



## Identification of Eastern vagrants to Britain

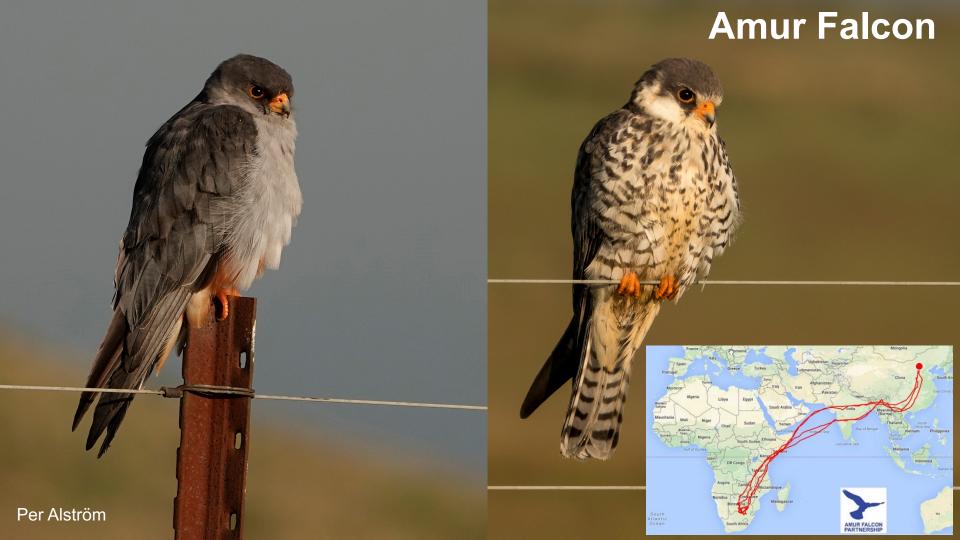
Per Alström



## Pallas's Sandgrouse

































### 1st-winter

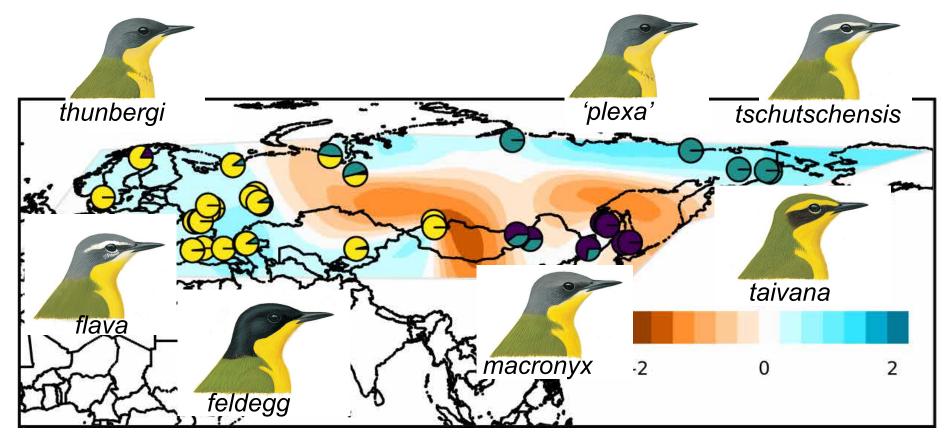


**Citrine** 

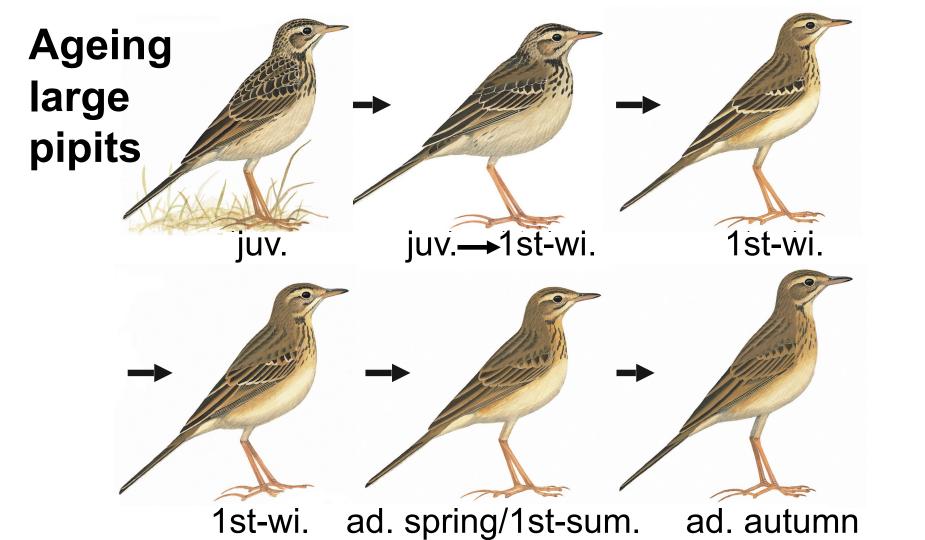
E/W Yellow Wagtail

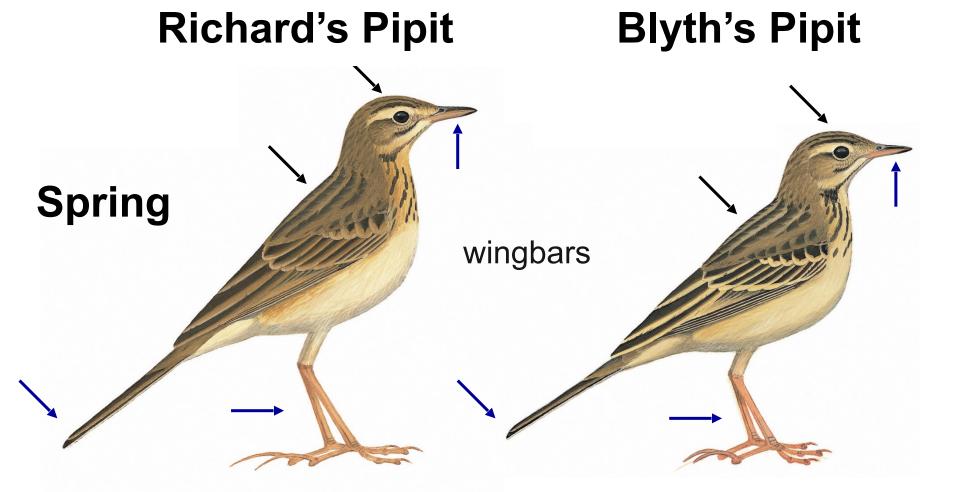
Bill Zetterström

## Gene flow barriers: 2-3 species. Confusing pattern.

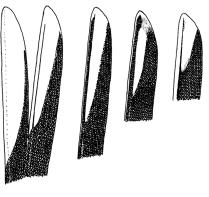


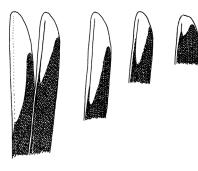
Harris et al. 2018. Molecular Phylogenetics and Evolution 120: 183–195





# Ad. autumn Ad. autumn Richard's Richard's





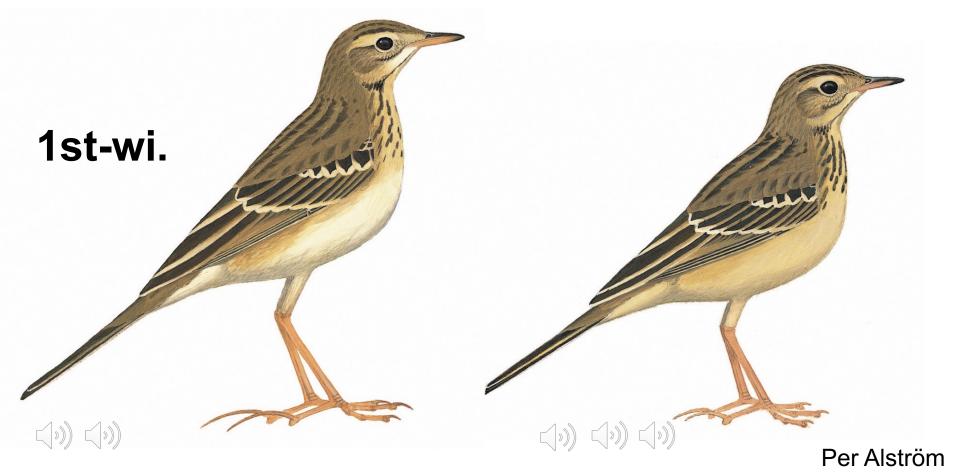
11.2-23.9 mm

8.8–15.4 mm

Per Alström

# Richard's Pipit

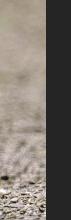
# **Blyth's Pipit**







Blyth's Pipit



Richard's Pipit



Kaoru Ishie





#### Identification and European status of eastern Stonechats



The eastern races of the Stonechat look very different from the familiar west European ones. Some might even be dismissed as Whinchats. Of 25 in western Europe, more than half have been in the last three

There are about 24 races of the Stonethat Stoicels tempora, all breeding within the Pulcarrite or the Ethiopian regions (Vaurie 1939). Fight Level in the Palearctic: two west European caces, S. t. ratiofe and S. t.hibranes, and six eastern forms, which are distinct from those of western Surenes, and use resourn turnes, which are diginet from those of western Europe, but cause identification problems.

Although at least 25 eastern Stonethats have been recorded in west Europe since 1883 (see later section), there is little information available t

**British Birds** 

VOLUME 71 NUMBER 4 APRIL 1978

#### Field identification of west Palearctic gulls

The west Palearctic list includes ag species of gulls : more than half the world total. Field guides—because of their concise format—provide inadequate coverage of identification and ageing, which has probably fostered the indifference felt by many birdwatchers towards gulls. This fivepart series aims to change that



Interest in identifying gulls is growing, as part of the recent improvement in identification standards, but doubtless also stin by the addition to the British and Irish list of no less than three N species in little over a decade (Laughing Gull Larus atricilla in Franklin's Guli L. pipiscan in 1970 and Ring-billed Gull L. delawar 1973). The realisation is slowly dawning that regular checking t flocks of gulls can be worthwhile.

