RINGING GROUP REPORT FOR 1973
MALTA ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

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RIMING GROUP REPORT FOR 1973

INTRODUCTION

During 1973 the members of the group were again very active. Though the number of rings--remained the same as in the past three years good results were obtained. Operating mainly during weekends, the seven members again succeeded in ringing over 6,000 birds, mostly spring and autumn migrants and winter visitors. Twelve recoveries were reported from abroad and these included the first locally ringed bird to be recovered south of the Sahara — a Spotted Flycatcher in the Congo basin. Of interest was also the first Robin to be recovered in its breeding grounds, some distance north-east of Moscow, in Russia. Other firsts were a Meadow Pipit and a Song Thrush in Italy, a Grey Wagtail in Sicily, and a Blackcap, a Chaffinch and a Starling in Tunisia.

Regrettably Br. Edmund had to leave the group in June when he left Malta to take up duty in Ethiopia. At the same time T. Gauzle qualified for a C permit. However it is unfortunate that no additional trainee member of the group has attained a ringing permit. This is because owing to various reasons (mainly transport and the lack of a permanent ringing site) on many occasions trainee members were unable to take part in ringing sessions.

Four new species were added to the ringing list: Barred Warbler, Fan-tailed Warbler, Yellowhammer and Rustic Bunting. A second Grasshopper warbler was ringed in late August. Pulli ringed included the first Cetti’s Warblers (clutch of 4) and Fan-tailed Warblers (clutch of 5).

This report also lists thirty-six foreign ringed birds recovered in Malta. As in past years these included a number of firsts: 2 Gannets from Scotland, a Temminck’s Stint, a Ruff and a Robin from Finland, a Curlew Sandpiper from Sweden, and a Blackcap from Poland. A second Paximada-ringed Eleonora’s Falcon was recovered, again after two years of ringing as a pulse. Other interesting recoveries were a Great Skua from Scotland (the third in as many years) and three Caspian Terns from Sweden.

The Ringing and Migration Section of the British Trust for Ornithology continues to supply us with rings and to handle our recoveries. We are most grateful for their continued support. The encouragement of the Head of the Section, Robert Spencer, is greatly appreciated.

We also like to thank Fl. Lt. C.A. Pomeroy and the R.A.F. for granting us permission to ring at Wied Znuber, at Hal Far airfield.

SIGHTINGS

It is encouraging to note that the number of recorder is slowly but steadily increasing. As a result there was much better overall coverage than in past years. Consistent coverage of the autumn wader passage over Salla, Marsascala and Marsaxlokk would, however, certainly give better results in the future.

Cover picture: Eleonora’s Falcon on Paximada Is. (off Crete). Photo by D. Rizzou & H. Walter. Two Eleonora’s ringed on Paximada have been recovered in Malta.
There was one new addition to the list — a Broad-billed Sandpiper in August, and over thirty other vagrants recorded. The highlight of the year was the Fan-tailed Warbler. Unrecorded before 1967, this warbler was found breeding for the first time. Spring and autumn were relatively poor but there was a good fall in each season — on 19th April and 24th October.

The autumn raptor migration over Buskett was well covered with 15 species, including three eagles, recorded there. A strong passage of Honey Buzzards was observed on 1st October, with 300+ logged. On 24th October over 500 Robins were counted in Wied Znuber alone; these included a Finnish-ringed bird.

Owing to the soaring cost of the printing industry, the systematic list has been compiled as briefly as possible. This has meant that he months had to be abbreviated and very few localities are mentioned.


C. Gauci,
Ringing Group Secretary

SYSTEMATIC LIST FOR 1973

Great Crested Grebe (Podiceps cristatus): 1 on 7 Jan, 4 records, all singles, 14 Nov - 17 Dec.

Black-necked Grebe (Podiceps nigricollis): 4 on 14 Mar and 1 on 28 Aug, 2 daily 9-11 Nov, then 1 on 15th and 15th.

Little Grebe (Podiceps ruficollis): 1 at Xlendi on 24 Nov.


Manx Shearwater (Puffinus puffinus): No colonies were visited.

Storm Petrel (Hydrobates pelagicus): Bred in usual numbers at Filfla.

Gannet (Sula bassana): 9 records, 1-3 birds, 4 Jan-7 Apr, max 3 off St. Paul's Isles on 21 Jan, 2 on 29 Sep and 1 on 29 Dec.

Cormorant (Phalacrocorax carbo): 1 on 18 Mar, 4 on 4th and 1 on 18 Apr. 1 record, all singles, 13 Sep-30 Nov.

Bittern (Botaurus stellaris): 1 on 1 Jan. Singles on 13th, 18th and 21 Mar. 1 on 29 Oct.

Little Bittern (Ixobrychus minutus): Spring passage 25 Mar-27 May; 1-4 on 18 days, only 3 in autumn; singles on 3rd, 4th and 8 Sep.

Night Heron (Nycticorax nycticorax): Spring passage 8 Mar-2 May; mostly single figures, but double figures on 9 days. Max 74 on 19 Apr. 1 on 6 Jun. Autumn passage 11 Aug-1 Nov, mainly Sep. Double figures on 11 days with 93 on 3 Sep and 71 on 15 Sep highest.

Squacco Heron (Ardeola ralloides): 6 records 12 Apr-8 May; 1-2, 1st 13 on 19 Apr. In autumn 12 on 31 Aug and 1 on 16th and 27 Sep.


Little Egret (Egretta garzetta): Spring passage 3 Mar-1 May, mostly on 18-19 Apr with 90+ and 120+ respectively; single figures on 14 other days. Only 9 days in autumn, 25 Aug-24 Sep, max 32 on 13 Sep.

Grey Heron (Ardea cinerea): Spring passage 28 Feb-25 May, recorded on 23 days, by flocks of up to 20. Larger numbers in autumn, 1 Aug-27 Oct. High double figures on 5 days and a flock of 200+ on 6 Oct.

Purple Heron (Ardea purpurea): 1 on 11 Feb, then from 1 Mar to 12 May. Heavy passages on 18 Mar (315+), 18 Apr (200+), and 19 Apr (1000+); single figures on 17 other days. Autumn passage 28 Jul-3 Oct, mainly late Sep-Oct. Recorded on 18 days, mainly low double figures, max 36.

Eisente (Platalea leucorodia): Singles at 'M Scala on 28 Jan, at Tal-Fessel on 19 Apr, at Delimara on 28 Sep and at Gharb on 23 Nov.

Glossy Ibis (Plegadis falcinellus): On 7 days from 3rd to 24 Mar, 1-3, but 9 on 23rd. 8 on 16th and 24 on 19 Apr. In autumn singles on 5 Sep and 11 Nov.

Black Stork (Ciconia nigra): 2 over Buskett on 4 Oct.

White-fronted Goose (Anser albifrons): 1 shot on 30 Jan, small passage in Nov; flock of c. 25 over Xlendi on 24th, 1 at 'M Scala on 25th and 1 at Bahar ic-Caghaq on 28th.

Grey Lag Goose (Anser anser): 1 at Xlendi on 24 Nov.

'Grey Goose' (Anser sp.): 3 over Cirkewwa on 7 Oct, 2 over Qawra on 18 Oct and 15 off Qawra on 29 Nov.


Mallard (Anas platyrhynchos): 1-2 on 18 Mar, 15 Sep, 15 Oct, and 12 Nov. In Dec. 3 on 3rd, heavy passage, with flocks of up to 40 off Qawra on 7th, 28 on 8th and 4th on 18th.

Teal (Anas crecca): Singles on 1st and 3 Jan and 5 Feb. Unusual bird at Salina on 3 Jul. 1968 in early autumn, 11 Aug-15 Sep, 1-2 recorded on 7 days and 20 on last date. Then on 23 days from 25 Oct to 15 Dec; mostly 1-5, but flocks of up to 40 were reported off Qawra on 7 Dec and 15 at Salina on 15 Dec.

