

BIRDS OF THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

ANNUAL REPORT – 2012



Himalayan Griffon (*Gyps himalayensis*) – 1st record for Arabia found at the Dubai Desert Conservation Reserve in October 2012.
(Photo © Stephen Bell)

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RECOMMENDED CITATION

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ANNUAL SUMMARY

JANUARY

Early January action mainly involved leftovers from the previous month - remaining vagrants included the **Western Black Redstart** at Jebel Dhanna until 7th, along with the **Redwing** at nearby Sila'a; the **Marbled Duck** and **Moustached Warbler** at Zakher Lake in late December but not seen since were both relocated on 13th. The first mega of the year was the UAE's second **Black Drongo** (and first since 2005) at Al Barsha Pond Park, Dubai from 18th until 1st February, although it may merely have moved locations on this date, rather than departed (see below).

Notable winter visitors included a total of three **Hen Harriers** (the first since 2004), **Merlin** at (its usual location of) Khor al-Beida, **Buff-bellied Pipits** in Abu Dhabi (two, from December) and at Wamm Farms (from 20th onwards) and the attractive combination of two **Sociable Lapwings** and up to 20 **Cream-coloured Coursers** at Dubai Pivot Fields. Twelve **Hypocolius** were on Lulu Island throughout and a **Hume's Warbler** was at Safa Park on 27th.

FEBRUARY

Dubai's public parks continued to deliver the goods with a **Black-naped Oriole** (first record, but closely following one in Oman in 2011) at Safa Park from 18th – 25th. Another **drongo**, **Ashy** this time, was found in Al Ain on 18th which remained until 10th March. Three **Red-crested Pochards** were also in Dubai for a few days until the 4th, when an adult Mediterranean Gull was found at Mafraq remaining well into March. Wintering **Hen Harriers** remained at Khor al Beida and Wamm Farms, with the bird at the latter site still present in March. A count of 70 **Hypocolius** on Lulu Island on 25th was the highest since 1998 and six **Sociable Lapwings** was a similarly impressive score at Dubai Pivot Fields on the same date. Finally, the **Great Stone-Plover**, seen once in late September 2011, finally reappeared at Musaffah on 27th and was seen on two dates until 6th March, much to the delight of a number of local birders who, despite believing over-wintering was highly likely, never thought the bird would ever surface again.

MARCH

Event of the month was surely a very heavy passage of **wheatears**, **stonechats**, **Eurasian Hoopoes** and **Pale Rockfinches** throughout March. This sensational spike of migrants included at least 17 **Caucasian Stonechats** (despite there being only nine previous records!), at least 20 **Black-eared Wheatears**, mainly in Abu Dhabi and the Western Region and culminated in the UAE's second **Kurdish Wheater** from 22nd (to 2nd April) at Jebel Dhanna. Much to the delight of our frequently absent bird recorder who had returned to the country a day too late in early February, a (the?) **Black Drongo** (re?) appeared at Dubai Pivot Fields on 11th and was seen again there on 15th April (but not in between!).

APRIL

Incredibly, and with (almost) nobody watching, Safa Park struck again with a **Radde's Accentor** from 10th-14th; another UAE first! Other exciting vagrants included **White-throated Kingfisher** at Jebel Dhanna on 1st and **Great Spotted Cuckoo** at Wamm Farms from 20th April (third record). A breeding-plumaged **Eastern Cattle Egret** was also at Wamm Farms on 20th; it very likely had over-wintered, 'hidden' in the Western Cattle Egret flock. A large influx of migrants from mid-April across the whole country included approximately 20 **White-throated Robins**, at least five **Semi-collared Flycatchers**, two **Eastern Cinereous Buntings** and singles of **Caspian Plover** and **Baillon's Crake**.

MAY

In contrast to the superb waves of migration that characterised March and April, and notwithstanding a **Bay-backed Shrike** at Wamm Farms on 4th (plus the notable combination of **Spotted Crake**, **Corncrake**, **Thrush Nightingale** and **Common Rosefinch** simultaneous at Sila'a on the same date), May was very quiet on the whole. However, a **White-rumped Sandpiper** at Al Ain Water Treatment Plant from 18th to 26th (first record for Arabia) did salvage things significantly. Boat trips from Kalba produced one **Sooty Shearwater** on several dates, **Masked Booby** and **Long-tailed Skua** on 11th and the first **Brown Noddy** of the season on 19th.

JUNE

Notable June records included **Little Swift** at Kharran Pools on 8th and **Sooty Falcon** at Wamm Farms on 15th. At the very end of the month, twelve **Flesh-footed Shearwaters** were seen from a Kalba boat trip on 28th, with seven two days later. Bar one further September record, no others were logged in 2012; a very different pattern from 2011.