Just as important as identification is the ability to recognise the individual immatures. This is obviously necessary in studies of I tion, distribution and migration, but is also a challenge in its ow to the serious bird-identifier. Indeed, identification and ageing go in-hand, for it is only by practising his recognition skills on the ce species-of all ages-that an observer will acquire the degree of fan necessary for the confident identification of the occasional rarity.

The enormous debt owed to D. J. Dwight's The Gulls of the World is readily acknowledged. That work, however, has long been print and its format was designed for the museum and taxonomic v the present series of papers will provide a reference more suited

Each of the five parts in this series will bring together species share similar characters, especially in their immature plumages wh possibility of confusion is greatest.

Librit, Sind at 145-126, April 1958]

#### Identification of Olive-backed Pipit. Blyth's Pipit and Pallas's Reed Bunting Alan R. Kitson



Three species which occasionally reach western Europe Knowledge of their field characters may help us to increase the number of vagrancy records

This is the third and last of this stries of papers based on observations in Mangalia in 1977. The general introduction to the series appeared with the first paper (Brit. Birds 71: 558-562).

Olive-backed Pipit Anthus hodgoon From mid May onwards, this species becomes common in Mongolia, inhabiting forests and the interface of forest and inconvain steppe. The race concerned is processoric (Vaurie 1950), to which Dennis (1967)

#### Steppe Buzzard morphs at migration and their separation from Long-legged Buzzard

Hadoram Shinihai & Dick Forsman

A most the enter word appoint or higher to continue the builder of the builder of

Fax-red morph (rufous morph)

S. C. Madge



#### The Pintail Snipe has not yet been recorded in Britain and Ireland, but has it been overlooked?

The genus Gollinge provides observers with difficulties in field identifi-cation, chiefly because of the rather similar general plumage patterns of snipes and their singularly awkward habits: most views being of flushed birds flying away from the observer. Difficulties generally arise between large-looking Snipe G. galliangs and Great Snipe G. media (see Wallace 1976), but emphasis on these two species should not preclude the possibility of other Palearotic suines, especially the Pintail Snipe G. stenure, occurring as vagrants in western Europe.

The inclusion of the Pintail Snipe in a popular European field guide (Heinzel, Fitter and Parslow 1972) has attracted the attention of observers to the species, but the brief description given there is of little use in the field. This paper grew around my field impressions of Pintail Snipe in comparison with Snipe in Nepal in winter 1973/74, and includes notes supplied by T. P. Inskipp (in litt.) from India in 1970 and P. A. Dukes (in litt.) from Sri Lanka in 1975. We found the distinctions between the two species more striking than has been suggested in the literature,

#### Identification of Western Palearctic swifts



Palearctic swifts treats the Apus species, Common Swift A apus, Pallid Swift A pallidus, Plain Swift A unicolor, Alexander's (or Cape I. A alexandri, Fookstalled for Pacific)

selavica. White-throated Needletail s caudacutus and African Palm Swift parvus (the common and scientific aw Sibley & Monroe 1990). unts of Chimney Swift. White-throatern Palearctic confusion species. An made to describe the species as they

his paper on the identification of Western coverts can be impossible to see in the field under anything but the optimum conditions, they are described to help the reader to understand how certain features are being formed. For convenience sake, the following terms are

used in the text; chest, the upper breast; eye patch, the coarse invariably black bristle-feather found in front of and just above the eye; fore crown, the most anterior part of the crown, forn ing a small arc-like area above the front of the eye; inner wing, the part of the wing that consist of the inner primaries, secondaries, media coverts and greater coverts; outer wing, the part of the wing that consists of the outer primaries, primary coverts, alula and leading edge-coverts: leading edge-coverls, the small coverts on the leading edge of the wing; saddle, the uniform area on the upperside in many swifts, formed by the mantle, scapulars and upper back (where the saddle is larger, ie, extending onto the nape or lower back, this is mentioned in the text). This article is primarily based on field-work. Apart from Alexander's Swift and Purple Needle-tail Hirundapus celebensis. I have observed all species dealt with (ie, including the main cor en during careful field observations.

eather-tracts, such as the lesser wingand over long periods of time. In addition, I have

#### **British Birds**

Field identification of Dusky and Radde's Warblets

R. J. Johns and D. I. M. Wallace

are several pairs of species which have always been thought difficult

Hatinguish from one another. In some cases, however, it is becoming surent that this is due largely to the fact that their appearance and macter remain poorly documented or interpreted. This applies ticularly to the Dusky Warbler Phyllosoper functor and Radde's abler P. schwarzi. References to them in The Handbook were brief, ding to stress similaristies; although Williamson (1962) shed more sitive light, field guides still offer markedly variable illustrations and much advice on eastion as on diagnosis. From our own recent erience of both species, and from additional information made slable by H. E. Axell and by the Rarides Committee, it is our belief t confusion between them in the field is not a real danger. This er summarises our reasons.

