of progressive greying may be involved (Hein van Grouw in litt). 'Vitiligo' causes the pigment producing cells to die off so that feathers and bare parts are not provided with melanin anymore.

Spannholmane consists of two holms and several skerries, situated 1.5 km south-west of Utsira and is geographically and ornithologically part of the main island. Being rat free, it holds tiny but thriving populations of European Shag *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*, Atlantic Puffin *Fratercula arctica*, Black Guillemot *Cepphus grylle*, Razorbill *Alca torda* and Common Murre (n nominate subspecies *U aalge*). The highest count of occupied

427 Aberrantly coloured Common Murre / Zeekoet *Uria aalge*, Spannholmane, Utsira, Rogaland, Norway, 14 June 2016 (Isak Grimsby)







**428** Aberrantly coloured Common Murre / Zeekoet *Uria aalge*, Spannholmane, Utsira, Rogaland, Norway, 14 June 2016 (Isak Grimsby)



**429** Aberrantly coloured Common Murre / Zeekoet *Uria aalge*, Spannholmane, Utsira, Rogaland, Norway, 1 June 2017 (Isak Grimsby). Same bird as in plate 427-428

murre nests since the turn of the century was 23 in 2009 with a total of 65 individual birds that same season (Atle Grimsby/Utsira municipality pers comm).

Common Murres with similar aberrant bare parts have been described for Runde, Møre og Romsdal, Norway (Blamire 2008) and for Bass Rock, Lothian, Scotland (Lloyd & Wiggin 2012). These possibly also involved a vitiligo type of aberration in which only the bare parts and not the plumage were affected (Hein van Grouw in litt).

For more information on aberrantly plumaged individuals of this species, see, eg, Arnold (1950), Kelly (1980), van Grouw et al (2011), Bond & Diamond (2016), and <https://tinyurl.com/yd79povu> and <https://tinyurl.com/ycn7xxq7>.

Hein van Grouw is acknowledged for commenting on this bird.

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## Arabian Eagle-Owls in United Arab Emirates and northern Oman

On 1 November 2017, Anthony Stoquert was working on an owl survey organised by the Emirates Wildlife Society-WWF when he found two Arabian Eagle-Owls *Bubo milesi*. They were located 4 km apart in the Khor Fakkan mountains, a coastal section of the Al Hajar range of Sharjah Emirate, United Arab Emirates (UAE). On two subsequent occasions, AS was able to obtain photographs, and on 30 November 2017, he identified a third territory in a distinct area at Wadi Helo, Sharjah. During the course of fieldwork over the first half of 2018, a further seven territories were discovered, taking the total to c 10 (Sandgrouse 40: 193, 2018). Remarkably, this is the second new species of owl for the UAE to be discovered by the same organisation, after they located an Omani Owl *Strix butleri* at Wadi Wurayah, Fujairah, in 2015 (Judas et al 2015).

A strong hint that Arabian Eagle-Owl occurs in the UAE came in 2003, when a young 'Pharaoh Eagle-Owl *B. ascalaphus*' was donated to Dubai Zoo, having apparently been caught near Dibba, Fujairah. Two years later this individual was re-

identified as an Arabian Eagle-Owl (Emirates News Agency, 29 March 2005).

The discovery of Arabian Eagle-Owl in the UAE is not only of national importance but adds to a mere handful of records from anywhere in north-eastern Arabia since the 19th century. Although Sharpe (1886) based his description of *Bubo milesi* on a holotype obtained near Muscat in northern Oman, this diminutive eagle-owl is much better known from the wooded Dhofar mountains of southern Oman. From there, its range extends through parts of Yemen and around the mountainous south-western corner of the peninsula into Saudi Arabia (Jennings 2010). Nowadays it is virtually unknown in northern Oman, although Eriksen & Victor (2013) mention two at Al Qurm park, Muscat, in 2011.

In February 2015, a Sound Approach team came across a pair of Arabian Eagle-Owls while searching for Omani Owls in the central Al Hajar, northern Oman. The same territory was occupied by a pair in February 2018, and photographs were obtained of the male (plate 432). In March 2017, they encountered three adults in two further territories in the same area, one of which was later discovered independently by a Birdquest group in

**430-431** Arabian Eagle-Owl / Arabische Oehoe *Bubo milesi*, Khor Fakkan mountains, Sharjah, United Arab Emirates, 5 December 2017, 22:15 (Anthony Stoquert/Emirates Wildlife Society-WWF)





432 Arabian Eagle-Owl / Arabische Oehoe *Bubo milesi*, Al Hajar mountains, Al Batinah, Oman, 4 February 2018  
(René Pop/The Sound Approach)

November 2017 (Hannu Jännes pers comm). Also that month, Arabian Eagle-Owl was reported from Sall Ala in Musandam, an Omani enclave north of the UAE, protruding north into the Strait of Hormuz ([www.birdsoman.com](http://www.birdsoman.com)). The Sound Approach team discovered a further two territories in Musandam in early 2018.

For most of its history, Arabian Eagle-Owl has been lumped under Spotted Eagle-Owl *B. africanus*, together with Greyish Eagle-Owl *B. cinerascens* of the Sahel belt. Given considerable differences in vocalisations, bare part coloration and plumage, however, these three taxa are best treated as separate species (Robb & The Sound Approach 2015).

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## Grijze Junco in Bergen aan Zee in mei 2017

Op zondag 7 mei 2017 bevond zich in een privé-tuin aan de Verspyckweg in Bergen aan Zee, Noord-Holland, een blauwgrijze zangvogel die de bewoners, Nico Spaarkogel en Jolanda Spaarkogel, niet konden thuisbrengen. De vogel foeraerde op het recent gemaaid gazon en at van de zaadpluizen van uitgebloeide paardenbloemen. Vanwege de onbekendheid maakte NS met zijn telefoon een aantal foto's. Op maandag 8 mei zat de vogel nog steeds in de betreffende tuin. Op dinsdag 9 mei deelde NS de foto's met enkele van zijn collega's waaronder Dick Groenendijk. Wat op de telefoonschermjes zichtbaar was leek veel op een mannetje Grijze Junco *Junco hyemalis* en DG besloot om nog dezelfde dag een poging te wagen om hem te zien te krijgen. Ondanks flink zoeken kon de vogel echter niet gelokaliseerd worden en ook de volgende dagen is nog op zijn aanwezigheid gelet door de bewoners, maar is niets meer gezien. Er zijn in totaal zeven foto's genomen. Deze bleken voldoende om de vogel als mannetje Grijze Junco te determineren. De waarneming is door de Commissie Dwaalgasten Nederlandse Avifauna aanvaard als het derde geval voor Nederland.

De beschrijving is gebaseerd op de zeven genomen foto's (cf <https://www.dutchavifauna.nl/record/67393>) en op waarnemingen van de bewoners. Omdat de foto's van afstand zijn, is ook de beschrijving niet heel gedetailleerd. De staat van poten, snavel en vleugels is bijvoorbeeld niet vast

**433** Grijze Junco / Dark-eyed Junco *Junco hyemalis*, mannetje, Bergen aan Zee, Noord-Holland, 7 mei 2017 (Nico Spaarkogel)



te stellen. Eventuele kenmerken die wijzen op onvolwassenheid ook niet.

**GROOTTE & BOUW** Vrij langgerekte vinkachtige vogel, globaal grootte van Vink *Fringilla coelebs*, hoewel directe vergelijking niet mogelijk.

**KOP & BOVENDELEN** Donker blauwgrijs, rond oog donkerst lijkend.

**ONDERDELEN** Onderstaart en buik helder wit. Keel en bovenborst donker blauwgrijs, scherp afgescheiden van witte onderdelen. Flanktekening met opvallende donker blauwgrijze 'uitstulping' ter hoogte van poten.

**STAART** Staart in zit donker met in zijaanzicht witte rand. In vlucht witte buitenste staartpennen maar precies aantal witte pennen onbekend.

**NAAKTE DELEN** Snavel geelroze en opvallend afstekend. Pootkleur niet vast te stellen. Oog zwart lijkend.

**GEDRAG** Foeragerend op grond op gemaaid gazon en etend van zaden van uitgebloeide paardenbloemen.

### Determinatie

De combinatie van formaat en bouw, de ongestreepte blauwgrijze kop, borst en bovendelen, de witte buik en de geelroze snavel sluiten alle Nearctische en Palearctische gorzen en vinken uit en passen alleen maar op een mannetje Grijze Junco (van Duivendijk 2011, Sibley 2014). Op de website van Dutch Birding, waar enkele van de gemaakte foto's gedeeld zijn, is nog overwogen of het wellicht om een Witte Kwikstaart *Motacilla alba* zou kunnen gaan. Maar behalve in foeraergedrag (Witte Kwikstaart foeraert niet op zaden van paardenbloem), zijn er verschillen in bouw (geen dikke snavel en langere staart bij Witte Kwikstaart) en verenkleed (vleugelstrepen aanwezig en meer licht grijs in plaats van donker blauwgrijs bij Witte Kwikstaart).

Grijze Junco maakt deel uit van een variabel soortcomplex met een grote geografische spreiding in Noord-Amerika. Del Hoyo & Collar (2016) vermelden 15 ondersoorten die in vijf ondersoortgroepen worden verdeeld. De vogel van Bergen behoort tot de groep van 'Slate-coloured Junco' vanwege de egaal blauwgrijze bovendelen en blauwgrijze flanken zonder kastanjebruine bovendelen of flanken of witte vleugelstrepen die voor andere ondersoorten kenmerkend zijn. Alle waargenomen kenmerken wijzen op de nominaat *Jh hyemalis*, de ondersoort waartoe alle tot op heden in Europa vastgestelde Grijze Junco's behoren (Slack 2009, Bosma & Ebels 2016).

### Voorkomen

In Nederland zijn twee eerdere gevallen bekend. Het eerste dateert van februari 1962 te Rotterdam, Zuid-Holland. De betreffende vogel is gevangen en in een volière gehouden totdat hij overleed op

7 november 1968 (van den Berg & Bosman 2001). Hij is opgenomen in de collectie van het Natuurhistorisch Museum Rotterdam. Het tweede geval betreft een (welbekende) vogel die van 1 februari tot 10 april 2015 in de woonwijk Beijum, Groningen, Groningen, verbleef. Dit geval is uitgebreid gedocumenteerd in Bosma & Ebels (2016). De vogel van Bergen aan Zee is daarmee het derde geval voor Nederland en het eerste voor de maand mei. In Brittannië is een meerderheid van de gevallen vastgesteld in het voorjaar met een duidelijke piek tussen 25 april en 30 mei (Slack 2009). De waarneming in Bergen aan Zee was één van in totaal zeven voor noordwestelijk Europa in het voorjaar van 2017, met gevallen in Engeland (2), Schotland (1), Wales (2; cf Dutch Birding 39: 212, plaat 288, 2017) en Zweden (1). Dit laatste geval betrof een zingend mannetje op 14 mei op Svenska Högarna, Uppland, en was het eerste voor Zweden (cf Dutch Birding 39: 269, plaat 360, 2017).

#### Summary

DARK-EYED JUNCO AT BERGEN AAN ZEE IN MAY 2017 On 7-8 May 2017, a male Dark-eyed Junco *Junco hyemalis* was

photographed in a private garden at Bergen aan Zee, Noord-Holland. It concerned the third record for the Netherlands. The first was a male trapped in February 1962 and the second a first-winter female from 1 February to 10 April 2015. The record at Bergen aan Zee coincided with six other spring records in north-western Europe in 2017, with individuals in England (2), Scotland (1), Wales (2) and the first for Sweden, a singing male on 14 May on Svenska Högarna, Uppland.

#### Verwijzingen

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## Corrigenda

In het bijschrift bij plaat 118 (Dutch Birding 40: 99, 2018) werd niet de juiste datum vermeld. De foto werd gemaakt op 7 december 2017.

