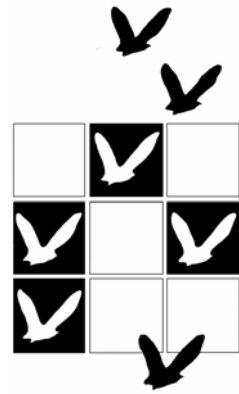
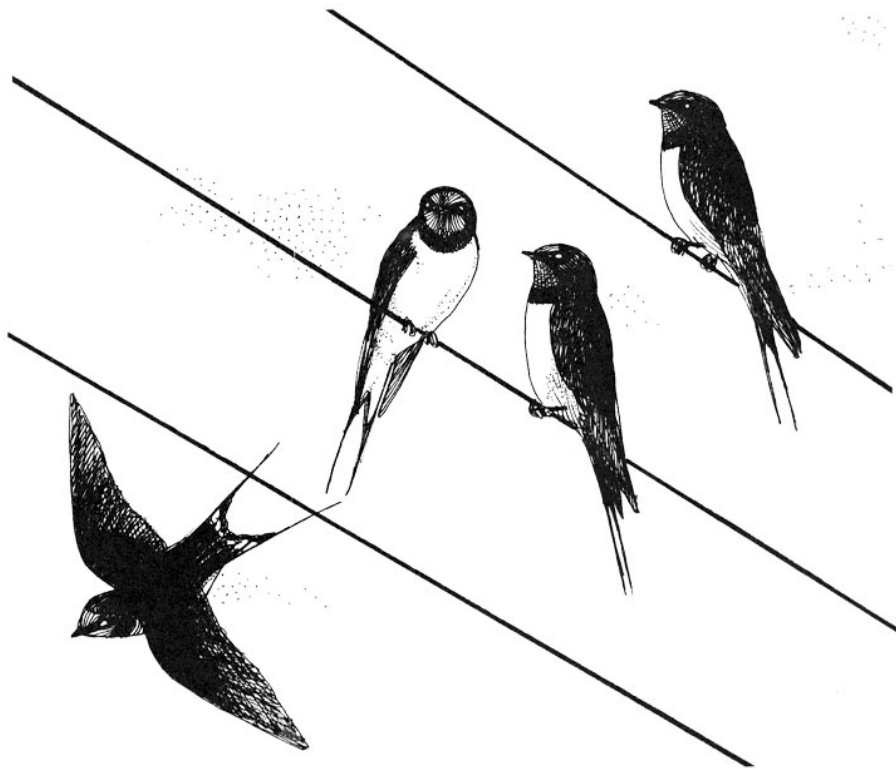


# Bird Census News

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*Newsletter of the European Bird Census Council*



**2003**  
**Volume 16 n°2**

## **Bird Census News** **2003, volume 16 n°2**

Bird Census News is the Newsletter of the European Bird Census Council or EBCC. The EBCC exists to promote the organisation and development of atlas, census work and population studies in all European countries; it promotes communication and arranges contacts between organisations and individuals interested in census and atlas work, primarily (but not exclusively) in Europe.

Bird Census News reports developments in census and atlas work in Europe, from the local to the continental scale, and provides a forum for discussion on methodological issues.

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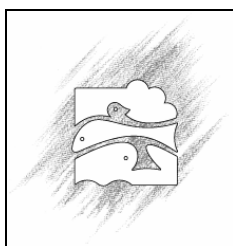
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## **Bird Census News**

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### **Preface**

At the same time as the Swallows (at least in the Nordic regions), here is the second issue of 2003. A bit late, but you will not have to wait long for the next one (2004/1) which will appear at the end of June (2004!). In this issue you'll find a breeding bird study from the Bulgarian Ponor Mountains, an overview on the monitoring of the Mediterranean Gull and a summary of the recently published Cyprus breeding bird Atlas. At the end of the issue there is a selected summary of journals and reports. And,...for those who are late, do not forget to register for the EBCC conference in Turkey!!

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# **Census of breeding birds in the Ponor Mountains, western Bulgaria**

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## **Introduction**

Few censuses of breeding bird populations on a given territory have been made in Bulgaria until the present moment. There have been few ornithocological studies concerning bird density and ecological criteria in different habitats (Petrov 1984, 1988, Simeonov and Petrov 1981, Simeonov 1992, Burov 1999).

The Ponor Mountains are situated 60 km to the north of the Bulgarian capital Sofia. Its biogeographical location, abundance of Karst forms and diversity of native ecosystems on a small scale influenced by humans are the reasons for the exceptional biodiversity of the mountain, although comparatively poorly studied. There are some fragmentary data about the study area (Reiser 1894; Harrison 1933; Patev 1950; Simeonov 1967; Donchev 1970; Baumgart *et al.* 1973; Fisher *et al.* 1975; Simeonov & Michev 1980; Michev & Petrov 1985; Simeonov & Michev 1985; Stoyanov & Kocev 1985; Michev *et al.* 1986; Baumgart 1987; Michev *et al.* 1989; Delov 1995; Petrov *et al.* 1996; Milchev & Georgiev 1998). There is only one paper on the entire avifauna of the Ponor Mountains (Stoyanov 2001). However, no detailed research about abundance and number of breeding species has yet been conducted.

The purpose of this survey is to clarify the abundance and number of breeding birds in the Ponor Mountains. The data from the research will be used for future quantitative comparisons on the local level. They also broaden the number of Bulgarian birds on the national level and contribute to the conservation of some rare and endangered species.

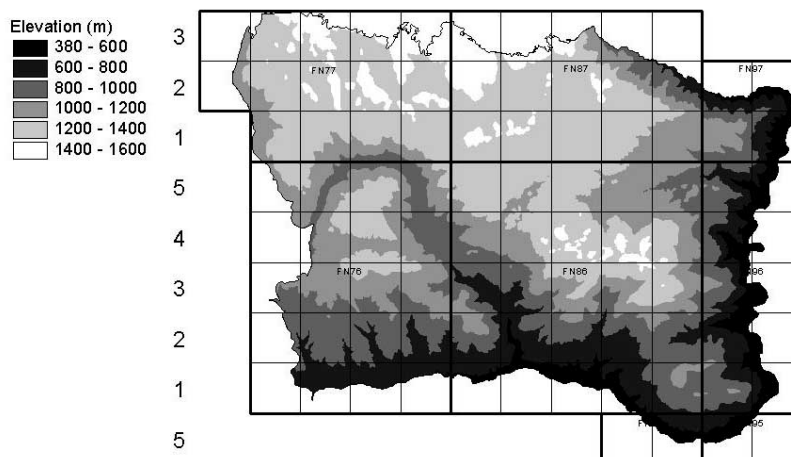
## Study area

The Ponor Mountains are part of the Western Balkan Range and border the Koznica Mountains to the north, on the Berkovska Mountains to the west, on the Mala Mountains to the south and to the east, on the Sofiyska Mountains (Figure 1).



*Fig. 1: Location of the Ponor Mountains*

The western boundary of the survey region is formed by the Ginska river, the southern, by the Iskrecka River, the eastern, by the Iskar River, and the northern, by the slopes of the Koznica Mountains (Stoycev & Nejkovski 1975), covering a total of 272 km<sup>2</sup>. The study area is with highest northwest part and lowest southeast part, with altitudes between 360 and 1601 m a.s.l. (Figure 2).



*Fig. 2: Altitude levels in the study area*

According to Vulev (1997) Ponor has a moderate continental climate, with warm summers (the mean summer temperature is 23°C) and cold winters (the mean winter temperature is - 2°C), maximum rainfall in spring and summer (the total annual rainfall is 650 mm and in May and June it is 900 mm). The duration and thickness of snow cover depend on elevation (up to 1000 meters the duration is less than 80 days and the thickness is less than 20 cm and between 1000-1600 meters the duration is 80-120 days and the thickness is 20-180 cm).

The vegetation cover consists of 548 plant species of 301 genera and 77 families (Jordanova 1999). The major plant communities are formed by tree species such as oak, elm and beech. The oak belt covers the zone up to 600 m elevation, the oak and elm belt is situated between 600 and 1000 m a.s.l. Above this elevation the beech belt and high-altitude meadows are presented (Bondev 1991).



## Methods

The survey was carried out during the breeding seasons in 2000, 2001 and 2002, for a total of 67 days. The Universal Transverse Mercator grid with squares 10 x 10 km (Lerer & Delchev 1978) was applied to military topographic maps with scale 1: 25,000. There are eight such squares on the study area. Only one is full; all the others are partials.

Each 10 x 10 km square was separated in 25 2 x 2 km squares giving a total 87 squares with 50 full and 37 partial squares (Figure 3). In each square all presented habitats were visited between one and seven times, depending on their surface and diversity of habitats and many transects were made. The birds were identified by sight and sound.

The taxonomic order and Latin names are according to Snow & Perrins (1998) and the breeding evidence follows Sharrock (1976), Yetman (1976), Lloyd *et al.* (1991), Milchev (1994), Milchev and Georgiev (2000). The number of some species was estimated directly. In this case their number is absolute, because the number of counted

birds corresponds to their total number. Such are Raptors (Orders *Accipitriformes* and *Falconiformes*), Owls (Order *Strigiformes*), Swifts (Order *Apodiformes*), Corvids (Family *Corvidae*) or species with limited distribution as Black Stork *Ciconia nigra*, Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*, Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis* etc. The method of Watson *et al.* (1989) was used for the estimation number of Raptors. The Owls were counted acoustically using point counts by vehicle or transect counts by foot and in some of the cases they were stimulated to answer using taperecordings or imitations of advertising - calls of the species (Cramp, Simmons 1985, Nikolov *et al.* 2001).