JULY

As usual, interesting July records were restricted to the east coast where boat trips recorded up to 15 **Wilson's Petrels** per trip and two **Long-tailed Skuas** on 13th. A **Sooty Tern** was at Fujairah on 12th.

AUGUST

August also proved to be another very quiet month, with many resident birders away. However, an **Alpine Swift** was in Dubai on 6th-7th and, rather more notably, **Purple Heron** was confirmed breeding in the UAE for the first time, with a fledging seen in at Ain al-Fayda, Al Ain on 20th.

SEPTEMBER

Autumn birding started steadily rather than spectacularly. Records included **Black Tern** at Fujairah on 1st, **Flesh-footed Shearwater** and two **Wilson's Petrels** off Kalba on 15th and a slippery **Little Crake** at the Abu Dhabi Golf and Equestrian Club from 19th to 25th, the first since 2007. Scarce visitors included up to nine **Brown Noddies** off Kalba on 8th, a **Steppe Eagle** over Dubai on 17th and a **Caspian Plover** at Al Wathba Camel Racetrack from 25th-26th (where several **Egyptian Nightjars** were present all month). The month ended with a **Blyth's Reed Warbler** at Safa Park on 29th.

OCTOBER

By far the most interesting records came from the Dubai Desert Conservation Reserve when an unprecedented influx of **Lappet-faced Vultures** occurred from 17th; 47 were recorded on that date (the previous UAE maximum is 12!) attracted to an Oryx carcass; up to 15 were still present on 26th. In addition, up to five **Eurasian Griffon Vultures** (first record since 2006) were also present, and if that wasn't enough, Arabia's first **Himalayan Griffon** was seen on 13th and 16th with **Cinereous Vulture** (first UAE record, although two individuals, possibly originally wild, have been brought to in zoos / rehabilitation centres since 1995) seen on 16th and 31st. Elsewhere, a **Shrika** at Sila'a on 6th was only the second record remote from the resident Dubai population; presumably the same individual was seen again in early December. A **Yellow-browed Warbler** was at Mafraq Marsh on 21st. Other records included, typically for October, several **Oriental Turtle Doves** and **Common Rosefinches**. Three rather early **Sociable Lapwings** were back at Dubai Pivot Fields from 25th. Finally, a **Little Bunting** (first since 2001) was photographed at Wadi Bih on 26th.

NOVEMBER

Good as October was, it gave no indication that things were going about to go interstellar in November. Highlights from this prolific month included first records of **Greater Scaup** (at Ruwais from 9th to 12th) and **Mesopotamian Crow** (at Sinaiya Island from 26th; remained until January 2013). The crow was the culmination of an amazing run from mid-month, when just about every trip by local and visiting birders seemed to produce a rarity from the top drawer. Starting the roll was **Black Scrub-Robin** at Sila'a on 15th (into 2013) and **Black-winged Kite** at Yas Island on the same day (also overwintering). Next up was **Red Knot** at Al Jazeerah Khor from 17th, which also proved a long stayer, and so it went on: an elusive **Marbled Teal** appeared at Al Warsan on 19th, **Brown Shrike** at Wadi Bih from 20th into December, another wandering **Shikra** (Kharran Pools) on 24th and then a **Taiga Flycatcher** at Wamm Farms from 25th into early December. Amazingly (or perhaps not?), another Taiga Flycatcher was soon located at Safa Park on 30th and this remained until March 2013, by when it was a beautifully plumaged male. Two within a week contrast with three previous records ever!

All of the above would have been plenty but we also had a major seabird influx to cope with: off Kalba, a sensational and unprecedented arrival of **Jouanin's Petrels** resulted in counts of up to 300 on several dates until 16th. To put this in perspective, we have previously had only six records, comprising a maximum of two birds! However, even all those counts were aced in December! **Lesser Noddy** (16th), two **Long-tailed Skuas** (9th) and at least three **Masked Boobies** (on several dates) also featured.

DECEMBER

Not surprisingly, given what had preceded it, early December continued as November ended, with plenty of great birds being found. These included **Calandra Lark** and **Brambling** on Dalma Island on 3rd with a **Kittiwake** at Dibba on 7th, soon followed by **Brown-headed Gull** there on 11th-12th. A **Cotton Pygmy-Goose** was at Zakher Lake from 8th until 26th, where a **Wire-tailed Swallow** was found on 30th and two **Red-crested Pochard** next day. Finally, an influx of **Eurasian Siskins**, the first since 2004/05, included records from 3 sites, with a maximum of 16 at Safa Park on 6th; these remained into 2013. As a fitting end to a fantastic year, a final speculative boat trip out from Kalba yielded a whopping 609 **Jouanin's Petrels** (and almost no other birds!) on the 21st.

Annual totals

352 species, plus another 33 deemed to be of captive origin, were recorded during the year. Seven species were admitted to the national list in 2012, which now stands at 456 species at the end of 2012.