De fotobijschriften in Dutch Birding 40: 167, 2018 en 40: 169, 2018 vermelden per abuis dezelfde plaatnummers. REDACTIE

In the caption of plate 118 (Dutch Birding 40: 99, 2018) the wrong date was mentioned. The photograph was taken on 7 December 2017.

The captions of the photographs in Dutch Birding 40: 167, 2018 and 40: 169, 2018 mistakenly give the same plate numbers. EDITORS

## DBA-nieuws

**Uitbreiding bestuur – bestuursfunctie secretaris** Met het vertrek van Jorrit Vlot als secretaris is het Dutch Birding-bestuur op zoek naar iemand die deze belangrijke functie binnen de Dutch Birding-organisatie wil overnemen. Tot er een geschikte kandidaat is gevonden neemt Marc Dijksterhuis de rol van secretaris waar. We willen Jorrit bedanken voor zijn inzet en enthousiasme in de afgelopen jaren.

Daarnaast is Dutch Birding ook op zoek naar versterking voor de webredactie en ondersteuning op het gebied van IT. Kijk voor meer informatie op onze website [www.dutchbirding.nl](http://www.dutchbirding.nl) of neem contact op met Remco Hofland (06-30905550) of Marten Miske (06-10014311). MARTEN MISKE

# WP reports

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This review lists rare and interesting Western Palearctic birds reported mainly from **August to late September 2018**. The reports are largely unchecked and their publication here does not imply future acceptance by a rarities committee. Observers are requested to submit their records to each country's rarities committee. Corrections are welcome and will be published.

**GEESE TO DUCKS** If accepted, a **Tundra Bean Goose** *Anser serrirostris* photographed at La Calabaza, Fuerteventura, on 7-15 August will be the first for the Canary Islands. A **White-headed Duck** *Oxyura leucocephala* shot at Qaraoun lake, West Beqaa, on 4 November 2017 was (only) the first for Lebanon (Sandgrouse 40: 130-132, 2018). The long-staying male **American White-winged Scoter** *Melanitta deglandi deglandi* at Keflavik, Iceland, was again reported on 13 August. The adult male at Musselburgh lagoon, Lothian, Scotland, was back from 9 September onwards. In Shetland, Scotland, an adult female **Hooded Merganser** *Lophodytes cucullatus* stayed at Lerwick, Mainland, from 15 August to 3 September. An adult male **Harlequin Duck** *Histrionicus histrionicus* at Italiaodden on 4 August was the fifth for Svalbard. The long-staying male **American Black Duck** *Anas rubripes* at Strontian, Highland, Scotland, remained into August, together with two of his hybrid offspring with Mallard *A platyrhynchos*. The best year ever for **Green-winged Teal** *A carolinensis* in Britain was 2016 with 63 males (Br Birds 111: 448-449, 2018).

**GREBES TO CUCKOOS** In the Azores, three **Pied-billed Grebes** *Podilymbus podiceps* remained on São Miguel into September. The male at Loch Feorlin, Argyll, Scotland, stayed until 20 August. The first breeding of **Common Wood Pigeon** *Columba palumbus* for Kuwait took place at Abdaly farms in March (Sandgrouse 40: 188-194, 2018). A male **Namaqua Dove** *Oena capensis* was reported at Mosul dam, Iraq, on 19 June. In Morocco, an adult and a young were seen at Mijk near Dakhla, Western Sahara, in August; the species bred here also in 2016-17. In Turkey, two were found at Çukurova delta, Adana, on 9 September. In the Azores, a **Red-billed Tropicbird** *Phaethon aethereus* was seen south of São Miguel on 15 July. An **Egyptian Nightjar** *Caprimulgus aegyptius* on the beach near Batumi on 17 September was the second for Georgia, soon after the first there in August 2017. In Jordan, as many as 33 **Nubian Nightjars** *C nubicus tamaricus* were counted at three sites in the southern Jordan valley and in Wadi Araba, in April-May (Sandgrouse 40: 195-208, 2018). By using geolocators, it was shown that some **Common Cuckoos** *Cuculus canorus* migrate more than 16 000 km from Kamchatka, Russia, to Namibia (Kasper Thorup, International Ornithological Congress 2018).

**RAILS TO CRANES** A pair with young **Baillon's Crakes** *Zapornia pusilla* at Akrotiri salt lake on 31 July constitut-

ed the first breeding for Cyprus since 1985. A first-year photographed at Préverenges, Vaud, on 20 August was a rarity for Switzerland. In Spain, an **Allen's Gallinule** *Porphyrio alleni* was photographed at Fuentedepiedra, Málaga, on 8 July. A **Red-knobbed Coot** *Fulica cristata* at Hatta Dam on 25 June was the third for the United Arab Emirates (UAE). In Cyprus, a total of 383 **Demoiselle Cranes** *Grus virgo* in 10 separate flocks were counted on passage between 19 August and 2 September; most of them spent the night at Akrotiri salt lake, and the largest group of 105 flew over Paphos at sunset on 26 August. The breeding population of **Common Crane** *G grus* in the Netherlands increased dramatically from 22 pairs in 2017 to 32 in 2018; for the first time, nesting also occurred in the south-easternmost provinces but only a total of seven fledglings was raised due to dry weather and disturbance.

**BUSTARDS** Collar et al (2017) reviewed the status of bustards in Asia and found most species declining. The current (2017) estimates are, eg, c 200 **Great Indian Bustards** *Ardeotis nigriceps*, 270 male **Lesser Floricans** *Sypheotides indicus* (compared with 1103-1765 in 1994-99) and 225-249 male **Bengal Floricans** *Houbaropsis bengalensis* in southern Asia plus several 100s in Cambodia. The numbers of the western subspecies of **Western Great Bustard** *Otis tarda tarda* in Asian Russia amount to c 200, in Kazakhstan 100-1000 and in China a maximum of 52 in 2014-16; the numbers of **Eastern Great Bustard** *O t dybowskii* are 380-430 in Asian Russia, fewer than 1000 in Mongolia and 600 in China. Habitat change, chiefly by rapid and widespread agricultural intensification but also by infrastructural developments and disturbance, probably form the biggest threat for these populations (Forktail 33: 1-26, 2017). By comparing survey results at the species' Chinese stronghold in Xinjiang in 1988 and 1992 with own counts in 2013-16, Wang et al (2018) reported a presumed strong decline of Eastern of up to 92%, with a minimum of 19 individuals found in the species' known summer area at Tacheng and none in the known winter area at Qapqal (Ardeola 65: 291-297, 2018). By collecting 51 genetic samples of Eastern from as far west as Kazakhstan, Mongolia and the Altai region and comparing mitochondrial DNA with that of 66 Western samples, Kessler et al (2018) concluded that the two may be regarded as distinct species (J Heredity 109: 641-652, 2018).

**LOONS TO PETRELS** An adult **Black-throated Loon** *Gavia arctica* at Vestmannsvatn from 23 August onwards was probably the same individual as the second one ever for Iceland in early June. The first **Pacific Loon** *G pacifica* for Denmark stayed at Grenen, Skagen, Nordjylland, on 13-26 August. In France, 13 **Wilson's Storm Petrels** *Oceanites oceanicus* were reported off the coast of Bretagne in August. Two **Black-bellied Storm Petrels** *Fregetta tropica* photographed at Banco de la Concepción off Lanza-



**434** Traces of Yellow-bellied Sapsucker / Geelbuiksapspecht *Sphyrapicus varius*, Apavatn, Árnessýsla, Iceland, 17 August 2018 (Alex Máni) **435** Yellow-bellied Sapsucker / Geelbuiksapspecht *Sphyrapicus varius*, first-summer female, Apavatn, Árnessýsla, Iceland, 8 September 2018 (Alex Máni) **436** Baillon's Crake / Kleinst Waterhoen *Zapornia pusilla*, first-year, Préverenges, Vaud, Switzerland, 20 August 2018 (Lionel Maumary)



rote on 7 and 10 September were the fifth and sixth for the Canary Islands; previous ones were at the same site in September 2011, August 2012, September 2016 and September 2017. The other 'greater WP' records were off Madeira (one), Oman (three records, six individuals) and Yemen (one). The adult **Black-browed Albatross** *Thalassarche melanophris* left Sylt, Schleswig-Holstein, Germany, on 25 July. One photographed at Faxaflói bay on 5 August was the third for Iceland; previous ones were in 1966 and 1968 (the same individual) and in 1990. On 24 September, one was swimming off the Norfolk coast, England. In the last week of August, the eighth **Swinhoe's Storm Petrel** *Hydrobates monorhis* for the Azores was observed almost every day at Bank of Fortune, Graciosa. Another one was seen at Banco de la Concepción, Canary Islands, on 10 September. If accepted, an intermediate or pale-morph **Trindade Petrel** *Pterodroma arminjoniana* flying past Porthgwarra, Cornwall, England, on 29 July will be the first for Britain; previous WP records were in the Azores (12) and Cape Verde Islands (one). Also off Porthgwarra, a **Yellkouan Shearwater** *Puffinus yellkouan* was reported on 28 August. On 17 September, within a 75 min time span, no less than five **Fea's Petrels** *P feae* were seen off Galley Head, Cork, Ireland. If accepted, a **Barolo Shearwater** *P baroli* flying south off Rubha Ardvue, Outer Hebrides, on 16 September will be the fifth for Scotland. On 20 September, one flew south-west off Heysham, Lancashire, England. In France, one was reported off Sémaphore, Brignogan-Plage, Finistère, on 21 September. A **Bulwer's Petrel** *Bulweria bulwerii* was photographed 13 km off Sagres, Vila do Bispo, Portugal, on 23 June.

**PELICANS TO HERONS** In Israel, a **Pink-backed Pelican** *Pelecanus rufescens* was seen at Hula reserve on 27 August. The first breeding of **Dalmatian Pelican** *P crispus* for Kuwait occurred on Boubyan island in January 2017; the birds unsuccessfully bred here again in March 2018 (Sandgrouse 40: 188-194, 2018). This year, a record 188 **Eurasian Bitterns** *Botaurus stellaris* were singing at 81 sites in Britain, with a key population of 55 males in Somerset, England. A putative **Yellow Bittern** *Ixobrychus sinensis* near Luxor, Egypt, on 12 August 2015 has been re-identified as a Little Bittern *I minutus* (contra Dutch Birding 37: 342, 2015). The **Dwarf Bittern** *I sturmii* on Fuerteventura from 1 December 2017 remained until at least 22 August (cf Dutch Birding 40: 98-101, 2018). A record 192 **Western Cattle Egrets** *Bubulcus ibis ibis* were found in Britain in 2016 (Br Birds 111: 455-456, 2018). This year, the largest-ever flocks were 51 at South Huish Marsh, Devon, on 28 August and 54 at Tadhams Moor, Somerset, on 7 September. A pair of **Western Great Egrets** *Ardea alba* raising four young at Porvoo constituted the species' first breeding record for Finland; one of the parents had been ringed as a chick on the nest at Krammer-Volkerak, the Netherlands, in 2016.

**BOOBIES TO ANHINGAS** A **Red-footed Booby** *Sula sula* off Bandar-e Lengeh on 27 August 1979 has recently been accepted as the first for Iran (Khaleghizadeh et al, Birds of Iran 2017). The sixth **Brown Booby** *S leucogaster* for

Morocco was photographed c 50 km off Sidi Ifni on 28 August. In Spain, one was resting on a fishing vessel c 55 km off Camariñas, A Coruña, on 29 August. The first **Masked Booby** *S dactylatra* for Singapore was picked up exhausted next to an expressway on 30 August and taken into care. An adult **Pygmy Cormorant** *Phalacrocorax pygmeus* was seen at Arles, Bouches-du-Rhône, France, on 25 August. In Iran, as many as 48 **African Darters** *Anhinga rufa* were counted at Hour-al-Azeem, Khuzestan, on 5 June.