Wigeon (Anas penelope): 1 at Ghadira on 1 May. On 10 days 15 Nov-18 Dec. 1-3, but heavy passage, with flocks of up to 40, reported on 7 Dec.

Pintail (Anas acuta): 1 on 15 Jan, 1-2 on 7 days in spring, 2 Mar-23 Apr. 2 in Sep — on 5th and 16th, and passage off Qawra on 8-9 Oct with 200-300 counted on each day. Then on 10 days till 13 Nov, 1-3 but 20+ on 11 Nov. 1 on 7 Dec
Garganey (Anas querquedula): An exceptional spring passage. First was 1 at Ghadira on 5 Feb, then almost daily in several places from 13 Feb to 26 Mar, double figures on 16 days, max 91 on 4 Mar. Again from 10 Apr to 18 May, 1-4 on 17 days. Singles on 8th, 22nd and 26 Jun. Autumn passage 27 Jul-8 Nov, mainly mid-Aug-early Oct; flock of 186+ on 12 Sep, 16 on 2 Oct and 30+ on 5 Oct, otherwise 1-2.

Shoveler (Anas clypeata): 3 on 4 Jan. Evidence of small passage in March, with 1 on 6th, 4 on 10th and 1 on 11th. In autumn 1 on 26 Aug, 1 on 9 Nov and 1-2 daily 6-9 Dec.

Osprey (Pandion haliaetus): In spring singles on 6 days, 5 Apr-29 May, with 2 on 19 Apr. Autumn passage 23 Aug-19 Oct, 1-5 recorded on 8 days.

Pochard (Aythya ferina): 1 on 23 Feb and 3 on 13 Aug. Singles on 6 days 3 Nov-1 Dec.


Red-breasted Merganser (Mergus serrator): 1 at Qawra on 3 Dec.

Honey Buzzard (Pernis apivorus): Spring passage 16 Apr-17 Jun, mainly May. Recorded on 14 days, with 10 on 19th and 87 on 20 May; 1-3 on other days. In autumn on most days from 27 Aug to 26 Oct, most mid-Sep to early Oct. Max counts were 118+ on 31 Sep and 300+ on 1 Oct (most over Buskett). Double figures (max 70) on 11 other days.

Black Kite (Milvus migrans): Unconfirmed report of 7 at Ta' Qali on 9 Apr. Single on 15th, 17th, 18th and 22 Apr. 1 on 31 July, then on 6 days in Sep; 1 on 11th, 2 on 14th, 10 on 15th, 2 on 16th, 1 on 21st and 22nd. Most seen over Buskett.

Sparrow Hawk (Accipiter nisus): 2 spring records: singles on 18 Mar and 30 Apr, 3 records in Oct: 1 on 1st, 4 on 5th and 1 on 12th.

Buzzard (Buteo buteo): 1 at Buskett on 30 Mar, 5 records in autumn: 1 on 22 Sep, 1 on 1 Oct, 3 on 24 Oct all over Buskett), 1 at Girgenti on 27 Oct and 1 at Bidnija on 30 Oct.

Booted Eagle (Hieraaetus pennatus): 1 (dark phase) over Buskett on 1 Oct.

Lesser Spotted Eagle (Aquila pomarina): 1 over Buskett on 1 Oct.

Short-toed Eagle (Circæetus gallicus): 1 near Buskett on 30 Sep; 5 on 1 Oct, 1 on 4 Oct, 1 on 5 Oct (all over Buskett) and 1 at Tal-Handaq on 7 Oct, 2 shot at Mosta in early Oct.

Hen Harrier (Circus cyaneus): 1 at Hal Far on 12 Apr.

 Pallid Harrier (Circus macrourus): As in recent years this harrier was scarce, with only 4 records in spring: singles on 26th and 27 Mar, 1st and 14 Apr.

Montagu's Harrier (Circus pygargus): A very poor year with 2 records in each passage season: singles on 20 Apr, 30 Apr, 8 Sep and 5 Oct.

Marsh Harrier (Circus aeruginosus): on 27 days in spring, 4 Mar-24 Apr; mainly 1-5 but 18 on 19 Mar and 37 on 27 Mar (but see also harrier sp.) Autumn passage 13 Sep-24 Oct; recorded on 12 days, mainly 1-6 but 16 on 13 Sep and 25 on 1 Oct over Buskett.

Harrier Sp. (Circus sp.): Heavy passage along southern coast on 18 Mar, 200+ counted, probably mainly Marsh. 1 'pale' at Qadi on same day. 1-3, mostly ring-tails, on 7 days, 19 Mar-18 Apr and 15+ over Ħelwenja on 19 Apr.

Lanner Falcon (Falco biarmicus): 1 shot at Bahrija on 11 Oct.

Peregrine (Falco peregrinus): Pair at Ta' Cenc throughout year. Singles at San Lawrence on 6 Apr, at M'isqar on 2 Jun, at Delimara on 26 Sep, at Hal Far on 27 Oct, at Dingli on 6 Nov and at Luniżjata on 12 Dec.

Hobby (Falco subbuteo): Spring passage 7 Apr-20 May, recorded on 21 days (most mid-Apr-early May). Always single figures, max 9 on 19 Apr. First in autumn 2 on 9 Sept, then from 13 Sep to 23 Oct; 10-30 on 13th, 14th and 30 Sep. 1st and 5 Oct, single figures on 18 other days.

Eleonora'S Falcon (Falco eleonorae): Singles on 24 Apr, 1st, 8th and 24 May, 14th and 17 Jun (all from coastal areas). As in recent years there were several autumn records: 1 on 28 Aug; 1 on 1st, 1 on 13th, 3 on 21st, 1 on 25th and 2 on 30 Sep; singles on 5th, 6th and 26 Oct and 2 shot in the 2nd week of Oct. Most autumn records were of birds on passage with other falcons and came from inland areas. 1 (dark) at Ħelwenja. Gozo on 26 Dec was the first winter record.

Merlin (Falco columbarius): 3 records in Oct: 1 juv on 1st, female on 18th and a first winter bird shot in the last week.

Red-footed Falcon (Falco vespertinus): Recorded only in spring: 1-5 on 17 Apr from 14 Apr to 15 May, 1 on 4 Jun.

Lesser Kestrel (Falco naumanni): Spring passage 13 Mar-15 May, only 5 records, 1-3. In autumn 1-2 on 5 dates from 13th to 25 Sep, then 14 on 1st, 10 on 4th, 8 on 5th, 4 on 6th, 1 on 22nd and 30+ on 24 Oct. All autumn records from Buskett.

Kestrel (Falco tinnunculus): Singles on 8 days 2 Jan-3 Feb. Almost daily on spring passage, 12 Mar-30 May, max 23 on 18 Mar. 1 on 1 Aug. First in autumn 1 on 2 Sep, then on most days from 10 Sep to 23 Oct. Very heavy passage on 24 Oct, 470+ counted. Double figures, up to 40, on 6 days in Sep and 9 days in Oct, 1-2 on 11 days Nov-26 Dec.

Quail (Coturnix coturnix): 1 on 7 Jan, 1-6 on 9 days from 10 Mar to 26 May. In autumn on 6 days 31 Aug-2 Oct with 120+ on 25 Sep and 16+ on 2 Oct. Singles on 10 Nov and 28 Dec.

Grane (Grus grus): 2 on 27 Mar and 1 on 19 Apr. Males autumn passage in Oct, 2 on 3rd, 30+ on 9th, 3 on 18th, 8 on 24th, 3 on 26th and 2 on 29th; 3 others seen shot. In Nov, 1 shot in the 1st week, 2 on 9th, 1 on 14th and 1 on 15th.

Water Rail (Rallus aquaticus): 1 at Ħelwenja on 3 Feb. 1-3 on 7 days from 1 Nov to 14 Dec.

