

The Scottish Birds Records Committee

A total of 56 records were examined by SBRC for 2001, with only 30 being accepted. As in 2000, the acceptance rate was considerably lower than in most recent years.

Amendments to Scottish List –species and subspecies

Since the last amendments to the *Scottish List* (2000 SBR: 5-7), the *British Ornithologists' Union Records Committee* have published both their 29th Report (Ibis 145: 178-183) and 30th Report (Ibis 146: 192-195). Additionally the 2nd Report of their Taxonomic Sub-Committee (Ibis 146: 153-157) has been issued. There have been a considerable number of recommended changes in these reports that affect the *Scottish List*. Changes have also arisen from other sources.

The definitions for two of the Categories of the *British List* have been redefined (Ibis 145: 178-183). The *Scottish List* uses the same Category definitions as the *British List* and therefore two minor changes are required. The introduction of Category C is reworded to read:-

Species that although introduced now derive from the resulting self-sustaining populations.

The sub-categories remain unchanged. Category D has been redefined to allow dual categorisation of B and D. The new definition of Category D is:-

Species that would otherwise appear in Category A except that there is reasonable doubt that they have ever occurred in a natural state.

The evolutionary relationships within the genus *Sylvia* have been clarified and should be listed in the following sequence (Ibis 146: 153-157):-

| | |
|--------------------|-------------------------|
| Blackcap | <i>S. atricapilla</i> |
| Garden Warbler | <i>S. borin</i> |
| Barred Warbler | <i>S. nisoria</i> |
| Lesser Whitethroat | <i>S. curruca</i> |
| Orphean Warbler | <i>S. hortensis</i> |
| Common Whitethroat | <i>S. communis</i> |
| Dartford Warbler | <i>S. undata</i> |
| Marmora's Warbler | <i>S. sarda</i> |
| Rüppell's Warbler | <i>S. rueppelli</i> |
| Subalpine Warbler | <i>S. cantillans</i> |
| Sardinian Warbler | <i>S. melanocephala</i> |

Ruddy Shelduck *Tadorna ferruginea*

The status of this species on the *British List* was given careful consideration by BOURC (Ibis 145: 178-183) and they agreed to retain it in Category B on the basis of the 1892 influx. It was also agreed by BOURC that no post-1950 records could be confirmed as referring to definitely wild birds and that some of these were best placed in Category D. With the revision of the species categories, BOURC have now placed Ruddy Shelduck in both Category B and Category D of the *British List*. Meanwhile Ruddy Shelduck remains on Category B of the *Scottish List* as a result of Scottish records dating to the 1892 influx. SBRC are willing to consider giving dual Category B and D status to Ruddy Shelduck if we are made aware of any post-1950 records that meet the required standard for admission to Category D.

Willow Ptarmigan (Red Grouse) *Lagopus lagopus scoticus*

The correct spelling of the scientific name of the Red Grouse is *L. l. scotica* (Ibis 146: 153-157).

Rock Ptarmigan *Lagopus mutus*

The correct spelling of the scientific name of the Rock Ptarmigan is *L. muta* (Ibis 146: 153-157).

Ascension Frigatebird *Fregata aquila*

Argyll Isle of Tiree, an immature female found exhausted in a moribund state, 9th July 1953 and died later the same day, was originally identified as a Magnificent Frigatebird *Fregata magnificens*. The record was recently reviewed by the British Birds Records Committee and the specimen held at National Museum of Scotland has now been identified as an Ascension Frigatebird. This becomes the first and only record for both Scotland and Britain. The species is monotypic. (*Ibis* 146: 192-195, *British Birds* 96: 58-73, 550).

Add to Category A.

Magnificent Frigatebird *Fregata magnificens*

Following the above-mentioned review, as there are no other records of Magnificent Frigatebird, the species is removed from the *Scottish List* (*Ibis* 146: 192-195).

Remove from Category A.