Species recorded for the first time in 2012:

Greater Scaup *Aythya marila*

White-rumped Sandpiper *Calidris fuscicollis*

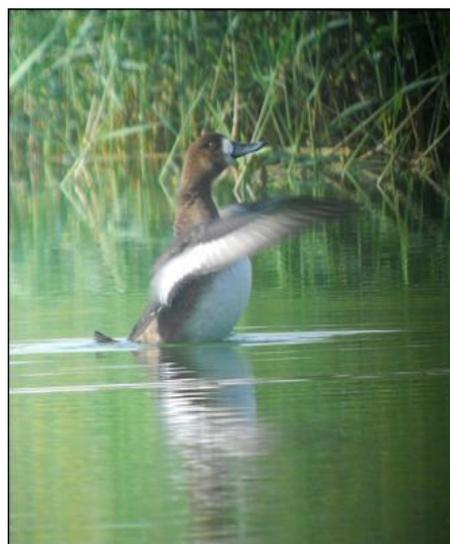
Cinereous Vulture *Aegypius monachus*

Himalayan Griffon Vulture *Gyps himalayensis*

Black-naped Oriole *Oriolus chinensis*

Mesopotamian Crow *Corvus cornix capellanus*

Radde's Accentor *Prunella ocularis*



Greater Scaup *Aythya marila*, Ruwais Water Treatment Plant © Mark Smiles



Cinereous Vulture *Aegypius monachus* with Lappet-faced Vultures *Aegypius tracheliotos*, Dubai Desert Conservation Reserve © Greg Simkins



Left: White-rumped Sandpiper *Calidris fuscicollis*, Al Ain Water Treatment Plant © Huw Roberts
 Right: Black-naped Oriole *Oriolus chinensis*, Safa Park © Ahmed Al Ali



Mesopotamian Crow *Corvus cornix capellanus*, Khor Al Beida © Mike Barth



Left: Himalayan Griffon Vulture *Gyps himalayensis* Dubai Desert Conservation Reserve Nimeesh Suseelan
 Right: Radde's Accentor *Prunella ocularis* Safa Park © Benjamin Baker

SPECIES ACCOUNTS

Key: PM: passage migrant, R: resident, SV: summer visitor, UC: uncommon, V: vagrant, WV: winter visitor.

Greater White-fronted Goose (*Anser albifrons*) WV

Reported from 7 sites at the beginning of the year, with overwintering birds including 6 at Saadiyat Island Golf Course (AD) until 29th Feb, 4 at Zakher Lake (AD) until 2nd Mar, 4 at Kharran Water Treatment Plant (RAK) until 10th Feb and a single bird at Abu Dhabi Golf & Equestrian Club (AD) which remained until the 9th Mar, the latest record from the winter of 2011/12. At the opposite end of the year, the only record received was of 10 at Meydan Horse Racing & Golf Course (DUB) on 7th Dec.

Eastern Greylag Goose (*Anser anser rubrirostris*) WV

There were 3 records during the year. A single bird was at Al Wathba Wetland Reserve (AD) from 5th to 13th Jan, with 4 on Sir Bani Yas (AD) on 15th to 16th Jan. At the end of the year, the only report was of 4 birds at Sila'a (AD) on 18th Dec.

Egyptian Goose (*Alopochen aegyptiaca*) R

Resident breeder recorded every month, with a maximum of 42 noted at Sir Bani Yas (AD) on 29th May.

Ruddy Shelduck (*Tadorna ferruginea*) WV

There were 5 records during the year. Five were found at Kharran Water Treatment Plant (RAK) on 24th Nov, with 3 remaining until 4th Dec, 4 at Sharjah Rubbish Tip (SHJ) on 5th Feb, and singles at Palm Sports Resort (AD) on 21st Jan to 4th Feb, Jumeirah Golf Estates (DUB) on 4th Feb and Zakher Lake (AD) on 1st Dec.

Common Shelduck (*Tadorna tadorna*) WV

Winter visitor recorded up to 10th Apr and from 8th Nov, mainly at Ra's al-Khor Wildlife Sanctuary (DUB) and Al Wathba Wetland Reserve (AD), from where the highest count of the year, 140, was recorded on 13th Jan.

Cotton Pygmy Goose (*Nettapus coromandelianus*) V

One was found and photographed at Zakher Lake (AD) on 8th Dec, remaining until the 26th, although often elusive. The 10th UAE record.

Gadwall (*Anas strepera*) WV

Fairly scarce winter visitor recorded up to 11th Feb and from 16th Oct. Highest count was 7 at Al Wathba Wetland Reserve (AD) on 5th Jan.

Eurasian Wigeon (*Anas penelope*) WV

Uncommon winter visitor recorded up to 31st Mar and from 16th Oct, with a maximum of 23 recorded from Zakher Lake (AD) on 15th Dec.

Mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*) WV

Recorded throughout the year, though numbers much reduced during the summer months. A count of 130 birds at Zakher Lake (AD) on 26th Nov was the highest recorded during the year.

Northern Shoveler (*Anas clypeata*) WV

Commonly and widely recorded up to 18th Apr, with returning birds noted from 5th Sep. A single record of one bird at Zakher Lake (AD) on 30th Jun was the sole summer record. The highest count recorded was 910 at Al Wathba Wetland Reserve (AD) on 13th Jan.

Northern Pintail (*Anas acuta*) WV

Uncommon throughout the winter, with records up to 27th Mar and from 14th Sep, peaking at 35 birds on 31st Dec at Al Wathba Wetland Reserve (AD).

Garganey (*Anas querquedula*) WV & PM

Recorded throughout the winter up to 23rd Mar, with returning birds seen from 30th Aug, their numbers peaking during autumn passage, during which 30 were at Al Warsan Lakes (DUB) on 13th Oct.

Eurasian Teal (*Anas crecca*) WV

Common winter visitor, with numbers peaking at 250 at Ra's al-Khor Wildlife Sanctuary (DUB) on 3rd Dec. Recorded up to 25th Apr and from 1st Sep.

Marbled Duck (*Marmaronetta angustirostris*) V

One remained at Zakher Lake (AD) from the end of 2011 until 16th Jan. In Dubai, one was present at Al Warsan Lakes (DUB) from 14th to 29th Nov, constituting the 6th UAE record.

Red-crested Pochard (*Netta rufina*) V

The 12th UAE record of a pair in a small pool in waste ground was first reported from the Green Community (Dubai Investment Park) (DUB) on 28th Jan, reaching 3 birds on 4th Feb, with the last report on 11th Feb. At the end of the year, 2 females were seen at Zakher Lake (AD) on 31st Dec, remaining into 2013.

Common Pochard (*Aythya ferina*) WV

Locally common during winter, with good numbers at Al Warsan Lakes (DUB) and Zakher Lake (AD), where there were respective high counts of 121 on 3rd Dec and 62 on 24th Jan. Latest birds departed after 28th Apr, with returning birds from 8th Sep.

Ferruginous Duck (*Aythya nyroca*) WV

Recorded virtually year-round from Zakher Lake (AD), where one individual over-summered, although it was not reported during September. This site was the only one where counts of more than 4 birds were noted, reaching 29 between 26th Nov to 26th Dec.

Tufted Duck (*Aythya fuligula*) WV

Scarce winter visitor only recorded at 2 sites up to 10th Feb and from 22nd Nov. The highest counts were 32 at Al Warsan Lakes (DUB) on 14th Jan and 20 at Zakher Lake (AD) on 11th Dec.

Chukar (*Alectoris chukar*) R

Only 8 records of wild birds during the year, all from Wadi Bih (RAK), from where 40 on 18th May was the highest number counted. There were many records from Green Mubazzarah (AD) and Jebel Hafit (AD) which relate to birds of captive origin.

Grey Francolin (*Francolinus pondicerianus*) R

Common and widespread resident recorded throughout the year. 86 on Sir Bani Yas (AD) on 14th Aug was the highest number reported.

Sand Partridge (*Ammoperdix heyi*) R

Uncommon resident of the wadis and mountains; mostly reported from Jebel Hafit (AD) and Green Mubazzarah (AD) with 16 at the latter site on 3rd Feb being the highest count.

Common Quail (*Coturnix coturnix*) WV & PM

Recorded up to 5th May and from 14th Sep, mainly in ones and twos. Regularly found at Wamm Farms (FUJ), from where counts of 4 were noted on 23rd Mar and 20th Apr, and 5 on 28th Jan.

Little Grebe (*Tachybaptus ruficollis*) R

Common on freshwater lakes throughout the year, with triple-figure counts noted at Ajman Water Treatment Plant (AJM) with 120 on 30th June and Kharran Water Treatment Plant (RAK) with 100 on 24th Nov. Breeding was recorded from most major sites.

Black-necked Grebe (*Podiceps nigricollis*) WV

Mainly reported from Al Wathba Wetland Reserve (AD), where up to 60 were counted on 4th Feb. Much smaller numbers elsewhere with 31 at Bin Butti overflow (AD) and 15 at Nad al-Sheba ponds (DUB) the only other sites to reach double figures. Departing birds were last recorded on 6th May, returning on 5th Sep.

Greater Flamingo (*Phoenicopterus roseus*) R

Seen throughout the year, often in sizeable flocks on major bodies of water; the two main locations being Al Wathba Wetland Reserve (AD), where 3889 were counted on 13th Jan, and Ra's al-Khor Wildlife Reserve (DUB) with up to 2300 on 19th Feb. Breeding was recorded at Al Wathba, with chicks first noted on 27th June, reaching 17 by 1st July.