Spotted Crake (Porzana porzana): 1 on 2 Mar, 1 on 3 Apr and 2 on 12 May. In autumn singles on 30 Mar, 14 Sep, 1st, 7th, 11th and 16 Nov.

Little Crake (Porzana parva): 1 female at Buskett on 30 Mar.
Corncrake (Crex crex): Singles on 10th and 26 Sep.

Moorhen (Gallinula chloropus): Only 8 records in spring, 23 Feb-18 May, all singles. In autumn singles on 6 days, 25 Sep-26 Oct; main passage in Nov: 1-4 on 9 days 8th-24th.

Goot (Fulica atra): 1-2 on 9 days from 12 Oct-18 Dec.

Oystercatcher (Haematopus ostralegus): 3 at M'Scal on 29 Mar; singles at Delimara on 1st, at M'Xlokk on 4th and at M'Scal on 23 Apr. Singles in Gozo on 15 May and at Delimara on 8 Aug.

Ringed Plover (Charadrius hiaticula): 1-3 on 4 days 22 Apr-22 May, Autumn passage 16 Jul-24 Nov, most in July and Oct, 1-6 on 12 days.

Little Ringed Plover (Charadrius dubius): Present on most days from 17 Mar to 20 May, mainly at Ghadira and Salina, 15-22 on 2 days, otherwise 1-7. Autumn passage 13 Jul-14 Oct, 1-7 on 12 days, most in Jul, in 6 on 4th-16 Nov and 2 on 4-6 Dec at Hal Far.

Kentish Plover (Charadrius alexandrinus): 1 on 29 Apr, 1 on 28 Sep and 2 on 1 Oct. Flock of 30+ at Luqa on 19-19 Oct.

Dotterel (Eudromias morinellus): Flock of 100+ over Gnejna on 24 Mar and 1 on 16 Apr. Autumn passage 20 Aug-24 Nov, recorded on 24 days, Mainly 1-11, but 33 on 21 Sep, 130+ on 26 Oct and 60+ on 27 Oct.

Golden Plover (Pluvialis apricaria): On 5 days in Jan-Feb, max 50+ at Hal Far on 17 Jan. On 13 days in March (to 25th), most at Hal Far, max 40 on 4-4th. Late record of 20+ at Comino on 12 Apr, First in autumn 6 at Hal Far on 10 Oct, then on 22 days, 24 Oct-12 Dec; mainly double figures with maxima of 120+ on 26 Oct, 65+ on 2 Nov, 100+ on 23 Nov and 140+ on 24 Nov.

Grey Plover (Pluvialis squatarola): 1 at T'Qali on 18 Mar, singles at Salina and M'Xlokk on 5 May and 2 at Arniex on 6 May. In autumn singles at Marsa on 11 Sep, at Hal Far on 19 Oct and at Bahar in-Caghaq on 3 Dec.

Whisk-tailed Plover (Vanellus leucurus): 1 shot at Salina on 22 Oct.

Lapwing (Vanellus vanellus): On 3 days in Jan, max 33 at Hal Far on 17th. Autumn passage from 28 Oct, mainly 17 Nov-7 Dec, max 220+ on 23 Nov and 125+ on 24 Nov; 1-30 on 22 other days.

Turnstone (Arenaria interpres): 10 singles seen shot at Salina and M'Scal in the last week of Apr. 1-2 on 5 days in May to 6th, to 17th, 1 on 6 Nov.


Temminck's Stint (Calidris temminckii): 1-3 on 6 days at Ghadira from 15 Apr to 4 May.

Dunlin (Calidris alpina): 3 on 22 Apr and 2 on 1 May, at Ghadira, In autumn 1-3 on 11 days, 23 Jul-18 Nov.

Curlew Sandpiper (Calidris ferruginea): 1 on 12 Apr, then 1-7 on 5 days 1 May-1 Jun. No autumn records.

Knot (Calidris canutus): 1 at M'Scal on 6 Sep.

Sanderling (Calidris alba): 4 at M'Xlokk on 7 May and 1 at Qbajjar on 4 Sep.

Ruff (Philomachus pugnax): Spring passage, 2 Mar-6 Jun, larger than usual; almost daily in Mar-Apr, with double or low trable figures on 33 days, Max 30+ at Hal Far/Luqa on 19 Apr and 200+ on 22 Mar, and on 20-22 Apr. 1 on 2 Jul and flock of 300+ on 20 Jul at Salina. In autumn 1-12 or, 8 days 15 Aug-29 Sep, Late 3rd on 28 Oct.

Broad-billed Sandpiper (Limicola falcinellus): 1 shot at Delimara on 24 Aug. (1st record for Malta).

Spotted Redshank (Tringa erythropus): Singles at Delimara on 13 Mar, at Ghadira on 1 May and at Hal Far on 27 Oct.


Marsh Sandpiper (Tringa stagnatilis): 2 on 13th and 1 on 31 Mar. Singles on 16th, 18th and 29 Apr and 1 May. No autumn records.

Greenshank (Tringa nebularia): 1-3 on 9 days, 11 Mar-1 May, most after mid-Apr. Singles on 13 Jul, 11th and 12 Sep.

Green Sandpiper (Tringa ochropus): 1-9 on 13 days 16 Mar-1 May. Late bird on 12 May. Autumn passage 13 Jul-16 Sep, 1-6 on 10 days.

Wood Sandpiper (Tringa glareola): Spring passage 18 Mar-1 Jun, mainly mid-Apr-mid-May, 1-19 on 17 days, 1 on 8th and 15 on 10 Jul at Salina. In autumn 1-3 on 7 days 31 Jul-26 Aug.


Black-tailed Godwit (Limosa limosa): Exceptionally heavy spring passage, 18 Feb-14 Apr. Mainly 28 Feb-5 Mar with 165+, 60+, 90+, 10+, 18 and 10+; respectively on each day, 1-3 on 11 other days. No autumn records.


Woodcock (Scolopax rusticola): 1 on 13 Jan. 1 on 12 Oct, then on most days 24 Oct-6 Dec; most from 18th to 24 Nov, 10-20 on each day and 40+ on 23rd. 1-9 on other days.

Snipe (Gallinago gallinago): 1 on 3-4 Feb, then 1-4 on 14 days 28 Feb-1 May. In autumn from 2 Sep to 8 Dec, mostly in Nov; 1-4 on 22 days.

Great Snipe (Gallinago media): 1 on 28 Feb, 3 on 21 Mar and singles on 8th 12th and 16 Apr.

Jack Snipe (Lymnocryptes minima): Singles on 8th, 14th and 30 Mar. 8 records in autumn, 26 Oct-29 Nov, all singles.

Black-winged Stilt (Himantopus himantopus): Only 5 spring records, all singles; on 13th, 17th and 19 Apr, 1st and 20 May.

Avocet (Recurvirostra avosetta): 2 at St Paul's Bay on 15 Apr, 1 at Renghuma on 18 Apr and 3 at Salina on 30 Aug.
Pratincole (Glareola pratincola): 4 at M'Scala on 19 Apr.

Cream-colored Courser (Cursorius cursor): 1 at Gharb on 25 May.

Stone Curlew (Burhinus oedicnemus): 1-6 on 9 days 30 Mar-16 May, most in Apr. Late bird on 4 Jun. Autumn passage 29 Sep-28 Oct, 1-4 on 8 days and 30+ on 24 Oct.

Great Skua (Stercorarius skua): 1 caught ca. 20 miles SW of Malta on 9 Jun.


Arctic Skua (Stercorarius parasiticus): Singles on 13th and 26 Oct, both taken offshore.

Long-tailed Skua (Stercorarius longicaudatus): Singles shot in late Jan and on 11 Oct, offshore.