Among the rare warblers that may confront British and Itish observers

NERAL APPEARANCE

th share rather dark plumage and can appear darker and bulkier than . Buropean Phillerspar, Initially even their generic identity can be puriopean regularitation, initiative even times generic islemativ can be excep, particularly as both as at overtant eskullers and no migration of to feed in and around ground cover. Thus three is the possibility confusion with neutraked Amerghaha warbers, and this is increased their generically aspiral, clipped calls. We make these points recitately to indicate how different both species are from familiar topican Phyllosophus, particularly the Willow Warbler P. treebilos and Childchaft P. sellyhits. Under prolonged observation their true stortship is apparent from their actions while moving in cover and

in spring. Being at one of these places lay, with thousands of birds streaming of the ultimate birding experiences. zard is one of the commonest species raptor route' (for spring- and autumn seasonal counts, see Shirihai 1987 and

#### Identification of Pied Wheatear and Eastern Black-eared Wheatear

First-autumn male Pied and Eastern Black-eared

Wheateur may be very difficult to separate. They generally give a rather 'untidy' impression with extensive pale fringing on the black throat, irre-

gularly patterned crown, rape, mantle and sca-pulars. The black of the throat reaches further

pulars. The black of the throat reaches further down on the upperbreast on Pied than on Black-eared. On many Pied, however, pale tringes will cover most of the lower part of the black throat-patch, so that they resemble Black-eared. Thus, a "Black-eared-type" throat in autumn could imply

any species, whereas a bird with an extensive

black throat-patch is a Pied. On Pied males tha

black throat-patch is a Pied. On Pied males that show a small throat-patch, because the lower part is covered with pale fringes, the lower bor-der of the patch is usually diffuse (plane 147). Or Black-eared males, the lower border is usually well-defined with no tendency of showing more

pale fringes here than further up on the throat (plate 148). The significance of this character has to be investigated further.

In autumn, most young Eastern Black-eared have pale fringes to the basically black scapulars. Thus, there is no difference in the pattern of the

Field identification of Brown, Siberian and

**Grey-streaked Flycatchers** 

Per Alström and Erik Hirschfeld

mantle and the scanulars as in spring. On the

t is notoriously difficult to distinguish Pied of the mantle is visible, this will exclude Black-Wheatear Oenanthe pleschanka and Eastern eared. This problem also occurs in north-western furope, where both taxa have been recorded as vag-rant. In this paper, the differences between the

Males

Adult Lastern Black-eured Wheateur Autumn adult male Eastern Black-eared Wheat-ears are reasonably easy to identify, since the plumage is roughly the same as in spring and

gives a rather neat impression. The most obvious difference from spring is formed by pale fringes to primaries and secondaries, greater and median coverts and rectrices. The lesser coverts are all black or have very narrow pale fringes, while the lesser coverts of autumn male Pied Wheatear are lesser coverts of autumn make Pied Whendear are broughly pale-fringed in friesh plumage. Even though there may be some pale fringes on the black of the throat and some tenny fringes on the black scapulars, the bird looks almost as "clean" as in spring; the lower border of the black throat-patch is well-defined plates 144 and 145;. The crown and the mantale are not as white as in times recalling Western Black-eared "redanoleuca-impression". This in presence or absence of contrast bet Wheatear pulars and the mantife is of no use

Adult Pied Wheatear
Typical autumn adult male Pied Wheatears have fring a first autumn bird in fresh pla.
The mantle of Pied and Black-e loses, eaccoverts, and throat site black with pale frings on the lower and of the float and flatcher integers on the lower and of the float and earlier of the float and the flatcher of the float and earlier of the float and the flatcher of the float and earlier of the float and the flatcher of the float and earlier of the float and the

gade fringes. If the plumage is worn and the black identification, it is absolutely necessarily

#### Recognition of Icelandic Black-tailed Godwit and its occurrence in the Netherlands

C S (Kees) Roselaar & Gerrit J Gerritsen

and testing, Anderstand, any the Periodical Assembly and the second of the State of

Christie in press). Maximum numbers

#### **British Birds**



The re-establishment of the Isabelline Shrike Lanius instellinus, the Brown Shrike L. mistatus and the Red-backed Shrike L. mistatus as separate species (Voous 1977 & 1979; BOU Records Committee (1980) has rekindled interest in their field identification. Confusion persists regarding the taxonomy of the group (e.g. Nielsen 1981), but this should not inhibit discussion of plumage distinctions. Although Hollom (1960) and Heinzel et

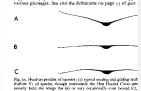
Flight identification of European raptors Steen Christensen, Bent Pors Nielsen,

