

Kormos légykapó (*Ficedula hypoleuca*) költése Szeged mellett

Szegedtől északra 15 km-re, a sándorfalva–dóci műút mellett található a Sándorfalvi Homokerdő, amely a Pusztaszeri Tájvédelmi Körzet része. A teljesen száraz aljzatú, homokra telepített vegyes erdőben idősebb – 40–50 éves – állományok is találhatóak, egyes fák kora a 80–90 évet is eléri. A nyolcvanas évek elején *Albert András* végzett itt madártelepítést mesterséges odúval, mi a MME 37. Helyi Csoport tagjaiként 1989 óta mintegy 80 odúból álló telepet gondozunk. Az odúban költött itt a szén- és kék cinegéken kívül a kerti rozsdafarkú, a fenyvescinege és a nyaktekercs is.

Az odútelep ellenőrzésekor 1993. május 1-én az egyik B–2 típusú odúban különleges fészkalapot találtunk, mely szálal fakéregből állt. Május 15-én már kész fészkek volt, amely finom faháncsból, fűszáלבól és fenyőtűből készült. A csészében 8 db világoskék színű, széncinege tojás nagyságú tojás volt. Egy hét múlva azonosítottuk a madarat, mely kormos légykapónak (*Ficedula hypoleuca*) bizonyult. Május 31-én 2–3 napos fiókákat találtunk a fészkekben, minden tojás kikelt. Ekkor *dr. Molnár Gyula* is megfigyelte az etető madarakat, és diafelvételeket is készített róluk.

Az odú deszkából készült, érdekessége, hogy előlapján a röpnylás egy természetes, enyhén ferde 36 mm átmérőjű ággöcsnyílás. Az odú egy kocsányos tölgyön 2,7 m magasan volt egy vízszintes ágra felakasztva, tehát szabadon lógott, a fatörzstől mintegy 15 cm-re. Az odú környékén átlagosan 40 m-es távolságban 8 másik mesterséges odú volt, melyekben 3 széncinege pár költött. Revírharcot nem tapasztaltunk. A környezet: 30–35 éves tölgyes (kocsányos és csertölgy) fekete- és erdeifenyővel vegyesen, távolabb nyáras állomány is található. A kormos légykapónak ez az első dél-alföldi fészkelése.

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A citrombillegető (*Motacilla citreola*) újabb előfordulása

A mongóliai-tibeti faunatípusba tartozó citrombillegető Ázsia középső és északi részein fészkel, de költőterülete két sávban Kelet-Európába is átnyúlik. Hatalmas elterjedési területén öt alfaja él, melyek hímjei színezet és méret alapján egymástól jól elkülöníthetők. A törzsalak (*M. c. citreola*) költőterülete a Nagy-Hingantól a Bajkál-hegységen, a Közép-szibériai-fennsíkon és a Nyugat-szibériai-alföldön át a Tyiman-hátságig, és – a '70-es évek óta – a Kola-félszigetig húzódik. Ez az alfaj viszonylag nagyobb a többinél (szárny 80–94 mm, farok 75–80 mm); feje és alsó oldala élénk citromsárga, az alsó farkfedők sárgásfehérek vagy fehérek; háta többnyire sötétszürke, de a világosszürkétől a feketéig (ritkán) minden árnyalat előfordulhat; a fekete nyaksáv kb. 1 cm széles, a szürke háttól többé-kevésbé élesen elhatárolt; a testoldalak szürkék; a karfedők és a közép szárnyfedők széles fehér csúcsai és szegélyei két feltűnő szárnycsíkot képeznek. A törzsalaknál kisebb *M. c. werae* alfaj (szárny 74–83 mm, farok 68–75 mm) az Altaj nyugati részétől a Kazah-hátságon és a Déli-Uralon át a Kelet-európai-síkságig fészkel, és e

század eleje óta nyugat–délnyugat irányban terjeszkedik. Ez az alfaj színezetében is jelentősen különbözik az előzőtől: alsó oldala nagyon halvány sárga (sötét fehéres is lehet); háta mindig szürke; fekete nyaksávja elmosódott, esetleg csak fekete pontok sora látható, néha teljesen hiányozhat is; a testoldalokról a szürke szín hiányzik, vagy nagyon halvány; szárnycsikjai keskenyebbek. Ugyancsak halvány színezetű, de nagyobb a két Közép-Ázsiában költő alfaj: és a Szaján vidékén a *M. c. quassatrix* (szárny 85–93 mm), a Tien-san környékén pedig a *M. c. sindzianica* (szárny 82–87 mm). A déli *M. c. calcarata* alfaj költőterülete Dél-Kína, Tibet, a Hindukus és az Iráni-felföld; ez az alfaj a törzsalaknál némileg kisebb (szárny 81–86 mm), csőre hosszabb; feje és alsó oldala sötétebb sárga, az alsó farkfedők is intenzív sárgák; háta mindig fekete; a fehér szárnycsikok kifejezettek, az összecsucskott szárnyon nagy fehér mezőt alkotnak. (Barthel, 1990, Bub, 1981, Glutz von Blotzheim–Bauer 1985, Hollom–Porter–Christensen–Willis, 1988).

A már említett terjeszkedéssel összefüggésben egyre gyakoribbak a faj európai előfordulásai. Érdekes azonban, hogy nem a határozottan, gyorsan nyugat–délnyugatra nyomuló *M. c. werae* alfaj, hanem minden esetben az északi – lassabban terjeszkedő – *M. c. citreola* alfaj fordul elő (a kézre került, és biztos alfaji hovatartozású madarak alapján). Ebben a században az európai megfigyelések, a legújabb adatokat is belevéve, a következők: Lettország 5, Finnország 47, Svédország 51, Norvégia 18, Dánia 7, Brit-szigetek 50, Izland 2, Franciaország 2, Spanyolország 1, Olaszország 3, a volt Jugoszlávia 1 adat. Közép-Európában is szinte minden országban előfordult: Hollandiában 1, Németországban 7, Lengyelországban 23, a volt Csehszlovákiában 3, Svájcban 1, Ausztriában 7 alkalommal figyelték meg. Magyarországról eddig egyetlen előfordulása volt ismeretes: 1989. május 06. Fertőrákos 1 ad. hím pd. (Hadarics, 1990). A közép-európai adatok zöme április–májusból származik, de van márciusi, júniusi, sőt szeptemberi megfigyelése is. (Lewington–Alström–Colston, 1991).

1992. május 06-án Fertőújlak (Mekszikópuszta) közelében, a leeresztett Hansági-főcsatorna iszapos medrében limicolavarsával fogtunk egy hím citrombillegetőt, melyet a gyűrűzés, a biometriai adatok felvétele, a tollazat leírása és bizonyító felvételek készítése után ugyanott szabadon engedtünk. (A madarat látták: dr. Hadarics Tibor, dr. Kárpáti László, Palkó Sándor és Pellingner Attila.)

A madár biometriai adatai a következők: a leghosszabb kézevezők sorszáma⁺: 2., 3., 4.; szárnyformula⁺: 2, 10, 15, 17, 20, 22; a szárnycsúcs és az első karevező különbsége⁺: 24; az első kézevező és a leghosszabb kézfedő közti különbség⁺ –8; szárnyhossz⁺: 82 mm, farokhossz 75 mm; csőrhossza a koponyától 17,0 mm; csüd hossza 24,9 mm; hátsó karom 10,0 mm, szűkítés a 2–5. kézevezőkön volt (a bal szárnyon a 3. kézevező csúcsa le volt törve, ezért a +-tel jelzett adatokat a jobb szárnyon mértük). A méretek felvétele az Actio Hungarica ajánlásai szerint történt (Szentendrey–Lövei–Kállay, 1979).

A madár tollazatáról részletes leírást készítettünk. A homlok, a szemöldöksáv, az áll és a torok élénk citromsárga. A fülfedők barnásak, az általuk képzett pofafolt előre felé mindinkább sárgával keveredik. A fejtető és a tarkó barnásszürke, amely szín a nyak hátsó oldalán lévő fekete örvtől élesen

határolódik el, a homlok felé viszont fokozatosan átmegy annak sárga színébe. A nyak hátsó oldalán kb. 1 cm széles koromfekete örv, mely a nyakoldalakra is lehúzódik, és többé-kevésbé élesen elhatárolódik a hát hamuszürke színétől. A farkcsik ugyancsak sűrke, a felső farkfedők feketések. A begy és a has élénk citromsárga, ez a szín a testoldalakon halvány olajszürkébe megy át. Az alsó farkfedők piszkosfehérek, az egyes tollak szegélyén 1 mm-nél keskenyebb sárga futtatással. A szárnyon a kis szárnyfedők barnászürkék, 1 mm széles hamuszürke szegéllyel; a közép szárnyfedők szürkésfeketék, 5–7 mm széles fehér csúcsokkal. A külső három karfedő mindkét szárnyon vedletlen, olajbarna színűek, 2 mm széles fehér szegéllyel; a belső karfedők szürkésfeketék, 5–7 mm széles fehér csúcsokkal, ez a fehér szín a tollak külső zászlójára félhold alakban lehúzódik. A karfedők és a közép szárnyfedők fehér csúcsai kettős fehér szárnyszalagot alkotnak. A kézfedők barnák, 0,5 mm széles fehéres szegéssel. A fiókszárny tollai földbarnák, a középső és a kis toll egyszínű barna. A kéz- és a karevezők ugyancsak földbarnák, a tollszárak sötétebbek, a külső zászlókon leheletnyi tejeskávésínű szegés látható, a belső zászlókon a következő tollak által takart részek világosabb barnák. A válltollak feketék, a leghosszabb tollon élesen, a többin elmosódottan határolt 3–4 mm széles fehér szegéllyel a külső zászlókon. A faroktollak feketék, a szélső három tollon fehér mintázattal: a szélső faroktoll külső zászlójának törésze kb. 1 cm hosszan fekete, ugyancsak fekete a belső zászló töve és szélső harmada majdnem a toll csúcsáig, a toll többi része fehér (a fehér részeken a tollszár is fehér): a második faroktollon a fekete szín nagyobb kiterjedésű, szélesebb, és a tollszár mentén a toll hosszának kétharmadáig felhúzódik (idáig a tollszár is fekete); a harmadik szélső faroktollon csak a külső zászlón van 0,5 mm széles fehér szegés. A csőr, a lábak és a karmok feketék, a szivárványhártya gesztenyebarna. A madár elengedéskor érdes „csrri-ip” hangot hallatott.

