Observers who have had a country first record accepted by a Rarities Committee are encouraged to write it up as a paper for publication.

**CYPRUS**

BirdLife Cyprus Rarities Committee members: Colin Richardson (chair), Melis Charalambides, Stavros Christodoulides, Jeff Gordon, Hugh Buck, Nigel Cottle. A full list of Cyprus birds requiring rarity descriptions and rare bird report forms are available from Colin Richardson at richar@cytanet.com.cy to whom claims should be sent. The following information includes that published in the 2010–2012 Cyprus Bird Reports and lists records assessed by the BirdLife Cyprus Rarities Committee from 2011–2013.

**Ruddy Duck** *Oxyura jamaicensis*. One Meneou pools 20–30 December 2011 (J Stylianou et al) and one Neapolis pond 3 May 2012 (Colin Richardson). First and second records (Category C).


**Red-necked Grebe** *Podiceps grisegena*. Two Akrotiri salt lake 4 July 2012 (C Richardson). Seventh record.

**Dalmatian Pelican** *Pelecanus crispus*. Eight over Armou 15 December 2012 (C Richardson, M Easterbrook). Ninth record.

**Crested Honey Buzzard** *Pernis ptilorhyncus*. One male over Akrotiri 21 October 2012 (D Radford). First record.

**Little Bustard** *Tetrax tetrax*. One juvenile found at Geri, Nicosia 3–15 December 2013 (G Konstantinou, Plate 1). This well watched bird was guarded by its finder almost daily until finally shot by hunters on 15 December 2013. Third record.

**Sociable Lapwing** *Vanellus gregarius*. One Akrotiri gravel pits 23–24 March 2012 (R Atkins).

**Plate 1.** Little Bustard *Tetrax tetrax* 3 December 2013, near Geri, Cyprus. © Filippos Georgiades

Grey Phalarope *Phalaropus fulicaria.* One Larnaca sewage works 4 June 2011 (M Shakespeare), one immature Phasouri reed-beds 7 October 2011 (J East) and one Spiros pool 12 May 2012 (M Gore, M Charalambides). Second, third and fourth records.


Laughing Dove *Stigmatopelia senegalensis.* One Lefke 17 April 2012 (M Gunel). Third record of apparently wild origin.


Steppe Grey Shrike *Lanius (meridionalis) pallidirostris.* One Paphos lighthouse 17 November 2011 (P Bray) and one Mandria 26 November 2011 (L Chystophorou). Eighth and ninth records.


House Crow *Corvus splendens.* One Apostolos Andreas 19 September–8 October 2011 (G Bourne, D Carter). First record (Category E).

Caucasian Mountain Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus (sindianus) lorenzii.* One trapped Kouklia 2 April 2013 (C & D Lamsdell). Second record.


Kurdistan Wheatear *Oenanthe xanthopyrrhoa.* One male cape Greco 15 January–23 March 2011 (K & R Howard) and one male Agia Napa sewage works 5–15 April 2011 (P Wragg). Fifth & sixth records, although possibly the same bird involved.

Pied Wheatear *Oenanthe pleschanka.* One Armou hills 22–23 October 2011 (C Richardson) and one female cape Andreas 30 April 2013 (C Richardson). Third & fourth records.

Eastern Mourning Wheatear *Oenanthe lugens.* One Souskiou 14 February 2011 (S lezekiel). Third record.

Rock Sparrow *Petronia petronia.* Up to 30 Marathounta hills 2 February–14 March 2011 (C Richardson); up to 15 Marathounta hills 15 December 2011–19 January 2012 (C Richardson); 20 Synagrosis 16 December 2012 (M Gunel) and one Marathounta hills 15 January 2013 (C Richardson). Eighth to 11th records. This species has occurred every winter since 2008 and may have been previously overlooked. Its status is being reviewed.


Blyth’s Pipit *Anthus godlewskii.* One Mandria 10 December 2011 (C Richardson). Second record.

Buff-bellied Pipit *Anthus (rubescens) japonicus.* Two found, photographed and sound-recorded at Larnaca sewage works 18–20 March 2013 (J Honold, T Valkenburg). First record.

Red-fronted Serin *Serinus pusillus.* One male Pileri dam 29 March 2011 (H-M Busch, A Koch) and one at Mavrokolymbos dam 20 January 2012 (M Van de Walle). Seventh & eighth records.

Common Rosefinch *Carpodacus erythrinus.* One Agia Napa sewage works 29 August 2012 (M Easterbrook). Ninth record.