R. F. Porter and Ian Willis

PART 4. HARRIERS

We now turn to the four harriers Circus, a genus associated with awar sive reedbeds, cornfields and moorland, not requiring trees as do most raptors. Three-Marsh C. aeraginesses, Hen C. sya Montagu's C. pagargas-ate comparatively common, but th C. marrows is much rarer (mainly east Forope). All invaria and normally glide with wings raised in a shallow V, and : their long wings and tail distinguish them from other birds The only other similar-sized raptors to soar on raised wings buzzards, particularly Butes butes (part 1), but they have short ta fully spread and glide on flat wings. Male harriers are not dif identify with reasonable views, but the females and imma Hen, Montagu's and Pallid must often be grouped as 'ringtaile the head and neck pattern is seen.

Fig. 35 below shows the head-on profiles. Figs. 36x-360 on [ compare the four males, and 36E-36F the heads of the three females; the facing text on page 235 comments on the main : and outlines the areas of Europe, the Middle East and north / which each species may be seen. Figs. 17-44 on pages supported by plates 41-44, illustrate the under- and upper various plumages. See also the definitions on page 53 of part



when gliding, never when souring

Identification of Isabelline Wheatear, Desert Warbler and three Phylloscopus warblers Alan R. Kitson

1, 3, 0, 112 & o: the British and Irish records totals of each of these five mainly Asiatic species

The background to my observations in Mongolia was detailed earlier (Kitson 1978). This paper covers five more species which have occurred or might occur as vagrants to western Europe.

Isabelline Wheatear Oceanthe inshelling

From mid April onwards, this wheateur breeds very commonly on the grassy steppes of Mongolia and half-heard smatches of its whistling highly minuric song were absent causing my to look around, now for a moder, now for a tern. I became very familiar with it. Having compared my more with the texts of modern field quides. I wish to emphasis several characters that seem to use to be incompletely appreciated particularly in the all-important differentiation (to observers in Europe) of Isabelline from the pale morphs of the Greenland race of Wheatean O. venanthe leavestoss. First, it is important to recognise the differences in nump- and tail

pattern of wheatears. Fig. 1 shows these for free species. To my eyes, it is the tail-pattern and tail-shape of Babelline which form the must immediate distinctions in the field from Whextear. In that species, the tail-pattern is essentially an inverted black T abuning a white base; the

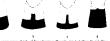


Fig. 1. Field appearance of tails of five wheatens Occopie (a) tratelline (), installing b) Wheatear O. orasthe: ir: Pirk D. Neubsolv and Black-cared O. historie: (d) Door G. dranti (Alex R. Kitsen

Stalt, Para: 32: 5/9, Journaly 1978

#### Identification of Roseate Tern in juvenile plumage

Killian Mullarnev

The North Atlantic population of Roseate Tern Sterna dougallii has suffered a catastrophic decline in recent years, reinforcing its dubious distinction as one of Europe's rarest and most threatened breeding seabirds. The paucity of published descriptions, photographs and reliable drawings of juvenile Roseate is largely due to the species' restricted breeding range in the Holarctic compared with Common Tern Shirundo and Arctic Tern Sparadisaea.

Grant & Scott (1969) were the first who tackled the problem of field identification of juvenile Common, Arctic and Roseate Tern. Bundy (1974) supplemented the original paper with additional observations of juvenile Arctics. The texts in Cramp (1985) provide further helpful instruction but the plates fail to reflect any more than the artist's remote acquaintance with the species.

I have had the opportunity to become very familiar with juvenile Roseate Tern at two small colonies in Ireland and subsequently amongst large autumn concentrations where juvenile Common, Arctic and Roseate Terns can be seen side by side. My observations concur with those of Grant & Scott but in the light of greate awareness of the normal variations in appearance exhibited by Common and Arctic I feel it may be helpful to discuss juvenile Roseate in the same context. My familiarity with juvenile Roseate does not extend to birds in more advanced stages of moult into first-winter plumage; Roseates tend to depart from Ireland very suddenly around mid-September and, of the few birds I have seen later in the month, none has been a first-year at close range.

For a summary of the identification characters of adult Roseate Terns, one is referred to Mullarney (1988).

There are subtle differences in structure between Common, Arctic and Roseate Tern in all plumages though these tend to be more obvious in summer adults. Roseate has shorter wings and a longer tail than the others. This is, however, seldom of much use in distinguishing juveniles for Roseates do not acquire a longtailed look until they are several weeks old. Even then the difference in length

(Durch Birding 10: 109-120, september 1988)

#### Större- och mindre korsnäbb svårigheterna att skilja dem åt

av Per Alström och Ola Lindblad

Korsnäbbarna är, åtminstone vissa år, rätt talrika och de flesta ornitologer känner väl till det hårda, metaliska locklätet, som riktigt ekar från en förbipasserande flock.

Trots dess invasionsartade uppträdande får dock de f flesta observationer, t.o.m av sittande fåg ar på nära / ¼11 stå obestämda.