**WADERS** An **American Golden Plover** *Pluvialis dominica* at Przemków, Silesia, from 29 July to 5 August was the second for Poland; the previous one was in 2002. The third **Pacific Golden Plover** *P fulva* for Austria stayed at Seewinkel, Burgenland, on 7-8 July. Five **Eurasian Dotterels** *Charadrius morinellus* near Hvoeva, Nesvizh, on 26 August constituted (only) the third record for Belarus. The **Semipalmated Plover** *C semipalmatus* found on 5 January on Tenerife, Canary Islands, remained until 31 July. In the Netherlands, the **Spur-winged Lapwing** *Vanellus spinosus* at Wieringermeer, Noord-Holland, from 16 July was last seen on 8 August. A first-winter **Caspian Plover** *Anarhynchus asiaticus* was found at Poti, Ajaria, Georgia, on 7 September. The third **Spoon-billed Sandpiper** *Calidris pygmaea* for Sri Lanka was photographed at Vankalai Sanctuary in Mannar on 6-7 June; previous ones were in March and November 1978 (Indian Birds, <https://tinyurl.com/ydxgt7oz>). In England, an adult **Stilt Sandpiper** *C himantopus* stayed at Frampton Marsh, Lincolnshire, from 22 August to 3 September. If accepted, a **Red-necked Stint** *C ruficollis* photographed at Hyères, Var, from 17 September will be the sixth for France (and the first juvenile). A **Dunlin** *C alpina* photographed at Saco dos Flamings, Mussulo, Luanda, on 13 September was the first for Angola. In Poland, three adult **White-rumped Sandpipers** *C fuscicollis* were present this summer: at Radziądz, Silesia, on 9-13 August; at Mietkowski reservoir, Silesia, on 11-18 August; and at Górk, Świętokrzyskie, on 19-25 August (there were three previous records). Two were seen in, eg, the Netherlands during August. The first for Mozambique was found at Macaneta on 22 September. A first-year **Terek Sandpiper** *Xenus cinereus* at Hagneck delta, Bern, on 6-11 September was the sixth for Switzerland since 1900. A **Spotted Sandpiper** *Actitis macularius* photographed at Lista light-house, Vest-Agder, on 8-10 September was the 10th for Norway. An adult **Solitary Sandpiper** *Tringa solitaria* stayed on Tresco, Scilly, England, on 15-25 August. The second **Collared Pratincole** *Glareola pratincola* for Latvia was found at Skrunda ponds on 13 September.

**AUKSTO SKUAS** The first **Atlantic Puffin** *Fratercula arctica* for Israel concerned a bird found dead at Bustan Hagalil beach on 15 September. A **Black Guillemot** *Cepphus grylle* at Le Conquet, Finistère, on 3 July was a rarity in summer for France. An adult **Common Murre** *Uria aalge* found dead at Viareggio, Toscana, on 25 July was the 10th for Italy and the first in summer. Perkins et al (2018) revealed an 81% decrease in **Parasitic Jaeger** *Stercorarius parasiticus* breeding success in Britain, from an average





**437** South Polar Skua / Zuidpooljager *Stercorarius maccormicki*, c 92 km off Safi, Morocco, 16 September 2018 (Robert L Flood) **438** Swinhoe's Storm Petrel / Chinees Stormvogeltje *Hydrobates monorhis*, Bank of Fortune, Graciosa, Azores, 29 August 2018 (Klaus Drissner) **439** Pacific Loon / Pacifische Parelduiker *Gavia pacifica* (left), first-summer, with Black-throated Loon / Parelduiker *G. arctica*, first-summer, Grenen, Skagen, Nordjylland, Denmark, 14 August 2018 (Klaus Malling Olsen)

of 0.9 chicks per pair in the early 1990s to 0.3 chicks per pair in the 2010s. In Scotland, 33 colonies showed a decline from 1061 breeding pairs to just 200 in 1992-2015, and it may mean that as few as 550 pairs remain in the entire country. This decline is largely attributed to a reduction in food due to higher sea temperatures depleting sandeel stocks (J Anim Ecol, <https://tinyurl.com/yc7dfd69>). On 16 September, **South Polar Skuas** *S. maccormicki* were seen c 460 km north-north-east of Lanzarote, Canary Islands, and c 92 km off Safi, Morocco; there was one previous record for Morocco on 9 January 2000. Another one was reported c 20 km off Sálvora islands, A Coruña, Spain, on 21 September.

**GULLS** A first-summer **Black-legged Kittiwake** *Rissa tridactyla* photographed at St Lawrence river, Les Escoumins, Quebec, Canada, on 1 and 14 August had been ringed as nestling at Plogoff, Finistère, France, on 12 June 2017. In the past 40 years, many individuals from French colonies

have been trapped on the western coast of Greenland and a very few also in Newfoundland, Canada (<https://tinyurl.com/y926sgxe>). An adult **Bonaparte's Gull** *Chroicocephalus philadelphia* at Thorsminde, Midtjylland, from 26 July to 7 August was the sixth for Denmark. An adult **Franklin's Gull** *Larus pipixcan* photographed at Wieringermeer, Noord-Holland, on 14 July was the 12th for the Netherlands. An adult at Bonn, Nordrhein-Westfalen, on 27-28 July was the ninth for Germany. The first **Audouin's Gull** *L. audouinii* for Russia was photographed at Mzymta river mouth, Sochi, Krasnodar, on 16 April (Russian J Ornithol 27: 3559-3562, 2018). This year, 3754 pairs were nesting in Catalunya, Spain, including 2231 pairs in two colonies at Delta de l'Ebre, 941 at port Tarragona and 582 at port Barcelona; in total, 521 young were ringed. This population strongly declined from 10 000-16 000 pairs in 2000-11 to less than 4000 in 2015-18 (<https://tinyurl.com/yc9h489g>). The **Ring-billed Gull** *L. delawarensis* colour-ringed (red PAA3) at



**440** White-rumped Sandpiper / Bonapartes Strandloper *Calidris fuscicollis*, adult, Mietkowski reservoir, Silesia, Poland, 13 August 2018 (Paweł Gębski/aviation-nature.pl)

**441** Red-necked Stint / Roodkeelstrandloper *Calidris ruficollis*, juvenile, Hyères, Var, France, 17 September 2018 (Aurélien Audevard)





**442** Terek Sandpiper / Terekruiter *Xenus cinereus*, first-year, Hagneck delta, Bern, Switzerland, 7 September 2018  
(Lionel Maumary)

**443** Least Sandpiper / Kleinste Strandloper *Calidris minutilla*, Lagoa das Furnas, São Miguel, Azores,  
26 August 2018 (David Monticelli)





**444** Sooty Tern / Bonte Stern *Onychoprion fuscatus*, adult, Long Nanny, Northumberland, England, 19 July 2018 (Gary Woodburn) **445** European Roller / Scharrelaar *Coracias garrulus*, Texel, Noord-Holland, 25 September 2018 (Jos van den Berg/BirdingTexel.com) **446** Pacific Loon / Pacifische Parelduiker *Gavia pacifica*, first-summer, Grenen, Skagen, Nordjylland, Denmark, 21 August 2018 (Henrik Knudsen)





**447** Sooty Tern / Bonte Stern *Onychoprion fuscatus*, adult, Praia, Graciosa, Azores, 26 August 2018  
(David Monticelli)

**448** Franklin's Gull / Franklins Meeuw *Larus pipixcan*, adult, Bonn, Nordrhein-Westfalen, Germany, 27 July 2018  
(Oliver Käseberg)





**449-450** Yellow-billed Kite / Geelsnavelwouw *Milvus aegyptius*, adult, K19, Eilat, Israel, 30 July 2018 (Aviv Etzion)  
**451** American Black Tern / Amerikaanse Zwarte Stern *Chlidonias niger surinamensis*, juvenile, Dungeness, Kent, England, 23 August 2018 (David Walker) **452** Bonaparte's Gull / Kleine Kokmeeuw *Chroicocephalus philadelphia*, adult, Thorsminde, Midtjylland, Denmark, 27 July 2018 (Klaus Malling Olsen)



Szczecin-Klucz, Pomerania, on 23 December 2005 again turned up at Olsztyn, Warmińsko-Mazurskie, on 5 September; this individual returned almost every autumn-winter to Poland but also stayed at Maasbracht, Limburg, Netherlands, and across the Belgian border, from 23 February to 2 March 2012.

**TERNs** In Northumberland, England, an adult **Sooty Tern** *Onychoprion fuscatus* was seen on Farne Islands on 7 July and at Long Nanny river on 19 July, after which it stayed at Ythan estuary, Aberdeenshire, Scotland, from 20 July to 5 August. In the Azores, the resident pair's juvenile was present on Graciosa during August. In 2017, 37 pairs of **Gull-billed Tern** *Gelochelidon nilotica* nested at the Elbe mouth in Dithmarschen, Schleswig-Holstein, Germany, which is currently the species' only colony in central Europe (Corax 23: 412-439, 2018, cf Dutch Birding 36: 147-158, 2014). The first **White-winged Tern** *Chlidonias leucopterus* for Argentina was a juvenile photographed at Cancha Larga, Bermejo, Chaco, on 2 April. In France, a pair successfully raised two young at Brière, Loire-Atlantique. A juvenile **American Black Tern** *C niger surinamensis* lingered at Dungeness, Kent, England, on 21-30 August while, in Northern Ireland, a juvenile stayed at Bann Estuary, Derry, on 9-18 September. This year's breeding season of **Roseate Tern** *Sterna dougallii* on Coquet Island, Northumberland, was the most successful in the past 40 years with 118 pairs raising chicks; previous best years were 2015 and 2017 with 111 pairs. In the 1970s, the population crashed by 80% with only 16 pairs remaining; in 2000, when there were only 34 pairs, the introduction of specially constructed nesting boxes was the start of increasing breeding success. This summer, the species' first breeding for Wales since 2006 resulted in two hatchlings (one of which fledged) on Skerries, Anglesey. An adult **Forster's Tern** *S forsteri* stayed in Louth, Ireland, from 7 August through September. In Spain, there were up to four breeding attempts by assumed **Elegant Terns** *S elegans* this summer; three involved mixed pairs with Sandwich Terns *S sandwichensis*. The **American Royal Tern** *S maxima* ringed in North Carolina, USA, first seen on Guernsey, Channel Islands, on 5 July 2017 and then irregularly also on the northern coasts of France and south-eastern coasts of England turned up at Granville, Manche, France, on 25 July.