Jouanin's Petrel (*Bulweria fallax*) V

A crazy and exceptional year for this species. After countless pelagics out of Kalba (SHJ) during the summer months drew consistent blanks, November saw a run of amazing counts, with 50 on 2nd, 31 on 6th, 145 on 9th, and 100 on 16th – all of which was totally eclipsed by a staggering 609 on 21st Dec. [BirdLife International estimates the global population to be 1500 – 7000 mature individuals, so the December count represents a massive percentage of that.]

Flesh-footed Shearwater (*Puffinus carneipes*) V

A fairly poor year for the species by the previous year's standards, with only 4 records from the season's Kalba (SHJ) pelagics. 12 were seen on 28th Jun, with 7 just 2 days later. Singles were also recorded on 14th and 16th Sep.

Sooty Shearwater (*Puffinus griseus*) PM

Recorded on 5 dates between 30th Mar and 1st Jun, mostly during pelagics offshore from Kalba (SHJ) and Fujairah (FUJ). Mainly reported as single birds, although 4 were recorded on 1st Jun and 2-3 on 27th Apr.

Persian Shearwater (*Puffinus persicus*) R

Reported throughout the year, with numbers generally highest between mid-May and the end of September. Highest count was 1850 on 10th Aug during a Kalba (SHJ) pelagic.

Wilson's Storm Petrel (*Oceanites oceanicus*) UC

Seen from 1st Jun until 28th Sep, almost exclusively from east coast pelagic trips. Double-figure counts were achieved on 3 dates – 15 were counted on both 30th Jun and 13th Jul, with 21 on 10th Aug the highest.

Red-billed Tropicbird (*Phaethon aethereus*) UC & V

There were three records this year. Singles were seen from the ferry whilst crossing between Dalma Island (AD) and the mainland on 10th Apr and 5th Dec, whilst 50 were counted at a breeding colony on Qarnein Island (AD) on 7th Dec.

Masked Booby (*Sula dactylatra*) UC

Four records relating to 3 individuals. A sub-adult was found sitting on a buoy a few kilometres offshore Kalba harbour (SHJ) on 11th May, whilst a total of 2 immatures and what appeared to be the same sub-adult were seen on pelagic trips between 6th to 16th Nov.

Eurasian Great Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax carbo sinensis/hanedae*) WV

Reported throughout the year, though only a few individuals summered. Highest count was 382 at Al Warsan Lakes (DUB) on 13th Jan.

Socotra Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax nigrogularis*) R

Recorded year-round, often in flocks thousands strong. A breeding colony on Siniya Island (UAQ) was estimated to hold 20-25,000 birds, including many juveniles, during visits on 1st and 8th Dec.

Eurasian Bittern (*Botaurus stellaris*) V

The wintering 2011 bird at Zakher Lake (AD) was last reported on 3rd Jan.

Little Bittern (*Ixobrychus minutus*) UC

Reported from 8 sites during the year, mainly between April to October with birds often remaining for 1-2 weeks. A long-staying pair was at Zakher Lake (AD) from 5th May to 21st Sep, although no evidence of breeding was confirmed.

Grey Heron (*Ardea cinerea*) R & WV

Recorded throughout the year, with a maximum count of 70 recorded at Al Warsan Lakes (DUB) on 3rd Jan. Inland, a count of 51 at Green Mubazzarah (AD) on 25th Jan was exceptional.

Purple Heron (*Ardea purpurea*) R & PM

The first breeding record for the UAE was confirmed at Ain al-Fayda (AD) on 20th Aug, though the juvenile was subsequently found dead a month later. Recorded year-round, the highest count of the year was 19 at Wamm Farms (FUJ) on 14th Sep.

Great Egret (*Ardea alba*) R & WV

Common and widespread, with Ra's al-Khor Wildlife Sanctuary (DUB) regularly holding large numbers, peaking at 80 on 26th Jan. A very small individual photographed on 13th Feb and 26th Mar may have been of the eastern race *modesta*.

Little Egret (*Egretta garzetta*) R

Scarce, but present year-round, with a maximum of 16 at Khor Kalba (SHJ) on 13th Jan.

Indian Reef Heron (*Egretta gularis schistacea*) R

Recorded all year, mainly from coastal sites. Triple-figure counts were recorded at Khor al-Beida (UAQ) on 6th Oct, from where the highest count of 180 was received, Al Salmia (AD) with 160 (including a feeding flock of 145) on 14th July and Al Jazirah Khor (RAK) with 120 on 21st Nov.

Cattle Egret (*Bubulcus ibis*) R

Common and widespread throughout the year, with large counts in excess of 100 birds reported mainly during the winter months. High counts of 150 were recorded at Dubai Pivot Fields (DUB) and Al Warsan Lakes (DUB) on 1st and 15th Dec respectively, with up to 135 at Al Wathba Wetland Reserve (AD) on 13th and 19th Jan.