A tollazat alapján a madarat még nem teljesen kiszíneződött, második naptári évében lévő, a *citreola* alfajhoz tartozó hím citrombillegetőnek határoztuk. Egyes szerzők szerint a korhatározás egyedül a karfedők kontrasztja alapján nem végezhető el, mert a fiatalok és az öregek is részben vedlik a karfedőket a költés előtti vedlés során; ugyanakkor feltételezik azt is, hogy a madarak csak harmadik naptári évükre színeződnek ki teljesen, tehát az első nyáron még megkülönböztethetők az idősebb példányoktól (Barthel, 1990, Busse, 1989, Lewington–Alström–Colston, 1991). Ezek figyelembevételével, a még meglévő fiataalkori vedletlen külső karfedők, valamint a barnászürke fejtető és tarkó, és a barnás fülfedők alapján határoztuk a citrombillegetőt második naptári évében lévőnek (2y).

A jövőben a citrombillegető egyre gyakoribb felbukkanásával kell számolnunk, elsősorban május hónapban. 1992. május 14-én a Hortobágyon is megfigyeltek egy hím példányt (Schmidt A. szóbeli közlése). Később e faj esetleges hazai fészkelésére is számíthatunk, hiszen Európában már több helyen figyeltek meg átnyaraló példányokat és etető hím madarakat: 1976. július Anglia, Essex; 1977. június–július Csehszlovákia, Karviná; 1977. július Svédország, Jämtland; 1983. június–július és 1984 Finnország (Glutz von Blotzheim–Bauer, 1985).

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Dr. Hadarics Tibor–Pellinger Attila

A karmazsin pirók (*Carpodacus erythrinus*) Magyarországon – első alföldi előfordulása kapcsán

A karmazsin pirók a század eleje óta terjeszkedőben lévő faj Európában. Magyarországon először 1924-ben észlelték, majd több, mint ötven évi kimaradás után, a hetvenes évek közepétől, egyre gyakoribbakká válnak megfigyelési adatai, ami indokoltá teszi eddigi ismereteink összefoglalását.

A karmazsin pirók Ázsia nagy részét lakja, a tundrától a Himalájáig, kivéve a belső-ázsiai sivatagokat. A század elejétől Európában is folyamatosan terjeszkedik. Az 1930-as évekre Kelet-Lengyelországban stabil populáció alakul ki. 1968-ban már az NDK-ban is fészkelő faj, 1971-re pedig az NSZK tengerpartját is eléri (Dathe, 1986). Elterjedésének határvonala Európában Közép-Svédországtól a Keleti-Beszkidékig húzódik. Ettől nyugatra és délre szigetszerű előfordulásai ismertek Brandenburgban, a Magas-Tátrában, Cseh- és Morvaországban és az Alpokban. Terjeszkedése során a Mura völgyében és Losoncnál csaknem elérte határunkat (Haraszthy, 1988; Keve, 1984). A faj expanziója jól nyomon követhető a kézikönyvek elterjedési térképein (Peterson–Mountfort–Hollom, 1977; 1986; Makatsch, 1980) is, a jelenlegi állapotig (1. ábra)

A karmazsin pirók eddigi magyarországi megfigyelési adatait térképen szemléltetem (2. ábra). Különösen érdekes a fenékpusztai adat, ahol párban fogták a madarakat, s közülük a tojó egy harmadik éves dán gyűrűs példány. A karcagi megfigyelés is eltér a többitől néhány szempontból.

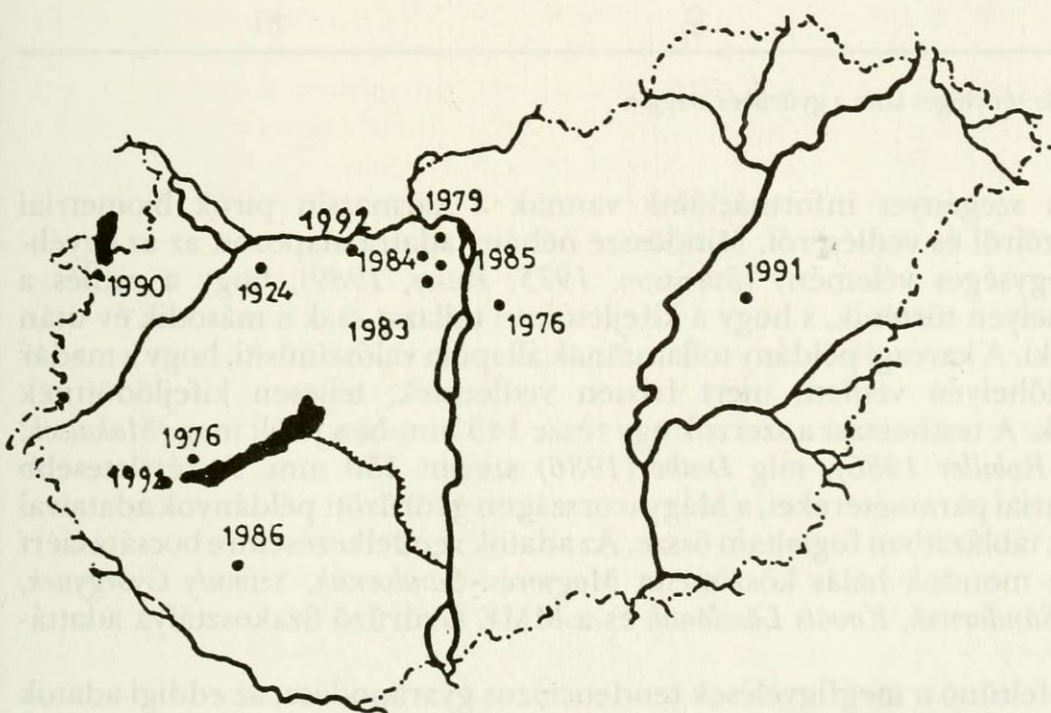
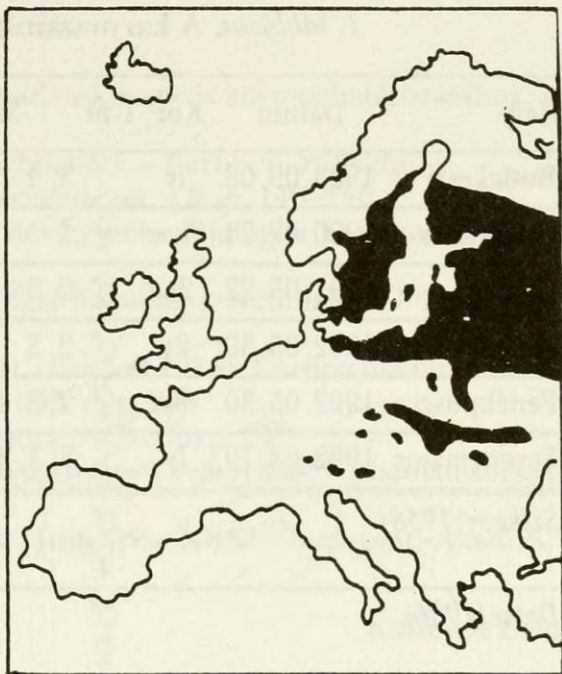
Ez a faj egyetlen tiszántúli előfordulási adata, és itt nem a szokásos vízközeli biotópban találtuk meg a madarat, hanem a DATE Kutatóintézet

parkjában, a szolgálati lakásokhoz tartozó kertekben. A madár előszeretettel tartózkodott néhány szőlőtőke között, egy kis füves parton, ahol a pongyola pitypang (*Taraxacum officinale*) magját csipegette. Feliasztva egy közeli fára repült, hívóhangját hallatva. A madár ragaszkodott a helyhez, egész délután kitartott, közel azonos útvonalakon mozogva. Még a hálóállítás idején sem nagyon húzódott el, bár nem volt feltűnően bizalmas.

Tóth László és Zsigrai György segítségével sikerült a madarat meggyűrnöm.

1. ábra.