Snowy Egret *Egretta thula*

Argyll, Ayrshire, Clyde Islands and Dumfries & Galloway Balvicar, Seil Island Argyll, age uncertain, 5-25 November 2001, probably since 30 October (J M Dickson, W Jackson et al). The same bird was at Ardrossan, Ayrshire 22-23 December 2001, Stevenson, Ayrshire 26 December 2001 – 9 January 2002, Isle of Arran, Clyde Islands 13 January – 28 March 2002, Loch Fyne, Argyll 3 April 2002, Balvicar 4 April – 3 May 2002, Ettrick Bay, Bute 15 – 18 May 2002, Seil Island about 7 June 2002 then after a gap, Tongland Bridge 19 August 2002, Caerlaverock 6 September 2002 and Lochar Water 7 – 17 September 2002 (last three localities all Dumfries & Galloway). (*British Birds* 95: 481-483, 96:551). In addition to being the first Scottish record it has been accepted by BOURC as the first British record. The race was undetermined though *brewsteri* presumed (*Ibis* 145: 178-183, 146: 192-195). The status code SV is applicable.

Add to Category A.

Montagu's Harrier *Circus pygargus*

At the time that status codes were given to species on the *Scottish List* (*Scottish Birds* 22: 33-49), this species was given the codes MB PV. There are only six or seven published records of breeding / attempted breeding in Scotland and the species' breeding status is therefore better described as CB. The status codes should therefore be changed to **CB PV**.

Great Bustard *Otis tarda*

To quote Andrews and Naylor (2002) '**Pre-1526 Borders** a few bred on the Merse in Berwickshire (Gray 1871)'. This is a somewhat similar situation to the 1416 breeding by White Stork on St. Giles' Cathedral, which has qualified that species to have the 'former breeder' status symbol 'FB'. Great Bustard already has the status symbol SV and 'FB' should therefore now be added. The new status code is therefore **FB SV**.

Stilt Sandpiper *Micropalama himantopus*

Morphological, behavioural and molecular studies indicate that the Stilt Sandpiper is better placed as a member of the genus *Calidris*. Stilt Sandpiper becomes *Calidris himantopus* and is moved to follow Curlew Sandpiper (*Ibis* 146: 153-157).

Spotted Sandpiper *Actitis macularia*

The correct spelling of the scientific name of Spotted Sandpiper is *A. macularius* (*Ibis* 146: 153-157).

Ruff *Philomachus pugnax*

At the time that status codes were given to species on the *Scottish List* (*Scottish Birds* 22: 33-49), this species was given the code PV. The species has however bred in Scotland on at least one occasion, when a clutch of four eggs hatched in Sutherland in 1980 (*British Birds* 75: 168; Thom, V.1986. *Birds in Scotland*. T & A.D. Poyser, Calton.). The status code should therefore be **CB PV**.

Long-tailed Skua *Stercorarius longicaudus*

Long-tailed Skua should be treated as polytypic with two races *S. l. longicaudus* and *S. l. pallescens*. Most migrants are believed to be the nominate race and the status of *pallescens* requires to be reviewed (*Ibis* 146:153-157). The nominate race is therefore now shown on the *Scottish List*.

Great Skua *Catharacta skua*

Studies now indicate Great Skua should belong to the genus *Stercorarius* (*Ibis* 146: 153-157).

Whiskered Tern*Chlidonias hybridus*

Northeast Scotland Meikle Loch, adult, 27 – 29 June and 1 – 3 July 2001 (P S Crockett, K Gillon *et al*); same, Loch of Strathbeg, 30 June 2001 (M B Cowie, I J Kelman *et al*) (*British Birds* 95: 499). This is only the second Scottish record, with the first in 1894.

Move from Category B to Category A.

Black Guillemot*Cepphus grylle*

The subspecies breeding in Britain is now considered to be *C. g. arcticus* (*Ibis* 146: 153-157). This race should replace *C. g. grylle* on the *Scottish List*.

Oriental Turtle Dove*Streptopelia orientalis*

The bird seen at Stromness, Orkney during 2002 (see below) has been attributed to the race *S. o. meena*. The first Scottish record (Fair Isle 1974) belonged to the nominate race, and the November 2002 Highland bird was not seen sufficiently well to establish its racial identity (*British Birds* 96: 581-582). The western race *meena* is added to the *Scottish List*, with the status code SV.

Mourning Dove*Zenaida macroura*

To be shown as 'race undetermined' (*Ibis* 146: 192-195).