The number of the other species is relative. The Quails *Coturnix coturnix*, Corncrakes *Crex crex*, Pigeons (Order *Columbiformes*), Hoopoes *Upupa epops*, Woodpeckers (Order *Piciformes*) and most of Passerines (Order *Passeriformes*) were counted by transects with a fixed belt between 7 and 11 hrs. local time (Bibby *et al.*, 1992). The transect length and width of the belt depended on itinerary and habitat. The transect length varied between 0.1 km and 2.5 km and the belt width varied between 30 m in dense forests and 200 m in open areas with short grass cover. The number of breeding pairs was calculated as equal to the number of calling males. The total number of breeding pairs was made by extrapolation of counted birds on transects with total habitat surface.

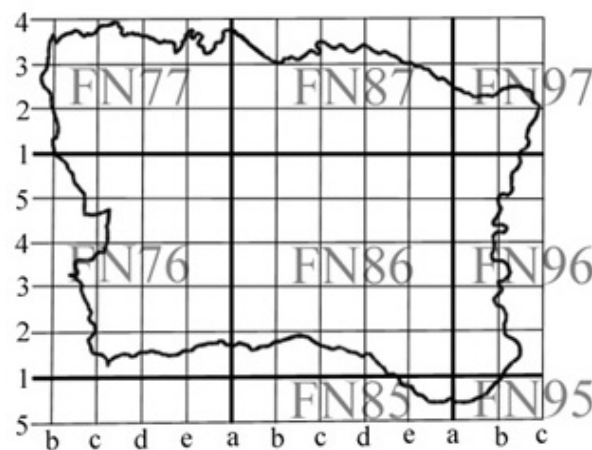


Fig. 3: UTM-grid for the study area

The coverage of habitats was made by GIS. The number of some species is subjective. They were presented in the study area, but because of their low abundance were not counted on transects, and their number was specified by assumption. Transect counts were made in all general habitats, determining the diversity of bird species

except rocks. The habitats were selected formally on the basis of quality and quantity of bird presence and also on the possibility to recognize them from the satellite photos. They were: 1. Meadows up to 1100 m asl; 2. Meadows above 1100 m asl; 3. Beech forests; 4. Other deciduous forests; 5. Deciduous and coniferous mixed forests; 6. Spruce and Macedonian Pine mixed forests; 7. Other coniferous forests; 8. Settlements; 9. Rivers; 10. Rocks (Figures 4 & 5).

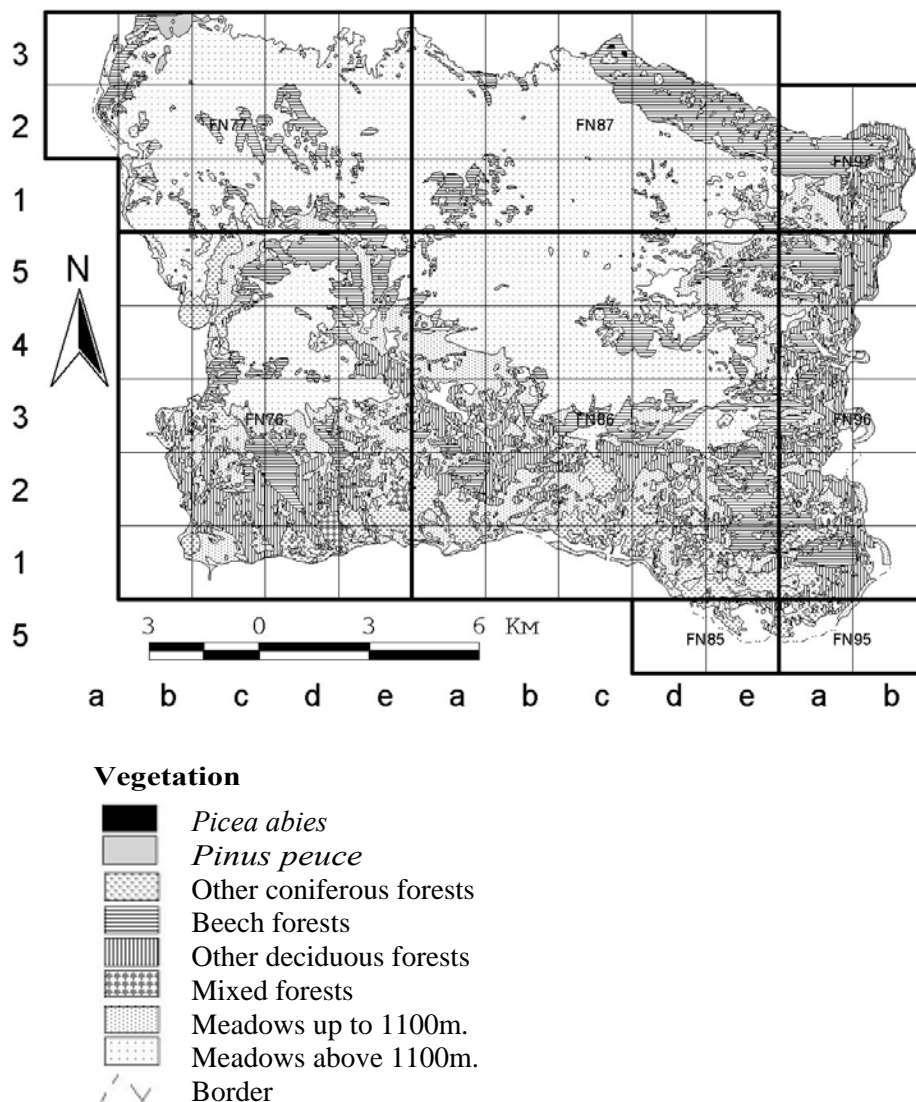
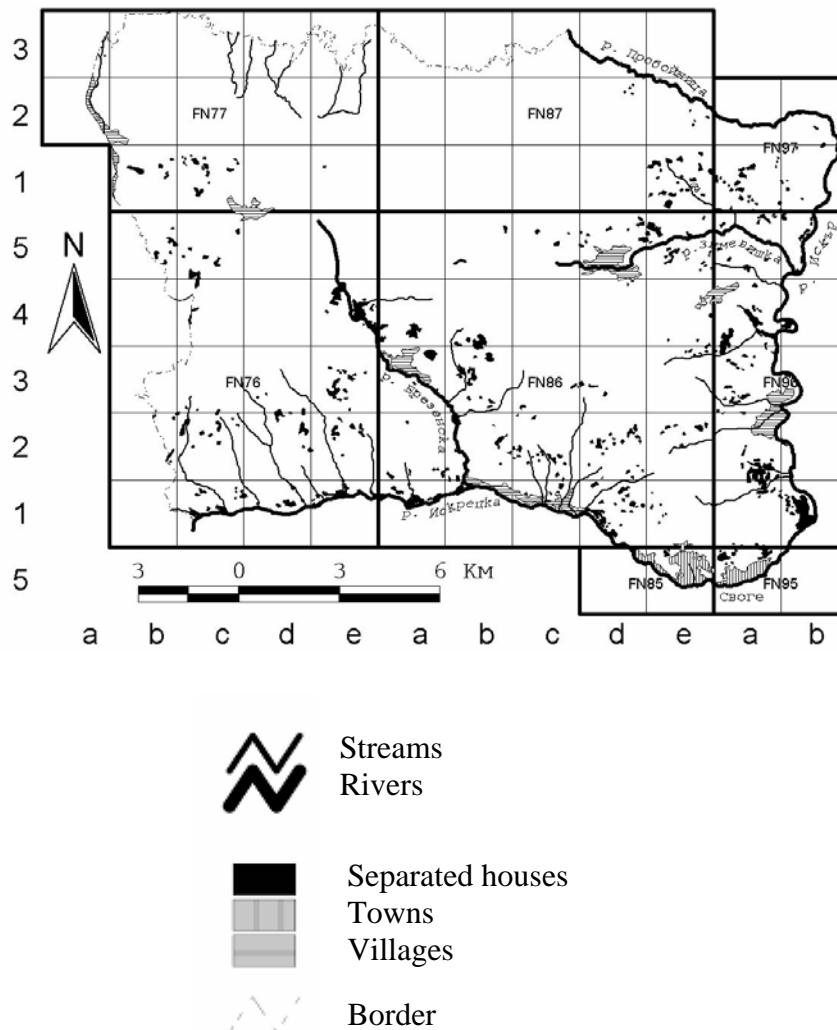


Fig. 4: Vegetation map of the Ponor Mountains





*Fig. 5: Rivers and settlements in the study area*

The number of transects corresponded to the total surface of habitats. More than 50 transects were made in each of the largest habitats such as meadows above 1100 m elevation, beech and other deciduous forests. The abundance was described according to the seven levels determined by Petrov and Michev (1986) with some modifications.

GIS and image processing work included the following: georeferencing of the satellite images and topomaps with ERDAS Imagine 8.3, sharpening of multispectral bands of satellite image with panchromatic, supervised and on-screen classification and digitalization of the land features with ERDAS and ArcView 3.2.

A Landsat 7 ETM satellite image from 26.06.2000 was used for the mapping of the land cover of the Ponor Mountain. The spatial resolution of the image was 30 m of the multispectral channels and 15 m of the panchromatic one. The land cover map was created using the comprehensive Land Cover Classification System of FAO (Di Gregorio, Jansen 2000, Travaglia *et al.* 2001). The satellite image was provided by the Bulgarian Aerospace Agency.