A karmazsin pírók európai elterjedése



1924. 03. 09. Bábolna	1985. 07. 13. Pomáz
1976. 05. 30. Pécel	1986. 05. 21. Lipótfa
1976. 06. 06. Tapolca	1990. 07. 24. Fertőrákos
1979. 07. 04. Visegrád	1991. 05. 22. Karcag
1983. 09. 08. Budakeszi	1992. 05. 30. Fenépuszta
1984. 05. 18. Pilisszentkereszt	1992. 08. 19. Ferencmajor

2. ábra. A karmazsin pírók magyarországi előfordulásai

1. táblázat. A karmazsin pirók biometriai jellemzői

Hely	Dátum	Kor	Ivar	Szárnyforma	I-II.	Szárny	Farok	Súly (g)
Budakeszi	1983.09.08.	ly		3, 4	02 - 4	10 14 18	25	84 55 19,6
Fertőrákos	1990.07.24.	ly+	♀	3	01 1 6	14 17 19	25	83 59 21,0
Karcag	1991.05.22.	2y+	♂	2, 3	- 1 6	12 16 19	26	88 61 -
Fenekpuszta	1992.05.30.	2y	♂	2, 3	- 1 5	10 14 16	24	82 53 25,4
Fenekpuszta	1992.05.30.	3y*	♀	2, 3, 4	-- 5	11 16 18	26	83 53 27,0
Ferencmajor	1992.08.19.	ly		2, 3, 4	-- 4	9 12 15	23	80 58 -
<i>Székesy (1958)</i>			♂					80-86
			♀					79-83
<i>Dathe (1986)</i>			♂					83-91
			♀					75-85
<i>Makatsch (1980)</i>			♂					83
			♀					81

*A madár tényleges kora a gyűrűzés alapján

Igen szegényes információink vannak a karmazsin pirók biometriai jellemzőiről és vedléséről. Mindössze néhány adatra alapozott az az egyébként egységes vélemény (Svensson, 1975; Busse, 1989), hogy a vedlés a telelőhelyen történik, s hogy a kifejlett kori tollazat csak a második év után alakul ki. A karcagi példány tollazatának állapota valószínűsíti, hogy a madár a telelőhelyen vedlett, mert frissen vedlettnek, teljesen kifejlődöttnek találtuk. A testhosszat a szerzők egy része 145 mm-ben jelöli meg (Makatsch, 1980; Robiller 1986), míg Dathe (1986) szerint 150 mm. A részletesebb biometriai paramétereket, a Magyarországon gyűrűzött példányok adataival együtt, táblázatban foglaltam össze. Az adatok rendelkezésemre bocsátásáért ezúton mondok hálás köszönetet *Mogyorósi Sándornak, Szimuly Györgynek, Palkó Sándornak, Kováts Lászlónak* és a MME Gyűrűző Szakosztálya adattárának.

Bár feltűnő a megfigyelések tendenciózus gyarapodása, az eddigi adatok elégtelenek a megbízható következtetések levonásához. Különösen hiányosak ismereteink a biometriai jellemzőkről és a vedlésről. Éppen ezért fontos e terjeszkedő fajra hangsúlyozottan odafigyelni, különös tekintettel esetleges fészkelési próbálkozására.

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Kalivoda Béla

SHORT COMMUNICATIONS

Impact of Drought and Canicular Days of 1992 on the Avifauna of the Hortobágy

The year of 1992 was characterized by a severe drought worsened by canicular days over a period of nearly two months. During the first nine months the cumulative precipitation amounted only to 170 mm at Nagyiván (SW-Hortobágy), contrary to a value of 183 mm obtained just in July, 1991. The drought, directly or indirectly, also had an impact on the avifauna. Some unusual phenomena are presented here.

Nesting

Montagu's Harrier (*Circus pygargus*) occurred in 10 pairs in the southern steppe (puszta) areas in 1992. At the borders of Zámon and Nagyiván five territories could be observed. From the two first nestings in 1981 and 1985, resp., this has been the most numerous population in the Hortobágy, probably due to high density of rodents resulted from the drought.

From early-May I could regularly observe 3 pairs of Short-toed Lark (*Calandrella brachydactyla*) in *Alopecuretum* meadow of the Darvas islet at Kunmadaras. In the grass of nearly 2 m high the birds were feeding on a bare winter reed-transporting dirt-road of 2 m wide, they escaped into the grass when flushed. Despite this „unusual” habitat their breeding was suggested by the food-carrying activity of the birds. In addition, I could find two territories with signs of nesting in a scanty oat-field, in Nagyiván puszta. Supposed, considerably more Short-toed Lark specimens could have bred unobserved under such an unusual environment year by year.

On 10th June 1992 a nest of Short-eared Owl (*Asio flammeus*) containing 7 eggs was found in a dried sodic-grass of *Puccinellietum*, about 200 metres off the nearest swampy meadow, the Csirés-lapos. Six young birds were brooded and reared by the owl pair, but they withdrew from the open puszta into the bog before reaching fledgling age. All the other Short-eared Owls (7–8 pairs) nested in the high-grassed or the swampy meadow and in boggy areas of the Hortobágy.

Over-summering

In 1992 the over summering population of the Crane (*Grus grus*) approximated to 400 specimens, but they disappeared in late-July due to increasing drought and permanence of the canicular days (38–39 °C). The cranes reappeared one month later in early-September. Curlew (*Numenius arquata*) and Whimbrel (*Numenius phaeopus*) colonies with 150–200 and ca. 20

specimens, resp., over-summered here in 1992. In mid-August 900 Curlew specimens were already present in several assembling places whilst, in other years such assemblings commenced only in September.

Contrary to the species mentioned above, summering of the Limicole sp. (Spotted Redshank, Wood Sandpiper, Ruff) was rather insignificant, compared to other years. Only 1–2 specimens occurred here during mid-summer and some species were absent (Common Sandpiper, Green Sandpiper).

Unusual behavioural patterns

On the 25th and 28th August 1992 I twice watch twice as a female Great Bustard (*Otis tarda*) walked into the discharge of the Sárosér dammed up for flooding. It drank a lot then walked further as far as the water reached the middle parts of the wings. After staying in the water for 2–3 minutes the bird went back to the bank and preened. On 24th July 1988 I observed a Great Bustard specimen flying off on the Sárosér-channel, but drinking and "bathing" were observed simultaneously only in 1992.

On 30th August 1992 it was the warmest day in the Hortobágy, the thermometer showed 40 °C in shadow early afternoon. At sunset I observed 11 Stone Curlew (*Burhinus oedicanus*) specimens by a small discharge at Kásahát eastward of Nagyiván. Six of them ran into the water in quick succession. The birds drank on several occasions then waded trunk-deep in water and took water with a great splashing and beating about for about half a minute. Then the curlews rushed to the bank and fluttered the wings. They preened for a long time. Stone Curlews occurred regularly in the surroundings of the flood area at Nagyiván during a period of 16 years. Yet, it was the first time when I could watch them drinking and „bathing” simultaneously.

Surface fires as feeding sites for birds

Unfortunately the grassy puszta and the dried swamps were devastated by surface fire altogether over 14 days in 1992. I visited each spot due to fire-fighting works and later on for surveying the damage. Even on the first occasion it was conspicuous that the sites burnt down attracted many birds of various species for feeding. On 24th August I was present on the spot where the swamps of the Ecseg-puszta were burnt down. I could observe the burning bulrush and the grass of ca. 400 ha burnt down on the previous night. On these sites the following birds occurred.

Species	Burning bulrush	Burnt Puszta
<i>Circus pygargus</i>	17	2
<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>	10	4
<i>Circaetus gallicus</i>	3	2
<i>Falco cherrug</i>	1	1

Species	Burning bulrush	Burnt Puszta
<i>Falco subbuteo</i>	1	—
<i>Falco vespertinus</i>	30	10
<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	20	4
<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>	—	80
<i>Eudromias morinellus</i>	—	12
<i>Glareola pratincola</i>	6	—
<i>Larus ridibundus</i>	—	kb. 500
<i>Larus canus</i>	—	1
<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	650–700	35–40

In autumn the fresh vegetation growing on the burnt grassy areas down attracted Lapwings, Curlews and Starlings. On 9th October 1992 I could watch an adult Sociable Plover (*Chettusia gregaria*) specimen on a site devastated by surface fire on 6th September in the surroundings of Szik-fertő (Kunmadaras-puszta). It was pickling about in the company of 7 Lapwings and 10 Starlings. (This is the second record of this species for the Hortobágy.)

Unusual early autumn migranis

In 1992 some species began to migrate earlier due probably to the extreme hot and dry weather. The White Stork (*Ciconia ciconia*) colony in the the began Nagyiván-puszta to decrease in numbers on 17th August and the last specimens flew away on 2nd September. From mid-August more and more Black Stork (*Ciconia nigra*) specimens appeared on the drying Darvas pond reaching a maximum of 177 sps. by 5th September.

Dotterels (*Eudromias morinellus*) also performed an interesting occurrence in 1992. They Arrived here only on 24 th August. Since then they appeared regularly on the Hortobágy Fish-pond No. 11 and on the dessicating mud of the duck-ponds of the Akademia-pond during the canicular days till early-September. I could see 28 specimens as a maximum resting in the shade around noon. No such a phenomenon occured during the previous years. In September, when the weather returned to normal, dotterels occupied their usual migrating places in the puszta. On 29th September I counted 102 specimens in one flock at Angyalháza.

Though only 8–10 pairs of Avocet (*Recurvirostra avosetta*) nested in the Hortobágy, I could count 243 specimens assembling on the reclaimed Hortobágy Fish Pond No. 11. They were most likely already assembling for the migration.

In 1992 the autumn assemblance of Stone Curlews in the Nagyiván-puszta began earlier, as well. The most numerous flock consisted of 29 specimens on 21st August.

Similarly the earlier onset of migration of the resident species and the first flocks of the northern birds appeared earlier than usual, too. The most important data in chronological sequence are listed as follows:

<i>Pulvialis apricaria</i>	31st July
<i>Pulvialis squatarola</i>	10th August
<i>Haliaeetus albicilla</i>	12th September
<i>Calcarius lapponicus</i>	13th September
<i>Anser erythropus</i>	14th September
<i>Circus cyaneus</i>	18th September
<i>Lanius excubitor</i>	19th September
<i>Grus grus</i>	21st September (families with young specimens)
<i>Anser fabalis</i>	24th September
<i>Anser albifrons</i>	27th September
<i>Carduelis flavirostris</i>	8th October

Dr. Gábor Kovács

Infrequent bird visitors in the North-East-Hortobágy between 1985 and 1991

The extension of the recording network together with the now wide spread use of telescopes of high magnitude has widened the sphere of observations of „rarities” in the North-East-Hortobágy. This paper presents the most interesting findings.

Great Northern Diver (*Gavia immer*): two specimens were watched on the Kónya fishpond between 8 and 15 of November, 1985. On 1st December 1980 *J. Tar* also observed 1 specimen by the Elep fishpond.