Little Bunting *Emberiza pusilla.* One Xeros Potamos 11 April 2011 (F Hollander). Third record.

EGYPT

The Egyptian Ornithological Rarities Committee (EORC) comprises: Sherif Baha El Din (chair), Frédéric Jiguet (secretary), Web Abdou, Richard Bonser, Andrea Corso, Pierre André Crochet, Andrew Grieve, Richard Hoath, Manuel Schweizer. Official external advisers are Istvan Moldovan, Ahmed Riad and Mary Megalli. Claims should be sent to eorc.secretary@gmail.com. See also www.chn-france.org/eorc/eorc.php?id_content=1 where claim forms can be downloaded.
The Israel Rarities and Distribution Committee (IRDC) comprises: Avner Cohen (secretary), James P Smith, Barak Granit, Rami Lindroos, Killian Mullarney, Eyal Shochat, Eran Banker and Tomer Landsberger. Claims should be sent to Avner Cohen at israbirding@gmail.com. See also www.israbirding.com/irdc where claim forms can be downloaded.

The Jordan Bird Records Committee (JBRC) comprises: Fares Khoury (secretary), Richard Porter, Ian Andrews, Feras Rahahleh, Khaldun Al-Omari. Claims should be sent to Fares Khoury at avijordan2000@yahoo.com.

The Kuwait Ornithological Rarities Committee (KORC) comprises: Mike Pope (chair), AbdulRahman Al-Sirhan (secretary), Pekka Fagel, Oscar Campbell (external adjudicator), Peter Kennerley (external member). Claims should be sent to AbdulRahman Al-Sirhan at alsisran@alsirhan.com. KORC has accepted the following claims since the last report in Sandgrouse 35(2). JPR Jahra Pools reserve, JEO Jahra East outfall.

**Squacco Heron** *Ardeola ralloides*. Juvenile being fed by an adult JPR 26 August 2013 (K Al Nasrallah, R Al-Hajji, M Pope). First breeding record.

**Indian Pond Heron** *Ardeola grayii*. One JPR 15 July 2013 (O Al Shaheen). Second record.

**Pygmy Cormorant** *Phalacrocorax pygmeus*. One JPR 9 August (H Boresli, O Al Shaheen). Third record.

**Sooty Falcon** *Falco concolor*. One Khuwaisat 13 October 2013 (K Al Nasrallah). 11th record.


**Grey Phalarope** *Phalaropus fulicarius*. One JEO 28 May 2013, one JEO 22 June 2013 (R Al Hajji). Fifth and sixth records.

**Black Tern** *Chlidonias niger*. One JEO 29 May 2013 (A Al Sirhan). 12th record.

**Pallid Scops Owl** *Otus brucei*. One JPR 30 November 2013 (S Al-Sulaihiim), one Jal Al Zour 7 December 2013 (B Atema). Sixth and seventh records.


**Mesopotamian Crow** *Corvus (cornix) capellanus*. One JPR 28 September 2013 (Y Al-Failakawi). Second record.

**Streak-throated Swallow** *Petrochelidon fluvicola*. One JPR 6 December 2013 (D O’Sullivan et al). First record.


**Booted Warbler** *Hippolais caligata*. One Tulha, 15 August 2013 (R Al Hajji, M Pope). Fourth record.

**Zitting Cisticola** *Cisticola juncidis*. One Al-Abraq 28 November 2013 (M Pope, Plate 2). Sixth record, first for 23 years.
Eversmann’s Redstart *Phoenicurus erythronotus*. One Al Abraq 16 November 2013 (P Fagel, Plate 3). Tenth record.


Striolated Bunting *Emberiza striolata*. One Tulha, Sabah Al Ahmad natural reserve, 14 August 2013, one Wafra oilfield 18 November 2013 (H Al Shayji). First and second records.

**OMAN**

The Oman Bird Records Committee (OBRC) comprises: Jens Eriksen (recorder), Ian Harrison, Dave Sargeant, Graham Searle, John Atkins, Peter Cowan, Simon Tull, Waheed Al Farsi, Zahran Al Abdulasalam, Manal Al Kindi. Claims should be sent to Jens Eriksen at hjoman@gmail.com from whom claim forms can be obtained. OBRC has accepted the following claims since the report in *Sandgrouse* 35(2).


**Frigatebird sp** *Fregata sp*. One Yiti 26 April 2009 (J Atkins). Sixth record.


**Allen’s Gallinule** *Porphyrio alleni*. One Raysut 9 August 2013 increasing to two 23–24 August (D Mackenzie and S Tibbett). Ninth record.