Med denna korta, lilla uppsats ville vi försöka visa på de viktimaste kännetecknena hos de båda arterna, så att ni har en god grund om hur de ser ut, när ni stöter på korsnäbbar ute i markerna.

Till sist skulle vi vilja rikta ett särskilt tack till Birgitta Hansson på Naturhistoriska museet för all den hjälp vi har fått.

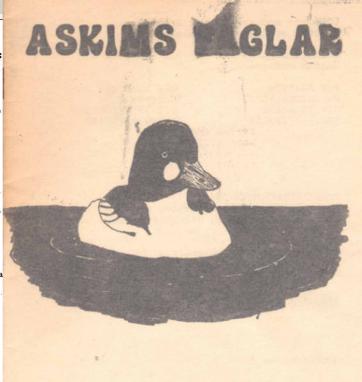
De båda arterna är mycket lika till utseendet och i färgteckningarna har vi inte kunnat upptäcka nägra säkra skillnader. Lätema anses av vissa ornitologer vara skiljbara från varandra, men det borde i praktiken var rätt svärt utan god erfarenhet av bäda arterna. (ang. lätena se nedan). Man ska dock i alla avseenden vara törsiktig när det säller bestämningen av korsnäbbar. Vissa mindre korsnäbbar kan t.cx ha en ovanligt kraftignäb, men formen skiljer från den större artens. (fig 12)

Påda arterna lever främst av barrträdsfrön Den större korsnäbben föredrar dock tallkotifrö, medan den mindre med sin klenare näbb huvudsakligen lever av granfrö. Märk väl att detta inte är något som man kan gå efter vid en fältbestämning.

Utseende, större korsnäbbe: Större korsnäbben är kraftigare än den mindre korsnäbben, "ramförallt är huvudet och i viss mån även fötterna och tarserna kraftigare. Det enda helt säkra skiljemärket verkar vara näbben (vilket också är det som vi har studerat mest).

Näbben är nästan lika hög som lång och ger ett papegojliknande intryck. Lägg märke till knölen som finns ung. mitt på undernäbben. Den var klart markerad på alla skinnlanda ex. och har tydligt setts vid alla fältobservationer

(jmfr dock fig. 1)



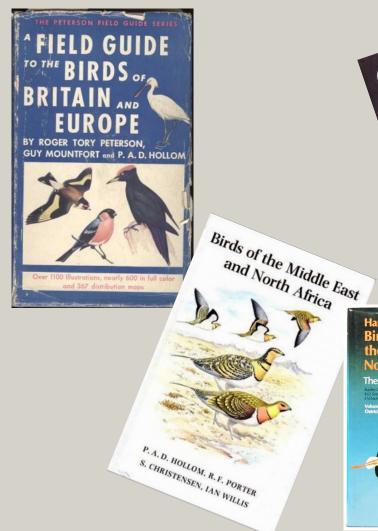
MEDDELANDE FRAN A.O.F

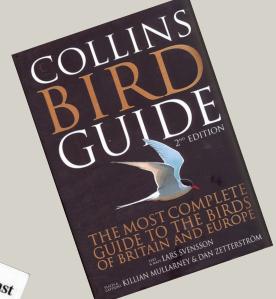
ASKIMS FALTBIOLOGER

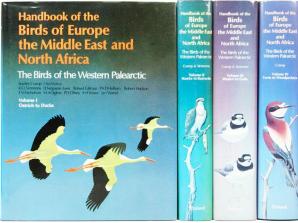
ARG 2 1976

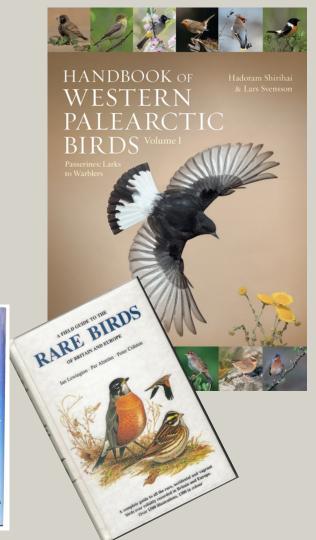
NR 2

koranabb Mi . torona bh Obs.dock "knöl".samt kraftig och hög näbb. Notera klen nacke.av-/ saknad av "knöl" jämnt sluttande övernäbb och att övre näbbhalfin.3 van skiuter ut rätt långt. fig.9 Jämn under-och övernäbb". Spetsig vinkel" fig. 10 "Spetsig vinkel" .Avsaknad av "knöl" fig.11 Jämnt sluttande näbbhalvor. Notera att övernäbben skjuter fia- 9 fig. 4 fram rätt långt. fig. 12 Relativt kort.kraftig näbb.Se dock typisk form. fig.13 Övernäbb långt framskjuten. Spetsig vinkel. fig. 6 Subad.