White Pelican (*Pelecanus onocrotalus*): 1 specimen flew from unit No.1. of the Kónya fishpond on 30th of June, 1989.

Dalmatian Pelican (*Pelicanus crispus*) on 15–16 of July 1989 1 adult specimen in nearly full colour stayed on pond No.4 of the Virágoskút fishponds just filled in.

Cattle Egret (*Bubulcus ibis*): 1 specimen in nuptial plumage occurred at the Nagyszik area of Balmazújváros on 7–9 of June, 1989. According to bird watchers it was feeding on green toads (*Bufo viridis*) on several occasions.

Bewick's Swan (*Cygnus bewickii*): on 31st of October 1987 1 specimen was feeding in the half-dried basin No.1 of the Virágoskút fishpond. On 24th of October, *J. Tar* observed an old specimen in full colouration on unit No.3 of the Elep fishpond, too. It was also seen by *Gy. Nagy* at the same place two days later.

Eider (*Somateria mollissima*): 1 specimen in juvenile plumage stayed on sewage ponds in the Magdolna-pusztá through 16–25 of September, 1988.

Common Scoter (*Melanitta nigra*): on 3rd of November 1985 Z. *Ecsedi* saw 1 specimen in layer plumage by the Virágoskút fishponds.

Bonelli's Eagle (*Hieraëtus fasciatus*): 1 specimen of a 1 year old a bird was Magdolna puszta on 17th of July, 1986.

Spotted Eagle (*Aquila clanga*): 1 specimen in transient plumage was observed in the Pap-meadow through 7–8 of October, 1986.

Eleonora's Falcon (*Falco eleonorae*): on 24th of October 1987 1 specimen of light variation appeared over unit No.4 of the Virágoskút fishponds. The bird swept down to the same point – probably to a small sized and injurid bird – on several occasions.

White-tailed Plover (*Chettusia leucura*): on 15th of November 1987 1 specimen in adult plumage could be seen in loose company of Lapwings and Grey Plovers on the drained basin No.3 of the Virágoskút fishponds.

Pectoral Sandpiper (*Calidris melanotos*): on 6th of October Z. *Ecsedi* and J. *Tar* and next day again J. *Tar* saw 1 specimen in juvenile plumage on the Elep fishpond. The bird was feeding alone or in the mixed company of Dunlins, and Curlew Sandpipers, as well as a Sanderling.

Purple Sandpiper (*Calidris maritima*): on 26–27 of May 1986 2 specimens nearly in breeding plumage stayed at the Nagyszik area of Balmazújváros. They were feeding in the company of plovers, sandpipers and a Turnstone in a sodic pond formed out of navy holes.

Pomarine Skua (*Stercorarius pomarinus*): on 14th of September 1991 1 specimen in full colouration belonging to the dark variety flew over the drained basin No. 4 of the Virágoskút fishponds.

Arctic Tern (*Sterna paradisea*): On 24th and 31st of August 1989 1–1 adult bird could be watched in the company of Common Terns on pond No. 4 of the Virágoskút fishponds just under draining.

Eagle Owl (*Bubo bubo*): 1 specimen was seen by L. *Szondi* and J. *Tar* in the Dob-wood of the Hortobágy on 3rd of December, 1989.

Calandra Lark (*Melanocorypha calandra*): 1 calling specimen flew over the Magdolna-puszta meanwhile giving a call on 17th of August, 1987. (L. *Szondi*'s observation).

Carrion Crow (*Corvus corone*): on 17th of August 1987 specimens could be watched by the wintering units of the Virágoskút fishponds. L. *Szondy* saw 1 specimen at Virágoskút on 23rd of October, 1990. They appeared in the company of Rooks on both occasions.

Black-eared Wheater (*Oenanthe hispanica*): 1 male was observed by L. *Szondy* in the Magdolna-puszta on 5th of August, 1986.

Desert Wheater (*Oenanthe deserti*): 1 hen stayed at the Nagyszik area of Balmazújváros through 17–20 of November, 1991.

Zoltán Ecsedi–László Szondi

First Occurrence of Egyptian Goose (*Alopochen aegyptiacus*) in Hungary

On 12th of January, 1993 I could watch a brownish anserine-like bird by the belt-channel of the Paks Nuclear Power Ltd. Taking a flight the prominent white wing stripes were discernible. I identified the bird as *Alopochen aegyptiacus*.

Next day I watched it with a telescope at a distance of 50 m. The bird was picking the fresh grass just sprouted out in the lovely sunny weather. It behaved quietly.

Description of the bird: for appearance it imposed to be goose-like, but somewhat smaller in size, compared to Bean Goose. The beak was flesh-red-dish. The head appeared brownish-grey. The nape, the ear-patch and the eye-ring were dark-brownish. The neck-ring appeared brownish; beneath the neck was greyish ventrally and brownish at the dorsal region. The breast, underparts and flanks were greyish. Forepart of the abdominal region revealed a dark-brownish spot of 6–7 cm diameter. The feet were flesh-red-dish. Upper part of the back appeared dark-brownish, the shoulder-feathers were fawn-coloured. The white patch on the wing was usually hardly visible. The green wing speculum was usually discernible. The primary wing-feathers and the tail appeared black. The lower feathers took a light, yellowish colour.

The bird gave no call. It flew infrequently and took only short distances mainly in horizontal flight.

The coverts from trunk to aid-wing were white, except a ca. 1 cm stripe extending to 3 cm of the primaries. From above the secondary appeared black. Underneath the wing-coverts were white, the wing appeared black.

On 14th of January, 1993 I could not find the bird in the morning. But in the afternoon I could again watch it at a distance of 500 m nearby the hot-water-channel of the Nuclear Power. Later on in the company of *János Zörényi* and *Sándor Farkas* we could approach the bird to 50 m. Then, the bird began to walk away from us. It drew away just 1,5–2 m from the Trabant car coming towards us then, continued grazing peacefully.

On 15th of January, 1993 *János Zörényi* took photos of the bird. Next day *Livia Zörényi*, *Tamás Deme* and me watched the bird and took coloured slides, too. That time we could see as our bird walked to the water, but after having drank returned to the top of the bank. For the most part the bird stayed on the sunny southern grassy sites close to the water.

The observations were performed with the aid of telescopes of 10x50 and 60x60, respectively. The photos were shot with an 5,6/500 mm objective lens adapter.

Miklós Zörényi

The geological origine and an observation of mutual display of the Golden Eagle (*Aquila chrysaëtos*) and Imperial Eagle (*Aquila heliaca*)

Obviously attributable to the imperfectness of the fossil documentation at all, remains of (extinct) larger birds of prey are very insufficient and known at first from the Lower Miocene. The Golden and the Imperial Eagle are sibling species which were separated very probably during the Pleistocene. The great osteological homogeneity (except for the greater "hind" clutch in the Golden Eagle) makes often difficult the exact determination of the bones of the two species. In spite of this facts (we tried to compile) – without the demand of completeness – the hitherto known very scattered data about the origine of this two species.

The presence of the (extinct forerunner?) Golden Eagle in Europe is proved by a very imperfect fossil remain from the Lower Pleistocene (about 2 million years ago) (*Jánossy, 1977*). Beginning with the Middle Pleistocene up to the Upper Pleistocene *Aquila chrysaëtos* was widespread from Western Europe through Northern Euroasia to Northern America at several localities, about on the territory of the present range of this species. Especially complete remains are in the Middle Pleistocene of Southern France: Saint Estève Janson and the Later Pleistocene from Los Angeles: Rancho la Brea (*Brodkorb, 1965; Mourer-Chauviré, 1975; Stock, 1963 etc.*).

The hitherto known oldest remains of the Imperial Eagle are to our knowledge the Middle Pleistocene those ones (about half a million years old) from China, Peking = Choukoutien 2 and those from the geologically younger Binagady, near Eastern Caucasus (*Pey, 1923* not included in the lists of *Brodkorb etc.*). The hitherto known geologically oldest remains from Europe are from the „Last Interglacial” of Northern Switzerland (*Cotenger, determined as Aquilinarum spec. indet.*) and of the same time period of Hungary (Lambrecht Cave, Bükk Mountains). The last time span seems to be identical with the European intrusion of Asiatic elements (e. g. *Allactaga*), which resulted also in the intrusion of the Imperial Eagle into the Iberian peninsula. The remains of the last one is the single remains from the Older Holocene of Southern Spain (Nerja Cave, Prov. Malaga). Remarkable is the fact that is the well known Holocene bird fauna of Hungary the Imperial Eagle is lacking (*Jánossy, 1985*). Such remains are more common at the Lower Danube (Iron Gate, Vlassac, 4000–2500 B. C.), at the Middle East (Lidar Höyük, Valley of Euphrates, 4000–2000 B. C. and Kordlar Tepe, Iranian Azerbaidzan, Lake Urmia, 1000 B. C.) and the southern part of the Russian Plain (Oljvin, near Odessa, A. D. I–IV century) (*Kussinger, 1988; Wolff, 1976; Woinswenskij, 1967*). This scattered data are not very convenient for further conclusions, however they make improbable the hypothesis – widespread in the recent-ornithological literature – which postulates an (temperate?) European origine of the Imperial Eagle (*Vouus, 1962*). It is to be expected that the (South-) Eastern population of Europe and also that one of Hungary established during the most recent historical times.