**RAPTORS** McClure et al (2018) showed that 52% of the world's raptor species are in decline and 18% threatened with extinction. Habitat destruction by agricultural expansion and logging are considered to be the main factors. Old World vultures are the most threatened, with 12 of the 16 species listed as Endangered or Critically Endangered (Biol Conserv, <https://tinyurl.com/ycs58th8>). **Black-winged Kite** *Elanus caeruleus* was confirmed as a breeding species in Jordan, with a few pairs with young being reported at Jordan valley near Safi and Madaba this spring (Sandgrouse 40: 195-208, 2018; cf Dutch Birding 39: 1-12, 2017). The 14th for Denmark (and sixth for Skagen) was seen on 15 July. Five were reported in Belgium: at Montenaken, Limburg, on 1-2 August; near



453 Eastern Imperial Eagle / Keizerarend *Aquila heliaca*, third calendar-year, El Haouaria, Nabeul, Tunisia, 29 April 2017 (Mohamed El Golli)

Mormont, Luxembourg, on 10 August; at Kalmthout, Antwerpen, on 9 September; flying south-west over Baaigemkouter, Oost-Vlaanderen, on 29 September; and flying south-west over Sint-Martens-Voeren, Limburg, on 29 September. In the Netherlands, individuals stayed at Fochteloërveen, Drenthe/Friesland, from 21 August to 3 September and at Groote Peel, Limburg/Noord-Brabant, from 17 September. An unmarked immature **Bearded Vulture** *Gypaetus barbatus* photographed at Pribylina, Slovakia, on 4 July was also seen that day at Starobociański Wierch, Tatry mountains, Poland. Arkumarev et al (2018) report that the **Egyptian Vulture** *Neophron percnopterus* population in Bulgaria declined by 51.7% in 2005-16 despite the fact that breeding success of this population is among the highest in Europe. It means that mortality is a more significant factor in the species' population dynamics than breeding performance (Ornis Fenn, <https://tinyurl.com/y8bp2uuy>). A nesting pair of **Short-toed Snake Eagles** *Circaetus gallicus* in southern Lithuania on 23 July constituted the country's first breeding record since c 100 years. A second calendar-year **Rüppell's Vulture** *Gyps rueppelli* was reported near Mina de São Domingos, Portugal, on 21 August. An unringed second-year **Cinereous Vulture** *Aegypius monachus* was photographed at Gedern, Hessen, Germany, on 20 August. If accepted, one flying east past Vuosaari, Helsinki, on 7 September and photographed at Virkkula on 23 September will be the third for Finland. The population of



**454** Pallas's Fish Eagle / Witbandzeearend *Haliaeetus leucoryphus*, adult, Golil and Sarani, North Khorasan, Iran, 11 August 2018 (*Babak Ghavidel Namanlu*) **455** Pied Crow / Schildraaf *Corvus albus*, Gebel Elba, Hala'ib Triangle, Egypt, 9 April 2018 (*Ali Dora*) cf Dutch Birding 40: 265, 2018 **456** Arctic Warbler / Noordse Boszanger *Phylloscopus borealis*, Eilat, Israel, 23 September 2018 (*Noam Weiss*) **457** American Golden Plover / Amerikaanse Goudplevier *Pluvialis dominica*, Przemków, Silesia, Poland, 29 July 2018 (*Radosław Gwóźdź*)

**Greater Spotted Eagle** *Aquila clanga* in Ukraine was estimated at 25-35 pairs in 2012-16, including six hybrid pairs with **Lesser Spotted Eagle** *A pomarina*. Breeding success in this period was 79.3% while 24 young were marked with metal and colour rings, including seven from mixed pairs (Berkut 26: 49-59, 2017). Migration movements are predominantly genetically determined in passerines, while in large soaring birds it is presumed that social factors play the largest role. Comparing the autumn migrations and wintering ranges of Lesser Spotted and Greater Spotted and their hybrids using gps telemetry, Väli et al (2018) however found that timing of migration in hybrids was similar to that of one parent species, while winter distribution and home range sizes were similar to that of the other parent species. They thus concluded that genetic factors in the migration of soaring birds are more important than previously assumed (Proc R Soc B, <https://tinyurl.com/yab65bze>). A second calen-

dar-year **Tawny Eagle** *A rapax belisarius* was photographed in Bordj Bou Arreridj, north-eastern Algeria, on 17 July (this taxon may now be extinct in Morocco). The first **Eastern Imperial Eagle** *A heliaca* for Tunisia and north-western Africa was a third calendar-year at El Haouaria, Nabeul, on 29 April 2017. Four immatures were recorded in eastern Poland between 29 July and 24 August. On 11 August, an adult **Pallas's Fish Eagle** *Haliaeetus leucoryphus* was photographed at Golil and Sarani, North Khorasan, Iran. The third **Yellow-billed Kite** *Milvus aegyptius* for Israel stayed at K19, Eilat, from 18 July to 8 September; previous ones were trapped in the late 1960s (kept alive in the Tel Aviv university zoological gardens until the late 1980s) and found exhausted on 28 March 2015 (released on 2 May 2015). The long-staying **Long-legged Buzzard** *Buteo rufinus* at both sides of the Dutch-German border near Netterden, Gelderland, from 6 July was last seen on Dutch soil on 17 August.



**OWLS TO ROLLERS** Two **Marsh Owls** *Asio capensis* photographed at a farmland near Benslimane, north-east of Casablanca, Morocco, on 8 August concern a rare record away from known breeding sites. The long-staying female **Snowy Owl** *Bubo scandiacus* remained on St Kilda, Outer Hebrides, through September. Other females were present at Kallviken, Västerbotten, Sweden, from 24 July to 4 August and at Carnedd Llewelyn, Gwynedd, Wales, on 26 July. In Scotland, the species was also reported at Grenitote, North Uist, Outer Hebrides, on 1-10 August and at Cunningsburgh, Shetland, on 31 August. In the first half of 2018, c 10 territories of **Arabian Eagle-Owl** *B milesi* were found at Hajar mountains, UAE, where the species was discovered on 1 November 2017 (Sandgrouse 40: 188-194, 2018). In Spain, a **Blue-cheeked Bee-eater** *Merops persicus* was photographed at Colonia Sant Jordi, Campos, Balearic Islands, on 30 July and an adult flew over Mas de Melons reserve, Lleida, on 2 September. The first **Eurasian Wryneck** *Jynx torquilla* for the Cape Verde Islands was photographed on Sal on 24 September. In early August, 10-15 trees with fresh sapsucker *Sphyrapicus* feeding holes were discovered at Apavatn, Árnesýsla, Iceland. It took some searching before, on 25 August, indeed a first-summer female **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** *S varius* was found there which stayed until 9 September; previous WP records were in Iceland on 5 June 1961 and 7-13 October 2007, in Scilly from 26 September to 6 October 1975, in Ireland on 16-19 October 1988 and on Corvo, Azores, from 11 October to

3 November 2008 (cf Dutch Birding 29: 384, plate 551, 2007, 30: 433, plate 517, 2008). A **European Roller** *Coracias garrulus* on Texel, Noord-Holland, on 24-26 September was twitched by many birders

**MOUSEBIRDS TO CROWS** A **Blue-naped Mousebird** *Urocolius macrourus* photographed at a village in the Tin-Zaouten district, Tamanghasset, on 29 July was the first for Algeria (and 'greater WP'); in northern Mauritania (within WP sensu BWP), the species has been recorded several times in recent years near Choum, Adrar. Photographs of the second **Saker Falcon** *Falco cherrug* for Finland at Viikki, Helsinki, on 14 September 2006 surfaced only recently. The third for Denmark was found at Ballum, Sønderjylland, on 4 August. The first **Red-eyed Vireo** *Vireo olivaceus* this autumn for Britain was found at Nanjizal valley, Cornwall, on 20 September. Sjöberg et al (2018) applied data loggers with barometric and temperature sensors to study migratory flights in autumn from Europe to Africa of a **Red-backed Shrike** *Lanius colurio* and a **Great Reed Warbler** *Acrocephalus arundinaceus*. Generally, both birds flew at highest altitudes during passage across the Mediterranean and Sahara desert, and at lowest altitudes in Europe. The warbler reached its highest altitude of 3950 m above sea level (asl) during its flight from Europe to western Africa and the shrike's highest flight of 3650 m asl occurred on the section from the Sahel to southern Africa. Both used lowlands and highlands for resting periods on their migration. It is thought that barometric data may be used in fu-

**458** Sykes's Warbler / Sykes' Spotvogel *Iduna rama*, first-year, Porthgwarra, Cornwall, England, 30 August 2018  
(Michael McKee)





**459** White-throated Sparrow / Witkeelgors *Zonotrichia albicollis*, first-winter, Foula, Shetland, Scotland, 7 September 2018 (Geoff Atherton)

**460** Yellow-breasted Bunting / Wilgengors *Emberiza aureola*, first-winter, Whalsay, Shetland, Scotland, 23 September 2018 (John Lowrie Irvine)



ture research into the influence of air pressure changes on migratory flight decisions by small birds (J Avian Biol, <https://tinyurl.com/y9fzxunc>). The third **Mesopotamian Crow** *Corvus capellanus* for the UAE was found at Umm al Quwain on 16 March. In the Canary Islands, the long-staying **Pied Crow** *C. albus* was again seen in the harbour of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria on 1 September.

**GOLDCRESTS TO SWALLOWS** Several territorial **Common Firecrests** *Regulus ignicapilla* at Jaagupi, Pärnumaa, in July concerned the first confirmed breeding for Estonia. Maier (2018) describes the increase of the population of **Eurasian Crag Martin** *Ptyonoprogne rupestris* in southern Baden-Württemberg, Germany, from the first breeding record in 1974 to 16-19 pairs in 2017; in 2017, the first was seen on 5 March and then pairs bred either alone or in small colonies of two-three raising a total of 72 young, with fledging between 3 June and 23 September (Vogelwelt 138: 123-140, 2018).

**LEAF WARBLERS TO REED WARBLERS** A **Green Warbler** *Phylloscopus nitidus* and an **Eastern Bonelli's Warbler** *P. orientalis* trapped at Grindul Chituc, Constanța, on 2 and 7 September, respectively, were both the second for Romania. An **Arctic Warbler** *P. borealis* trapped at Skagen on 8 September was (only) the seventh for Denmark. The first for Israel was ringed at Eilat on 23 September. In Norway, an early **Dusky Warbler** *P. fuscatus* was trapped at Spildra, Meløy, Nordland, on 4 September. In the Netherlands, a male **Sardinian Warbler** *Sylvia melanocephala* was trapped at Bergumermeer, Friesland, on 28 August. Early **Lanceolated Warblers** *Locustella lanceolata* were trapped in Scotland on Fair Isle, Shetland, on 5 and 11 September and on North Ronaldsay, Orkney, on 10 September. In France, a **Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler** *L. certhiola* was trapped at Trunvel, Finistère, on 24 September. A presumed hybrid **Common Grasshopper x Savi's Warbler** *L. naevia x luscinioides* was trapped at Ooijse Graaf, Gelderland, the Netherlands, on 28 August. If accepted, a **Sykes's Warbler** *Iduna rama* reported at Understen, Uppland, on 26 August will be the fourth for Sweden. The 20th for Britain was photographed at Porthgwarra on 29-30 August. A **Paddyfield Warbler** *A. agricola* ringed at Seewinkel, Burgenland, on 2 August and a **Blyth's Reed Warbler** *A. dumetorum* ringed at Hartberger Gmoos, Steiermark, on 4 August were the third and second for Austria, respectively. The fourth Blyth's Reed for Malta was trapped at Ghadira reserve on 15 September. In the first four weeks of September, five were trapped in the Netherlands. In France, as many as 115 **Aquatic Warblers** *A. paludicola* were ringed at Donge, Loire-Atlantique, in August, including 19 on 7 August and 12 on 8 August. The first for Denmark since 2008 was trapped at Sønderho, Fanø, on 8 August.

**WALLCREEPERS TO WHEATEARS** A **Wallcreeper** *Tichodroma muraria* at Avagas Gorge on c 20 July concerned the first-ever summer record for Cyprus. The first **Eye-browed Thrush** *Turdus obscurus* for Lebanon was shot at Bchaaleh, Batroun, on 23 November 2017 (Sandgrouse 40: 130-132, 2018). In Finland, 110 territories of **Red-**

**flanked Bluetail** *Tarsiger cyanurus* were counted in May-July. The Spanish rarities committee has recently reviewed all records of **Siberian Saxicola** *Saxicola maurus maurus*, **Caspian S m hemprichii** and **Stejneger's Stonechat** *S. stejnegeri* which led to four being assigned to *maurus/stejnegeri* and two to *hemprichii* (<https://tinyurl.com/yc5hxmqq>). In February, at least 10 pairs of **Red-rumped Wheatear** *Oenanthe moesta brooksbanki* were discovered in two separate areas at Sharrah highlands in Jordan; the habitat of this rather rare species for the Middle East is threatened by wind farm developments (Sandgrouse 40: 195-208, 2018).