The data for the vegetation cover, settlements, river and road network and relief were obtained from topographic maps in scale 1:25,000, bought from the Military Topographic Service. In order to integrate the maps in the GIS environment they were georeferenced in UTM, WGS 84. Then the georeferenced topomaps were digitized in ArcView 3.2. and all of the above mentioned vector and raster layers were included in the GIS database.

Because the topomaps were not updated in the past six to seven years, we had to use a satellite image for a revision of the forest cover. The forest vector layer received from the topomaps was revised with the satellite image as a background and the area, type and distribution of the forests were updated.

## **Results and discussion**

As a result of the GIS work, a detailed and updated map of the area and of the distribution of the forests and meadows was obtained for the year 2000. The final result from the integration of the topomaps and the satellite image was the creation of a geo-database with information about land cover, relief, river network, road network and settlements of the Ponor Mountain. On the basis of all these data we could estimate the number and abundance of 115 breeding bird species observed on the study area between 2000 and 2002 (Table 1).

Extremely low abundance was determined for 5 species; rather low abundance for 11, low abundance for 35, intermediate abundance for 34, high abundance for 24, rather high abundance for 6 and there were not found birds with extremely high abundance. The species with low, intermediate and high abundance comprised over 80% of the total. The most numerous Raptors were the Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*, Common Buzzard *Buteo buteo* and Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*. For the family of *Phasianidae* this was the Quail, for the *Rallidae* it is the Corncrake with the highest density above 1100 m elevation, for the *Columbidae*, the Woodpigeon *Columba palumbus* which had the highest density in beech forests.

According to Delov (1995), the relative density of the Corncrake in meadows between 1300 and 1600 m elevation in this region is 0.38 pairs/ km<sup>2</sup> which is comparatively low for the Sofia region where the

№	Breeding bird species in Ponor Mountains	Breeding evidence	Number in couples.	Abundance	Nature protective status				
					LNP	RB	SPEC	ETS	BERN
1	<i>Ciconia nigra</i>	Probable	0 - 1	ELA	+	E	3	R	II
2	<i>Pernis apivorus</i>	Confirmed	2 - 3	RLA	+	E	4	S	II
3	<i>Circaetus gallicus</i>	Probable	2	RLA	+	E	3	R	II
4	<i>Accipiter gentilis</i>	Confirmed	2 - 3	RLA	+	E		S	II
5	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>	Confirmed	5 - 10	LA	+	E		S	II
6	<i>Buteo buteo</i>	Confirmed	5 - 10	LA	+			S	II
7	<i>Buteo rufinus</i>	Confirmed	6 - 8	LA	+	E	3	(E)	II
8	<i>Aquila heliaca</i>	Probable	0 - 1	ELA	+	E	1	E	II
9	<i>Aquila chrysaetos</i>	Confirmed	2	RLA	+	R	3	R	II
10	<i>Hieraaetus pennatus</i>	Possible	0 - 1	ELA	+	E	3	R	II
11	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	Confirmed	8 - 10	LA	+		3	D	II
12	<i>Falco subbuteo</i>	Possible	0 - 1	ELA	+	E		S	II
13	<i>Falco cherrug</i>	Possible	0 - 1	ELA	+	E	3	E	
14	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>	Confirmed	2	RLA	+	E	3	R	II
15	<i>Alectoris graeca</i>	Confirmed	30 - 50	IA			2	(V)	
16	<i>Perdix perdix</i>	Probable	20 - 40	IA			3	V	III
17	<i>Coturnix coturnix</i>	Confirmed	250 - 300	HA			3	V	III
18	<i>Crex crex</i>	Probable	100 - 130	IA	+	E	1	V	II
19	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>	Confirmed	3	LA	+			S	III
20	<i>Columba livia</i>	Confirmed	20 - 25	LA	+			S	III
21	<i>Columba palumbus</i>	Probable	200 - 250	IA			4	S	III
22	<i>Streptopelia turtur</i>	Possible	1 - 5	LA			3	D	III
23	<i>Cuculus canorus</i>	Probable	120 - 150	IA	+			S	III
24	<i>Otus scops</i>	Possible	3 - 10	LA	+		2	D	II
25	<i>Bubo bubo</i>	Possible	1 - 3	RLA	+	E	3	V	II
26	<i>Athene noctua</i>	Confirmed	5 - 10	LA	+		3	D	II
27	<i>Strix aluco</i>	Probable	28 - 35	IA	+		4	S	II
28	<i>Asio otus</i>	Confirmed	5 - 10	LA	+			S	II
29	<i>Aegolius funereus</i>	Probable	4	LA	+	R		(S)	II
30	<i>Caprimulgus europaeus</i>	Possible	1 - 10	LA	+		2	(D)	II
31	<i>Tachymarptis melba</i>	Probable	25 - 30	IA	+			(S)	II
32	<i>Apus apus</i>	Probable	5 - 10	LA	+			S	III
33	<i>Apus pallidus</i>	Probable	3	RLA				(S)	II
34	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>	Possible	1 - 3	RLA	+		3	D	II
35	<i>Merops apiaster</i>	Confirmed	0 - 3	RLA	+		3	D	II
36	<i>Upupa epops</i>	Possible	40 - 45	IA	+			S	II
37	<i>Jynx torquilla</i>	Possible	40 - 50	IA	+		3	D	II
38	<i>Picus canus</i>	Possible	20 - 30	LA	+		3	D	II
39	<i>Picus viridis</i>	Probable	100 - 120	IA	+		2	D	II
40	<i>Dryocopus martius</i>	Confirmed	8 - 10	LA	+	R		S	II
41	<i>Dendrocopos major</i>	Confirmed	100 - 120	IA	+			S	II
42	<i>Dendrocopos syriacus</i>	Confirmed	60 - 70	IA	+		4	(S)	II
43	<i>Dendrocopos medius</i>	Confirmed	20 - 30	LA	+		4	S	II
44	<i>Dendrocopos minor</i>	Confirmed	40 - 50	IA	+			S	II
45	<i>Lullula arborea</i>	Probable	400 - 430	HA			2	V	III
46	<i>Alauda arvensis</i>	Confirmed	8450 - 8550	RHA	+		3	V	III
47	<i>Eremophila alpestris</i>	Confirmed	60 - 80	IA	+			(S)	II
48	<i>Hirundo rupestris</i>	Confirmed	100 - 120	IA	+			S	II
49	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	Confirmed	500 - 540	HA	+		3	D	II
50	<i>Hirundo daurica</i>	Confirmed	90 - 100	IA	+			S	II
51	<i>Delichon urbica</i>	Confirmed	850 - 900	HA	+			S	II
52	<i>Anthus campestris</i>	Probable	1 - 5	LA	+		3	V	II

№	Breeding bird species in Ponor Mountains	Breeding evidence	Number in couples	Abundance	Nature protective status				
					LPN	RB	SPEC	ETS	BERN
53	<i>Anthus trivialis</i>	Confirmed	950 - 1050	HA	+			S	III
54	<i>Anthus spinoletta</i>	Possible	50 - 60	IA	+			S	III
55	<i>Motacilla flava</i>	Probable	20 - 25	LA	+			S	II
56	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>	Confirmed	60 - 70	IA	+			(S)	II
57	<i>Motacilla alba</i>	Confirmed	400 - 450	HA	+			S	II
58	<i>Cinclus cinclus</i>	Confirmed	5 - 10	LA	+			(S)	II
59	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>	Possible	100 - 120	IA	+			S	II
60	<i>Prunella modularis</i>	Probable	3 - 6	LA	+		4	S	II
61	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>	Confirmed	6100 - 6200	RHA	+		4	S	II
62	<i>Luscinia megarhynchos</i>	Confirmed	700 - 750	HA	+		4	(S)	II
63	<i>Phoenicurus ochruros</i>	Confirmed	230 - 280	IA	+			S	II
64	<i>Phoenicurus phoenicurus</i>	Confirmed	120 - 130	IA	+		2	V	II
65	<i>Saxicola rubetra</i>	Confirmed	1000 - 1100	HA	+		4	S	II
66	<i>Saxicola torquata</i>	Possible	1 - 5	LA	+		3	(V)	II
67	<i>Oenanthe oenanthe</i>	Confirmed	300 - 320	HA	+			S	II
68	<i>Monticola saxatilis</i>	Confirmed	10 - 20	LA	+		3	(D)	II
69	<i>Turdus torquatus</i>	Possible	1 - 3	RLA	+		4	S	II
70	<i>Turdus merula</i>	Confirmed	7300 - 7400	RHA	+		4	S	III
71	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>	Confirmed	1150 - 1250	HA	+		4	S	III
72	<i>Turdus viscivorus</i>	Confirmed	330 - 360	HA	+		4	S	III
73	<i>Hippolais icterina</i>	Possible	1 - 10	LA	+		4	S	II
74	<i>Sylvia nisoria</i>	Confirmed	280 - 310	HA			4	(S)	II
75	<i>Sylvia curruca</i>	Confirmed	330 - 370	HA	+			S	II
76	<i>Sylvia communis</i>	Confirmed	2200 - 2300	HA	+		4	S	II
77	<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>	Probable	950 - 1050	HA	+		4	S	II
78	<i>Phylloscopus sibilatrix</i>	Possible	1 - 5	LA	+		4	(S)	II
79	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>	Probable	2700 - 2800	RHA	+			(S)	II
80	<i>Regulus regulus</i>	Confirmed	10 - 15	LA	+		4	(S)	II
81	<i>Muscicapa striata</i>	Probable	60 - 75	IA	+		3	D	II
82	<i>Aegithalos caudatus</i>	Confirmed	180 - 200	IA	+			S	III
83	<i>Parus palustris</i>	Confirmed	120 - 150	IA	+			S	II
84	<i>Parus lugubris</i>	Confirmed	130 - 160	IA	+		4	(S)	II
85	<i>Parus montanus</i>	Confirmed	60 - 80	IA	+			(S)	II
86	<i>Parus ater</i>	Confirmed	1300 - 1400	HA	+			S	II
87	<i>Parus caeruleus</i>	Confirmed	300 - 350	HA	+		4	S	II
88	<i>Parus major</i>	Confirmed	2750 - 2850	RHA	+			S	II
89	<i>Sitta europaea</i>	Confirmed	200 - 250	IA	+			S	II
90	<i>Certhia familiaris</i>	Possible	1 - 10	LA	+			S	II
91	<i>Oriolus oriolus</i>	Confirmed	20 - 30	LA	+			S	II
92	<i>Lanius collurio</i>	Confirmed	1950 - 2050	HA	+		3	(D)	II
93	<i>Garrulus glandarius</i>	Confirmed	600 - 650	HA				(S)	
94	<i>Pica pica</i>	Confirmed	8 - 15	LA				S	
95	<i>Nucifraga caryocatactes</i>	Confirmed	2 - 5	LA	+			S	II
96	<i>Pyrrhocorax graculus</i>	Confirmed	13	LA	+			(S)	II
97	<i>Corvus monedula</i>	Probable	0 - 2	RLA			4	(S)	
98	<i>Corvus corone</i>	Confirmed	15	LA				S	
99	<i>Corvus corax</i>	Confirmed	7	LA	+			(S)	
100	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	Confirmed	200 - 230	IA				S	
101	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	Confirmed	900 - 950	HA				S	
102	<i>Passer montanus</i>	Confirmed	250 - 280	IA				S	III
103	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>	Confirmed	5500 - 5600	RHA	+		4	S	III
104	<i>Serinus serinus</i>	Probable	80 - 110	IA	+		4	S	II
105	<i>Carduelis chloris</i>	Confirmed	350 - 400	HA	+		4	S	II