The population also in Hungary get over a crisis during the last decades. For that very reason we established within the Hungarian Ornithological and Nature Conservation Society a special Working Group for the protection of *Aquila heliaca* which resulted already in the considerably increasing of this species during the last few years. In course of the activity of this working group the population of the Imperial Eagle in Northern Hungary in 1993 was also appraised. It was possible several times in the neighbourhood of a traditional (since the 1930ties known) eyrie to observe the movement of two individuals of Eagles. One specimen was a full colored adult Imperial Eagle, with a pale crown, with white shoulder feathers and with broader wings, the other one a semiadult Golden Eagle, with narrower wings, with white areas at the wing base ("carpal patches") and finally with white tail with a dark band. The permanent movement of birds was observable for monthes in the neighbourhood, but the eyrie remained until July inactive (laying of eggs was not observable, but the eyrie was refurbished).

At last on the July 1, 1993 by cool NE-wind ("frontal passage") between 11 and 11.30 ours was observable an airial display of the two birds and we could take some pictures of it. In this sky dances played parts soarings, undulating displays, stoops, foot, tauchings and other flight manoevers.

We didn't found in the literature on the subject any data about the forming of pairs of interbreeding between the above mentioned two species, not even in monographical compilations (*W. Fischer, 1979*). We found only reference to one case of hybridisation between the Imperial- and the Golden Eagle by artificial insemination and by artificial rearing (*Fenzloff, 1979*). In this case and also in other data of interbreeding the most important question remains without an answer: what is the situation with the further reproduction? The same is the situation in such groups where we know about very varied hybridisations as e. g. the Tetraonids.

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Dr. Dénes Jánossy – László Jánossy – Zoltán Petrovics

Observation of the Steppe Eagle (*Aquila nipalensis*) in the Tószeg–Kőröstétetlen-puszta area

On 31st May, 1993 in the morning, in the company of *György Kállay* and *Sándor Urbán*, I watched a young Tawny Eagle in the Tószeg–Kőröstétetlen-puszta area, in a freshly cut lucern field just under bailing. Watching the bird at a longer distance through field-glasses of 10x50 only its light colour and greater size compared to the Buzzard, could be discerned. From 400 m just a very light-coloured eagle could be seen via a standing telescope due to air vibration. We could approach the bird in question to ca. 150 m whence, it proved to be an eagle binoculars. Since during previous weeks I could thoroughly watch some 11 Steppe Eagle specimens of 1 year old brought from Germany for reintroducing them in Hungary, it was a good opportunity for comparison. Contrary to the warm yellowish colour characteristic of Imperial Eagle, our bird appeared whitish-sandy-yellow and much lighter than any of the 11 Imperial Eagle specimens. Having approached, the eagle took flight and circled long in the air. Thus, it could be watched above and beneath, either. Underneath the tail and all the wing feather were dark-brownish shading to black whilst, the other feathers covering the body (wing and quill feathers) appeared tawny. Despite of other colours, it looked like a Booted Eagle. From above, the light margin of the wing coverts appeared as a very definite line. The tail stripe was bright white. The coverts had uniform colouration. The bird had not appeared pied, contrary to the Imperial Eagle pied frequently. Lack of the ochre colour characteristic of Imperial Eagle was especially conspicuous on the upper cover feathers. The bird had a very light appearance. During flight the eagle approached a Buzzard and a Kestrel on several occasions. Thus, its size could well be estimated.

László Haraszthy

Occurrence of the Steppe Eagle (*Aquila nipelensis*) in the vicinity of Szeged

On 16th June 1993 *Balázs Kálmán* observed an eagle of unusual light-colour Szeged airport 4 days after a heavy storm. On the same day he and *Gyula Molnár* visited again the spot. At a distance of 250 m they could watch the eagle sitting on, then flying off the ground, using a telescope of 30x. It was identified with Eagle. Without mentioning the species, *Lajos Puskás* and *Ferenc Kasza* were called to the spot who could watch the eagle on several occasions between 16 and 21 June. They made a description and coloured slides of the specimen. It was also identified as a Eagle. On 26th June *Gyula Molnár* could again watch the eagle in the Blaskovics-puszta belonging to the areas of the Pitvaros-puszta, ca. 60 km northeastward of Szeged.

Description of the bird: from far the eagle sitting on the ground appeared very light-coloured. The head, breast, the underparts and the forepart of the wing-lining had the same colour. The wings were brown-coloured with light patch on each secondary cover shading to a stripe. There were two stripes visible on the wings. The wax membrane was yellow, the beak greyish-blue with a black edge. The feet feathered. Appearance of the flying bird: from above the tail was dark-brown, the tail-base (tail-stripe) distinct light. The tail-tip was rounded and devoid of white margin. From above there were also two pale stripes visible on the wings each. The wing-tips appeared black with long sleeved feathers. Inside of the black carpal flight feathers 3–4 light feathers were discernible. On the outspread wings the secondary flight feathers formed a black stripe with whitish margins and light bars on the inner edges. The head was prominently outstretched. The eagle appeared approximately one and a half times bigger in size compared to a Buzzard driven it in the sky.

At the same time three Long-legged Buzzard specimens stayed in the area of the airport, two light and a dark one. All the four birds fed on the carcasses of the mainly young ground squirrels killed by the storm. The Steppe Eagle did not prey on live Ground Squirrels. According to the managers of the airport the Tawny Eagle had been here since 9th of June, it approximated the planes in the sky without fear on several occasions. Moreover, 10 slides were also taken on the eagle, two on ground, eight flying, using a teleobjective of 800 mm.

According to on spot observations and the slides taken the bird was identified with *Aquila nipalensis vindiana* immature (of probably 3–4 years) specimen.

Dr. Gyula Molnár, Lajos Puskás and Dr. Ferenc Kasza

Nesting of the Long-legged Buzzard (*Buteo rufinus*) in the Hortobágy

The Long-legged Buzzard nests in the moderate and subtropic zones of the palearctic in steppe, semi-desert environment: in Central Asia, Manchuria, in the Central-Near East, in North-Africa and East-Europe. In Europe its largest nesting population occurs in the Balkan (*Cramp et. al. 1980*).

The bird is a regular spring or more exactly latesummer and autumn visitor of Hungary and it appears in the Hortobágy, the most typical place of occurrence in the country, every year (*Szomjas, 1909*). These last years

records on the Long-legged Buzzard have considerably increased. The birds have occurred here not only during the spring and late-summer days but their summering has been getting more and more frequent, as well.

At the end of the eighties, for example, some 14–18 Long-legged Buzzard specimens can be watched regularly during the summer months, too (Kovács, 1992). Quite recently wintering of the birds in the Hortobágy has also been reported (Kovács, 1992). It is also noteworthy that 80–90% of the Long-legged Buzzard specimens staying in the Hortobágy wear adult plumage suggesting the enlargement of the range of the species (Kovács, 1992).

On 18th April 1992 in the morning hours a after having Long-legged Buzzard was watched in the north part of the Hortobágy taken flight off a lucern field inserted among loessy steppes. Shortly after it was accompanied by a darker bird of the same species. Having circled together the birds settled down a poplar grove and sea by an abandoned Hooded Crow (*Corvus cornix*) nest. After a little while the hen (the bigger-sized bird) then the male settled down the ground. Later on the hen carrying dry grass in its talons walked back to the nest. It repeated this action on 4–5 occasions. Meanwhile the male stays on the ground. On the next day both Long-legged Buzzard specimens were sitting in the heer tree of the nest. Then the male flew up and circling in the air it gave a cry of a bit longer than the buzzard's call. Next it flew down and copulated with the layer sitting by the nest. Thus, their nesting intention became evident. On 30th April before checking the Long-legged Buzzard pair we watched a Saker (*Falco cherrug*) pair brooding in an artificial nest situated at ca. 250–300 m from their nesting site in aerial perspective. The artificial nest was empty and the sakers were not staying in the surroundings of the nest. Then we began to watch the supposed nesting site of the Long-legged Buzzard pair but we could not find the birds in their territory though commencement of their breeding was taken for certain. After a little while the Saker hen appeared and flew to the nest repaired by the Long-legged Buzzard pair. It was evident that the Saker pair „drove out” the Buzzards and occupied their nest. We could not find the Buzzards and combed the surroundings systematically. From ca. 1,5–2 km of the original nesting site we could watch the male just as carrying nest material to an artificial nest placed out earlier on a poplar tree. The hen buzzard was diligently sitting meanwhile the male carrying permanently the nest material and repairing the skirt of the nest. Till mid-June we watched the nest only from a far. The sitting underwent undisturbed. As we thought the nestling to be big enough we climbed up the tree to visit the nest. In the nest there was a nestling of 2–3 weeks old and 2 eggs, that proved later infertile. The young bird was ringed and the eggs taken for additional examination. Based on the food remains found in the nest the young was exclusively fed on Ground Squirrels (*Spermophilus citellus*). The young buzzard took flight on 22nd July, but it could be watched for a long time on the solitary poplar tree trying its wings.

Nesting of the Saker pair can also be mentioned as successful. The parents reared up two of their own and another nestling adopted from an injured pair kept in a pen. In the course of brooding and rearing the juveniles no territorial fight or other signs of aggressive behaviour was observed between the Saker pair and the buzzard parents.

Acknowledgement

We want to thank *János Bagyura* and *Tamás Szitta* for their active contribution (evidencing the nesting, ringing the nestling, collecting the two infertile eggs) as well as *Dr. Gábor Kovács* for the evidencing photographs on the successful flight of the young bird.

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Miklós Dudás és István Sándor

First observation of the Greater Sand Plover (*Charadrius leschenaultii*) in Hungary

The nesting region of the Greater Sand Plover extends between Mongolia and Asia Minor. It broods throughout the southern and western parts of Mongolia from the East-Gobi desert to Tannu-ola (*Ch. l. leschenaultii*); in the areas southward of Djungaria and the Balhas Lake, in the southern parts of the Kara-kum and Kizil-kum through Betpak-Dalan and Mujun-kum to the eastern shore of the Caspian Sea, in the region of Usturt and the Aral Sea (*Ch. l. crassirostris*); as well as in the Asperon peninsula, in the vicinity of Jerevan, westward of the Caspian Sea and in the Anatolia plateau from Tuz-Golu as far as the Van lake. Recently its nesting has also been recorded in North-Syria and North-Jordan (*Ch. l. columbinus*) (*Cramp and Simmons, 1982; Glutz von Blotzheim, Bauer and Bezzel, 1975*).