Mediterranean Gull (Larus melanocephalus): Double figures in Harbours and along south coast on most days in Jan-Mar (to 1st), Max 50 on 25 Feb, 3 on 4th and 2 on 19 Apr. Again from 8 Dec; single figures except for 40+ on 12th.


Black-headed Gull (Larus ridibundus): Double or treble figures (up to 500) on most days in Jan-Mar (to 25th) but 1500-2000 on 24-25 Feb. 1 on 11 Nov, then 25 Nov onwards. Same numbers as before with 800+ on 8 Dec highest.

Slender-billed Gull (Larus genei): 1 at St. Paul's Bay on 11 Sep and 2 at Qawra Pt. on 15 Sep.

Lesser Black-backed Gull (Larus fuscus): 1 on 25 Feb and 3 Apr, 1 at Hal Far on 13-14 Oct, then 2 on 25 Nov, 3 on 8 Dec and 3 on 28 Dec. Except for the Oct bird, only adults were identified.

Herring Gull (Larus argentatus): Resident along usual cliffs and on Filfla Max counts from T'á 'Cene on 3 Feb, 50 pairs and from Filfla on 28 Jun, 60+ juvs. Up to 100 in harbours and off south coast in winter.

Audouin's Gull (Larus audouinii): 2 at M'Scala on 20 Aug.

Kittiwake (Rissa tridactyla): 1, adult female, shot off south coast on 1 Feb

Black Tern (Chlidonias niger): 1 at M'Xllokk on 10 Jun and 6 at Delimara on 29 Sep.

White-winged Black Tern (Chlidonias leucopterus): 1 on 19th, 1 on 25th and 2 on 30 Apr; 2 on 31 May; 1 on 10 Jul; singles on 5th, 18th and 24 Aug.

Gull-billed Tern (Gelochelidon nilotica): 2 on 15th and 1 on 20 Apr; 1 on 3 Jun; 1 on 18 Jul; 2 on 29 Sep and 2 on 10 Oct.

Caspian Tern (Hydroprogne caspia): 1 at Pomm ir-Rif on 15 Aug, 1 at Gżira Pt. on 26 Oct and 1 at Ramla Bay on 28 Oct.

Sandwich Tern (Sterna sandvicensis): 4 off south coast on 29 Aug and 2 at Delimara on 25 Nov.

Woo Pigeon (Columba palumbus): 1 on 15 Mar. In autumn singles on 15 Sep, 24th, 26th and 28 Oct, 2 on 1st and 1 on 3 Nov.

Turtledove (Streptopelia turtur): Daily 8 Apr-31 May, with several large passages. Peak counts were on 18 Apr: 12,000+; 19 Apr: 22,000+; 26 Apr: 4,500+ and 29 Apr: 6,000+; up to 2,000 on several other days. Few migrants also in June, 1-14 on 12 days, 1-2 on 7 days 6 Jul-5 Aug. Autumn passage 22 Aug-27 Oct, mainly Sep. Only double or low figures, max 490+ on 3rd and 13 Sep.

Palm Dove (Streptopelia senegalensis): 1 at Lunzijata, Rabat on 4 Oct.

Cuckoo (Cuculus canorus): Spring passage 31 Mar-3 May: 1-7 on 3 most days. 1 on 12th and 16 May. Autumn passage 18 Jul-1 Nov, 10 records, with no clear peak; all singles except for 5 on 3 Oct.

Long-eared Owl (Asio otus): 1 on 10 Nov. 5 seen shot in Dec.

Short-eared Owl (Asio flammeus): 7 records, all singles, 15 Mar-18 Apr. Autumn passage 21 Sep-18 Nov. 1-6 on 9 days. 3 Dec records, singles on 12th, 15th and 24th.

Scops Owl (Otus scops): Unusually scarce in spring: only 5 records 14 Mar-28 Apr, all singles. From 30 Sep to 10 Nov in autumn, most in late Oct. Max 25 on 1 Oct and 20 on 22 Oct. 1-6 on 10 other days.

Barn Owl (Tyto alba): Nest with 6 young stoned from Siggiewi in May. Most records in autumn: 1 in Xagha on 19-20 Jul, 1 at Mellieha on 10 Aug, 1 at Luqa on 31 Sep, 1 at Ta'Mellah on 27 Oct, 1 at Buskett on 10 Nov and 1 at Zabbar on 12 Nov.

Roller (Coracias garrulus): On 12 days 15 Apr-20 May, mainly Apr; most records 1-6, but 26 on 26 Apr, Summer record of 1 on 2 Jul. Only 2 autumn records: 2 on 26 Aug. and 1 on 26 Sep.


Bee-eater (Merops apiaster): Spring passage 18 Apr-3 Jul, mainly April-May. Double figures on 3 days and 112+ on 23 Apr. On 4 days in Sep: 1 on 1st, 3 on 5th, 15 on 12th and 11 on 15th.

Blue-cheeked Bee-eater (Merops superciliosus): 1 at Wardija on 20 May.

Hoopoe (Upupa epops): After 1 on 16 Feb, frequently seen from 21 Mar to 2 May but only single figures, 1-6. 1 on 8th and 19 May. In autumn 2 on 20 Jul. then 1-5 on 19 days 2 Aug-5 Oct, most mid-Aug to mid-Sep.

Wryneck (Jynx torquilla): 1 at Xemxija on 12 Jan. In spring 1-4 on 15 days 25 Mar-20 Apr. Autumn passage 2 Sep-1 Dec, records of 1-5 on most days with no clear peak.

Nightjar (Caprimulgus europaeus): Only a few in spring, 18 Apr-24 May; 1-7 on 10 days and 29 Apr. In autumn 1 on 3 Sep, then 1-4 on 10 days 21 Sep-27 Oct.

Egyptian Nightjar (Caprimulgus aegyptius): 1 female shot on 28 Mar.

Swift (Apus apus): Almost continuous passage from 20 Mar to 30 Sep, but most in April-May. Longest interval without any records 12-26 Aug. Double or treble
figures on most days, max 520+ on 29 Jul. 3 records in Oct; 2 on 14th, 1 on 21st
and 20 on 29th.

Alpine Swift (Apus melba): 1-6 on 14 days in spring, 25 Mar-30 Apr. 1 on 17
Jun and 15+ on 1 Jul. Only 3 records in autumn: 3 on 6 Sep. 1 on 26 Sep
and 3 on 1 Nov.

Short-toed Lark (Calandrella cinerea): Very common summer visitor. First re-
corded on 19 Mar, most from 7 Apr reaching treble figures in suitable areas on
21st. First birds in song on 29 Mar. Birds on autumn passage recorded from
15 Aug. Last seen on 30 Sep.

Wood Lark (Lullula arborea): Only 2 records: singles on 24 Oct and 1 Nov.

Sky Lark (Alauda arvensis): 1-10 on 9 days 1 Jan-18 Feb. Spring passage, as
usual insignificant with up to 25 on 10 days 4 Mar-9 Apr, 2 on 22 Apr. 1 at Hal
Far on 11 Jun could have been an escaped bird. From 4 Oct in autumn, almost
daily till 16 Dec, most mid-Oct to mid-Nov. Treble figures on most days, max
1,000+ on 26 Oct.

Sand Martin (Riparia riparia): Spring passage 8 Mar-20 May, mainly mid-Apr
to mid-May; double or low treble figures on most days, but 1,200+ on 15 May.
Singles on 13th and 29 Jul. 1 on 24 Aug, then from 5 Sep-29 Oct, most in mid-
Oct max 135+ on 21st.

Swallow (Hirundo rustica): Almost daily 15 Mar-27 May; treble figures on most
days in April, but never more than 250. 1 on 2nd and 2 on 12 Jun. 10+ on 5
Aug, then daily 28 Aug-29 Oct. Larger numbers than in spring with max of
5,500+ on 1 Oct and up to 800 on several other days. In Nov 1-20 on 8 days
till 17th.