№	Breeding bird species in Ponor Mountains	Breeding evidence	Number in couples	Abundance	Nature protective status				
					LNP	RB	SPEC	ETS	BERN
106	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>	Confirmed	250 - 300	HA	+			(S)	II
107	<i>Carduelis cannabina</i>	Confirmed	200 - 250	IA	+		4	S	II
108	<i>Loxia curvirostra</i>	Confirmed	5	LA	+			S	II
109	<i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i>	Probable	30 - 40	IA	+			S	III
110	<i>Coccothr. coccothraustes</i>	Confirmed	140 - 160	IA	+			S	II
111	<i>Emberiza citrinella</i>	Confirmed	2050 - 2150	HA	+		4	(S)	II
112	<i>Emberiza cirius</i>	Possible	1 - 10	LA	+		4	(S)	II
113	<i>Emberiza cia</i>	Probable	130 - 150	IA	+		3	V	II
114	<i>Emberiza hortulana</i>	Possible	1 - 10	LA	+		2	(V)	III
115	<i>Miliaria calandra</i>	Confirmed	1300 - 1400	HA	+		4	(S)	III

**Table 1: Breeding birds in Ponor Mountain, their breeding evidence, numbers, abundance and nature conservation status.**

**Abundance** - abundance categories according to Petrov & Michev (1986) with some modifications

**ELA** – extremely low abundance (under 0,1 couple/100 km<sup>2</sup>); **RLA** – rather low abundance (0,1 – 0,99 couples/100 km<sup>2</sup>); **LA** – low abundance (1 – 9.99 couples/100 km<sup>2</sup>); **IA** – intermediate abundance (10 – 99.99 couples/100 km<sup>2</sup>); **HA** – high abundance (100 – 999.99 couples/100 km<sup>2</sup>); **RHA** – rather high abundance (1000 – 9999.99 couples/100 km<sup>2</sup>); **EHA** – extremely high abundance (up to 10 000 couples/100 km<sup>2</sup>).

**LNP** – species protected by the Nature Protection Act, Order №342 from 21.04.1986, *The Official Gazette*, Vol. 42 of 30.05.1986.

**RB** – Bulgarian Red Book of Animals with categories: **R** – rare species; **E** – endangered species.

**SPEC** – species with European nature protection importance according to the criteria of *Birds of Europe* (Tucker & Heath, 1994) with the following conservation status categories: **SPEC 1** – world endangered species, dependent on nature conservation or pure studied; **SPEC 2** – species whose world population is concentrated in Europe and have unfavourable conservation status in Europe; **SPEC 3** – species whose population is not concentrated in Europe, but whose conservation status is unfavorable in Europe; **SPEC 4** – species whose world population is concentrated in Europe and their conservation status there is favourable.

**ETS** – Endangered level of European bird species according to the criteria of *Birds of Europe* (Tucker & Heath, 1994) with conservation status categories: **E** – endangered species with intensive decreasing population in Europe under 10,000 couples or stable, but under 2,500 couples and decreasing moderately or under 250 couples; **V** – vulnerable species whose European population is up to 10,000 couples, but decrease strongly or under 10,000 couples and decrease moderately or under 2,500 couples; **R** – rare species whose European population is stable, but under 10,000 couples; **D** – moderately decreasing species whose European population is up to 10,000 couples; **S** – stable species whose European population is up to 10,000 couples; **( )** – temporary status.

**BERN** – species included in the Convention for the conservation of the wild European flora, fauna and natural habitats: **II** – species included in annex II of the Convention as strictly protected; **III** – species included in annex III of the Convention.

highest density is more than 5 pairs/ km<sup>2</sup> in the Zimevitza Meadows. We specified higher relative density of 0.47 pairs/km<sup>2</sup> between 600 and 1600 m elevation, but lower in the Zimevitza Meadows: 4 pairs/km<sup>2</sup>. The most numerous of the Owls was the Tawny Owl *Strix aluco*, which inhabits all types of forests presented in study area. The distribution of the population in respect of habitats was 64.3% in beech forests, 32.1% in other deciduous forests and 3.6% in coniferous forests. In terms of elevation it was 67.9% up to 1000 m a.s.l. and 32.1% above this elevation. This distribution corresponds to the coverage of habitats: the beech forests are with biggest surface, followed by the other deciduous and coniferous forests and most of the forest are in locations of up to 1000 m elevation. The most numerous of Swifts was the Alpine Swift *Apus melba* and the most

numerous among the Woodpeckers were the Green Woodpecker *Picus viridis* and the Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major*. The most numerous of the Passerines was the Skylark *Alauda arvensis*, followed by the Blackbird *Turdus merula*, the Robin *Erithacus rubecula* and the Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*. The Skylark and the Whinchat *Saxicola rubetra* predominated in meadows above 1100 m a s l. In the meadows up to this elevation which are richer in shrubs, the dominants were the Great Whitethroat *Sylvia communis* the Yellowhammer *Emberiza citrinella*, the Red-backed Shrike *Lanius collurio* and the Corn Bunting *Miliaria calandra*. In beech forests the Chaffinch, the Robin and the Three Pipit *Anthus trivialis* predominated, while in other deciduous forests these were the Blackbird, the Robin, the Chaffinch, the Great Tit *Parus major* and the Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita*.

In the Spruce-Macedonian Pine mixed forests the dominant species were the Chaffinch, the Coal Tit *Parus ater*, the Blackbird, and the Serin *Serinus serinus*. In other coniferous and mixed forests these were the Chaffinch, the Coal Tit, the Blackbird and the Robin. The most numerous species on the rocks were the Black Redstart *Phoenicurus ochruros*, the House Martin *Delichon urbica* and the Crag Martin *Hirundo rupestris*. In settlements the House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*, the House Martin, the Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica*, the Nightingale *Luscinia megarhynchos* and the Blackbird predominated. The White Wagtail *Motacilla alba*, the Nightingale and the Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea* predominated along the rivers and streams.



There are some inaccuracies in the data presented because of the method applied. The reliability of the presented total number of breeding birds is different. Some species were counted directly and their number is real. The number of most species was estimated indirectly with extrapolation, so it is relative and less authentic. There are also few species for whom the number was estimated by assumption in a range, so it is subjective and least authentic. According to Bibby *et al.* (1992) when the transect is a single route following a natural path it is the simplest way to sample an area, but sometimes it is the only possible if access or time is limited. It has the disadvantage that the route may not be typical of the whole area when the path follows a feature such a stream or a contour line, which affects bird distribution and number.

In respect of the conservation status there were 63 species with European nature protection importance according to the criteria of *Birds of Europe* (Tucker & Heath, 1994), 100 species protected by the National Nature Protection Act, 16 species included in the Bulgarian Red Book of Animals and 106 species included in the Convention for the conservation of the wild European flora, fauna and natural habitats.