The three *Charadrius* subspecies differ first of all in size as well as in the length and contexture of the beak. *Ch. l. crassirostris* is the biggest in size, *Ch. l. columbinus* is the smallest. The latter with its reddish dorsal colouration also differs from the other two subspecies (*Hayman, Marchant and Prater, 1991*).

The Greater Sand Plover nests mainly in scanty steppes, in semi-deserts and deserts, generally close to the water. It builds its nest of 3 (2–4) eggs in a soil dip. The eggs are brooded alternately by the male and the layer over ca. 25 days. They brood one year (*Makatsch, 1982*).

The plovers leave the nesting areas in small flocks from late-July to early-August when the young specimens can already fly. One part of the birds can get to the southeast wintering places by late-August and early-September. The remaining birds are slowly migrating, they move to southward only when the winter weather is too raw. Some specimens occur in the surroundings of the nesting sites even till November. The plovers are mainly wintering in the tropic and subtropic coasts; in the western coastline of the

Pacific Ocean, from South-China and Vietnam throughout the Philippines, Micronesia and Melanesia as far as Australia and New-Zealand. Other wintering places occur in the northern and western coasts of Australia along the Indian Ocean in the Sunda Islands, throughout the Bengali Gulf and the coastline of the Arabian Sea to the Red Sea, as well as the eastern coast of Africa as far as Cape Colony and Namibia. The first visitors of the wintering places are the old birds. The young ones arrive only some weeks later. Many birds – first of all the young specimens reaching sexual maturity by the age of two years – remain on these coasts also in summertime; some old birds can even brood here (e.g., in the northern part of Somalia in 1913). The spring migration commences early, the birds from pairs already during the migration and build nests immediately after getting to the nesting area. The pair brooding in Asia Minor arrives already in early-March, whereas the Mongolian population gets to the nesting area only from early – to mid – May (*Glutz von Blotzheim, Bauer and Bezzel, 1975*).

In the mid parts of the continents, far from the coastlines, the Great Sand Plover seldom occurs. Specimens have wandered to far-off parts of Africa (Libia, Tunesia, Morocco, the surroundings of the Chad Lake). Wandering plovers have occurred in several places of Europe, too. The corresponding records are: 2 in Finland, 4 in Sweden, 1 in Norway, 9 in England, 3 in France, 6 in Malta, 5 in Greece, 1 in Bulgaria and 1 in Ukraine. In Central-Europe it has been recorded on 13 occasions in our century (3 in Belgium, 3 in Holland, 2 in Germany, 4 in Poland, 1 record in Austria). The observations and captures happened in the period between June and September, predominantly in July: adult and young birds occurred, either (*Glutz von Blotzheim, Bauer and Bezzel, 1975; Lewington, Alstrom and Colston, 1991*).

On 7th July 1992, in the morning a male Greater Sand Plover was watched in a so-called habitat-reconstruction area near Fertőújlak (Mexikópuszta). We noticed the bird from an abandoned military watch-tower using a standing telescope with a magnitude of 60x. The plover was in the company of Little Ringed Plovers and Lapwings in a partly dried open area extending between the Pap-meadow and the Nyék quarter. At a distance of ca. 400 m just a bird, considerably greater in size and lighter than the Little Ringed Plover, could be distinguished that had a strong dark beak, a black patch around the eye and a reddish breast. It could be approached to ca. 300 m and at this distance the details of the plumage were also discernible. Visibility was relatively good, despite of facing the Sun. The lower air layer was cool thus, no vibrating disturbed the watch. The species characteristics could be recognized even at noon despite of air vibration. On this day the bird was inspected by *Dr. Tibor Hadarics, András Kosztra, Kerecsen Kosztra, Sándor Mogyorósi, Balázs Molnár, Norbert Neuwirth and Attila Pellingner*. The Greater Sand Plover specimen stayed in the area for a week, meanwhile it was seen on the mentioned place and at the Nyéki-szállás on several occasions (in addition the persons mentioned by *Zsolt Blaskó, Gábor Horváth, András Schmidt, Egon Schmidt, János Soproni, Endre Sós and Miklós Vácz, too*). The bird was noticed last on 14th July 1992.

The observations from 140–400 m and in various light during a week enabled a detailed description of the bird. It was considerably bigger in size and taller, compared to the Little Ringed Plover, due to its longer legs and

slender neck. With the slightly square head and the relatively long and strong beak the bird had somewhat a disproportional appearance. The Little Ringed Plover specimens nearly shaded into the slimy background whilst, the visitor appeared conspicuous from a far due to its light colour. The crown and nape had a light sandy-brownish colour shaded into isabel at the dorsal side of the neck. The upper part of the front, the frenulum, the periocular region and the earlets were black. In the front a distinct white patch was visible with a black margin that was halved by a thin vertical black line (it was apparent only when facing the bird). The underparts from the chin to the tail-feathers appeared white, except a ca. 2 cm rusty cross-stripe along the breast, washed at the upper and lower ends. Beyond this stripe a small rusty patch was discernible in either side of the breast. The rusty stripe extended to and even covered dorsally the neck. The back and the wing-coverts appeared light sandy-brownish similarly the crown. The unusually long and strong beak thickening at the end was black. The iris appeared dark, but its exact colour, similarly the legs, could not be determined from such a distance.

The Greater Sand Plover specimen took flight on several occasions yet, we failed to watch its flying pattern in details due to back-light. Its call were not heard, either. Its feeding habit was characterized by short runs with abrupt stops and picking, similar to the Little Ringed Plover. Usually, the Greater Sand Plover stayed by the water margin of the peddles, contrary to the Little Ring Plovers preferring the already dried sites far from the water.

Based on the greater size, as well as the relatively long strong beak, the rusty breast stripe with washed upper and lower ends and the distinct white front patch, the plover was identified as *Ch. leschenaultii*. The very similar subspecies, *Ch. mongolus*, can easily be confused with *Ch. leschenaultii*. The former is somewhat smaller, of Ringed Plover size, with a shorter and weaker beak; the upper end of the rusty breast stripe is demarcated by a black line in certain subspecies (Mongolic group) whilst it is lacking in others (atrifrons group). However, the front of the latter is completely black or only traces of the white front patch are visible. The Greater Sand Plover could not be listed into subspecies on the basis of this telescope observation. According to sex it was attributed to a male due to the bright rusty breast stripe, the black periocular region and the earlets. The layer has a lighter colouration, the earlets and the periocular region are brownish (Hayman, Marchant and Prater, 1991).

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Dr. Hadarics Tibor

Occurrence of the Arctic Tern (*Sterna paradisea*) by the Lake Fertő

In the reconstructed habitat of the Mexikópuszta 22 Common Tern (*Sterna hirundo*) pairs breed successfully in 1993. Having taken wing some young specimens could be observed here for several weeks. In mid-July the water was drained off due to usual mowing of the area. Thus, I could watch the terns on the open water of the Madárvárta-inlet.

On 29th of July meanwhile visiting the remaining waters of the Nyékiszálás in the company of two forest engineer students from München we saw 1 adult Arctic Tern (*Sterna paradisea*) in full plumage sitting among 2 juvenile and 1 adult Common Tern specimens on the last year's tussock. At a distance of ca. 150 m its flesh-reddish beak was well discernible via a telescope of 60x. It took wing together with the Common Tern specimens on several occasions. Thus, the thin black stripe lining the wing-tip could be seen from beneath. Unfortunately we failed to observe the very short feet characteristic of the species due to the unevenness of the tussock. Yet, the well-discernible features enabled clear identification of the bird.

Attila Pellingner

Nesting of Short-eared Owl (*Asio flammeus*) in the surroundings of the Lake Fertő

The Short-eared Owl has probably been regularly nested in the wet meadows surrounding the Lake Fertő. However, *Fászl (1883)* reported Short-eared Owl specimens occurring only in the reed during winter. Neither *Zimmermann* mentioned its evidenced nesting in his comprehensive work published in 1944 though, he referred to some observations suggesting this fact. According to *Dr. Alfred Grill (Pers. comm.)* the Short-eared Owl population consist of less than five pairs in Austria and several years can ellapse without breeding success.

Kárpáti (1983) has reported about a dozen Short-eared Owls wintering in the so-called Cikes pasture near Fertőújlak, in the Hungarian part of the Fertő. This latter record prompted us to search the wintering places of the Short-eared Owls in December 1991. In the Cikes pasture a flock of 7–8 specimens were kept under observation from December to March. A wintering group of similar size was also discovered and observed regularly in the right bank of the Hanság channel, along the northern margin of the so-called Ürmény balk. In both areas pellets were collected in the day-resting sites on several occasions. The pellets were analysed by *Jánoska (1993)*. In early-March we could watch a smaller flock of 5 specimens by the clay-field near Hegykő. Unfortunately, these owls disappeared by the second half of March. During winter and spring 1–3 Short-eared Owl specimens were observed in several sites as they were hunting or alarmed at sunset. During the breeding season we failed to find the owls in these sites, except one on 17th April. It was alarmed on the bank of the Hanság-channel ca. 300 m

away from the Ürmény wintering place between the road and railway crossing-places by the frontier. We could not find the nest until 14th May when the owl appeared here and a fledged young was discovered, as well.

On 20th May we noticed a pair of Short-eared Owl attacking a Marsh Harrier in a plot between the Hideghát road and the Körgát dyke. On the same day we could find the three young owls of similar age. They were scattered over a large area ca. 40 steps from one another in smaller paths reed and *Juncus gerardii*. The pellets collected in the surroundings of the young owls consisted of the following prey animals:

<i>Microtus arvalis</i>	27 sps.
<i>Sorex araneus</i>	5 sps.
<i>Apodemus sp.</i>	1 sp.