Red-rumped Swallow (Hirundo daurica): 4 records in April: singles on 18th,
19th and 22nd, and 2 on 24th.

House Martin (Delichon urbica): 3 at Luzzjata on 1-3 Jan. First in spring
3 on 3 Mar, then from 15 Mar-14 May, most from mid-Apr. Mainly double
figures, but up to 600 on 5 days and 1,400+ on 15 May. 3 on 30 May. Autumn
passage 2 Sep-17 Nov, up to 50 on 16 days. most well in Oct.

Grey Martin (Hirundo rustica): Up to 10 at Luzzjata from 8 Dec onwards.


Tawny Pipit (Anthus campestris): Only small numbers in spring: 1-3 on 11
days 19 Mar-28 Apr, but 10+ at Hal Far on 19 Apr. In autumn 1-10 on 19
days 2 Sep-14 Oct.

Tree Pipit (Anthus trivialis): 1 on 11 Mar, then from 18 Mar-19 May. Almost
daily but notable gaps on 2-6 Apr and 2-11 May. Double or treble figures
daily 14th-29 Apr. largest counts 500 on 18th, 960 on 19th and 350 on 25th.
Autumn passage 22 Aug-4 Nov, up to 29 on most days.

Meadow Pipit (Anthus pratensis): Very common in Jan-Mar with up to 50 in
suitable areas. Up to 25 till 8 Apr then singles on 5 days to 21st. First in
autumn on 11 Oct, numbers increasing after 21st with max of 90 in several
places.

Red-throated Pipit (Anthus cervinus): Spring passage 7 Apr-12 May, mainly
19 Apr-1 May, with 10-30 at Hal Far. Only a few in autumn: 1-4 on 8 days.
7 Oct-5 Nov, and 12 on last day.

Water Pipit (Anthus spinolletta): 1 taken at M'Scalia in March. ...
150+, 2W+, on Savi's Warbler (Locus•tella luscinioides): 1 trapped and ringed at Ramla Valley on 6 Sep.

Grasshopper Warbler (Locustella naevia): 1 trapped and ringed at Wied il-Luq on 26 Aug.

Moustached Warbler (Luscinia melanopogon): 1 at Xemxija on 27 Oct, 3 at Wied il-Luq on 22 Nov and 1 at Salina on 24 Nov, 2 were still present at Wied il-Luq on 17 Dec.


Reed Warbler (Acrocephalus scirpaceus): Only 1 in spring, on 27 Apr. Autumn passage 19 Aug-4 Nov, mainly late Aug-end Sep. 35 records of 1-5.

Great Reed Warbler (Acrocephalus arundinaceus): 1, in heavy body moult, trapped and ringed at Xemxija on 12 Jan was the first winter record. Spring passage 16 Apr-16 May, mainly Apr; recorded on 15 days, max 6 at Luzzuża on 29 Apr. In autumn 1-4 almost daily, at Wied il-Luq, from 12 Aug to 19 Sep, 2 on 27 Oct.

Icterine Warbler (Hippolais icterina): In spring 1-4 on 10 days 19 Apr-27 May. In autumn, 1-4 on 11 days 15 Aug to 6 Sep, then 5 records, 1-2, from 2nd-18 Oct.

Barred Warbler (Sylvia nisoria): 1 immature trapped and ringed at Xagħra on 10 Sep.

Garden Warbler (Sylvia borin): Spring passage smaller than usual; daily 14th-29 Apr, max 15 at Hal Far on 19th. In May 1-6 to 5 days to 28th, Autumn passage 6 Aug-28 Oct, mainly Sep. Recorded on most days, max 60 at Buskett on 16 Sep. Up to 50 on several other days.

Blackcap (Sylvia atricapilla): Common in suitable areas in Jan-Mar, with up to 300 at Buskett and 150 at Mdina. Few till 22 Apr, 1 was singing at Buskett on 5 Jul. 1 on 14 Sep, then from 30 Sep onwards; only single figures in Oct-Nov, mid Nov, then up to 35 at Buskett.

Whitethroat (Sylvia communis): Spring passage 15 Apr-14 May, mainly Apr. Large influx on 19 Apr -- 150+ at Hal Far. Up to 34 on other days, 11 records in autumn, 26 Aug-12 Oct, all singles.

Lesser Whitethroat (Sylvia curruca): 1 at Salina on 16th-23 Sep.


Sardinian Warbler (Sylvia melanocephala): Very common resident. First nests found in early April.

Subalpine Warbler (Sylvia cantillans): Spring passage 21 Mar-27 Apr; single figures on most days with max of 15 at Hal Far on 13 Apr. Autumn passage 29 Jul-7 Oct, mainly mid-Aug-mid-Sep; common in several places with 30-60 regularly at Buskett in Aug-Sep. Very late bird in poor plumage condition on 24 Oct.

Spectacled Warbler (Sylvia conspicillata): Common resident, mainly in rocky valleys and open country. First record of young out of nest on 30 Apr.

Darford Warbler (Sylvia undata): 2 at Ghadir on 18 Feb and 1 at Salina on 12 Nov.

Willow Warbler (Phylloscopus trochilus): Spring passage 18 Mar-31 May, mainly Apr. Single figures or up to 15 on most days, but 150+ on 19 Apr (1 freshly dead) on 1 Aug, then from 21 Aug to 21 Oct. In about the same numbers as in spring but none on 5th-11th and 23rd-29 Sep.


Bonelli's Warbler (Phylloscopus bonelli): Only 1 record: 1 at Mistlehem on 27 Apr.

Wong Warbler (Phylloscopus sibilatrix): Spring passage 1 Apr-21 May, mainly 11th-30 Apr; double or triple figures on 25 days. Marked influx on 14th -- 75+, 16th -- 150+, 19th -- 300+ and 26th -- 160+, all dates in April. In autumn 1 on 16th and 30 Aug; influx on 3-4 Sep with 50+ and 17+ respectively, then singles on 12th and 18 Sep and 5 Oct.


Firecrest (Regulus ignicapillus): No positive records in Jan-Feb. Singles on 5 days 15 Mar-13 Apr. From 24 Oct in autumn with a max of 6 at Buskett in Nov-Dec.

Gold/Firecrest (Regulus regulus/ignicapillus): 10 records, 1-10, 1 Jan-26 Mar (most from Buskett/Rabat); 6 records, 1-10, 1st-24 Nov.

Fan-tailed Warbler (Cisticola juncidis): A pair present at Xemxija throughout the year built 3 nests and raised 2 broods (the other probably taken by a snake). Another pair at Ghadir, first seen in July, raised at least one brood. These were the first breeding records in these Islands. Records outside Xemxija/Ghadira were singing males at Girgenti and Chadwick Lakes on 20 May and at Salina on 27 Jan, and 1-2 at Luzzuża from 29 Sep to 1 Nov.

Pied Flycatcher (Ficedula hypoleuca): From 30 Mar to 23 May in spring, mainly in Apr with large influxes on 18th -- 210+, 19th -- 180+ and 26th -- 150+. Up to 80 on other days in Apr, but only single figures in May. As usual, autumn passage much smaller; 15 records from 19 Aug-19 Oct, all 1-2 except for 4 on last day.

Collared Flycatcher (Ficedula albicollis): 1-5 daily from 15th to 27 Apr. No autumn records.

Red-breasted Flycatcher (Ficedula parva): 8 records, all singles, from 16 Sep to 21 Oct.

Spotted Flycatcher (Muscicapa striata): Spring passage 14 Apr-20 May; double figures 23 Apr-12 May, max 45 on 26 Apr. No summer records. 1 on 28 Aug, then from 4 Sep to 29 Oct; only single figures and occasionally up to 10. No records 23-28 Sep and 2-9 Oct.
Whinchat (Saxicola rubetra): Daily 12 Apr-2 May, with 60-150 at Hal Far on 19th-27 Apr; then 1-4 on 8 days till 30 May. In autumn 1-2 on 3rd, 5th and 9 Sep and 6 Oct.