Eastern Cattle Egret (*Bubulcus ibis coromandus*) V

An individual reported from Wamm Farms (FUJ) between 28th Mar and 20th Apr was presumably one of the birds seen in previous years.

Squacco Heron (*Ardeola ralloides*) R

Scarce resident, most commonly reported from Al Warsan Lakes (DUB), where 14 were counted on 27th July. Singles recorded from several sites, with Zakher Lake (AD) being the only other site to host more than one bird, with 2-3 counted on several dates.

Indian Pond Heron (*Ardeola grayii*) WV

Relatively scarce this year, presumably access restrictions to the mangroves at Khor Kalba (SHJ) affecting the number of reports. Despite this, the site managed to still host the largest count of the year, with 3 on 17th Feb. Two other sites held multiple birds, with 2 recorded at Zakher Lake (AD) on 22nd Nov and Safa Park on 8th Dec.

Pond heron sp. (*Ardeola* sp)

There were 3 reports of unidentified pond herons. Two birds recorded at Ain al-Fayda (AD) on 22nd Sep were probably the same as the 2 reported at Zakher Lake (AD) on the 28th. The third record related to a bird in Safa Park (DUB) on 31st Oct.

Striated Heron (*Butorides striata* [atricapilla-group]) R

Regularly seen throughout the year, although nowhere common. Highest count was of 6 birds at Sir Bani Yas (AD) on 27th Jun.

Black-crowned Night Heron (*Nycticorax nycticorax*) R & PM

Regularly recorded at Al Warsan Lakes (DUB), from where numbers reached 145 on 15th Dec. Other notable counts included 19 at Safa Park (DUB) on 5th Dec and 16 at Zakher Lake (AD) on 1st Jan.

Glossy Ibis (*Plegadis falcinellus*) R, WV & PM

Present year-round, mostly at Mafraq Marsh (AD), Al Wathba Wetland Reserve (AD) and Zakher Lakes (AD) where counts reached 24, 23 and 18 respectively during the winter months. It is likely the records from the former two sites involve mainly the same individual birds.

Eurasian Spoonbill (*Platalea leucorodia*) R, WV & PM

Recorded every month except April, mainly at Ra's al-Khor Wildlife Reserve (DUB) and Khor al-Beida (UAQ), from where high counts of 46 and 21 were reported on 7th & 21st Jan and 24th Mar respectively. Inland, up to 3 were regularly seen at Zakher Lake (AD) during the summer, with reports from 18th May to 28th Sep.

Osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*) R, WV & PM

Reported throughout the year, with several breeding records on offshore Abu Dhabi islands. Highest counts were 8 at Futaisi Island (AD) on 17th Apr and 7 at Ra's al-Khor Wildlife Sanctuary (DUB) on 21st Jan.

Crested Honey Buzzard (*Pernis ptilorhynchus*) WV & PM

Regularly recorded during winter and spring passage, with up to 7 reported at Mushrif National Park (DUB) on 23rd Apr. Summer birds were recorded at Wamm Farms (FUJ), Ain al-Fayda (AD) and Abu Dhabi Golf & Equestrian Club (AD).

Crested/European Honey Buzzard (*Pernis* sp.)

There were 8 reports of unidentified honey buzzards during the year.

Black-winged Kite (*Elanus caeruleus*) V

The 14th record of this species was found at Yas Links Golf Course (AD) on 15th Nov. The bird remained in the area until Mar 2013, returning for a second successive winter from November 2013 onwards.

Black-eared Kite (*Milvus migrans lineatus/formosanus*) WV & PM

There were 24 reports of possibly as few as 7 individuals during the year. In the first half of the year, up to 2 were recorded in the Dubai areas or Ra's al-Khor Wildlife Sanctuary and Dubai Pivot Fields from 14th Jan to 2nd May, with one from 1st Nov onwards. Inland, single birds were recorded at Al Ain Water Treatment Plant (AD) and Zakher Lake (AD) from 11th Nov until the year end and at Al Qua'a Fodder Fields (AD) on 16th Nov.

Egyptian Vulture (*Neophron percnopterus*) R

Common and regular around the usual sites close to Jebel Hafit (AD), where up to 45 were recorded on 20th Oct. Away from the Al Ain area, an immature was photographed on the ground at Sharjah Desert Park (SHJ) on 21st Jul and a juvenile flew over Dibba Port (FUJ) on 14th Dec.

Himalayan Griffon Vulture (*Gyps himalayensis*) V

One was found and photographed with Eurasian Griffon and Lappet-faced Vultures resting on dunes in the Dubai Desert Conservation Reserve (DUB) on 13th to 16th October, constituting the first record for Arabia. This was part of a massive influx of vultures into the DDCR during October.