**SPARROWS TO BUNTINGS** In Ukraine, c 250 pairs of **Spanish Sparrow** *Passer hispaniolensis* were found at seven sites in Kherson and Mykolayiv regions in 2016-17; the species was first breeding in 1986 in southern Odessa, and it expanded to the north since, up to Berezki-Chechelnitski, Vinnitsa (Berkut 26: 62-64, 2017). In the southernmost region of Algeria, a flock of more than 30 **Sudan Golden Sparrows** *P. luteus* photographed at Tin-Zaouten district, Tamanghasset, on 28 July constituted the country's third record. An early **Blyth's Pipit** *Anthus godlewskii* was photographed at Länsiniitty, Vaasa, Finland, on 16 September. In Sicily, Italy, a **Trumpeter Finch** *Bucanetes githagineus* turned up at Penisola Magnisi, Siracusa, on 7 August. A first-winter **White-throated Sparrow** *Zonotrichia albicollis* photographed on Foula from 7 September onwards was the 16th for Shetland. Also in Shetland, a first-winter **Yellow-breasted Bunting** *Emberiza aureola* stayed on Whalsay on 22-23 September. In Germany, an unseasonal **Little Bunting** *E. pusilla* was reported on Helgoland on 14 July.

**NORTH AMERICAN CHECKLIST** Four new species have recently been added to the North American list: **Great Black Hawk** *Buteogallus urubitinga* (South Padre Island, Cameron, Texas, USA, 24 April 2018), **Red-backed Shrike** (Gambell, St Lawrence Island, Alaska, USA, 3-22 October 2017), **Mistle Thrush** *T. viscivorus* (Miramichi, New Brunswick, Canada, 9 December 2017 to 24 March 2018) and **Pied Wheatear** *O. pleschanka* (Cape Nome, Nome, Alaska, 5-31 July 2017).

**NORTH AFRICAN LIST** In *Alauda* 86: 117-152, 2018, Isenmann & Thévenot discussed in depth the taxonomic status of (sub)species breeding in North Africa. They for instance accepted species status ('splits') for **Maghreb Wood Owl** *Strix mauritanica*, **Desert Grey Shrike** *L. elegans*, **Maghreb Magpie** *Pica mauritanica*, **Maghreb Lark** *Galerida macrorhyncha*, **Atlas Horned Lark** *Eremophila atlas*, **Seebohm's Wheatear** *O. seebohmi* and **Western Mourning Wheatear** *O. halophila* while suggesting a possible species status for, eg, **Cyrenaic Partridge** *Alectoris (barbara) barbata*, **Maghreb Short-toed Treecreeper** *Certhia (brachydactyla) mauritanica* and **Sahara Scrub Warbler** *Scotocerca (inquieta) saharae*.

**EXTINCT BIRDS** Butchart et al (2018) listed a number of bird species that have possibly gone extinct or went extinct in the past few decades: **Javan Lapwing** *V. macro-*

*pterus* (last recorded in 1939), **Pernambuco Pygmy Owl** *Glaucidium mooreorum* (2001), **Glaucous Macaw** *Anodorhynchus glaucus* (2001), **New Caledonian Lorikeet** *Chamosyna diadema* (1976), **Cryptic Treehunter** *Cichlocolaptes mazarbarnetti* (2007), **Alagoas Foliage-gleaner** *Philydor novaesi* (2007) and **Poo-uli** *Melamprosops phaeosoma* (2004). Moreover, **Spix's Macaw** *Cyanopsitta spixii* has been classified as extinct in the wild (2000; an observation in 2016 is believed to relate to a release from captivity). The analysis also shows a new trend: for the first time, mainland extinctions outpace island extinctions. The revised total of extinct species 'since 1500' is 187, of which 90% are island species (Biol Conserv, <https://tinyurl.com/yaxzfkjp>).

For a number of reports Birdwatch, British Birds, Go-South Bulletin, Sovon-nieuws, [www.birdguides.com](http://www.birdguides.com), [www.dutchavifauna.nl](http://www.dutchavifauna.nl), [www.hbv.com](http://www.hbv.com), [www.magornitho.org](http://www.magornitho.org), [www.netflugl.dk](http://www.netflugl.dk), [www.rarebirdalert.co.uk](http://www.rarebirdalert.co.uk), [www.tarsiger.com](http://www.tarsiger.com) and [www.waarneming.nl](http://www.waarneming.nl) were consulted. We wish to thank Eric Jan Alblas, Mohamed Amezian, Donna and Geoff Atherton, Aurélien Audevard, Soufyane Bekkouche, Patrick Bergier, Paul Bradbeer, José Luis Copete, Magnus Corell, Andrea Corso, Ali Dora, Klaus Drissner, Philippe Dubois, Nils van Duivendijk, Enno Ebels, Aviv Etzion, Mohamed El Golli, Bob Flood, Raymond Galea, Pawel Gebski, Ricard Gutiérrez, Radosław Gwóźdź, Klaus Hubatsch, John Lowrie Irvine, Josh Jones, Zbigniew Kajzer, Oliver Käseberg, Leander Khil, Henrik Knudsen, Bence Kókay, Yann Kolbeinsson, Richard Kvetko, André van Loon, Klaus Malling Olsen, Alex Máni, Lionel Maumary, Michael McKee, Gerbrand Michielsens, Geir Mobakken, Jean-Yves Monnat, David Monticelli, Killian Mullarney, Babak Ghavidel Namanlu, Alexander Nastachenko, Gerald Oreel, Yoav Perlman, René Pop, Nikos Probonas, Colin Richardson, Magnus Robb, Roy Slaterus, Vincent van der Spek, Rasmus Strack, Ehsan Talebi, Hugo Touzé, Roland van der Vliet, Peter de Vries, David Walker, Noam Weiss and Gary Woodburn 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 beslaat voornamelijk de periode **juli-augustus 2018**. 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 (CDNA) wordt verzocht hun waarnemingen zo spoedig mogelijk in te dienen via [www.dutchavifauna.nl](http://www.dutchavifauna.nl).

**EENDEN** (Vermoedelijk) ongeringde **Ross' Ganzen** *Anser rossii* waren, meestal in de buurt van Grauwe Ganzen *A anser*, aanwezig van 23 juli tot 6 augustus bij Zevenhuizen, Zuid-Holland, op 25 juli en 14 augustus in de omgeving van Medemblik, Noord-Holland, en van 19 tot 27 augustus in het Oude Land van Strijen, Zuid-Holland. Enkele andere waarnemingen hadden met zekerheid betrekking op ontsnapte vogels. Overzomerende **Ijseenden** *Clangula hyemalis* verbleven tot 17 juli bij Lienden, Gelderland; de gehele periode op de Maasvlakte, Zuid-Holland; vanaf 9 augustus op de Marker Wadden, Flevoland; en op 15 augustus op De Kreupel, Noord-Holland. Het bekende mannetje **Buffelkoppeend** *Bucephala albeola* in eclipskleed hield zich tot ten minste 27 augustus op in de Brabantse Biesbosch, Noord-Brabant, en ook in het Lauwersmeer, Groningen, verbleef vanaf 14 juli weer eens een – schijnbaar ongeringd – mannetje. Op het Eemmeer bij Huizen, Noord-Holland, dobberde vanaf 1 augustus een waarschijnlijk vrouwtje, maar of dat met zekerheid ongeringd was bleef (voorals-

nog) onduidelijk. Van 4 tot 8 augustus verbleef een **Marmereend** *Marmaronetta angustirostris* bij 't Zand, Noord-Holland, maar toen de eerste berichten verschenen over een hap uit de rechtervleugel was de belangstelling snel verdwenen. De 629 **Krooneenden** *Netta rufina* op 16 augustus in Meijndel, Zuid-Holland, vormden een recordtelling buiten de Randmeren. Naast een terugkerende **Witoogeend** *Aythya nyroca* bij Hilversum, Noord-Holland (vanaf 12 juli), waren er nog enkele andere meldingen, waaronder van een mannetje met gele kleurring van 12 juli tot 5 augustus op de Hatertse Vennen bij Nijmegen, Gelderland. Laatstgenoemde bleek afkomstig te zijn van Steinhuder Meer in Niedersachsen, Duitsland, waar er sinds 2012 naar verluidt 600 zijn geherintroduceerd; verreweg de meeste zijn geringd (links metaal, rechts geel).

**HOENDERS TOT DUIKERS** Alleen bij Castricum, Noord-Holland, en in Meijndel (twee) werden **Kwartels** *Coturnix coturnix* geringd. Bij Westenschenouwen, Zeeland, hing op 22 juli een **Nachtzwaluw** *Caprimulgus europaeus* in een mistnet: zeker gezien de datum een opvallende locatie. In augustus werden **Porseleinhoenders** *Porzana porzana* geringd bij Castricum (vier), in Meijndel (twee) en in de Amsterdamse Waterleidingduinen, Noord-Holland (twee). Een vrouwtje **Klein Waterhoen** *Zapornia parva* werd op 11 juli gefotografeerd bij Elburg, Gelderland. In elk geval tot 22 juli werd een **Kleinst Waterhoen** *Z pusilla* zo nu en dan gehoord in de Onnerpolder in het Zuidlaardermeergebied, Groningen. In totaal 32 broedparen **Kraanvogels** *Grus grus* werden geteld – 10 meer dan in 2017 – met bolwerken in Drenthe en Friesland.



461 Ralreiger / Squacco Heron *Ardeola ralloides*, adult zomer, Ouderkerk aan de IJssel, Zuid-Holland, 1 juli 2018  
(Chris van Rijswijk)

462 Dougalls Stern / Roseate Tern *Sterna dougalli*, adult zomer, met Grote Sterns / Sandwich Terns *S sandvicensis*, Zuidpier, IJmuiden, Noord-Holland, 3 juli 2018 (Daan Drukker)



## Recente meldingen

Tot de nieuwe gebieden waar de soort zich vestigde behoorden de Grote Peel en Mariapoel op de grens van Limburg en Noord-Brabant. Het broedsucces was overigens mager; in totaal 12 paren kregen kuikens, waarvan er slechts zeven groot werden. Op zowel 27 als 30 juli passeerde een **Parelduiker** *Gavia arctica* in zomerkleed telpost Camperduin, Noord-Holland, in noordelijke richting.

**TUBENOSES** Het eerste **Vale Stormvogeltje** *Hydrobates leucorhous* van het najaar werd op 25 augustus gefotografeerd bij Westkapelle, Zeeland. Hierna volgden exemplaren op 28 augustus op het Nederlands Continentaal Plat ten noorden van Terschelling, Friesland, en op 30 augustus langs Camperduin. Slechts 12 **Noordse Stormvogels** *Fulmarus glacialis* werden gezien vanaf trekposten, waarvan de helft langs Camperduin. Pijlstormvogels waren schaars: zeetrekters noteerden slechts zes **Grauwe Pijlstormvogels** *Puffinus griseus* en één **Noordse Pijlstormvogel** *P. puffinus* (en ook het aantal waarnemingen buiten de telposten stelde weinig voor). Slechts vijf **Vale Pijlstormvogels** *P. mauretanicus* werden gezien: op 10 en 17 juli en 30 augustus langs Camperduin en op 21 en 24 augustus vanaf Terschelling. Het gemiddelde aantal in juli-augustus in de afgelopen 10 jaar in de database van trektellen.nl bedraagt 7.3.