Stonechat (Saxicola torquata): Common in Jan-Mar, with regular records of up to 15. Singles on 4 days 1st-14 Apr. From 1 Oct in autumn, double figures after 6th, numbers reducing in late Nov. Max 90 on 2 Nov.

Wheatear (Oenanthe oenanthe): 1 at Hal Far on 4 Jan. Common on spring passage 16-12 May, mainly mid to end Apr — 50-200 daily. 1 on 17 Aug then from 26 Aug to 26 Oct; in same numbers as in spring but no clear peak. Max 100 at Hal Far on 5 Sep, 1 on 4th and 15 Nov.

Black-eared Wheatear (Oenanthe hispanica): 16 records, 1-3, from 24 Mar to 7 May, most mid-end Apr. Only 1 in autumn, on 3 Sep.

Isabelline Wheatear (Oenanthe isabellina): 1 at Hal Far on 29 Mar and 1 at Ta’ Qali on 7 Apr.

Pied Wheatear (Oenanthe picata): 1 male at Wied il-Kbir on 21 Apr.

Rock Thrush (Monticola saxatilis): Very poor year with only 5 records: 1-3 on 4 days 22 Mar-21 Apr and 1 on 13 Sep.


Black Redstart (Phoenicurus ochruros): 1-3 in most rocky areas in Jan-Mar (to 25th). From 30 Oct in autumn, in larger numbers than before, with up to 14 in some areas.

Redstart (Phoenicurus phoenicurus): Spring passage started much later than usual: 1 on 2nd, then daily 11 Apr-6 May and occasional Ull 20 May. Mainly up to 15 but 20-45 on 18th, 19th and 26 Apr. Autumn passage 5 Sep-26 Oct, mainly end-Sep-mid-Oct. Larger numbers than in spring with up to 40 in most days in peak period.

Robin (Erithacus rubecula): Common in Jan-Mar with up to 20 in several places, numbers reducing after mid-Mar. Records of 1-6 daily 1st-17 Apr, 1 on 27 Apr and 1 on 1 May. 1 at Buskett on 24-25 Aug and 1 on 6 Sep, then few from 15 Sep reaching double figures by 30th. Very common in Oct-Nov, numbers reducing to Jan level in Dec. Several large falls, treble figures, max 800+ at Wied Ziniber on 24 Oct and 300+ at Buskett on 27 Oct.

Nightingale (Luscinia megarhynchos): Spring passage 19 Mar-26 May, mainly Apr. Records on most days, with max of 30 in a number of places on several days. From 19 Aug in Autumn, most from 3 Sep, with up to 35 at Buskett; on several days. Last on 13 Oct.

Bluethroat (Luscinia svecica): 1 at Wied Mielah, Gozo on 19 Apr.

Fieldfare (Turdus pilaris): 3 at Ta’ Cenc on 4 Mar. 12 records, 1-9, from 12 Nov to 31 Dec.

Ring Ouzel (Turdus torquatus): 1 at M’Scula on 6 Apr. 6 records, 1-2, from 12 Oct to 12 Nov.

Blackbird (Turdus merula): Small numbers, 1-3, in several places in Jan-Apr (to 4th). Unusually early bird on 13 Sep. then from 11 Oct. Up to 25 in most days in late Oct, otherwise 1-5.

Redwing (Turdus iliacus): No records in Jan. 1-4 on 8 days at Buskett/Xemxija/Luqa between 3 Feb to 30 Mar. On 11 days 4 Nov-17 Dec, in same numbers as before.

Song Thrush (Turdus philomelos): Fairly common in Jan with a few passages recorded, largest 150+ on 6th. Only a few in Feb, then slight increase in Mar with max of 50 on 31st, 1-9 on 6 days 1st-19 Apr. From 4 Oct in autumn, double or treble figures on most days till mid-Nov, then smaller numbers. Heavy passages on 24 Oct — a total of 6070 recorded, and 26 Oct — 2170.


Tree Sparrow (Passer montanus): Resident, breeding in small numbers in several places. Small passage in Oct, max 40 over Xemxija on 5th.

Spanish Sparrow (Passer hispaniolensis): Abundant resident.

Chaffinch (Fringilla coelebs): Fairly common in Jan-Mar, up to 25 at Buskett; single figures in other places. 1-3 on 6 days in Apr to 26th. Records of 1-2, mainly at Buskett, in May-Sep. Autumn passage from 30 Sep, double figures, max 40, on most days after mid-Oct. Smaller numbers in Dec.

 Brambling (Fringilla montifringilla): 1 at Mtahleb on 31 Oct and 1 at M’Scula on 5 Nov.

Sara (Serinus serinus): Common in Jan-Mar, a total of 100+ at Buskett, and Salina on 21 Jan highest; 7 records, 1-4, till 26 Apr. 6 records in May, 1 in Jun and 1 in Aug, all singles. From 16 Oct in autumn, no large numbers not recorded daily, max 20 at Salina on 30 Dec.

Greenfinch (Carduelis chloris): Fairly common in Jan; 35 on 14th, 1-5 on other days. Only 3 records in Feb with 60+ counted at a roost in Valetta on last day. On most days from 10 Mar to 23 Apr, mainly up to 15, but 250+ in Gozo on 14 Apr. 1 on 30 May and 7 Jul. In autumn singles on 20-30 Sep then from 10 Oct. 100+ over Xagħra on 12 Dec, otherwise never more than 12.

Goldfinch (Carduelis carduelis): 8 records, 1-3, from 1 Jan to 19 Feb. 1-3 on 11 days 12 Mar-28 Apr. 1 on 30 Jun. In autumn 1-6 on 6 days from 20th to 29th Oct and on 8 days from 17 Nov to 19 Dec.

Siskin (Carduelis spinus): 1 on 1 Jan, 1 on 1 Apr and 4 on 15 Apr. In autumn singles on 26 Oct, 2nd and 4 Nov.

Limnet (Acanthps cannabina): Common in Jan-Feb with up to 20 (and occasionally up to 70) in several places. Larger numbers after mid-Mar and till mid-Apr, max 160+ on 14 Apr. Few till 2 May, 2 at Xemxija on 15 May and up to 29 at Ghajn Barrani, Gozo throughout summer. 12 on 28 Sep, then from 6 Oct onwards. Treble figures, max 300, only from mid-Oct to mid-Nov.

Trumpeter Bullfinch (Rhodopechys githaginea): 8 immature caught in Jun-Jul. 1 on 22nd and 2 on 24 Oct, and singles on 7th and 10 Nov.

Hawfinch (Coccothraustes coccothraustes): 1 on 13 Jan, Main autumn passage 29 Oct-9 Nov, with a total of 125+ recorded. 5 records, 1-4, from 20 Nov to 27 Dec.

Corn Bunting (Emberiza calandra): Common resident. No signs of migration in spring. Several flocks of up to 20 between mid-Aug and mid-Oct probably migrants.
Yellowhammer (Emberiza citrinella): Singles at Dingli on 6 Nov, at Ta' Zuta on 15 Nov and at Xemxija on 1 Dec.

Ortolan Bunting (Emberiza hortulana): Spring passage 18 Apr-6 May with up to 8 on most days. Only 1 in autumn: on 28 Aug.

Giri Bunting (Emberiza gryfelda): First year male at San Lawrence on 16 Nov

Little Bunting (Emberiza pusilla): 1 at Qawra on 4 Nov.


Rustic Bunting (Emberiza rustica): First year male trapped and ringed at Lunzjata on 12 Oct.

Reed Bunting (Emberiza schoeniclus): Singles at Lunzjata on 1st and 5 Nov, and at Dingli on 6 Nov.