Because detailed data about the number and density of breeding birds in the study area did not exist before the study, it is impossible to compare the previous and current situation of populations. There are still certain fragmentary data concerning few species (Reiser 1894, Simeonov 1967, Donchev 1970, Simeonov & Michev 1980, Michev *et al.* 1984, Michev & Petrov 1985, Stoyanov & Kocev 1985, Baumgart 1987, Petrov *et al.* 1996, Stoyanov 2001). According to Stoyanov (2001), the Raven has been in expansion in the past 20 years and the number of the Raven population in the Ponor Mountains is about 10 pairs. During our study we found only 7 breeding pairs, but we agree with the above statement because of the high number of vagrant birds presented: up to 32 individuals in winter. We determined decrease in number of five species: the Imperial Eagle *Aquila heliaca*, the Sacker Falcon *Falco cherrug*, the Rock Dove *Columba livia*, the Ortolan Bunting *Emberiza hortulana* and the Alpine Chough *Pyrrhocorax graculus*, and increase in number of two species: the Long-legged Buzzard *Buteo rufinus* and the Red-rumped Swallow *Hirundo daurica*.

## **Acknowledgements**

Our most cordial thanks go to Associate Prof. Tanyo Michev for his valuable advice and guidance during the preparation of this work. We would hardly have succeeded in our software work without the satellite images of the Bulgarian Aerospace Agency. Our field trips in the mountains we made possible thanks to the assistance and help we received from Svetoslav Spassov and Siyka Nikolova. Our sincere thanks go to them as well.

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# **Monitoring of Mediterranean Gulls *Larus melanocephalus* by means of colour ringing programmes in the Black Sea and north-eastern Mediterranean regions.**

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## **Introduction**

Since 1989, a number of colour ringing programmes for the Mediterranean Gull have been set up in Western Europe (Flamant 1994), resulting in a wealth of information. These data, of which only a small part has so far been published (Meininger *et al.*, 1999), do not only concern migratory movements, nest site and wintering site fidelity, but also very specific information such as pair fidelity. This huge amount of information, about 100.000 recoveries from birds ringed in Western Europe alone, concerns only a very small fraction of the world population, which is mainly situated in the Black Sea.

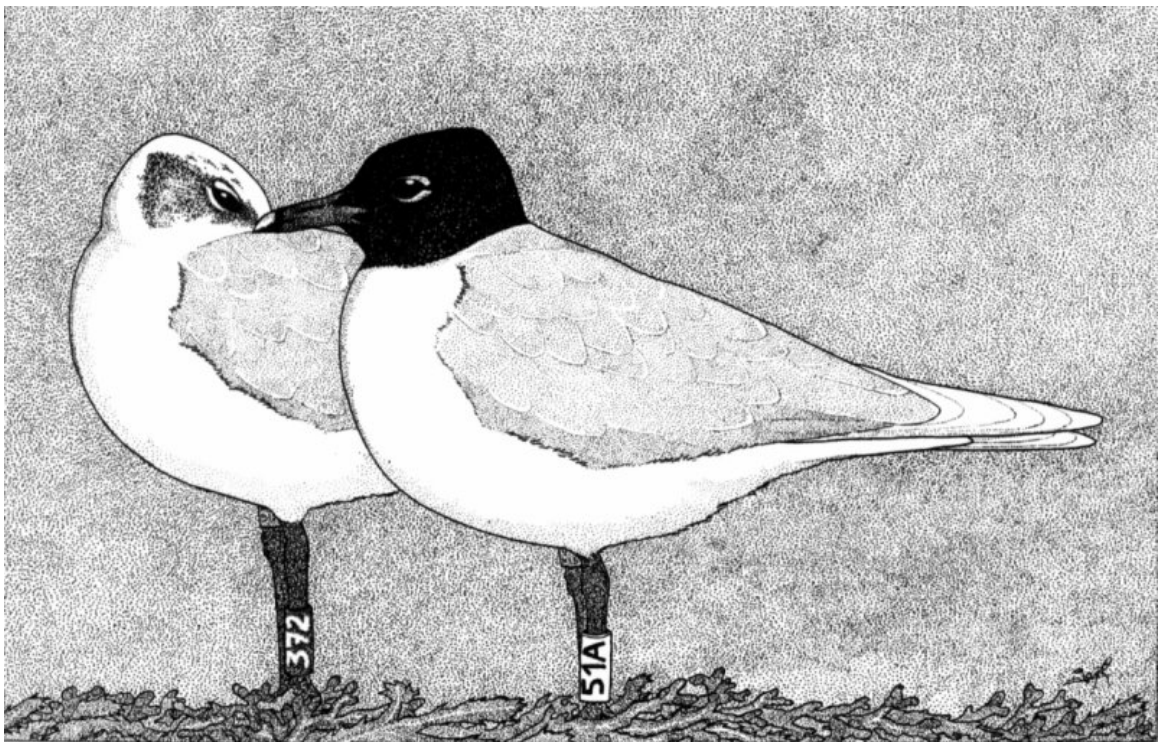
Despite a steady and considerable ringing effort in the main Western European colonies for a number of years, a significant proportion of the Mediterranean Gulls observed in the Western European colonies, staging areas and wintering sites is un(colour)ringed (RF & PLM, pers. obs.). This suggests an origin from other colonies where ringing activities are limited or non-existent. This consideration has been the main motivation for setting up new colour ringing activities in Ukraine

(since 1994), Turkey (since 1997), and to a lesser extent Greece (since 1997).

Considering the fact that the Mediterranean Gull is listed in annex 1 of the Council Directive 79/409 of the European Economic Community for the conservation of wild birds (dated 2 April 1979), it is important to collect information concerning the biology of the species. Knowledge about distribution mechanisms can be very useful to implement protective measures adapted to the colonising strategy of the Mediterranean Gull.

### **Aim of the paper**

The aim of this short paper is to give an impression of the various ongoing colour ringing monitoring programmes on Mediterranean Gull populations from the Black Sea and north-eastern Mediterranean regions, and to encourage any form of collaboration for a better follow-up of these birds by ringers and observers.



Gaël Rault (†) ©

## **Set up of colour ringing programmes in Ukraine, Greece and Turkey**

Thanks to Tatiana Ardamatskaya (TA), Antonina Rudenko (AR) and PLM, the first 296 Ukrainian Mediterranean Gulls were fitted with a black engraved colour ring in 1994. In 1997, Renaud Flamant (RF) took over the coordination of the black rings, expanding it to Greece and Turkey with the collaboration of, respectively, Vassilis Goutner (VG) and Sühendan Karauz Er (SK).

Mainly thanks to the financial support of the Solvay Company and the Janssens-Theys Foundation, Mediterranean Gulls have been colour ringed, on almost a yearly base in Ukraine, Greece and Turkey, resulting in a total of 5312 black colour ringed Mediterranean Gulls (see Table 1).

In Ukraine, the colour ringing has been carried out at three locations: the Black Sea Biosphere Reserve with the help of AR and Olga Yaremchenko, the Kinburn peninsula (Nicolaev region) with the help of TA and the Azov Sea with the help of Valery Siokhin and Alex Matsyura. In 2000 and 2002, two colour ringing and observation fieldwork sessions were organised by RF in the Black Sea Biosphere Reserve. The total number of colour ringed Ukrainian Mediterranean Gulls, mainly chicks, amounts to 4061 birds.

In Greece, 761 chicks of the colonies of the Evros delta, Axios delta and Lafri lagoon have been fitted with black colour rings by VG and his team.

In Turkey, 675 chicks were colour ringed by SK and her team from 1997 until 2002 at the Bolluk and Kulu lakes in the Konya province (Central Anatolia). In 2002, 48 chicks were metal ringed at Gediz Delta (Aegean Sea).

Further colour ringing activities in these three countries are planned in the near future. Due to a lack of authorizations and/or finances, the setting up of similar programmes in Romania and Azerbaijan has not yet been possible.

**Table 1: Number of Mediterranean Gulls black colour ringed in 1994-2003 in Greece, Turkey and Ukraine.**

	1994	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	Total birds per country
<b>Greece</b>	0	145	0	118	144	0	0	354	761
<b>Turkey</b>	0	80	225	107	78	0	137	0	627
<b>Ukraine</b>	296	0	300	956	655	0	1544	300	4061
<b>Total birds per year</b>	296	225	525	1191	887	0	1681	654	5449

## Data-handling

All ringing and recovery data are kept in a database, which can be used to produce various types of reports and statistical analyses. Observers are “rewarded” with a complete life history report of the bird. Thanks to modern communication by e-mail, all observers also receive an update of the life histories of “their birds” on a yearly basis; they have also the possibility to be free member of a Mediterranean Gull discussion forum. Full details of all the used codes of rings can be found on [www.cr-birding.be](http://www.cr-birding.be), a website containing the majority of the colour marking programmes in Europe.

## Observation pressure

Despite the active information policy, the bulk of the observations is performed by a small number of very motivated ring readers: out of the 1441 sightings made by 142 observers, 70% have been made by only 13 observers. Table 2 gives the geographical distribution per country. Table 3 gives the 10 most successful ring reading sites for black-ringed Mediterranean Gulls. It clearly demonstrates that the combination of some very motivated observers and good numbers of Mediterranean Gulls of the Greek, Turkish and Ukrainian populations in the western part of the Mediterranean Sea result in the bulk of information collected. Unfortunately, some locations with very high wintering numbers, such as Varano lake (Foggia, Italy) and Sicily (N. Baccetti & A. Talamelli, in litt.), have so far produced very few or no sightings.