Probably, the nesting population of the Short-eared Owl was not considerably larger in the study area in 1992. The Hanság population connected with that of the Fertő might be approximated to 10(–20) pairs (Tibor Fülöp, *Pers, comm.*). According to the Austrian colleagues (Zuna–Kratky, 1992) there were 19 pairs of Short-eared Owl nesting in the Austrian part of the Fertő in the year 1992, favourable for nesting of this species. In the experimental areas of Sopron University of Forestry and Wood Industry, Dept. Wildlife Management, two breeding pairs were found in the vicinity of Márialiget and one pair in the area between Mosonszolnok and Várbalog in 1992 (Farágó and Jánoska, *in litt*).

Based on these the number of the pairs nesting in the Fertő-Hanság region might be estimated at 35(–45) in 1992.

Dr. Tibor Hadarics, Sándor Mogyoróssi and Attila Pellingner

Nesting of the Pied Flycatcher (*Ficedula hypoleuca*) in the vicinity of Szeged

The Sándorfalva Homokerdő, part of the Pusztaszer Landscape Protection Area, extends along the Sándorfalva–Dóc roadway 15 km northward of Szeged. The mixed-forest of dry undergrowth settled on sandy soil consists of 40–50 years old stands and the age of some trees approximates to 80–90 years. At the beginning of the eighties András Albert setting out nest boxes. The Consisting of more than 80 nest boxes the authors, as members of the 37th Local Group of the Hungarian Ornithological and Nature Conservation Society since 1989. surveyed this area Besides Great Tit and Blue Tit, Redstart, Coal Tit and Wryneck have also bred in these boxes.

On 1st May 1993 controlling the boxes peculiar nest-bedding consisting of fine bast fibres was found in one of the B-2 type nest boxes. By 15 May the nest was finished; it consisted of fine fibres, grass and pine needles. The cap contained 8 light-blue eggs of Great Tit size. One week later the bird could be identified as a Pied Flycatcher (*Ficedula hypoleuca*) specimen. On 31st May nestlings of 2–3 days old were found in the nest. All the eggs were hatched

out. Later on *Dr. Gyula Molnár* also watched the adult birds feeding the juveniles and took some slides.

The nest box, made of boards, is peculiar for its natural entrance formed by a slightly awry knur with a diameter of 36 mm. The nest-hollow was hung on a horizontal branch of an oak at a height of 2,7 m. Thus it hung freely ca. 15 cm from the branch of tree. Around the nest additional eight nest boxes were set up at a distance of 40 m. These were used by three nesting pairs of Great Tit. No signs of territorial fighting were noted. The environment corresponded to an oak (English and Turk'y oak) forest mixed with Austrian and Scots pine as well as an Aspen grove nearby.

This was the first nesting of the Pied Flycatcher in the southern part of the Great Hungarian Plain.

Ferenc Galiba Sen. and Ferenc Galiba Jr.

Recent occurrence of the Citrine Wagtail (*Motacilla citreola*) in Hungary

The Citrine Wagtail, belonging to the Mongolian-Tibet faunatype, breeds in the middle and northern parts of Asia, but its nesting range also extends in two stripes into East-Europe. Within its immense area five *Motacilla* subspecies occur among which the males can accurately be distinguished by colouration and size. The nesting range of the foretype (*M. c. citreola*) extends from the Great-Hingan throughout the Baikal Mountains, the Central-Siberian-Upland and the Western-Siberian-Plain to the Tyiman Ridge, as far as the Kola peninsula since the seventies. This subspecies is relatively bigger in size, compared to the others (wings 80–90 mm tail 75–80 mm). The head and the underparts are citrine-coloured, the lower quill-feathers yellowish-white or white. The back is usually dark-grey but the shade may vary from light grey to black. The black neck ring of ca. 1 cm wide is more or less demarkated from the grey back, the flanks are grey. The wide and white wing-tips and margins of the upper and middle wing-coverts form two prominent wing-stripes.

The smaller subspecies, *M.c. werae* (wings 74–83 mm, tail 68–75 mm), nests from the western part of the Altai through the Kazah Ridge and the Southern-Ural to the Eastern-European Plain. Since the turn of this century it too has been spreading westward. This subspecies differs considerably from the former even in its colouration. The upperparts are very light yellow (even white). The black ring around the neck shading at the margins is indefinite and usually thinner than 1 cm. Occasionally only a series of black puncta are visible or the ring is lacking. The flanks are not grey or only light grey, the wing-bars are thinner. The two other subspecies brooding in Central-Asia, *M. c. quassatrix* (wings 89–93 mm) and *M. c. sindzianica* (wings 82–87 mm) living in the region of the Altai and Saian and in the Tien-San district, resp., are also light coloured. The nesting region of the southern subspecies, *M. c. calcarata*, comprises South-China, Tibet, the Hinducus and the Persian-Upland. This is somewhat smaller in size than the foretype

(wings 81–86 mm). The beak is longer, the underparts are dark-yellow, the lower tail-feathers are bright yellow. The back is always black, the prominent white wing-bars shape a large white patch when closing the wings. (Barthel, 1990; Bub, 1981; Glutz von Blotzheim, Bauer, 1985; Hollom et al., 1988).

Owing to spreading the European occurrence of the species is getting more and more frequent. Surprisingly enough, appearance of the slow-moving northern subspecies, *M. c. citreola* and not *M. c. werae* extending definitely west- south-westward, has been evidenced by captured birds of known subspecies. The European records for this century including the most recent data are as follows: Latvia 5, Finland 47, Sweden 51, Norway 18, Denmark 7, British-Isles 50, Island 2, France 2, Spain 1, Italy 3, former Yugoslavia 1. It has occurred in nearly all countries of Central-Europe. The corresponding records are: 1 in Holland 7 in Germany, 23 in Poland, 3 in former Czechoslovakia, 1 in Switzerland, 7 in Austria. In Hungary only one record, 6th May 1989 1 ad. male at Fertőrákos, is known (Hadarics, 1990). The majority of the Central-European records originate from April–May, some records from March, June and even September are also mentioned (Lewington, Alström and Colston, 1991).

On 6th May 1992 a male Citrine Wagtail was captured in the muddy bed of the Hanság Main-channel near Fertőújlak (Mexikópuszta) using a limicola-trap. It was ringed, the biometrical data were taken and the feathering characteristics described. Having taken the evidencing photographs the bird was released on the spot. The specimen was observed by Dr. Tibor Hadarics, Dr. László Kárpáti, Sándor Palkó and Attila Pellingner.

The measurements (mm) are as follows: wing length* 82; serial no. of the longest (carpal) flight-feathers* 2., 3., 4; wing formula* 2, 10, 15, 17, 20, 22; difference between the wing-tip and the first (brachial) flight-feather* 24; difference between the first (carpal) flight-feather and the longest wing-covert –8; tail length 75; beak length from the skull 17.0; foot length 24.9; dorso-claw 10.0; tightening present at (carpal) flight-feathers 2–5 (tip of the 3rd (carpal) flight-feather of the left wing was broken thus, the data indicated with asterisks were taken on the right wing). The measurements were performed according to the recommendations of „Actio Hungarica” (Szentendrey, Lövei and Kállay, 1979).

Description of feathering is given below. The front, eyebrow-stripe, chin and throat were bright yellow. The chick patches formed by the brownish earlets turn yellowish forward. The crown and nape are brownish-grey. This colour is sharply demarcated by a black ring dorsally at the neck whilst, it is gradually turning to yellowish frontwards. The coal-black ring of ca. 1 cm wide, extending dorsally and also laterally, is more or less sharply separated from the ashen-grey back. The tail-stripe was also grey, the upper tail-feathers were blackish. The pouch and the abdomen were bright citrine shading into pale-olive. The lower tail-feathers were off-white with a yellow margin of less than 1 cm on each. On the wings the small wing-coverts are brownish-grey with ashen-grey margins of 1 mm wide; the middle wing-coverts appear greyish-black with white tips of 5–7 mm. The three outer

(brachial) wing-coverts were unmoulted and olive-brownish coloured showing a white margin of 2 mm, each. The inner wing-coverts were greyish-black with white tips of 5–7 mm; this white colour extends to the external webs of the feathers in a semi-lunar form. The (brachial) wing-coverts and white tips of the middle wing-coverts formed a double white wing-bar. The (carpal) wing-coverts were brown with whitish margins of 0.5 mm wide. The subwing feathers are earth-coloured, the external webs of the middle and small feathers have whitish margins of 1 mm, the long feather is solid brown. The (carpal and brachial) flight-feathers were also earth-coloured, the quills darker, the external webs were marginated with a fine milk coffee colour. On the inner webs the area covered by the feathers are lighter brownish. The scapular feathers appear black with 3–4 mm white margins on the external webs, sharply demarkated on the longest feather. The tail-feathers were black with whitish markings on the three outer feathers; the external web of the outer feather is black along ca. 1 cm of the root. The root and the outer third of the inner web up to ca. the tip of the feather were also black, the remaining part white (here the quills are white, as well). On the second tail-feather the black takes a larger size and extends to the two third of the feather length (along this section the quill is also black). On the third outer tail-feather only the external web had a 0.5 mm white margin. The beak, legs and claws were all black, the iris chestnut-brown.

Having released the bird it gave a sharp „tsrri-ip” call.