Snowy Owl*Nyctea scandiaca*

Studies now indicate that Snowy Owl should be included in the genus *Bubo* (*Ibis* 146: 153-157).

Blue-cheeked Bee-eater*Merops superciliosus*

Merops superciliosus is now split into three species. The species recorded in Britain retains the English name Blue-cheeked Bee-eater but has the scientific name *Merops persicus*. *M. persicus* is polytypic, the race having occurred in Britain being the nominate *persicus* (*Ibis* 146: 153-157) which is now shown on the *Scottish List*.

Tree Swallow*Tachycineta bicolor*

Shetland Burrayfirth, Unst, 29 May 2002, photo (W Dickson) (*British Birds* 96: 583) The 2nd British record and first for Scotland. The status code SV is applicable.

Add to Category A.

House Martin*Delichon urbica*

The correct spelling is *D. urbicum* (*Ibis* 146: 153-157).

Ashy-headed Wagtail*Motacilla flava cinereocapilla*

This race was included on the *Scottish List* (*Scottish Birds* 22:42) on the basis that there were a number of Scottish records e.g. Thom (1986) says 'there are a few sight records of birds showing the characteristics of *cinereocapilla*'. Bob McGowan, SBRC's Museum Consultant made available to the committee photographs of a series of skins, from which it was clear that as a result of variations in plumage and interbreeding of races, ideally it would require examination of a bird in the hand, failing which excellent field notes, preferably backed-up by good photographs, to prove the race conclusively. SBRC undertook a review of Scottish records, but were only able to obtain written descriptions of three birds, none of which proved acceptable as the 1st Scottish record. As a result the race has been removed from the *Scottish List*. We would welcome submission of any other claimed records of this race.

Grey-headed Wagtail*Motacilla flava thunbergi*

This race of Yellow Wagtail is recorded annually in Scotland and bred on Fair Isle during 1996 (*1996 Scottish Bird Report* : 51). The status codes should be **CB PV**.

Stonechat*Saxicola torquata*

The correct spelling of the species scientific name is *S. torquatus*. The correct spelling of the subspecies *maura* is *maurus*. (*Ibis* 146: 153-157).

Pied Wheatear*Oenanthe pleschanka*

The taxon breeding in Cyprus *cyprica* has been elevated to species status with the English name Cyprus Pied Wheatear. Pied Wheatear now becomes monotypic. (*Ibis* 146: 153-157).

Black-eared Wheatear *Oenanthe hispanica*

There are now 4 Scottish records of this species assigned to the race *melanoleuca* (see *Scottish Birds* 23: 98 and below). Add *melanoleuca* to *Scottish List* with Status Code SV.

Ruppell's Warbler *Sylvia rueppelli*

Change spelling of English name to Ruppell's Warbler.

Red-breasted Flycatcher *Ficedula parva*

The taxon *albicilla* has been elevated to species status *F. albicilla* with the English name Taiga Flycatcher. *F. parva* now becomes monotypic. (*Ibis* 146: 153-157).

Isabelline Shrike *Lanius isabellinus*

The race breeding in Mongolia, Transbaikal and northern, previously called *L. i. speculigerus* should be called *L. i. isabellinus*. The race breeding in Tarim Basin, China previously called *L. i. isabellinus* should be called *L. i. arenarius* (*Ibis* 146: 153-157).

The male, on Fetlar, Shetland during September 2002 (see below) has been assigned to the nominate race *L. i. isabellinus*. A review of previously accepted records is now being undertaken by BBRC (*British Birds* 96: 600), but meanwhile Pennington *et al* (2004) indicate that the 1981 and 1987 records also refer to this race, whilst the 1960 and 1994 Fair Isle records are *phoenicuroides*. The species has until now been shown on the *Scottish List* as 'phoenicuroides presumed'. The nominate race is now added to the *Scottish List* and *phoenicuroides* confirmed.

Long-tailed Shrike *Lanius schach*

Outer Hebrides Howmore, South Uist 3-4 November 2000 (probably present from 27 October) (A Stevenson *et al*). 1st winter, probably the migratory race *erythronotus*, but conflicting characters made racial identification uncertain. Accepted By BOURC as the 1st British record. (BOURC Press Release – 22 January 2004; *Birding Scotland* 4: 8-10). The status code SV is applicable.