**OUIEVAARS TOT IBISSEN** Er werden 58 **Zwarte Oievaars** *Ciconia nigra* gezien op trekposten, met het hoogste aantal (17 in totaal) over telpost Loozerheide bij Weert, Limburg. Dat deze soort steeds algemener wordt in ons land, blijkt uit het hoge aantal uurhokken (286) met waarnemingen in deze periode. Een 10-tal **Woudapen** *Ixobrychus minutus* werd gemeld, waaronder maar liefst drie 's nachts over Amsterdam, Noord-Holland (op 23 (twee) en 28 augustus). Nadat op 30 juni een overvliegende **Ralreiger** *Ardeola ralloides* werd opgemerkt bij Lekkerkerk, Zuid-Holland, volgden er meldingen bij Berkenwoude, Zuid-Holland, op 1 en 13 juli en van 21 tot 25 juli. Op c 20 plekken gaven **Koereigers** *Bubulcus ibis* acte de présence. Met name de Biesbosch, Noord-Brabant/Zuid-Holland, was populair; het hoogste aantal bijeen bedroeg 11 op 26 augustus in de Slie-drechtse Biesbosch, Zuid-Holland. Op 30 augustus werd het respectabele aantal van 373 **Purperreigers** *Ardea purpurea* genoteerd vanaf telpost Dordtse Biesbosch, Zuid-Holland; dat daarmee de koek nog lang niet op was bleek op 13 september toen hier zelfs 480 exemplaren passeerden (landelijk dagrecord). Op 12 augustus trokken twee **Zwarte Ibissen** *Plegadis falcinellus* zuidwaarts langs Scheveningen, Zuid-Holland. Verder waren er waarnemingen van maximaal twee vogels op zes plekken in de drie noordelijke provincies.

**STELTKLUTEN TOT STRANDLOPERS** **Steltkluten** *Himantopus himantopus* waren aanwezig in 28 uurhokken verspreid over het noorden en westen van het land. De grootste groepen telden 11 exemplaren, zowel in de Oostvaardersplassen, Flevoland, als in het Zuidlaardermeergebied. **Aziatische Goudplevieren** *Pluvialis fulva* werden gezien op 6 en 8 augustus in de Kroonspolders

op Vlieland, Friesland, en op 12 en 23 augustus op Walcheren bij respectievelijk Serooskerke en Koudekerke, Zeeland. Sinds de eerste voor Vlieland in 2014 is deze soort jaarlijks op dit eiland waargenomen. Van **Morinelplevier** *Charadrius morinellus* werden er in augustus 37 geteld op trekposten, met opvallend veel waarnemingen diep in het binnenland. Daarnaast werden er verspreid over het land exemplaren aan de grond gezien, met een maximum van zeven op 28 augustus op de Tweede Maasvlakte, Zuid-Holland. Misschien wel de zeldzaamste soort maar aanvankelijk met bedenkingen gadegeslagen – eerdere gevallen betroffen immers bewezen of vermoedelijke escapes – was de **Sporenkievit** *Vanellus spinosus* die zich van 16 juli tot 8 augustus ophield bij Slootdorp in de Wieringermeer, Noord-Holland. De vogel was in de rui en bleek geen tekenen van een verblijf in gevangenschap te vertonen. Later werd bekend dat op 8 juli ook een exemplaar was gefotografeerd bij Aagtekerke, Zeeland, maar daarvan is niet bekend of er rui of tekenen van gevangenschap waren. Op een handvol locaties in het Waddenzegebied werden **Breedbekstrandlopers** *Calidris falcinellus* ontdekt, waaronder twee juveniele van 27 tot 29 augustus op Schiermonnikoog, Friesland. **Bonapartes Strandlopers** *C. fuscicollis* werden opgemerkt op 12 augustus bij Westhoek, Friesland, en op 17 augustus op Griend, Friesland. **Blonde Ruiters** *C. subruficollis* lieten zich goed bekijken van 21 tot 27 augustus in en rond Mariëndal bij Den Helder, Noord-Holland, en op 31 augustus en 1 september op het Westerstrand van Schiermonnikoog. **Gestreepte Strandlopers** *C. melanotos* verbleven van 7 tot 14 juli in de Ezumakeeg, Friesland; op 22 juli in De Putten bij Camperduin; van 12 tot 14 augustus bij Wieringerwerf, Noord-Holland; en op 30 en 31 augustus iets oostelijker in de Wieringermeer. Een **Rosse Franjepoot** *Phalaropus fulicarius* werd (opnieuw) gemeld op 4 juli op de Marker Wadden. Uit 26 uurhokken kwamen meldingen van **Grauwe Franjepoten** *P. lobatus*, vooral uit de noordelijke helft van het land. Het hoogste aantal bijeen bedroeg vier, waaronder een adulte in zomerkleed, op 26 juli in de Kroonspolders op Vlieland. Van 18 tot 25 juli verbleef een **Terekruiter** *Xenus cinereus* aan de Dollard bij Termunterzijl, Groningen, en van 4 tot 11 augustus liep een exemplaar voor het kijkscherm in de Balgzandpolder bij Den Helder. Maar pas echt bijzonder was de geluidsopname van een overtrekkend exemplaar die kort na middernacht op 12 augustus werd gemaakt in Noordwijkerhout, Zuid-Holland. De **Kleine Geelpootruiter** *Tringa flavipes* die op 28 juni werd ontdekt bij Petten, Noord-Holland, bleef tot 3 juli. Op c negen locaties werden **Poelruiters** *T. stagnatilis* waargenomen, waaronder twee juveniele op 25 juli in polder IJdoorn bij Durgerdam, Noord-Holland.

**JAGERS TOT STERNS** Zeetrekters registreerden in totaal vier **Kleinste Stercorarius** *longicaudus*, 109 **Kleine S** *parasiticus*, negen **Middelste S** *pomarinus* en 13 **Grote Jagers** *S. skua*. Daarnaast waren er vanaf half augustus c vijf overige waarnemingen van Kleinste Jagers langs de kust. Een bescheiden influx van adulte **Vorkstaartmeewen** *Xema sabini* vond plaats in augustus. Na het eerste



**463** Sporenkievit / Spur-winged Lapwing *Vanellus spinosus*, Slootweg, De Haukes, Noord-Holland, 31 juli 2018 (Mattias Hofstede) **464** Terekruieter / Terek Sandpiper *Xenus cinereus*, met Tureluurs / Common Redshanks *Tringa totanus*, Balgzandpolder, Noord-Holland, 10 augustus 2018 (Eric Menkveld) **465** Sporenkievit / Spur-winged Lapwing *Vanellus spinosus*, Slootweg, De Haukes, Noord-Holland, 7 augustus 2018 (Co van der Wardt)





**466** Klein Waterhoen / Little Crake *Porzana parva*, vrouwtje, Korte Waarden, Elburg, Gelderland, 11 juli 2018 (Henk van Dorp/instagram.com/henk.vandorp) **467** Franklins Meeuw / Franklin's Gull *Larus pipixcan*, adult zomer, Dijksgatsweide, Wieringermeer, Noord-Holland, 14 juli 2018 (Bob Woets) **468** Blonde Ruiters / Buff-breasted Sandpiper *Calidris subruficollis*, adult, Mariëndal, Den Helder, Noord-Holland, 22 augustus 2018 (Rob Half) **469** Blonde Ruiters / Buff-breasted Sandpiper *Calidris subruficollis*, adult, Schiermonnikoog, Friesland, 31 augustus 2018 (Lonnie Bregman)

exemplaar op 4 augustus langs Texel, Noord-Holland, volgden waarnemingen op 24 augustus ver in het binnenland (!) bij Deventer, Overijssel; op 25 augustus langs Petten en Westkapelle; op 27 augustus langs Ameland, Friesland; en op 30 augustus langs Camperduin en op Schiermonnikoog. Knap ontdekt maar helaas ook snel vertrokken was een adulte **Franklins Meeuw** *Larus pipixcan* op 14 juli op de Dijksgatsweide in de Wieringermeer; indien aanvaard betreft dit het 12e geval. Een tweedekalenderjaar **Grote Burgemeester** *L hyperboreus* trok op 1 juli langs telpost De Vulkaan bij Den Haag, Zuid-Holland. Bij Alteveer, Groningen, bedroeg het maximum aantal **Lachsterns** *Gelochelidon nilotica* 28 op 21 juli. Op de slaapplaats op het Balgzand, Noord-Holland, was het hoogste aantal 23 op 15 augustus. Buiten de wijde omgeving van deze pleisterplaatsen waren er enkele waarnemingen van trekkende exemplaren. In totaal 23

**Reuzensterms** *Hydroprogne caspia* vlogen langs trekposten. De aantallen tijdens speciale slaapplaatsstellingen waren vergelijkbaar met vorig jaar; zowel half augustus als eind augustus werden er meer dan 130 geteld, met zoals gebruikelijk de grootste concentraties langs de Friese IJsselmeerkust. Op een vijftal locaties buiten het Zuidlaardermeergebied werden **Witwangsterns** *Chlidonias hybrida* opgemerkt, waaronder van 28 tot 30 juli bij Den Oever, Noord-Holland. In 14 uurhokken, merendeels gelegen in het IJsselmeergebied, werden **Witvleugelsterns** *C leucopterus* gezien. In een enkel geval ging het om twee of drie exemplaren bij elkaar. Op 2 en 3 juli hield een adulte **Dougalls Stern** *Sterna dougallii* (met een metalen ring om de rechterpoot) zich op bij de Zuidpier bij IJmuiden, Noord-Holland; vermoedelijk betrof het één van de twee vogels die op 24 en 25 juni in De Putten bij Camperduin verbleven.





**470** Vorkstaartmeeuw / Sabine's Gull *Xema sabini*, adult zomer, Westkapelle, Zeeland, 25 augustus 2018 (Marcel Klootwijk) **471** Bijeneter / European Bee-eater *Merops apiaster*, Paarlo, Limburg, 5 augustus 2018 (Michel Veldt) **472** Grijsze Wouw / Black-winged Kite *Elanus caeruleus*, eerstejaars, Fochteloërveen, Friesland, 22 augustus 2018 (Jan de Jong) **473** Roze Spreeuw / Rosy Starling *Pastor roseus*, eerstejaars, 's-Gravensande, Zuid-Holland, 14 augustus 2018 (Rob Berkelder)

**ROOFVOGELS** Op de telposten werden onder meer de volgende aantallen roofvogels vastgesteld: 78 **Visarenden** *Pandion haliaetus*, 502 **Wespendieven** *Pernis apivorus*, acht **Blauwe Kiekendieven** *Circus cyaneus*, negen **Grauwe Kiekendieven** *C. pygargus*, drie **Zeearenden** *Haliaeetus albicilla*, 14 **Rode Wouwen** *Milvus milvus*, zes **Zwarte Wouwen** *M. migrans*, twee **Roodpootvalken** *Falco vespertinus* en twee **Smellekens** *F. columbarius*. Een eerstejaars **Grijsze Wouw** *Elanus caeruleus* verbleef van 21 augustus tot 3 september in het Fochteloërveen, Drenthe/Friesland. Behalve op enkele gebruikelijke locaties – met name het Fochteloërveen en de Hoge Veluwe, Gelderland – werd van 8 tot 15 juli ook in de Brabantse Biesbosch een **Slangenarend** *Circaetus gallicus* gezien. De enige meldingen van **Steppiekiekendieven** *C. macrourus* kwamen op 18 augustus van Schiermonnikoog en op 30 augustus van Delfzijl, Groningen. Voor het eerst sinds mensenheugenis vond een geslaagd broedgeval van **Zeearend**

plaats in Noord-Holland, namelijk op een eilandje in het Eemmeer; in juli vloog hier één jong uit. Van 6 juli tot 17 augustus bezocht een **Arendbuizerd** *Buteo rufinus* het grensgebied bij Netterden, Gelderland; het betreft alweer het 10e geval (maar het eerste voor Gelderland); het overgrote deel van de tijd verbleef hij (net) aan de Duitse kant en uitstapjes naar de Nederlandse kant waren meestal zeer vluchtig.