Eurasian Griffon Vulture (*Gyps fulvus*) V

Four found on 13th Oct in the Dubai Desert Conservation Reserve (DUB) with a Himalayan Griffon & Lappet-faced Vultures. At least one bird remained in the area until 28th Oct, with 5 reported on 19th Oct. 12th UAE record.

Cinereous Vulture (*Aegyptius monachus*) V

One was found feeding at a carcass in the Dubai Desert Conservation Reserve (DUB) on 16th Oct, in the company of a large number of Lappet-faced Vultures. The bird was also seen in the same area on 26th and 30th Oct. This constitutes the first confirmed wild record for the UAE; previous records refer to birds taken in to care, whose provenance could not be verified.

Lappet-faced Vulture (*Torgos tracheliotus*) UC

As might be expected given the records from the above three species, an incredible year for this species also. A group of 3 seen at Al Ghafan (AD) on 3rd Apr was the only record until 5th Oct when 3 were seen at Dubai Desert Conservation Reserve (DUB), starting an amazing run of records lasting though to 18th Nov, during which huge numbers were recorded on several days. On 16th Oct, 47 were counted in the vicinity of an Oryx carcass – the highest ever count by some margin; the previous best being 10 recorded in 2011.

Short-toed Snake Eagle (*Circaetus gallicus*) WV & PM

Irregularly recorded during the year, with sightings probably involving up to 7 individuals. In the Al Ain (AD) area, there were 8 sightings between 23rd Oct and 13th Dec, probably relating to the same wintering individual.

Western Marsh Harrier (*Circus aeruginosus*) WV & PM

Widely recorded up to 27th Apr and from 2nd Aug, with large roosts observed at Al Wathba Wetland Reserve (AD) with 35, and Al Warsan Lakes (DUB) and Ain al-Fayda (AD), both with up to 25 birds in winter. An interesting record involved 2 birds seen at sea, 40km from shore during a Kalba (SHJ) pelagic on 28th Sep and presumed to have flown from Iran.

Hen Harrier (*Circus cyaneus*) WV

Recorded from 3 sites during what was a good year for this species. A male and a female were intermittently seen at Wamm Farms from 13th Jan until 23rd Mar, with another male frequenting the site from 3rd Dec to at least 15th Dec. Females were at Khor al-Beida (UAQ) on 20th Jan, 22nd Feb and 21st Dec, with another at Al Qua'a Fodder Fields (AD) on 3rd Feb.

Pallid Harrier (*Circus macrourus*) WV & PM

Regularly seen up to 30th Apr and from 8th Sep. A count of 4 at Al Qua'a Fodder Fields (AD) on 7th Jan was the highest.

Montagu's Harrier (*Circus pygargus*) PM

Less frequently recorded than Pallid Harrier, though records extended up to 11th May. Returning birds seen from 7th Sep, with a highest count of 4 birds being noted at Wamm Farms (FUJ) on 14th Sep.

Shikra (*Accipiter badius*) R

Regularly reported within the Dubai area throughout the year, except during Jun-Aug – presumably due to reduced observer effort. There were 2 records of vagrant juveniles seen outside of Dubai, with birds at Kharran Water Treatment Plant (RAK) on 24th Nov and at Sila'a (AD) on 1st Dec. These were only the 2nd and 3rd records of vagrants in the UAE.

Eurasian Sparrowhawk (*Accipiter nisus*) WV

Common winter visitor recorded up to 4th May and from 6th Oct. Up to 4 birds were seen at Al Wathba Camel Racetrack (AD) on 17th Nov and Sila'a (AD) on 1st Dec.

Steppe Buzzard (*Buteo buteo [vulpinus-group]*) V

There were only 2 birds reported during the year. One was at Wamm Farms (FUJ) on 27th Apr, whilst a grey-brown morph was seen at Al Qua'a Fodder Fields (AD) on 14th and 29th Dec, staying well into 2013.

Long-legged Buzzard (*Buteo rufinus*) R & WV

Single birds were reported during the winter months up to 14th Mar and from 12th Oct.

Greater Spotted Eagle (*Aquila clanga*) WV

Common during the winter, with birds staying as late as 20th Jun at Dubai Pivot Fields (DUB) and returning birds seen from 5th Oct onwards. Largest concentrations noted at Siniya Island (UAQ), where 15 were counted on 15th Nov and 8th Dec and at Ra's al-Khor Wildlife Sanctuary (DUB) with 13 on 2nd Mar.

Steppe Eagle (*Aquila nipalensis*) WV

There were 5 records, with singles recorded at Zakher Lake (AD) on 13th Jan, Ra's al-Khor Wildlife Sanctuary (DUB) on 23rd Mar, Al Salmia (AD) on 30th Mar, Bab al-Shams desert (DUB) on 10th May, and Dabb'iyah peninsula (AD) on 10th Oct.