Add to Category A.

Lesser Grey Shrike *Lanius minor*

The species should be treated as monotypic (*Ibis* 146: 153-157).

Corn Bunting *Miliaria calandra*

Studies now indicate that Corn Bunting should be placed in the Genus *Emberiza*. The species sequence is unchanged. (*Ibis* 146: 153-157).

Baltimore Oriole *Icterus galbula*

The *Scottish List* appearing in *Scottish Birds* 22: 33-49 tabulated that it was the nominate race which occurred in Scotland. In fact in 1996 BOURC split Northern Oriole *I. galbula* into three species (*Ibis* 139: 197-201) with what had previously been the nominate race becoming a monotypic species called Baltimore Oriole. As Baltimore Oriole is monotypic, no race should be shown in the subspecies column.

Update to records of species and subspecies recorded in Scotland on up to 20 occasions

A comprehensive list of all records of species and subspecies recorded in Scotland on up to 20 occasions was published on behalf of SBRC during 2002 (Andrews I J and Naylor K A, *Scottish Birds* 23: 61-116). What follows is the first of what we intend to be annual updates.

Lesser White-fronted Goose *Anser erythropus*

Outer Hebrides Berneray, North Uist, adult, 17 February 2002 (P R Boyer) (*British Birds* 96: 554). 13th Scottish record.

Red-breasted Goose *Branta ruficollis*

Argyll Loch Gruinart, Islay, adult 27 October to 10 November 2001 (A W Reid) (*British Birds* 95: 484) (*Scottish Birds* 23: 69) also 18 October 2002 to at least 9 April 2003 (T ap Rheinalt *et al*), presumed returning individual (*British Birds* 96: 555).

Perth & Kinross Findatie, adult, 15 February 2002 (I Munro, S Paterson, J Sykes *et al*), same Vane Farm, 14 and 29 March (J Fermer, S Paterson *et al*), same Gellybank 27-28 March, and in area until 27

April, photo; second individual Vane Farm, 7 April 2002 at least (A W Reid, K D Shaw *et al*) (*British Birds* 96: 555)

The Perth & Kinross birds are 13th and 14th Scottish records.

Lesser Scaup *Aythya affinis*

Highland Loch Insh, Inverness-shire, male, 29 – 30 March 2002, photo (C Davis, C Donald, M A Newell *et al*) (*British Birds* 96: 558).

Dumfries & Galloway Auchenreoch Loch, three first winter males, 20 – 24 December 2002, one or two, Auchenreoch and Milton Lochs, 28 December to 16 February 2003, two, 18 February to at least 20 April 2003 (S Cooper, G Stenning *et al*) (*British Birds* 96: 558).

15th and 16th Scottish records.

Black Scoter *Melanitta nigra americana*

Moray & Nairn Burghead Bay, male, 27 October – 7 December 2001 (D M Pullan *et al*) (*British Birds* 96: 559).

4th record of the North American and east Siberian race.

Pied-billed Grebe *Podilymbus podiceps*

Caithness Harrow Harbour 6 May 2002, video. (J Corbett, S Laybourne, J Smith *et al*) (*British Birds* 96: 545) 9th Scottish record.

Black-browed Albatross *Thalassarche melanophris*

Outer Hebrides St Kilda, adult 12 June 2002 (M Gray, O Melander)

Lothian Tor Ness, adult, 13 October 2002 (M Griffin), presumably same as at Spurn, East Yorkshire on 22 September 2002 (*British Birds* 96: 545).

3rd and 4th Scottish records.

Soft-plumaged/ Madeira/ Cape Verde Petrel *Pterodroma mollis/madeira/feae*

Orkney North Ronaldsay, 21 September 2002 (M Ainscough, A Disley, J S Lees) (*British Birds* 96: 547). 2nd Scottish record.

Black Stork *Ciconia nigra*

Highland Spean Bridge, Inverness-shire, 18 May 2002, photo (R & S Bottomley) (*British Birds* 96: 553). 16th Scottish record.