Based on the feathering of incomplete colouration the bird was indentified as a male Citrine Wagtail of two years old belonging to the subspecies *citreola*. According to some authors age determination cannot be performed according to the contrast between the wing-coverts, because these are partly moulted by young and old wagtails during the broodmoulting. Full colouration is probably reached by the age of the third calendar year, i. e. young specimens can be distinguished from the older ones until the first summer (Barthel, 1990; Busse, 1989; Lewington, Alström and Colston, 1991). Thus, the external wing-coverts unmoulted in young birds, the brownish-grey colour of the crown and nape as well as the brownish-white earlets were considered when classifying the bird as a Citrine Wagtail of 2y.

In the future the Citrine Wagtail could be more frequent, particularly in May. On 14th May 1992 a male specimen was also observed in the Hortobágy (A. Schmidt Pers. comm.). Later on its occasional nesting may also be expected in Hungary since summering specimens and young-feeding males have already been observed on several occasions: July 1976 Essex, England; June–July 1977 Karvina, Czechoslovakia; July Jamtland, Sweden; June–July 1983 and 1984 Finland (Glutz von Blotzheim and Bauer, 1985).

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Dr. Hadarics Tibor–Pellinger Attila

The Scarlet Rosefinch (*Carpodacus erythrinus*) in Hungary

The Scarlet Rosefinch occurs throughout Asia from the tundra as far as the Himalaya, except the Central Asian deserts. Since the beginning of the century it has continuously been spreading in Europe, too. By the years 1930es a stable population had been formed in East-Poland. In 1968 it was already nesting in the GDR and also reached the coastline of the GFR (Dathe, 1986). The borderline of its European range extends from Central-Sweden to the Eastern-Beskidék. Westward and eastward of this region insolar occurrences of the Scarlet Rosefinch are known in Brandenburg, the High-Tatra, Bohemia and Moravia as well as in the Alps. During its spreading it approximated the borders of Hungary by the Mura-valley and at Losonc (Keve, 1984, Haraszty, 1988). Extension of the species can accurately be followed on the occurrence maps of the handbooks (Peterson–Mountfort–Hollom, 1977; 1986; Makatsch, 1980) till present (Fig. 1).

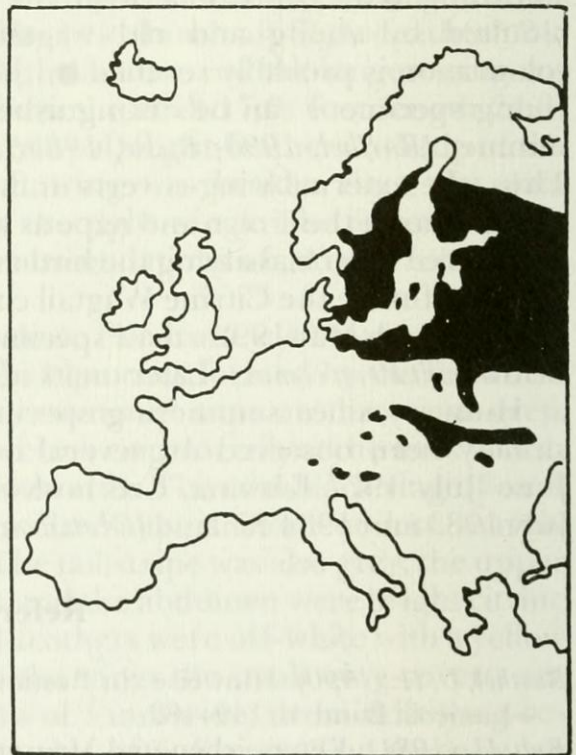


Fig. 1.

Occurrence of the Scarlet Rosefinch in Europe

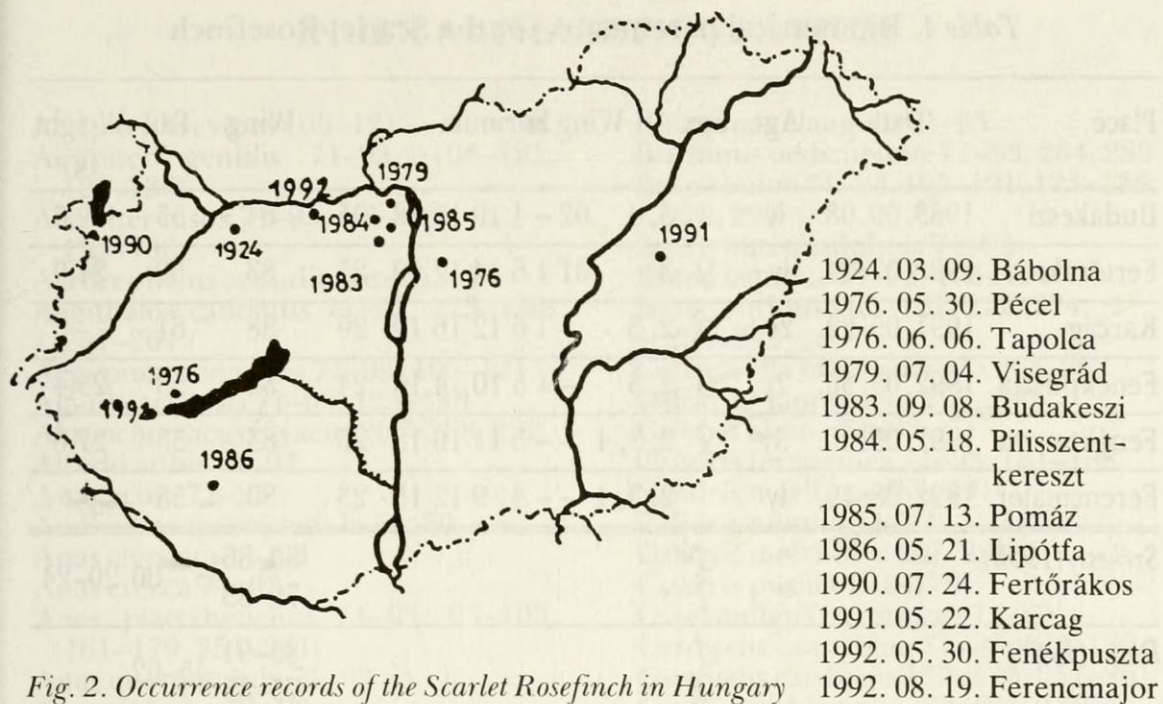


Fig. 2. Occurrence records of the Scarlet Rosefinch in Hungary

In Hungary it was observed first in 1924. After a 50 year absence it has become more and more frequent here. It is reasonable therefore to summarize the records having accumulated so far. (See: Figure 2.) The occurrence at Fenékpusztza is a very peculiar one, here the birds were captured in pairs; among them a female specimen having ringed three years earlier. The record at Karcag also differs from the others in some respects. It is the only occurrence of the species beyond the Tisza region and the specimen was found in a garden area and not in the usual biotop close to water. The bird preferred a small grassy bank among some wine-stocks and was picking dandelion seeds (*Taraxacum officinale*). Alarmed, giving a calling song it flew to a close tree. The Scarlet Rosefinch stayed on this site moving on the same routes all the afternoon. It withdrew only a little even during stretching the net though, it was not very confident. The bird could be ringed with the help of my friends, *László Tóth* and *György Zsigray*.

The biometrical characteristics and moulting of the Scarlet Rosefinch have been little studied. According to general opinion based on some data (*Svensson, 1975; Busse, 1989*), moult happens in the wintering place and the adult plumage develops only after the second year. Feathering of the Karcag specimen indicated that it moulted in the wintering place since it appeared freshly moulted and fully developed. Some authors put the body-length at 145 mm (*Makatsch, 1980; Robiller, 1986*) whilst *Dathe (1986)* estimates it at 150 mm. The biometrical parameters together with the records of the Scarlet Rosefinch specimens ringed in Hungary are summarized in Table 1. I want to thank *Sándor Mogyoróssy, György Szimuly, Sándor Palkó, László Kováts* and the Ringing Group of the Hungarian Ornithological and Nature Conservation Society for making their data accessible.

Table 1. Biometrical parameters for the Scarlet Rosefinch

Place	Date	Age	Sex	Wing	Formula	Wing	Tail	Weight (g)
Budakeszi	1983.09.08.	ly		3, 4	02 - 4 10 14 18 25	84	55	19,6
Fertőrákos	1990.07.24.	ly+	♀	3	01 1 6 14 17 19 25	83	59	21,0
Karcag	1991.05.22.	2y+	♂	2, 3	- 1 6 12 16 19 26	88	61	-
Fenekpuszta	1992.05.30.	2y	♂	2, 3	- 1 5 10 14 16 24	82	53	25,4
Fenekpuszta	1992.05.30.	3y*	♀	2, 3, 4	-- 5 11 16 18 26	83	53	27,0
Ferencmajor	1992.08.19.	ly		2, 3, 4	-- 4 9 12 15 23	80	58	-
<i>Székessy (1958)</i>			♂			80-86	57-60	20-24
			♀			79-83		
<i>Dathe (1986)</i>			♂			83-91	45-62	
			♀			75-85		
<i>Makatsch (1980)</i>			♂			83		
			♀			81		

*Actual age of the bird according to ringing

Despite a tendentious accumulation of the observations no reliable conclusions can be drawn. The data on the biometrical characteristics and moult are insufficient. It is therefore important to pay more attention to this spreading species with a special reference to its possible nesting.

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ORNIS HUNGARICA

EDITOR: CSABA MOSKÁT

Hungarian Natural History Museum,
Budapest, Baross u. 13. H-1088, Hungary
Fax: (36-1) 113-8820

ORNIS HUNGARICA is published twice yearly by the Hungarian Ornithological and Nature Conservation Society. Ornis Hungarica publishes research reports and short articles on the ecology, behaviour and biogeography of birds. The geographical emphasis of Ornis Hungarica is on Hungary, East- and Central-Europe but papers from other regions will also be considered.

ORNIS HUNGARICA is abstracted and/or indexed in Ecological Abstracts, Wildlife Review.

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