**Lesser Moorhen** *Gallinula angulata*. One Salalah nature reserve 1 October 2008 (A Lassey). Second record.


**Great Crested Grebe** *Podiceps cristatus*. One Sohar 9 April 2013 (J Atkins). Tenth record.


Malachite Kingfisher *Corythornis cristatus*. One Khawr Al Mughsayl 26 December 2008 (T Collins), one Khawr Sawli 12 November 2010 (A Lassey). Seventh and eighth records.


Thrush Nightingale *Luscinia luscinia*. One Dawkah farm 7 May 2013 (H & J Eriksen, Plate 5). Tenth record.


**Grey-necked Bunting** *Emberiza buchanani*. One As Sayh 1 May 2010 (I Harrison and S Tull). Fourth record.


**QATAR**

Qatar Rare Birds Committee (QRBC) members: Jamie A Buchan (chair/recorder), Michael J Grunwell, Neil G Morris, Simon J Tull. Claims should be sent to Jamie Buchan at jamie_buchan@yahoo.com.

**UNITED ARAB EMIRATES**

The Emirates Bird Records Committee (EBRC) comprises the following voting members: Oscar Campbell (chair), Nick Moran (secretary), Huw Roberts, Mark Smiles, Neil Tovey, Tommy Pedersen (UAE bird recorder). Ahmed Al Ali and Peter Hellyer are non-voting members. Records are circulated and assessments published three times per year according to the timetable outlined at www.uaebirding.com/ebrc.html. Decisions on assessments, plus EBRC’s constitution and information about the assessment process and downloadable report forms are all available at the same location. Claims should be sent to ebrcuae@gmail.com or to Tommy Pedersen at tommypepe@fastmail.fm. The UAE Bird Checklist, in both short and annotated forms, is available at www.uaebirding.com/uaechecklist.html together with recently published reports for 2010 and 2011. The following summary lists particularly significant decisions in 2013, up to and including

**Plate 7.** Cretzschmar’s Bunting *Emberiza caesia* 26 March 2013, Jebel Dhanna, UAE. © Tommy Pedersen
the latest record circulation (completed October 2013).

**Bewick’s Swan** Cygnus (columbianus) bewickii. Adult Fujairah tennis club dam 17–21 June 2013 (J Judas et al); origin uncertain and placed in Category C. One previous record in Category A, 1994.

**Wedge-tailed Shearwater** Puffinus pacificus. Up to eight seen during pelagic trips from Kalba on four dates 31 May–14 June 2013 (M Smiles et al). Four previous records, last 2011.

**Flesh-footed Shearwater** Puffinus carneipes. Up to five seen during pelagic trips from Kalba 31 May–21 June 2013 (M Smiles, K Al Dhaheri et al). Nine previous records, almost all since 2010. This species is clearly a frequent if somewhat irregular visitor to offshore waters in summer and records from pelagic trips no longer require a claim.

**Jouanin’s Petrel** Bulweria fallax. Twenty seen on a pelagic trip from Kalba 14 June 2013 (M Smiles et al). Eight previous records, all except one since 2011. This species is clearly an erratic and sometimes numerous visitor to offshore waters with records June–December. Records from pelagic trips no longer require a claim.

**Common Crane** Grus grus. One Hamraniyah fields 15 March 2013 (NP Williams). Seven previous records; last 1998.


**Long-tailed Skua** Stercorarius longicaudus. One adult on pelagic trip from Kalba 7 June 2013 (OJ Campbell et al). 14 previous records.


**Great Spotted Cuckoo** Clamator glandarius. One Al Qua’a fodder field 23 February 2013 (SP Lloyd et al). Three previous records.


**Wire-tailed Swallow** Hirundo smithii. One Zakher lake 30 Dec 2012–4 January 2013 (S Young et al), one Ajban 21–22 April 2013 (M Almazrouei). Twelve previous records; last 2012.

**Cretzschmar’s Bunting** Emberiza caesia. One female Al Ankah 7 January 2011 (M Smiles, OJ Campbell), one adult male, Jebel Dhanna, 24–27 March 2013 (K Al Dhaheri, M Al Musharafy et al, Plate 7). First and second records.

**Red-headed Bunting** Emberiza bruniceps. One male Emirates palace 25 March 2013 (SP Lloyd, OJ Campbell et al), one Wamm farms 31 August–1 September 2013 (SL James, J Judas et al). Five previous records, but only two since 1996.

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