**Table 2: Sightings of black-ringed Mediterranean Gulls per country.**

Country	Number of different readings	Number of Individual birds	
Belgium	29	3	
Bulgaria	3	1	
Cyprus	1	1	
France	544	Atlantic coast	29
		Mediterranean coast	7
Great Britain	6	3	
Greece	7	5	
Italy	651	157	
Mauritania	2	1	
Netherlands	1	1	
Portugal	2	2	
Spain	55	Atlantic coast	2
		Mediterranean coast	35
Switzerland	1	1	
Tunisia	2	2	
Ukraine	137	52	
Total	1441		

**Table 3: Top 10 finding places outside the breeding colonies of Greece, Turkey and Ukraine (out of 134 locations).**

<b>Locality</b>	<b>Number of different rings read</b>
Sacca di Scardovari, Porto Tolle, Rovigo, Italy	36
Valle Mezzano, Comacchio, Ferrara, Italy	26
Saline di Comacchio, Comacchio, Ferrara, Italy	22
Chioggia, Valle Brenta, Venezia, Italy	17
Valle Pega, Comacchio, Ferrara, Italy	16
Conca, San Giovanni in Marignano, Forli, Italy	14
Tarragona harbour, Tarragona, Spain	14
Porto Garibaldi, Ferrara, Italy	14
Cambrils, Tarragona, Spain	12
Beach of Cattolica, Forli, Italy	11

## **Request for collaboration**

Any help in setting up colour ringing and –reading activities in other locations or countries in eastern and south-eastern Europe would be most welcome.

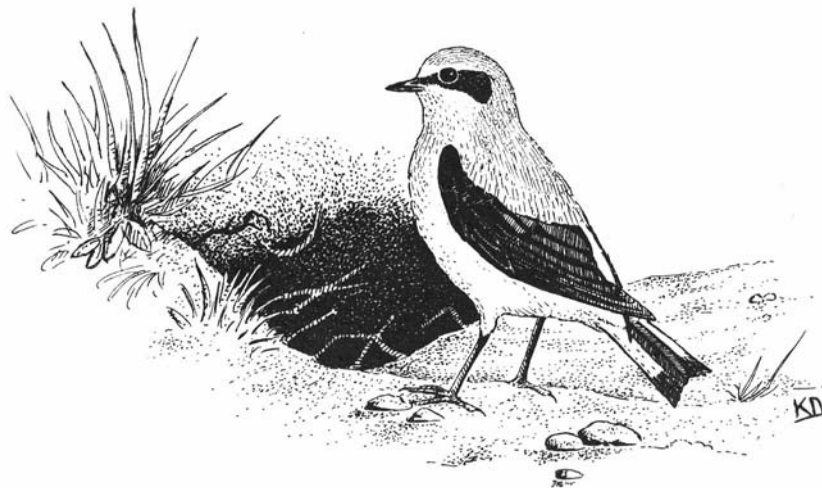
Any reports from the above mentioned or other locations with high numbers of Mediterranean Gulls and ring-reading possibilities, especially from the coast of the Mediterranean Sea, would be highly appreciated by the authors.

## **Acknowledgements**

We are most grateful to all persons having collaborated in the set up of these programmes and in colour ringing or – observing activities and more especially Nicola Baccetti, Martin Boschert, Camille Duponcheel, Guido Goris, Lyndon Kearsley, Jean Lampe, Alex Matsyura, Georgy Mayatsky (†), Anatoly Poluda, Walter Roggeman, Valery Siokhin, Fernando Spina, Georges Theys, Jacques Van Esbroeck, the Greek, Turkish and Ukrainian ringing teams, the Solvay Company, the Janssens-Theys Foundation, the Underwater Research Society and Bird Research Society for financial support to the Turkish part of the project, and last but not least the 142 observers spending hours on the field to trace the black rings.

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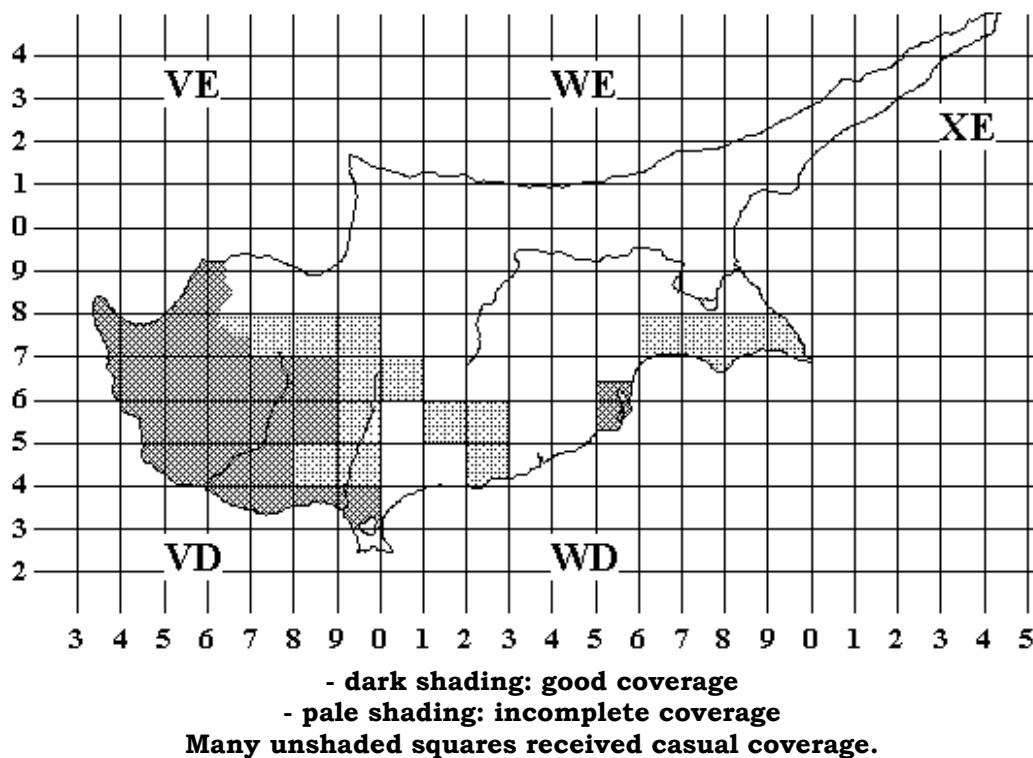
# Cyprus Breeding Birds Atlas

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Peter Flint & Peter Stewart, in their book *The Birds of Cyprus* (1992), suggested that an atlas of the breeding distribution of Cyprus birds would be of particular value. In 1995 we took up the challenge and now publish our work to date, complete for the Paphos District but regrettably not for the remainder of the south of the island. The area north of the 'Green Line', dividing the Republic of Cyprus, was covered only during our occasional restricted visits.

**Figure 1: Cyprus map showing areas with different degrees of coverage**

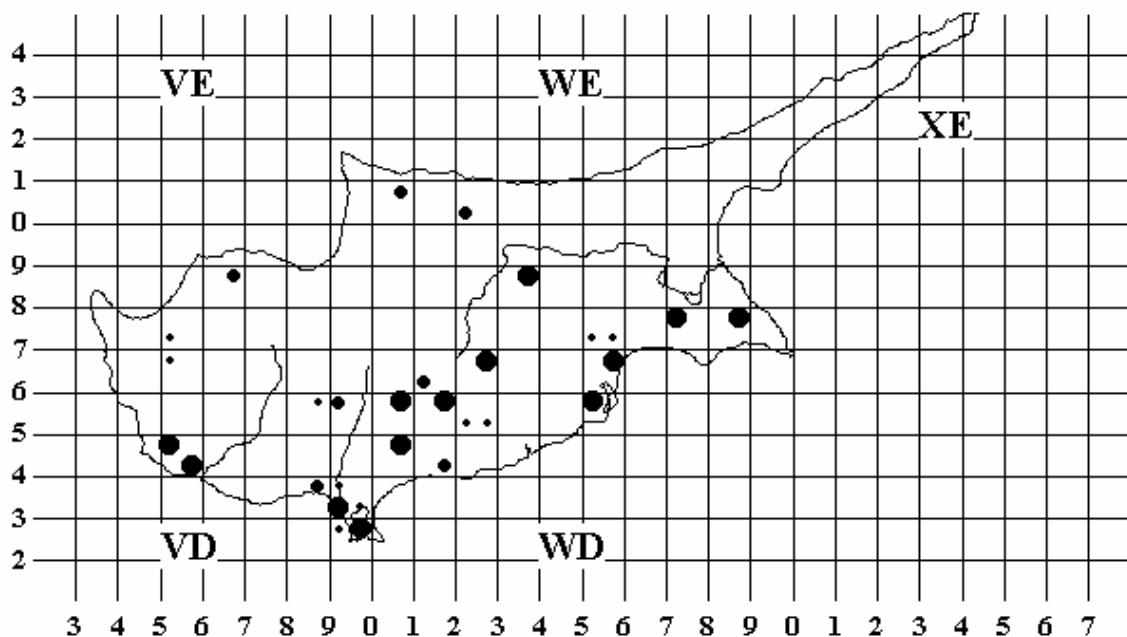


Our method was to spend at least two hours in each five-kilometre square in the Paphos District twice per year but this was not achieved in some of the more remote squares. Derek Pomeroy contributed many useful records during his Timed Species Count Project. In addition we included our casual records made during birding forays to other parts of the island and casual records from local and visiting bird-watchers. Usually we used a car - a mobile hide - stopping for more detailed inspections on foot at obviously interesting sites, in a variety of habitats or when birds were briefly seen or heard. We concentrated on finding territories and young birds, rather than spending time searching for nests.