**HOPPEN TOT ZWALUWEN** Van 7 tot 18 augustus liet een **Hop** *Upupa epops* zich bekijken bij Waardenburg, Gelderland. Ook van enkele andere locaties kwamen meldingen, al hadden die in Barendrecht, Zuid-Holland, en de Wieringermeer betrekking op 'escapes'. De meeste waarnemingen van **Bijeneter** *Merops apiaster* kwamen uit Limburg, waar een groep van maximaal 40 bij Paarlo tussen eind juli en eind augustus veel bekijks trok; ook dit jaar vonden er in deze provincie weer broedgevallen



474 Waterrietzanger / Aquatic Warbler *Acrocephalus paludicola*, juveniel, Schiedam, Zuid-Holland, 1 september 2018 (*Wilma van Holten*)

475 Scharrelaar / European Roller *Coracias garrulus*, Delleboersterheide, Friesland, 19 mei 2018 (*Jan Regtop*)  
cf Dutch Birding 40: 282, 2018



plaats. Begin september werden enkele veertjes van een **Scharrelaar** *Coracias garrulus* gevonden onder een nest van een Havik *Accipiter gentilis* bij Ugchelen, Gelderland; vermoedelijk werd de vogel in het late voorjaar of de zomer naar het nest gebracht als voer voor de jongen. Er werden in augustus zeker 28 **Draaihalzen** *Jynx torquilla* geringd en ook in het veld werden er verspreid over het land diverse opgemerkt. Het vrouwtje **Roodkopklauwier** *Lanius senator* aan de rand van de Grootte Peel bij Meijel, Limburg, dat gepaard was met een Grauwe Klauwier *L. collurio* (het broedsel mislukte), bleef tot 19 juli. Nog een vrouwtje werd op 15 augustus waargenomen in het Noordhollands Duinreservaat bij Heemskerk, Noord-Holland. Er dook weer eens een ontsnapte **Azuurmees** *Cyanistes cyanus* op, ditmaal een exemplaar met een blauwe ring op 14 juli in Nieuwegein, Utrecht. Roepjes van een 's nachts overvliegende vogel die op 21 augustus werden opgenomen in de wijk Beijum in Groningen, Groningen, bleken, verrassend genoeg, sterk overeen te komen met **Kuifleeuwerik** *Galerida cristata*. Een **Roodstuitzwaluw** *Cecropis daurica* werd op 15 augustus gefotografeerd in de Weerribben, Overijssel.

**BOSZANGERS TOT GRASZANGERS** Tot 18 augustus werden nog regelmatig **Grauwe Fitissen** *Phylloscopus trochiloides* gemeld op Schiermonnikoog, waar eind juli het tweede broedgeval voor Nederland (en voor het eiland) werd vastgesteld (ten minste twee jongen vlogen uit). Een **Bergfluiter** *P. bonelli* bevond zich op 30 augustus bij De Koog op Texel. Eerstejaars **Sperwergramussen** *Sylvia nisoria* werden uitsluitend aan de kust aangetroffen. Vanaf 9 augustus waren er acht ringvangsten op vier locaties. Veldwaarnemingen waren er op 19 en 21 augustus in Duin en Kruidberg bij Santpoort, Noord-Holland; op 26 augustus op de Westplaat bij Oostvoorne, Zuid-Holland; en op 31 augustus op Schiermonnikoog. Een mannetje **Kleine Zwartkop** *S. melanocephala* werd op 28 augustus geringd bij het Burgumer Mar (Bergumermeer), Friesland. Een waarschijnlijke eerste-kalenderjaar hybride **Sprinkhaanzanger x Snor** *Locustella naevia x luscinioides* werd op 28 augustus geringd in de Ooijse Graaf, Gelderland. Deze hybride is niet eerder beschreven. Een zingende **Krekelzanger** *L. fluviatilis* werd gemeld op 21 juli in de Weerribben. De laatste waarneming van een **Orpheusspotvogel** *Hippolais polyglotta* van het geslaagde broedgeval in het Noordhollands Duinreservaat bij Castricum dateerde van 7 juli. Tot 10 juli bleef een exemplaar zingen in De Meinweg, Limburg, en op 19 juli werd een roepend exemplaar gehoord bij Noorbeek, Limburg. Er werden vijf **Grote Karekieten** *Acrocephalus arundinaceus* geringd, waaronder één langs de kust, op 18 augustus in de Kennemerduinen, Noord-Holland. Het was een goed jaar voor **Waterrietzanger** *A. paludicola*. Ze werden in 23 uurhokken vastgesteld, met een duidelijke concentratie in Noord-Holland en Zuid-Holland. In totaal werden er 18 geringd, waarvan liefst 11 bij Castricum. Zeer bijzonder was daarnaast de terugvangst van een adulte vogel met een Spaanse ring in de Ooijse Graaf op 13 augustus. Het hoogste aantal in het veld betrof drie op 9 augustus in het Verdronken Land van Saeftinghe, Zeeland. Waarnemingen van **Graszangers**



476 Waterrietzanger / Aquatic Warbler *Acrocephalus paludicola*, juveniel, Petten, Noord-Holland, 2 augustus 2018 (Mattias Hofstede)

*Cisticola juncidis* bleven beperkt tot Zeeuws-Vlaanderen, Zeeland, en dan vooral het Verdronken Land van Saeftinghe.

**SPREEUWEN TOT GORZEN** Een adulte **Roze Spreeuw** *Pastor roseus* verbleef op 20 juli op Texel en de allervroegste juveniel ooit werd op 14 augustus gezien en gefotografeerd bij 's-Gravezande, Zuid-Holland. Het vooral bij fotografen populaire adulte mannetje **Kleine Vliegenvanger** *Ficedula parva* van de Hoge Veluwe bleef tot 7 juli. Vermeldenswaardig is verder de waarneming van een mannetje dat op 4 augustus kortstondig zong bij Makkum, Friesland. Het mannetje **Witkeelkwikstaart** *Motacilla cinereocapilla* dat op 21 april werd ontdekt in de Onnerpolder in het Zuidlaardermeergebied, werd voor het laatst gemeld op 9 juli. Een eerste-winter **Citroenkwikstaart** *M. citreola* werd op 31 augustus gefotografeerd op Griend. Vanaf half augustus werden 101 **Duinpiepers** *Anthus campestris* geregistreerd op telposten, met de hoogste aantallen langs de telposten Loozerheide (14), Brobbelbies-Noord tussen Oss en Uden, Noord-Brabant (13), en Aan de Majoor, Koningsbosch, Limburg (12). Bijzonder waren groepjes van zeven aan de grond op 28 augustus bij Itteren, Limburg, en op 29 augustus bij Roosteren, Limburg. Vroege **Roodkeelpiepers** *A. cervinus* werden op 29 augustus gemeld van telpost Langebosch bij Wildervank, Groningen, en bij Everdingen, Utrecht. Tot 21 juli werden nog op een vier-

tal plekken bij de kust zingende **Roodmus** *Erythrura erythrura* gemeld. Op 2 juli werd bij Castricum een vrouwtje van een jaar eerder teruggevangen, nu met broedvlek. Op 20 juni hing hier overigens ook al een vrouwtje met broedvlek in de netten. Een mannetje **Witbandkruisbek** *Loxia leucoptera* werd op 17 juli dood gevonden als raamslachtoffer in een woonwijk in Haren, Groningen. Curieus was de melding van een **Ijsgors** *Calcarius lapponicus* op 26 juli – nota bene op de warmste dag van het jaar – over telpost Berkheide bij Wassenaar, Zuid-Holland. De enige melding van een **Grauwe Gors** *Emberiza calandra* was van 12 augustus bij Ifteren. Vanaf half augustus werden 56 **Ortolanen** *E hortulana* op trekposten opgemerkt, maar nog opmerkelijker is het aantal van 61 's nachts opgenomen exemplaren door een groeiend aantal 'nocturnal flight call recorders'. Het gemiddelde aantal over reguliere telposten in augustus in de laatste 10 jaar is 24.4. Met name de laatste drie jaar worden weer behoorlijke aantallen geteld (gemiddeld 43.3 in augustus). De laatste melding van het zingende mannetje **Cirlogors** *E cirulus* dat op 20 april werd ontdekt in de Weerter- en Budelerbergen op de grens van Limburg en Noord-Brabant, was op 10 juli. Intrigerend was de melding (met geluidsopname) van een vroege **Bosgors** *E rustica* op 31 augustus over de Gooimeerdijk bij Almere, Flevoland.



477 Witbandkruisbek/ Two-barred Crossbill *Loxia leucoptera*, mannetje, Haren, Groningen, 17 juli 2018 (Lili Labouchere)

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## DB Actueel

**Klaas Eigenhuis (1948-2018)** Op de sobere en ontroerende begrafenis van Klaas Eigenhuis in De Kwakel, Noord-Holland, op 24 augustus 2018 vatte Dirk Moerbeek het overlijden van Klaas samen met een enkel woord, 'zonde'. Het was precies wat ook ik voelde: er was iemand uit Aalsmeer 'verdwenen' die op onorthodoxe wijze zijn moreel kompas volgde en altijd iets interessants had te melden.

Klaas klaagde de laatste maanden over een zwakke gezondheid ten gevolge van diabetes en was sterk vermagerd. Dat hij een halfjaar na zijn 70e verjaardag in zijn slaap zou overlijden had echter niemand verwacht. Al was het maar omdat hij als arts gezond leefde, geen alcohol dronk en nooit had gerookt.

Klaas' vader werkte bij de KLM en dat zal verklaren waarom hij in Zweden het levenslicht zag, op 29 maart 1948, om daarna de rest van zijn leven bij Schiphol in Aalsmeer, Noord-Holland, te wonen. Eerst had het gezin Eigenhuis een huis aan de Seringenstraat en toen dat werd opgeslokt door nieuwbouw van de televisiestudio's van Endemol konden de vogels in een tuin aan de Rietgorstraat door Klaas in de watten worden gelegd.

Het was dankzij zijn broer Kees dat ik begin jaren 1970 voor het eerst over Klaas hoorde. Met een groepje

jaargenoten op de biologiefaculteit van de Vrije Universiteit, waar Karel Voous indertijd nog colleges gaf, spraken we tijdens lunchpauzes over goede vogelplekken in de wijde omgeving. Klaas had toen al een grote actieradius en nam zijn vijf jaar jongere broer vaak op sleeptouw, vooral in Noord-Holland rond de Westeinderplas, op de opspuitterreinen van Sloterdijk, in de AW-duinen en langs de pieren van IJmuiden.

Klaas werkte aanvankelijk als leraar in de Duitse taal maar hij wilde verder studeren en arts worden. Daartoe moest hij eerst staatsexamen voor de HBS doen om met dat diploma als student te worden toegelaten op de medische faculteit van de Universiteit van Amsterdam. Na die ingewikkelde omweg studeerde hij binnen korte tijd af ondanks dat hij veel tijd besteedde aan het kijken naar vogels. En passant ontwikkelde hij vele andere vaardigheden, zoals in de schaaksport (waarmee hij stopte omdat er in zaaltjes veel werd gerookt), de mycologie (paddenstoelen) en een aantal talen (Russisch, Zweeds).

Hij kreeg een aanstelling als keuringsarts en probeerde dat werk niet alleen te combineren met vogels zoeken maar ook met het 'twitchen' van dwaalgasten. Dat laatste betekende dat hij soms plotseling zijn post moest

verlaten. Zijn werkgevers hadden daar geen begrip voor en dat was naar verluidt een reden om zijn dienstverband te verbreken, niet lang na zijn bezoek aan een Steppekievit *Vanellus gregarius* op Schiermonnikoog, Friesland, op 24 augustus 1982. Mede door de economische crisis van die jaren kwam hij daarna niet meer als arts aan het werk.