Black Kite *Milvus migrans*

Highland near Rhifail, Strath Naver, Sutherland, 4 June 2002 (N Archer); probably same, Achantoul, 9 July to at least early August, photo (C H Crooke, R H Dennis, A F McNee *et al*) (*British Birds* 96: 560). 17th Scottish record.

Pallid Harrier *Circus macrourus*

Shetland Sumburgh, juvenile, 10 September 2002, same Brow Marsh, 10th – 14th, photo (P V Harvey, R Riddington *et al*) (*British Birds* 96: 560). 6th Scottish record.

Pacific Golden Plover *Pluvialis fulva*

Outer Hebrides North Boisdale, South Uist, adult, 14 October to 4 November 2001 (W A K Neill, B Rabbits, A Stevenson *et al*) (*British Birds* 95: 492, *Scottish Birds* 23:81), presumed returning individual, North Boisdale and Oduburgh 7 – 14 April 2002, presumed same, North Boisdale and Garrymonie area 13 October – 10 November 2002, again 9 February to at least 5 April 2003 (A Stevenson *et al*) (*British Birds* 96: 567).

Orkney North Ronaldsay, adult, 8 – 9 July 2002 (P A Brown, J S Lees *et al*) (*British Birds* 96: 567). 14th Scottish record.

Stilt Sandpiper *Calidris himantopus*

Shetland Norwick, Unst, juvenile, 5 – 7 November 2002, photo (M A Maher, M G Pennington, M I Smith *et al*) (*British Birds* 96: 569). 3rd Scottish record.

Marsh Sandpiper *Tringa stagnatilis*

Highland Dingwall Bay, Ross & Cromarty, first winter, 4 – 5 October 2000 (D P Butterfield, R Graham *et al*) (*British Birds* 96: 571). 9th Scottish record.

Greater Yellowlegs *Tringa melanoleuca*
Outer Hebrides St Kilda, 28 – 30 April and 8-9 May 2002, photo (A Robinson) (*British Birds* 96: 571).

Argyll Loch Gruinart, Islay, 11 – 14 May 2002 (T ap Rheinallt *et al*) (*British Birds* 96: 571).
7th and 8th Scottish records.

Herring Gull *Larus argentatus*
North American race *smithsonianus* (American Herring Gull)

Caithness Scrabster, first winter, 6th – 13th March 1999 (S Laybourn, N Money *et al*) (*British Birds* 96: 575). 2nd Scottish record.

Mediterranean race *michahellis* (Yellow-legged Gull)

Clyde Hoggenfield Loch, East Glasgow, adult, 3 February 2002 (C J McInerny) 18th Scottish record.

Argyll Loch Gruinart, Islay, Argyll, adult, 1-7 September 2002 (T ap Rheinallt) 19th Scottish record.

The above records are accepted by SBRC as *michahellis*, with the proviso that *atlantis* has not been fully ruled out.

Caspian Tern *Sterna caspia*

Central Region Skinflats, 9 July 2002, photo (G Owens *et al*) (*British Birds* 96: 580). 21st Scottish record. Removed from list of species recorded on twenty or fewer occasions.

Oriental Turtle Dove *Streptopelia orientalis*

Highland Portmahomack, Easter Ross, juvenile / first winter, 9 November 2002, photo (R F Hewitt), race undetermined (*British Birds* 96: 581).

Orkney Stromness, juvenile / first winter, S. o. *meena* 20 November – 6 December 2002, photo (J Bishop, E R Meek *et al*) (*British Birds* 96: 581).

2nd and 3rd Scottish records.

Blyth's Pipit *Anthus godlewskii*

Fair Isle 13 – 23 October 1988, photo, (A J Livett, N J Riddiford, P G W Salaman *et al*) (*British Birds* 96: 584). This now becomes the first British and Scottish record. With the 1993 Fair Isle bird having previously been accepted, there are now two Scottish records.

Red-flanked Bluetail *Tarsiger cyanurus*

Shetland Helendale, Lerwick, female or first winter, 11 – 14 October 2002, photo (G F Bell, H R Harrop *et al*) (*British Birds* 96: 587). 11th Scottish record.

Black-eared Wheatear *Oenanthe hispanica*

Fife Isle of May, male 2 – 23 May 1980 (*British Birds* 79: 483). Previously unassigned, was first summer *melanoleuca* (*British Birds* 96: 589).