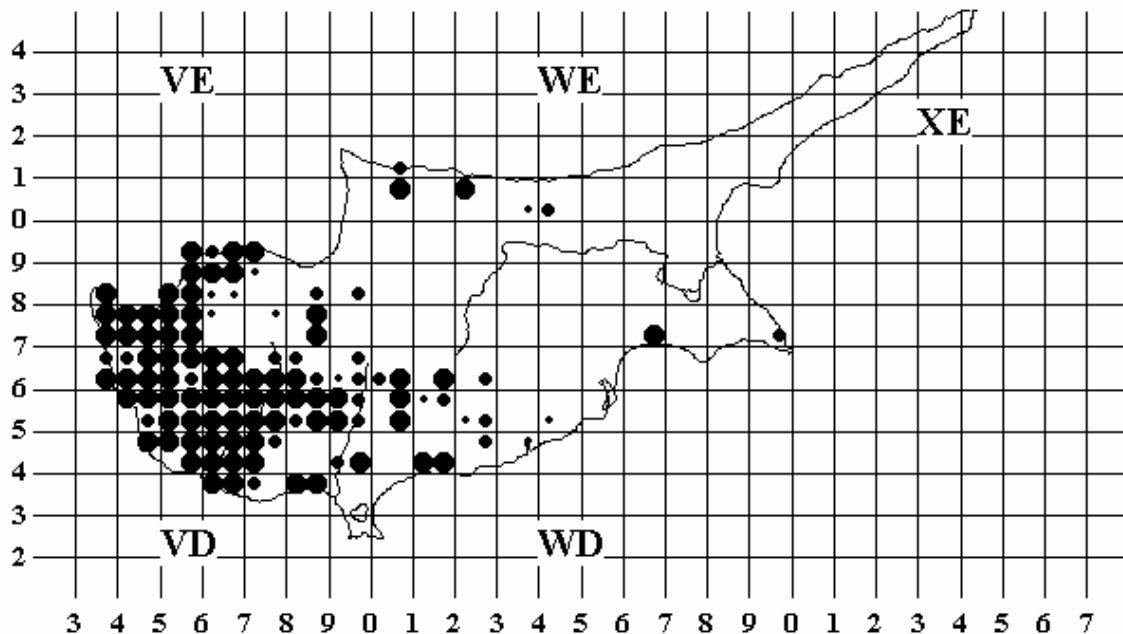
The survey period was from 1st March to 30th June except when eggs, unfledged juveniles, recently fledged young (nidicolous species) with obvious parent bird or birds nearby, or downy young (nidifugous species), were found later in the year, and in the case of those raptors known to breed earlier or later in the year.

The maps for Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis* and Cyprus warbler *Sylvia melanothorax* illustrate the typical coverage achieved for two very different species. The former restricted to much visited and well known water features; the latter a more skulking but widespread species, probably less common in the east but under-recorded away from the Paphos District.

### 0007 Little Grebe



## 1268 Cyprus Warbler



The breeding evidence criteria are those used for the European Ornithological Atlas (EOA), with confirmed, probable and possible breeding denoted by decreasing dot size. However we have been unable to resolve to our satisfaction, the common problem of winter visitors and passage migrants that remain in Cyprus well into the breeding season. Species with no past confirmed breeding records are often found singing and displaying, sometimes apparently paired, in suitable habitats. Using the EOA criteria, such birds should have been recorded as probable or at least possible breeders. Where there has never been historical evidence of confirmed breeding, those species have not been included unless the records were in late spring, generally after mid-May.

Since the publication of *The Birds of Cyprus* (1992) much has changed. This book records these changes and also includes, for the record, some sightings previously unpublished for lack of full, acceptable field notes. It also suggests some species that may breed in Cyprus in the future.

One hundred and thirty two species are included, ninety-five of which are known to have bred on the Island during the survey period. Nine new species have been added to the list of breeding birds; seven species have been recorded breeding after a long interval; several species have increased in numbers and range; two species almost certainly have become extinct.

We realise that our efforts are only a start and sincerely hope that others may take up the challenge to complete this atlas in Cyprus, perhaps as part of a common bird monitoring scheme with Pan-European Monitoring in mind.

### **Cyprus Breeding Birds Atlas**

39 pages, A4, spiral bound.

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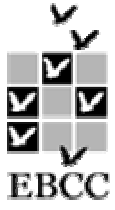
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**Spur-winged Plover – A regular breeding bird since 1990 –  
Photo David Whaley**



# Bird Numbers 2004

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The European Bird Census Council (EBCC), Erciyes University, and Doga Derneği (DD) are pleased to invite you to attend the 16th International Conference of the EBCC, which will be held in Kayseri, Turkey from 6th-11th of September, 2004.

So far more than 150 people from 25 countries have preliminary registered to the conference. The conference promises to be a diverse, stimulating, and resourceful meeting. We aim to share knowledge of all aspects of bird monitoring across Europe and are open to those with interests in the following related issues:

- ▶Monitoring: sampling design, field methods and analysis
  - ▶Monitoring using capture techniques
  - ▶Monitoring conservation action and policy
  - ▶Accession to European Union and Monitoring
  - ▶Pan-European Monitoring and Indicators
  - ▶Integrated Population Monitoring
  - ▶Atlas studies
  - ▶Modeling Bird Numbers and Distributions
  - ▶Monitoring ecological disasters
  - ▶Climate Change
  - ▶Setting conservation priorities
  - ▶Site or protected areas monitoring
  - ▶Citizen Science: Working with volunteers
-

## Journals and reports

In this Chapter a selected summary review is given of the contents of journals and reports send to Bird Census News as exchange

Ciconia, Ligue Pour la Protection des Oiseaux. Délégation Alsace et Lorraine. Musée Zoologique de Strasbourg. (in French with English summaries) Volume 26, Fasc. 3-2002

**Andres, C. & J-Ph. Stuber: 85-96. Evolution of the House Martin (*Delichon urbica*) population of Strasbourg (France) during the last 30 years.** The species is an abundant breeder in the region. To follow the evolution of the population in Strasbourg, an inventory was made in a area of approximately 100km<sup>2</sup>, including 70 km<sup>2</sup> of urban zone. Since 1967 every ten years such an inventory has been made. The total number of nests in 1967 was 89, in 1987, 396 and in 1997 383. The species probably benefited from the wave of constructions during the 1960-70 in the suburbs. Since the end of the 90ties, colonies in the old centre are abandoned.

**Muller, Y & M. Brignon: 97-106. The House Martin (*Delichon urbica*), bird of the year in Alsace.** A study of the abundance and distribution of House Martins and Swallows was launched in 2000 in Alsace. 7735 House Martin nests were counted in 116 towns and villages. The numbers varied from 0 nests (in 7 villages) to 520 nests. The average was 67 pairs per village. The total population is estimated at between 60000-80000 pairs in the region. The total Swallow population was estimated at between 30000-50000. Both species are threatened by the change in agricultural practices, the improvement of buildings and the "obsession" with cleanliness.

**Koenig, P; & C. Hof: 107-111. Population evolution of the Nightjar (*Caprimulgus europaeus*) in the forest of Haguenu after the hurricane 'Lothar'.** 33 to 39 singing Nightjar males were recorded in 1992/1993 in 13000 hectares of the forest of Haguenu. Hurricane Lothar (December 1999) damaged a large part of the forest. To assess the impact on the species, a new inventory was organised in 2002 in two areas. In the western sector of the forest, not much affected by the storm, the numbers increased from 0 to 3 singing males whereas in the eastern sector which was strongly affected, the numbers increased from 7 to 25 singing males. We conclude that the hurricane had a positive effect on the Nightjar population of the forest.

**Daske, D.: 112-120. The prey of the Peregrine Falcon (*Falco peregrinus*) in Mulhouse.** From December to march 2001 a pair of peregrine Falcons visited regularly the St Etienne church, the highest religious building in Mulhouse (département of Haut-Rhin). During this period more than a hundred preys remnants were collected, consisting of 30 bird species and a bat. The main prey items are the feral pigeons, the starling and species of the large turdidae, but it was noted that the Peregrine specialised in the capture of water birds (especially the Black-headed Gull). Night hunting by the raptor is proved by the

presence of nocturnal migratory species such as Quail, Corn Crake, and an important number of Woodcock captured in autumn and winter.

Nos Oiseaux, Revue de la Société romande pour l'étude et la protection des oiseaux, Martigny; Switzerland (in French with English and German summaries of the articles). [info@nosoiseaux.ch](mailto:info@nosoiseaux.ch), <http://www.nosoiseaux.ch>

Volume 51, number 1, March 2004

**Märki, H. & F. Benoit: 1-10. New data from the winter range of Citril Finch, *Serinus citrinella* in Spain.** For the first time Citril Finches have been observed in the mountains of southern Spain during winter.

**Defourny, H, H. Teerlinck & D. Vangeluwe: 11-19. Geographic origins and demographics of Common Pochards *Aythya ferina* wintering in the Meuse region of Belgium.** Wintering Pochards ringed in Belgium were recovered in four Russian breeding areas with different habitat: steppe, river valley, alluvial marshes and forest.

Anuari Ornitológic de les Balears. Palma de Mallorca, Spain (in Catalan, Spanish or English with summaries in English and Spanish or Catalan). [xiscoavella@vodafone.es](mailto:xiscoavella@vodafone.es)

2002, Volume 17

**Stagg, A. : 3-9. A First sighting of Long-billed Dowitcher, *Limnodromus scolopaceus* in the Balearctic Islands.** In October 2002 an immature bird was observed in the Parc Natural de s'Albufera de Mallorca, the first for the Balearics.