**ADDITIONS TO SYSTEMATIC LIST FOR 1972**

Little Bittern: 1-2 on 17th and 22 Apr; 2nd, 5th and 6 May, and 2 Jun. 3 on 14 Sep.

Night Heron: flock of 7 Jan on 28 May.

Squacco Heron: 2 on 1st and one on 12th and 14 Apr, 1 on 5th and 6 Sep

Greater Flamingo: 1 at Manikata on 15 Sep.

Pintail: 1 male at Kalafrana on 24 Mar.

Pochard: 1 male on 28 Jul.

Red-breasted Merganser: 1 at Marsascala on 8 Nov.

Egyptian Vulture: 1 at tas-Silub on 26 Sep.

Gsparry: Singles at Ghar Lapsi on 17th and 24 Sep.

Sparrow Hawk: Singles on 17th, 29th and 30 Sep; 8th, 14th, 21st, 22nd and 23 Oct.

Pallid Harrier: 1 male at Fiddien on 21st Sep.

Montagu’s Harrier: Singles on 7 Apr and 14 Sep.

Marsh Harrier: 1 on 26 Aug.

Eleonora’s Falcon: Singles at Ta’ Zuta on 6 May and at Siggiewi on 9 Sep.

Merlin: 1 female at Fawwara on 27 Oct.

Red-footed Falcon: 1 on 18 Apr; 2 on 2nd and 1 on 13 May.

Kestrel: 1 male on 19 Jun.

Quail: 8 on 1 May.

Spotted Crake: 1 on 25th and 23 Sep.

Cormorant: 1 on 20 Apr.

Grey Plover: 1 on 26 Sep.

Dunlin: Singles on 30 Jul and 5 Aug.

Sanderling: Singles on 11 May and 8 Oct.

Ruff: 1 in summer plumage (black) at M'Scala on 11 Jun.

Woodcock: Unusually late bird on 10 Apr.

Snipe: 3 at Salina on 26 Aug.

Great Snipe: 1 on 26 Apr.

Redshank: 2 on 26 Mar.

Whimbrel: 1 on 29 Sep.

Little Gull: 1 juvenile on 13 Sep.

White-winged Black Tern: 1 juvenile on 12 Sep.

Whiskered Tern: 1 at Salina on 11 Nov.

Gull-billed Tern: Singles on 17 Mar and 16 Apr.

Wood Pigeon: 1 on 12 Oct.

Stock Dove: 1 at Hal Far on 2 Oct.


Short-eared Owl: Singles on 18th, 22nd and 31 Mar and 2 Apr.

Egyptian Nightjar: 1 at Zabbar on 2 May.

Little Swift: 1 shot on 14 Oct.

Bee-eater: 5 on 2 Apr. Singles on 11th, 17th and 18 Sep.

Roller: Singles on 21 May, 4th and 16 Sep.

Wood Lark: 1 on 6 Oct.

Skylark: Late bird on 30 Apr.

Red-rumped Swallow: 1 on 29 Apr.

Red-backed Shrike: Singles on 21st and 24 Sep, and on 2 Oct.

Woodchat Shrike: 1 (L.s. guttata) at Ghadira on 5 Jun.

Lesser Grey Shrike: 1 on tal-Mandar on 9 Sep.

Great Grey Shrike: 1 at Mtaheb in mid-March.

Alpine Accentor: 1 taken at Mgarr in October.

Isfaring Warbler: Up to 10 on 30th-29 Aug.

White-throat: Singles on 16th and 18 Sep.

Rupelli’s Warbler: 1 at M'Scala on 20 Oct.

Fan-tailed Warbler: 2 on 25 Jun and singles on 2nd and 17 Aug. at Salina.

Collared Flycatcher: 1 male on 27 Aug.

Red-breasted Flycatcher: 1 on 17th and 18 Oct.

Whinchat: 1-3 on 18th-21 Oct.

Rufous Bush Chat: 1 at Siggiewi on 13 Apr.

Dicer Wheatar: 1 at Delimara on 19 Mar.

Rock Thrush: 1-3 on five days from 15th-29 Mar. 1 on 27 Sep.

Mistle Thrush: Singles on 18 Oct and 2 Nov.

Rustic Bunting: 1 at Siggiewi on 21 Oct.

**SPECIES RINGED AND TOTALS**

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<th>Species</th>
<th>1973 Total</th>
<th>Species</th>
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<td>Manx Shearwater</td>
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### RINGING RECOVERIES

This section of the report deals with 35 recoveries of 15 species, 25 others, all of them in, or within 5 kilometers of the place of ringing, are omitted; 12 have been reported from abroad, and one of these was recovered in 1971, but was reported during this year. For local recoveries of over five kilometers the distance is given; this, together with the directions, are approximate.

**Key to symbols and terms used in the recovery list:**
- Ring number: where this is followed by an asterisk (*) the ring has been returned.
- Age Code: 1 — pullus; young bird ringed in the nest.
- 2 — fully grown; year of hatching quite unknown.
- 3 — definitely hatched during current calendar year.
- 4 — hatched before current calendar year; exact year unknown.
- 5 — definitely hatched during last calendar year.
- 6 — hatched before last calendar year; exact year unknown.

**Sex:**
- M. — male.
- F. — female.

**Manner of recovery:**
- v — caught or trapped, and released with ring;
- + — shot or killed by man;
- x — found dead or dying;
- ( — caught or trapped alive and not released, or released but with ring removed;
- /? — manner of recovery unknown.

**Date of recovery:** Where this is unknown the date of the reporting letter is given instead and is shown in brackets. An 09 in the date indicates that the exact date of the month is unknown.

The first line of each recovery gives ringing details — ring no., age code, sex, date and locality. The second line gives recovery details — how found, date and locality. The co-ordinates of the principal ringing sites are:

#### Cory’s Shearwater (Calonectris diomedes)
- SS 70.987 4 26.07.68 Filfla.
- + (19.08.73) Delimara. (14 km ENE).
- SS 92.762 4 16.08.69 Filfla.
- + Jul.-Aug. 75 off St. Julian’s. (ca. 29 km NNW)

### Recoveries of 1973

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<th>Sex</th>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barred Warbler</td>
<td>1 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orphean Warbler</td>
<td>1 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garden Warbler</td>
<td>303 1,779</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blackcap</td>
<td>217 897</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whitethroat</td>
<td>86 611</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesser Whitethroat</td>
<td>9 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sardinian Warbler</td>
<td>163 1,167</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subalpine Warbler</td>
<td>178 830</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Ringed in 1973:** 6,204 of 78 species

**Grand Total Ringed:** 36,336 of 113 species
Storm Petrel (Hydrobates pelagicus)
212.6052 4 27.05.72 Filfla.
+ 19.06.73 St. Thomas Bay. (16 km ENE)
214.8091* 4 28.06.73 Filfla.
X 24.07.73 nr. Pachino: 36°43'N; 15°06'E, Sicily.

Moorhen (Gallinula chloropus)
SS 92.803 3 29.09.72 Lunzjata Valley.
+ 00.10.72 Salina. (20 km SE).

Swallow (Hirundo rustica)
JP 09.462* 3 11.10.73 Lunzjata Valley.
+ 14.10.73 Delimara Fl. (36 km SE).
JP 09.955 3 13.10.73 Lunzjata Valley.
X 17.10.73 St. Paul's Bay. (15 km SE).

Meadow Pipit (Anthus pratensis)
JH 83.993* 2 20.11.71 Lunzjata Valley.
+ 20.11.71 Alifie: 41°20'N; 14°26'E, (Caserta), Italy.

Grey Wagtail (Motacilla cinerea)
JH 83.886 3 06.01.71 Lunzjata Valley.
/ ?/ 06.01.71 Castelvetrano: 37°41'N; 12°47'E, Sicily.