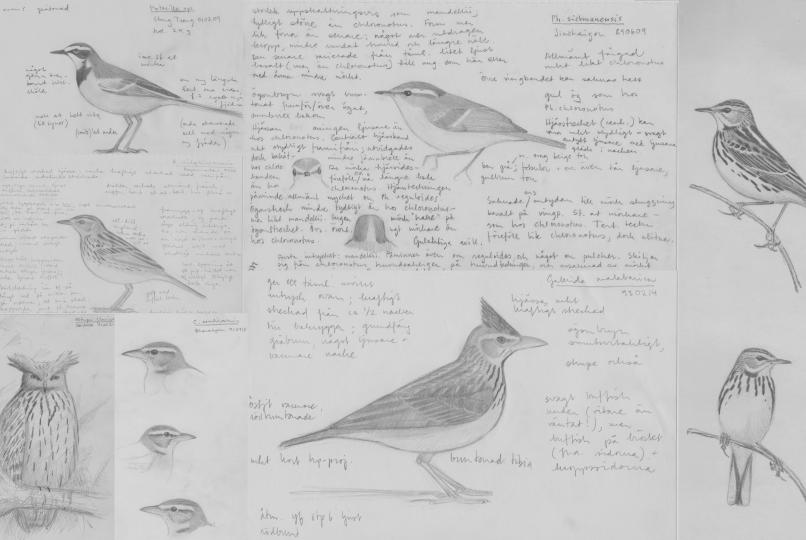












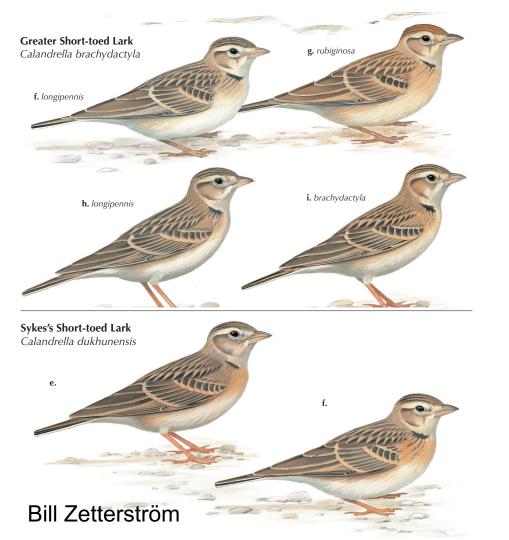
og-parti mattligh flachas broslet vanieran fram whathigh som butter hu hydligh kontrasterand gulton.; sheller ofta talane, flyter thop his stone central flack

Per Alström,

Honghe 880623

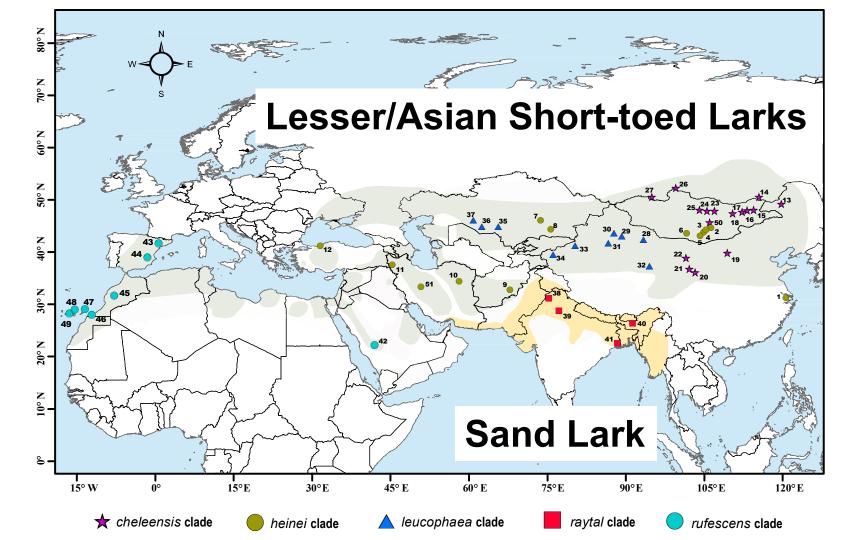














rufescens group

Sand Lark

cheleensis group

leucophaea group

Ghorbani et al. (in prep.)