**Costa, S: 11-12. Contribution to the Atlas of Breeding Birds of the Island of Formentera.** During the year 2002 the breeding of three new species in the Island of Formentera has been verified: Corn Bunting, *Miliaria calandra*, Blackbird, *Turdus merula* and Quail, *Coturnix coturnix*. These species will have to be added to the Atlas of the breeding birds of the island.

**Martinez, O.: 13-15. New breeding location of Northern Long-eared Owl *Asio otus* in Eivissa.** During the year 2001, the breeding was confirmed of the second breeding pair of the Long-eared Owl on the island of Eivissa, and the presence of this species in other territories.

**Mayol J, Jurado JR, Montaner JC & Muntaner J.: 21-29. Demographic trends of the avifauna of the Balearctic Islands from 1975 to 2000.** The paper evaluates the demographic evolution of 134 species and the insular bird population of the Balearics over the past 25 years. 59 species are increasing, 53 are decreasing and 22 are stable.

**Triay, R.: 31-39. Status of the Osprey, *Pandion haliaetus* in the island of Minorca.** During the 1980s only 2 to 3 Osprey pairs were nesting in the island of Minorca. During the 90s there was an increase in the

population, and up to 7 pairs nested. This recovery might have happened from the existing Balearic nucleus.

**Adrover J, Muñoz A & Riera J.: 41-45. Situation of the Red Kite *Milvus milvus* in Mallorca.** The Red Kite has suffered a big decrease in Mallorca during the last decades. After 3 years of investigation the cause of mortality seems to be the illegal use of poison: 78% of the birds found dead in the last years had died from poisoning. The high mortality in immatures as well as adult birds will have a disastrous effect if the illegal poisoning continues in the near future.

**De Pablo F & Pons JM.:47-51. The red Kite *Milvus milvus* in Menorca (Balearic Islands): status and conservation.** The Red Kite has suffered a major population decrease in Menorca in recent years, falling from 135 breeding pairs at the end of the 1980s to 10 currently, a decline which will lead the population to extinction in a few years if the trend is not reversed. There is a high mortality due to the use of poison baits, electrocution and shooting.

**De Pablo F.: 53-57. Status of the Egyptian Vulture *Neophron percnopterus* in the Balearic Islands.** The population of Egyptian Vulture in the Balearic Islands has been estimated at 41 territorial pairs with the greater part of the population in Menorca. This indicates a population decrease of up to 20% when compared with data from ten years ago.

**Tewes E.: 59-69. The Black Vulture *Aegypius monachus* Conservation Program on Majorca in 2002.** The Black Vulture population of Majorca was on the edge of extinction at the beginning of the 80ies, when less than 20 birds were left. Since then, successive "Recovery and Conservation Programs" have been carried out by the Autonomous Community of the Balearic Islands, in collaboration with the Black Vulture Conservation Foundation.

**Muntaner J.: 71-85. Status of the Audouin's Gull *Larus audouinii* population in the Balearic Islands during the years 2000 to 2002.** The paper reports the results of the annual censuses of breeding pairs of the Audouin's Gull in the Balearic Islands, their distribution, number of colonies and the changes in distribution during the years 2000, 2001 and 2002. In 2002 1571 breeding pairs were counted in 17 locations.

**Viada, C: 87-91. Area Manager: a network of collaborators for the conservation of birds.**

**Gargallo G.:93-95. Structure, functioning and projects of the Institut Català d'Ornitologia (ICO).**



**The State of the UK's Birds 2002. 2003. Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, British Trust for Ornithology, Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust & Joint Nature Conservation Committee, 23 pages. [www.bto.org](http://www.bto.org), [www.wwt.org.uk](http://www.wwt.org.uk), [www.rspb.org.uk](http://www.rspb.org.uk)**

The UK Government uses breeding bird populations as an indicator of sustainability. The indicator for wild birds, which is one of 15 headline indicators of the Quality of Life in the UK, shows stability in common birds, although woodland birds have declined moderately, and farmland birds steeply.

There have been encouraging signs of meeting the targets for some species in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan. Positive progress has been made with the Stone-curlew, Bittern, Corncrake and Cirl Bunting. The successes are balanced by the continuing critical status of the Capercaillie, and the virtual regional extinction of the Red-backed shrike and Wryneck. It has not been possible to assess the status of some of the more common species because of the impact of foot and mouth disease.

Population recovery of common birds, such as farmland birds, requires solutions at a sufficiently large scale. The last year has seen bold steps by the UK Government towards reversing the downward trend in farmland birds. Acceptance of the recommendations on agricultural reform, for example in the Curry report, will further help farmland birds.

Birds of prey have benefited from conservation action, through a combination of land-use policies, species protection and Government-backed campaigns against illegal killing. We have seen the recovery of species such as the White-tailed eagle and Red kite, although persecution and secondary poisoning still occur, limiting populations and species in some areas.

The trends among seabirds are linked to their food and the way they feed. Monitoring of seabird colonies has shown numbers of some species to have increased or remained stable, but others, such as Kittiwakes and Shags, have declined at these colonies. A national survey of seabirds will provide more insight into their long-term population trends when the results are published in 2004.

Over the last 30 years, the numbers of wintering waterbirds in the UK has increased strongly in response to protection, re-creation and management of habitats. A waterbird indicator has shown a short-time decline from around 1996, however, marking a change in the upward trends.

A major new assessment of the population status of birds in the UK places 40 species on the red list (of highest conservation concern), 121 on amber and 86 on the green list (lowest concern). Five birds have moved from the red to the amber lists as their populations are recovering, largely in response to targeted conservation action. Overall, the red list has grown by four species and the amber list by 11, since the last review in 1996. All of the birds added to the red list qualify because of population decline. The review highlights the continuing plight of farmland birds and raises concern for some woodland, urban and upland species.

**Fornasari L., P. Bonazzi, E. de Carli, A. Magnani, L. Crucé & V. Vigorita, 2003. L'Osservatorio Ornitologico Regionale "Antonio Duse" di Passo di Spino (*The Regional Ornithological Observatory "Antonio Duse" of the mountain pass "Passo di Spino"*). Edited by Regione Lombardia, Divisione Agricoltura, ERSAF, Ente Regionale per i Servizi**

**all'Agricoltura e alle Forest, Stef delle Prealpi orientali e delle Alpi bresciane & Associazione Fauna Viva. 55 pages.**

**caterina\_rubolino@regione.lombardia.it**

The ornithological station of the Passo di Spino in the Italian Alps was the first of this kind in the southern part of Europe. Bird migration was studied by means of ringing and observations from 1929 until 1941, when the site was closed due to the war. Since 1999 the Lombardian Region has reopened the station. The booklet presents a general introduction on bird migration, focused on the Alps region, and gives an overview of former and recent ringing results.

**Dvorak, M. & G. Wichmann, 2003. Die Vögelwelt Österreichs im dritten Jahrtausend. Monitoring-Programme für Vögel in Österreich. (*The birds in Austria in the third millennium: bird monitoring schemes in Austria*). BirdLife Österreich & Gesellschaft für Vogelkunde, Wien. 32 pages. (in German).**

This reports gives a review the monitoring projects running in Austria: the common birds (transects and point counts), the White Stork census, Bee-eater monitoring, colonial bird counts, waterbird counts, monitoring along the Danube river and monitoring of wintering geese and waders. For each project, trends are presented.

**Zenatello M. & N. Bacetti (eds) 2001. Piano d'azione nazionale per il Chiurlottello (*Numenius tenuirostris*). (*Action plan for the Slender-billed curlew*). Quaderni di Conservazione della Natura, numero 7. Istituto Nazionale per la Fauna Selvatica "Alessandro Ghigi", Bologna. 49 pages. ISSN-1592-2901 (Italian with English summary).**

The international Action Plan for the globally threatened Slender-billed Curlew identifies the key-sites of this species in Italy and indicates the priority actions to be undertaken, in order to ensure legal protection of the species, improve the habitat quality, continue the monitoring programs and make politicians, hunter and the general public aware of the plight of the species. The Italian Action Plan contains the detailed actions to be carried out within a five-year period, in order to fulfil the requirements of the International Action Plan.

In the same series, two more Italian species plans have been elaborated, one for the Purple Gallinule and one for the Audouin's Gull:

**A. Andreotti 2001. Piano d'azione nazionale per il Polo sultano (*Porphyrio porphyrio*). (*Action plan for the Purple Gallinule*). Quaderni di Conservazione della Natura, numero 8. Istituto Nazionale per la Fauna Selvatica "Alessandro Ghigi", Bologna. 74 pages. ISSN-1592-2901 (Italian with English summary).**

**G. Serra, L. Melega & N. Bacetti 2001. Piano d'azione nazionale per il Gabbiano corso (*Larus audouinii*). (*Action plan for the Audouin's Gull*). Quaderni di Conservazione della Natura, numero 6. Istituto Nazionale per la Fauna Selvatica "Alessandro Ghigi", Bologna. 74 pages. ISSN-1592-2901 (Italian with English summary).**

## **Your text in the next issue?**

Bird Census is meant as a forum for everybody involved in bird census, monitoring and atlas studies. Therefore we invite you to use it for publishing news on your own activities within this field:

- you have (preliminary) results of your regional or national atlas,
  - you have information on a monitoring campaign,
  - you have made a species-specific inventory,
  - you are a delegate and have some news on activities in your country,
  - you are planning an inventory and want people to know this,
  - you read a good (new) atlas or an article or report on census and you want to review it,
- Do not hesitate to let us know this!

Send text (in ASCII-format, Word Perfect), figures and tabels (and ilustrations) by prefence in digital format,

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**Bird Census News**  
**2003 Volume 16 number 2**

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