Garden Warbler (Sylvia borin)
HX 95.387* 3 22.08.70 Maheleb.
+ 09.11.73 Campiglia Marittima: 43°04'N; 10°37'E, (Livorno), Italy.

Blackcap (Sylvia atricapilla)
HX 74.538 4 M. 27.02.70 Buskett.
X 23.03.73 Mateur: 37°03'N; 9°40'E, Tunisia.

Spotted Flycatcher (Muscicapa striata)
HX 74.055 3 27.09.69 Lunzjata Valley.
/ ?/ (17.09.73) Burdji: 1°18'; 15°16'E, Moyen Congo.

Robin (Erithacus rubecula)
HX 94.897* 4 22.11.70 Wied Znuber, Hal Far.
/ ?/ 17.10.71 nr. Ivanovo: 57°08'N; 41°00'E, U.S.S.R.
X 19.11.72 Mqarr. (47 km NW).
JK 31.596 4 02.11.72 Lunzjata Valley.
X 25.11.72 Sbiba: 35°33'N; 9°05'E, Tunisia.
JE 60.955 4 20.10.71 St. Julian's.
X 09.01.73 Hagar Qim. (11 km SSW).

Song Thrush (Turdus philomelos)
CV 55.456* 3 28.11.70 Lunzjata Valley.
+ 08.01.73 S. Giorgio Mergato: 38°23'N; 16°06'E, (Reggio Calabria), Italy.
CP 66.948 2 11.10.73 Wied Znuber, Hal Far.
+ 00.10.73 Buskett. (11 km NW).
CP 73.741 2 25.10.73 Xemxija, St. Paul's Bay.
X 27.10.73 Rabat, (7 km SSE).

Blackbird (Turdus merula)
CV 55.480 2 15.12.72 Xemxija, St. Paul's Bay.
+ 07.01.73 St.emma: (10 km SSE).

Chaffinch (Fringilla coelebs)
HX 76.228 5 P. 15.01.70 Buskett.
v 28.02.73 Medjez-el-Bab: 36°39'N; 9°40'E, Tunisia.

Linnet (Acanthis cannabina)
JJ 55.593 2 P. 25.10.72 Lunzjata Valley.
X 07.03.73 Tarxien: (30 km SE).
JK 31.893 4 P. 29.10.72 Wied Znuber, Hal Far.
X 07.03.73 Hamrun. (8 km N).
JK 32.832 4 P. 01.04.73 Wied Znuber, Hal Far.
X 04.04.73 Birkirkara. (10 km NNW).
JH 83.910 2 P. 27.10.71 Birkirkara.
X 04.04.73 Birkirkara.
JK 32.030 4 P. 01.04.73 Wied Znuber, Hal Far.
X 04.04.73 Birkirkara. (15 km NNW).
JK 32.639 4 P. 01.04.73 Wied Znuber, Hal Far.
X 21.04.73 Birkirkara. (10 km NNW).
FOREIGN RINGED BIRDS RECOVERED IN MALTA

This section of the report deals with 36 foreign ringed birds recovered in Malta. As usual, a number of them were recovered in earlier years, but only came to our notice in the past year.

The symbols and terms are the same as those used in the 'Ringings Recoveries'. A number in brackets beside the age code indicates the size of the brood.

**Gannet (Sula bassana)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Recovered</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>London</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stockholm</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Purple Heron (Ardea purpurea)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Recovered</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arnhem</td>
<td>1 (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paris</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CA 20035</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Osprey (Pandion haliaetus)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Recovered</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stockholm</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helsinki</td>
<td>1 (2)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Honey Buzzard (Pernis apivorus)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Recovered</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Helsinki</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stockholm</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Eleonora’s Falcon (Falco eleonorae)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Recovered</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Paris</td>
<td>6 M.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paris</td>
<td>6 M.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Temminck’s Stint (Calidris temminckii)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Recovered</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Helsinki</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Dunlin (Calidris alpina)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Recovered</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Paris</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paris</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Wood Sandpiper (Tringa glareola)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Recovered</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stockholm</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

23
**Great Skua** (Stercorarius skua)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>London</td>
<td>02.08.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HW 23.599</td>
<td>+ (09.06.73)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Black-headed Gull** (Larus ridibundus)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Praha</td>
<td>12.06.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E 154.814</td>
<td>+ 01.06.64</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Caspian Tern** (Hydroprogne caspia)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stockholm</td>
<td>22.06.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.022.848</td>
<td>+ 08.11.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stockholm</td>
<td>10.06.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.050.342*</td>
<td>+ 15.08.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stockholm</td>
<td>18.06.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.050.408</td>
<td>+ 26.10.73</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Sandwich Tern** (Sterna sandvicensis)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Moskva</td>
<td>15.06.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P-229.085</td>
<td>+ 00.05.72</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Sand Martin** (Riparia riparia)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Zagreb</td>
<td>06.06.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A 372.448</td>
<td>+ 11.04.70</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Yellow Wagtail** (Motacilla flava)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>London</td>
<td>29.03.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JP 04.430</td>
<td>+ 23.04.73</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Blackcap** (Sylvia atricapilla)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Varsovia</td>
<td>10.06.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HA 152 398</td>
<td>+ 29.03.73</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Robin** (Erithacus rubecula)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Helsinki</td>
<td>16.09.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K-842.553</td>
<td>+ 24.10.73</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**Seren (Serinus serinus)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Praha N 56221</td>
<td>05.08.59</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Linnet (Acanthis cannabina)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Zagreb A 373.255</td>
<td>12.10.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Varsovia G 280 389</td>
<td>15.12.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lithuanian 39578</td>
<td>24.04.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Varsovia HA 188 983</td>
<td>04.04.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bologna L 350577</td>
<td>17.04.73</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**RETRAPS**

During 1973, there were over 600 retraps of locally ringed birds. Winter visitors, mainly Chiffchaffs and Robins, constitute more than half this number. Only 58 were spring and/or autumn migrants. Most birds retrapped had only been ringed a few days or weeks previously, but a good proportion had been ringed from one to seven years earlier, and these are tabulated below.

In the following tables, the top line shows the approximate period which had elapsed between ringing and retrap. The figures show the number of individuals retrapped in 1973.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>1yr</th>
<th>2yr</th>
<th>3yr</th>
<th>4yr</th>
<th>5yr</th>
<th>6yr</th>
<th>7yr</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Residents.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sardinian Warbler</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish Sparrow</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer Visitors.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cetti's Warbler</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Storm Petrel</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winter Visitors.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grey Wagtail</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blackcap</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**Notes:**

- a) Residents.
- b) Summer Visitors.
- c) Winter Visitors.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Species</th>
<th>No.</th>
<th>11</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>1</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chiffchaff</td>
<td>38</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Stonechat</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robin</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d) Spring and Autumn Migrants.***</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scops Owl</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subalpine Warbler</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* All five birds recovered, not retrapped.
** One of these Cory's Shearwaters had been ringed as a pullus.
*** Both birds ringed and retrapped in autumn.

**ERRATA**

**Il-Merill No. 6, Dec. 1971.**

p. 27: The birds ringed with Bologna 37775 and Radolfzell K 222.575 should read Siskins (Carduelis spinus) not Goldfinches (Carduelis carduelis).

**Il-Merill No. 8, Aug. 1972.**

p. 18: Orphean Warbler replaces Olivaceous Warbler as the English name for (Sylvia hortensis).

**Il-Merill No. 11, Aug. 1973**

p. 15: Instead of Rock Pipit read Rock/Water Pipit.
p. 26: The number of Wrynecks ringed in 1972 should be 12 not 18.

p. 30: The ring number of the Helsinki ringed Osprey, accidentally omitted, is M-6.740.

**Il-Merill No. 13, Jan.-Jun. 1974.**

p. 16: The Great Tit at Ta' Braxia was caught in 1963 not in 1960.