Göran Ekström



Jonathan Martínez



Göran Ekström



Lars Jonsson

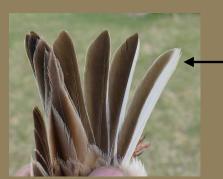






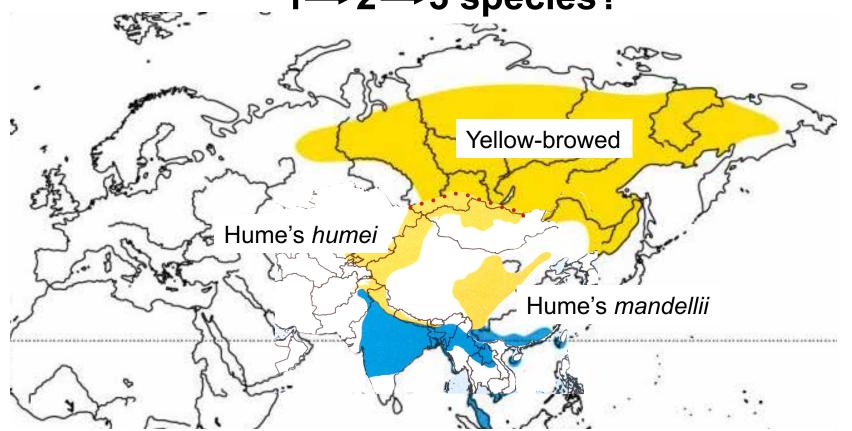




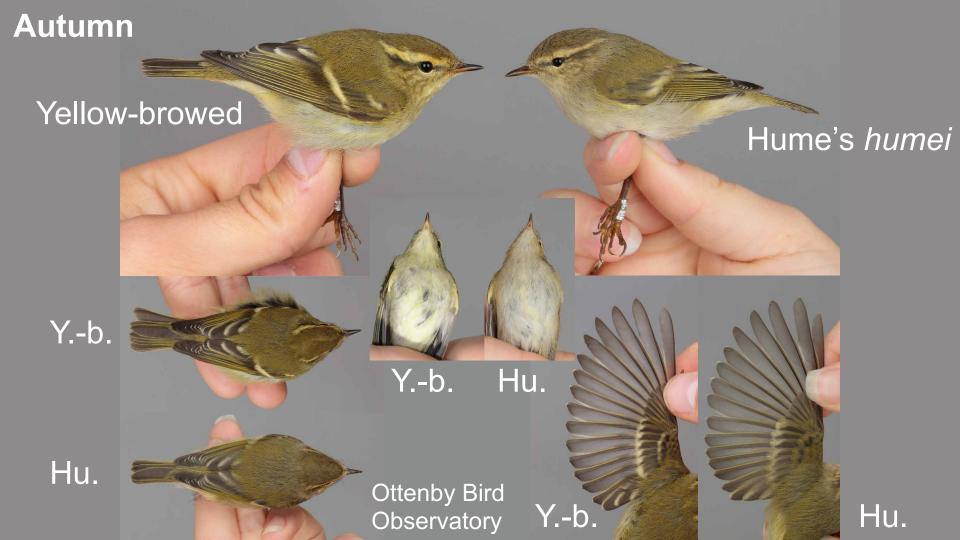


Per Alström

## Yellow-browed Warbler vs. Hume's Leaf Warbler $1 \rightarrow 2 \rightarrow 3$ species?



Hume's humei Autumn Yellow-browed Shen Yue Carlos N. Bocos



## Spring Yellowbrowed

















### Twobarred









# barred

Two-









## Two-barred







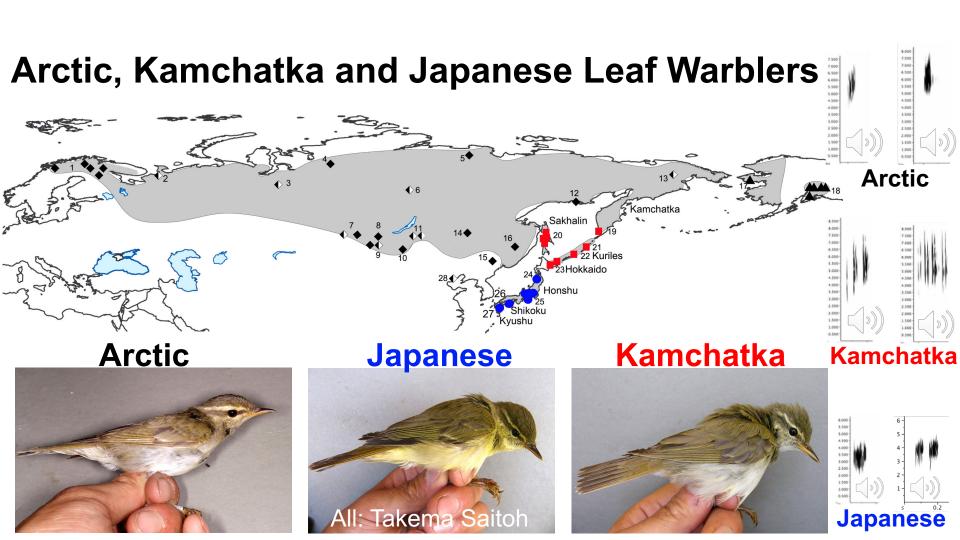




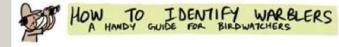
Arctic



All: Paul Leader









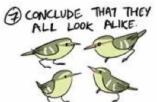






























Craig Brelsford/shanghaibirding.com

#### https://valleyofthecats.org

#### Thanks and Goodbye!





## Keen to support my research...?

per.alstrom@ebc.uu.se

ResearchGate: Per Alstrom

Google Scholar Citations: Per Alstrom

Twitter: @AlstromPer