Klaas bleef fanatiek vogels kijken en werd een icoon in zowel Nederland als België, zeker voor vogelaars die nu ouder zijn dan 30-40 jaar. Hij wordt gezien als een van de grondleggers van Dutch Birding en was een van de acht initiatiefnemers waarvan het telefoonnummer is te vinden onderaan de drie 'nieuwsbrieven', velletjes met informatie die in de winter van 1978/79 werden verspreid als voorloper van het tijdschrift.

Toch heeft hij aan maken en uitbrengen van het tijdschrift en later de DB-website weinig bijgedragen. Ook verliet hij al korte tijd na zijn benoeming de Commissie Dwaalgasten Nederlandse Avifauna. Hoewel vriendelijk en sociaal, was hij blijkbaar niet echt een 'team speler'. Het leek alsof hij zich alleen ergens voor wilde inzetten als alles precies op zijn manier werd gedaan. Misschien was het ook dat Dutch Birding voor hem te veel pretenties had. Het ging hem immers vooral om de herkenning en het voorkomen van zeldzaamheden in de Lage Landen en bijvoorbeeld minder om wat er daarbuiten werd ontdekt. Hij stond wel als 'consultant' vermeld in het colofon van het Vlaamse vogeltijdschrift *Natuur*. oriolus en van DB-Nieuwsbrief, een maandelijks uitgave die werd verzorgd door Dirk Moerbeek en Sandra

Gardeslen, en in 1989 naast Dutch Birding verscheen.

Desalniettemin was zijn invloed in de tijd die voorafging aan internet baanbrekend. Met de draadtelefoon als wapen opende hij in de jaren 1970-90 vele deuren en kwamen berichten over waarnemingen van zeldzame vogels boven water die anders verloren waren gegaan. Dat schiep een nieuwe mentaliteit van informatie delen in plaats van geheim houden. Dat was een transformatie die met name in de jaren 1970 niet zonder slag of stoot plaatsvond. Rivaliteiten tussen clubjes vogelaars verdwenen snel doordat Klaas geen begrip of geduld voor geheimhoudingen had, en mensen die iets achterhielden 'straftte' door ervoor te zorgen dat ze bij een volgende dwaalgast niet tijdig werden gewaarschuwd. Zijn opstelling bij de vangst van 's lands tweede Raddes Boszanger *Phylloscopus schwarzi* op 8 oktober 1977 te Castricum, Noord-Holland, leidde zelfs tot zo veel spanningen dat, om toekomstige problemen met ringers te voorkomen, het bestuur van de Dutch Birding Association een paar jaar later besloot om gevangen vogels niet op tellijstjes van twitchers mee te tellen. Een overleg met ringstations om tot afspraken te komen kwam daarna nimmer meer aan de orde omdat sindsdien Nederland altijd het land is gebleven waar gevangen vogels ook kort na het vrijlaten 'niet telbaar' zijn.

Tegenwoordig worden meldingen van zeldzaamheden door een reeks website-moderatoren vanachter een computerscherm op waarde geschat. Vroeger deed Klaas dat vaak alleen en in het veld, als actiefste van een dozijn vogelaars dat regelmatig meldingen controleer-

478 Klaas Eigenhuis bij Grote Kanoet / Great Knot *Calidris tenuirostris*, Oostvaardersdijk, paal 23.3, Flevoland, 21 september 1991 (Arnoud B van den Berg). Twee dagen na zijn beste ontdekking.





**479** Klaas Eigenhuis staat centraal bij voorjaarsvangst van Waterrietzanger / Aquatic Warbler *Acrocephalus paludicola*, Ruigoord, Amsterdam, Noord-Holland, 26 april 1978 (*Arnoud B van den Berg*). Samen met Rienk Slings (voor Klaas zittend) en omringd door onder anderen Frank Rozendaal (linksvoor), Aage Niels Holstein (staand links), Janjaap Brinkman, Cock Reijnders (rechtsvoor) en Ronald Geskus (staand rechts). **480** Klaas Eigenhuis bij twitch van twee Jufferkraanvogels / Demoiselle Cranes *Grus virgo*, Asten, Noord-Brabant, 10 september 1989 (*Arnoud B van den Berg*). Zittend in karakteristieke houding achter grote verrekijker met, staand van links naar rechts, Edward van IJzendoorn, Karel Hoogteyling, Rob Bouwman (vermoedelijk), José Schoonhoven, Eus van der Burg, Gerard Steinhaus, onbekend, Enno Ebels, Peter van Scheepen, onbekend, Jowi de Roever (gezicht achter blad) en Aart Vink (uiterst rechts).





**481** Klaas Eigenhuis bij noordwesterstorm op terras van Minkema, Camperduin, Noord-Holland, 20 augustus 1990 (*Arnoud B van den Berg*). In karakteristieke zoekijkhouding, met capuchon als bescherming tegen zand, zon en zout. Links van Klaas, van links naar rechts Maarten Platteeuw (achteraan), Wim van der Schot, Joop Swaab, Nomdo Dijkstra, Jeanette Milder en Nick van der Ham; rechts van Klaas, Martin Olthoff en Leo Stegeman. **482** Klaas Eigenhuis bij twitch van Dwergaalscholver / Pygmy Cormorant *Phalacrocorax pygmeus*, Montfoort, Utrecht, 24 januari 1999 (*Arnoud B van den Berg*). Gehurkt tussen Jan Vanwynsberghe (links) en Gerald Driessens; verder onder anderen André van Loon (links, met lichte jas).



de. Nel Eigenhuis-Wies, Klaas' moeder met wie hij zijn leven lang hetzelfde huis deelde, vervulde daarbij een cruciale rol. Als Klaas het huis uit was noteerde zij binnenkomende berichten en vanuit telefoons konden Klaas of andere vogelaars contact met haar opnemen.

Daarnaast investeerde Klaas in de toekomst door generaties van jonge, beginnende vogelaars enthousiast te maken en mee te laten rijden naar vogels in alle uithoeken van het land. Uit de reacties op zijn overlijden op de DB-website is op te maken dat velen van hen die genereuze hulp nooit zijn vergeten.

Hij liep niet alleen meldingen van anderen af maar probeerde ook zelf zeldzame soorten te vinden. Hij spendeerde nooit tijd aan het foto- of sonografisch vastleggen van vogels en als hij een zeldzaamheid goed genoeg had gezien, reed hij vaak snel weer weg om een andere te zoeken. Ook tuurde hij vele uren achtereen met zijn Beck Kassel-verrekijker over zee, of zocht hij meeuwen en steltlopers af. Hij had daarbij geregeld succes en was bijvoorbeeld bij de ontdekkingen in Noord-Holland van een Kleine Kokmeeuw *Chroicocephalus philadelphia* op 16 juni 1988 te IJmuiden en een veel bediscussieerde Gon-gon *Pterodroma feae* op 24 oktober 1992 te Camperduin. Zijn hoogtepunt kwam met 's lands eerste Grote Kanoet *Calidris tenuirostris* langs de Oostvaardersdijk, Flevoland.

In die tijd liepen er in de Oostvaardersplassen nog geen grote zoogdieren rond en was het gebied in het zomerhaljaar rijk aan 10 000en steltlopers. Deze waren door de brede rietkragen vaak moeilijk af te zoeken. Klaas had daar een oplossing voor door zich met statief en stoel een weg te banen dwars door het riet naar de waterkant, daarbij na een paar meter direct een scherpe bocht makend zodat zijn pad vanaf de openbare weg niet zichtbaar was. Zijn Grote Kanoet vond hij dankzij zo'n pad dat hij op 19 september 1991 maakte bij paal 23.3. De korte kijkafstand bleek essentieel want de vogel droeg een op afstand lastig te herkennen kleed; het betrof het eerste juveniele exemplaar voor Europa.

Al deze activiteiten resulteerden erin dat hij jarenlang de 'nummer één' was, de vogelaar met de langste lijst van in Nederland waargenomen vogelsoorten, een positie die hij periodiek afwisselde met Gerard Steinhaus. Hij was alleen daardoor al een boegbeeld van Dutch Birding en toen bestuursleden na de eeuwwisseling hoorden dat Klaas een enorme vracht aan kennis over de herkomst van Nederlandse vogelnamen had vergaard, vroegen ze hem er een door Dutch Birding uit te geven boek over te schrijven. Het resultaat was een monumentaal werk van 672 pagina's, het *Verklarend en etymologisch woordenboek van de Nederlandse vogelnamen*, dat in 2004 met hulp van Theo Admiraal, Dirk en Sandra werd uitgebracht.

Velen dachten dat Klaas na het schrijven van dit boek weer vaak de vrije natuur in zou gaan en zich minder met etymologie bezighouden. Niets was minder waar: hij liet steeds meer steken vallen voor zijn lijst terwijl zijn taalkundige werk in omvang bleef groeien. Eerst liet hij de vogels aan zich voorbijgaan waarvoor hij te ver moest reizen, zoals op Vlieland de Vale Gierzwaluw *Apus pallidus* in oktober 2006 en de Noordse Waterlijster

*Parkesia noveboracensis* in september 2010. Tegen zijn oude gewoonte in liet hij nu en dan ook 'telbare' zeldzaamheden met een twijfelachtige herkomst schieten, zoals de Kokardezaagbek *Lophodytes cucullatus* in december 2007. Vanaf 2012 bezocht hij zelfs makkelijk te bereiken 'superdwaalgasten' niet meer, zoals de Bruinkeelortolaan *Emberiza caesia* van Lauwersmeer, Groningen, op 5 mei 2013 en de Rosse Waaierstaart *Cercotrichas galactotes* van Camperduin in september 2013. Al met al miste hij in de laatste 10 jaren c 25 soorten. Tot zijn laatste dag werkte hij wel gestaag door aan de etymologie, waarbij hij dermate veel nieuws ontdekte dat er meerdere boeken mee gevuld hadden kunnen worden.

Zijn voordeel was dat hij met zijn grote ornithologische kennis tot verrassende oplossingen kwam over de oorsprong van vogelnamen die een taalkundige met minder vogelkennis over het hoofd zag. Als zijn visie niet werd geaccepteerd, schrok hij er niet voor terug om (misschien wel te) volhardend en op het scherpst van de snede meningsverschillen met taalkundigen te beslechten.

Het was niet alleen zijn passie voor 'Neerlandistiek' die Klaas steeds vaker weerhield het veld in te gaan. Op 1 oktober 2004 brak hij in de duinen van IJmuiden bij een door Magnus Robb ontdekte Goudlijster *Zoothra aurea* zijn enkel. Het herstel duurde langer dan verwacht en dat was misschien een eerste teken van een teruglopende gezondheid. Volgens Kees ging ook zijn gezichtsvermogen ernstig achteruit; hij was altijd al deels kleuren- en nachtblind maar nu kreeg hij moeite om vliegende vogels in beeld te krijgen. Als belangrijkste reden om zich te beperken tot de vogels (én egels) rond zijn huis noemde Klaas echter zijn persoonlijke strijd tegen de oorzaken van klimaatverandering. Net als vele anderen van zijn leeftijd zal hij pas rond de eeuwwisseling hebben gezien hoe groot de omvang van de afbraak van de natuur door de mens was geworden. Daarover was hij oprecht zo bezorgd dat hij koos voor een levenswijze met een zo klein mogelijke 'ecologische voetafdruk'.

De redactie van Dutch Birding wenst zijn moeder Nel, zijn broer Kees, zijn zuster Ria en overige familieleden en vrienden sterkte met dit verlies. ARNOUD B VAN DEN BERG

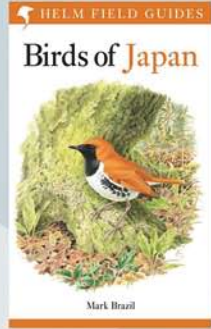


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