Outer Hebrides Howmore, South Uist, male 23 April 1990 (*British Birds* 84: 483). Previously considered to be *hispanica* now considered unsafe to attribute to race (*British Birds* 96: 589).

Veery *Catharus fuscescens*

Orkney North Ronaldsay, 30 September – 5 October 2002, trapped 30th, photo (J S Lees *et al*), (*British Birds* 96: 591). 2nd Scottish record.

River Warbler *Locustella fluviatilis*

Fair Isle First-winter, 21 – 25 September 2002, trapped 21st, photo (A J Bull, R Caygal, R Kemp *et al*) (*British Birds* 96: 592). 16th Scottish record.

Savi's Warbler *Locustella luscinioides*

Shetland Hametoun, Foula, 28 – 29 May 2002 (S C Votier *et al*) (*British Birds* 96: 592). 8th Scottish record.

Eastern Olivaceous Warbler *Hippolais pallida*

Shetland Sandwick / Hoswick, adult *H. p. elaeica*, 18th to at least 28 August 2002, trapped 18th, photo (P M Ellis *et al*) (*British Birds* 96: 594). 4th record.

Sykes's Warbler*Hippolais rama*

Fair Isle Adult 29 – 31 August 1959, trapped 29th (J Bazey, R H Dennis *et al*)(*British Birds* 53: 123-124 and 425), previously accepted as Booted Warbler *H. caligata*, from which this species has been split (*British Birds* 96: 594).

Fair Isle First-winter, 20 – 27 August 1977, trapped 20th, photo (R A Broad, M A Peacock, M P Sutherland *et al*) (*British Birds* 71: 520), previously accepted as Booted Warbler *H. caligata*, from which this species has been split (*British Birds* 96: 594).

These two records now become the 1st and 2nd Scottish records, pre-dating the 1993 Shetland record (200 Scottish Bird Report: 5), the only other Scottish record.

Western / Eastern Bonelli's Warbler*Phylloscopus bonelli / orientalis*

Shetland Foula, 2 October 2000, video (J M & T P Drew). As it was not heard calling, it is currently accepted as Western / Eastern Bonelli's Warbler, but as the video is of high quality it is possible that wing formulae details may allow it to be specifically assigned at some future date (*British Birds* 96: 600).

Isabelline Shrike*Lanius isabellinus*

Shetland Fetlar, male, *L. i. isabellinus*, 14th – 17th September 2002, photo (P Kelly, M Smith *et al*) (*British Birds* 96: 600). 14th Scottish record.

European Serin*Serinus serinus*

Shetland Scalloway, 17 November 1968 (*British Birds* 62: 487), now considered inadequately documented (*British Birds* 96: 602). As a result there are now only five accepted Scottish records.

Cirl Bunting*Emberiza cirlus*

Orkney North Ronaldsay, adult female, 13 August – 20 October 2002 (A E Duncan, P Brown *et al*). Accepted by SBRC. 13th Scottish record.

Baltimore Oriole*Icterus galbula*

Shetland Unst, immature male, 26 September 1890, captured. Specimen now at Chelmsford Museum. Following a review this is accepted by BOURC as the first British record. It was well documented at the time, but was dismissed as a likely escape from captivity. Subsequent records have revealed that the location, date and age all support natural vagrancy (*Ibis* 145: 178-183). This now becomes the first of three Scottish records.

CATEGORY D**Chestnut Bunting***Emberiza rutila*

Fair Isle Female, 4 – 7 September 2002, trapped 5th, photo (A J Bull, M A Newell, D N Shaw *et al*) (*British Birds* 96: 606). 5th Scottish record.

As a result of the above changes the new *Scottish List* totals are:

| | |
|------------|----------|
| Category A | 483 |
| Category B | 8 |
| Category C | <u>6</u> |
| TOTAL | 497 |

| | |
|------------|----|
| Category D | 12 |
|------------|----|

References

- Andrews, I.J. & K.A. Naylor on behalf of the Scottish Birds Records Committee. 2002. Records of species and subspecies recorded in Scotland on up to 20 occasions. *Scottish Birds* 23: 61-116.
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