Eastern Imperial Eagle (*Aquila heliaca*) WV

Up to 2 were at Ra's al-Khor Wildlife Sanctuary (DUB) from 21st Jan to 13th Feb, whilst single birds were seen at Bab al-Shams desert (DUB) on 29th Feb, Zakher Lake (AD) on 22nd Nov and Wadi Tarabat (AD) on 16th Dec.

Golden Eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*) V

A juvenile was photographed at a photo-trap at Dubai Desert Conservation Reserve (DUB) on 16th Jan, whilst an adult was briefly at Zakher Lake (AD) on 15th Nov.

Bonelli's Eagle (*Aquila fasciata*) R & WV

Regularly seen throughout the year, with up to 3 birds recorded at Bab al-Shams desert (DUB) on 2nd Jun and at Ra's al-Khor Wildlife Sanctuary (DUB) on 3rd Dec.

Booted Eagle (*Aquila pennata*) WV

There were only 4 records this year, with birds seen at Khor Kalba (SHJ) on 22nd Feb, Sila'a (AD) on 28th Sep, Al Awir (DUB) on 17th Nov and Al Wathba Camel Racetrack (AD) on 22nd Nov.

***Aquila sp.* (*Aquila sp.*)**

An unidentified large eagle was reported from Green Mubazzarah (AD) on 13th Dec.

Lesser Kestrel (*Falco naumanni*) PM

Recorded on passage from 2nd Mar to 29th Jun and from 5th Oct to the year end. The majority of sightings were from Wamm Farms (AD), from where 25 were counted on 20th Apr, the same as recorded at Kharran Fodder Field (RAK) on 15th Apr.

Common Kestrel (*Falco tinnunculus*) R, WV & PM

Recorded throughout the year, with the majority of records during winter and passage. The highest counts were from Wamm Farms (FUJ) with 10 on 14th Nov and Al Qua'a Fodder Field (AD) where 9 were seen on 16th Nov and 14th Dec.

Amur Falcon (*Falco amurensis*) V

An adult female was seen at Al Qua'a Fodder Fields (AD) on 16th Nov. The 13th UAE record.

Sooty Falcon (*Falco concolor*) UC

An adult was seen at Wamm Farms (FUJ) on 15th Jun, whilst a juvenile flew through the same site on 20th Oct.

Merlin (*Falco columbarius*) UC

Two records. An adult male was at Khor al-Beida (UAQ) on 7th and 20th Jan and a female was on Siniyah Island (UAQ) on 1st Dec.

Eurasian Hobby (*Falco subbuteo*) PM

There were 5 spring records between 30th Mar and 5th May, but the majority of records came from the autumn and winter months, with 25 reports from 15th Sep to 3rd Dec.

Peregrine Falcon (*Falco peregrinus*) WV

Uncommon during the winter months, with 4 birds reported from 13th Jan to 30th Mar and possibly 3 from 23rd Nov to 15th Dec.

Barbary Falcon (*Falco pelegrinoides*) R

Recorded erratically throughout the year, mainly in the Al Ain (AD) areas of Green Mubazzarah and Jebel Hafit, from where 3 were seen on 6th Dec. Away from this area, 2 were seen along the Fujairah mountain pipeline road (RAK) on 11th Jul, and singles at Qarnein Island (AD) on 7th Dec and Wadi Wurrayah (FUJ) 10th & 12th Dec.

Unidentified Falcon (*Falco sp.*)

A distant falcon seen at Al Wathba Wetland Reserve (AD) on 28th Sep was identified as either an Amur *F. amurensis* or Red-footed Falcon *F. vespertinus*.

Corncrake (*Crex crex*) PM

A good year, with 4 birds found. Most remained for a few days, allowing a good chance to catch up with this scarce, usually elusive species. Particularly showy individuals were at Sila'a park (AD) from 25th Apr to 4th May, Safa Park (DUB) from 27th Apr to 3rd May, and Al Mamzar Park (SHJ) from 30th Apr to 2nd May. A fourth bird was at Ain al-Fayda (AD) on 3rd May.

Water Rail (*Rallus aquaticus*) WV

Only recorded at 2 sites. Two were at Ruwais Water Treatment Plant (AD) on 30th Jan, with one there later in the year from 15th Nov to at least 3rd Dec, whilst birds were heard at Al Warsan Lakes (DUB) on 16th May and on several occasions between 14th to 22nd Dec.

Little Crake (*Porzana porzana*) V

One frequented a small reed bed in the lake at Abu Dhabi Golf & Equestrian Club (AD) from 19th to 25th Sep.

Baillon's Crake (*Porzana pusilla*) V

Only 3 records this year. One in central Dubai close to Sheik Zayed Road (DUB) on 22nd Apr was the only spring record, whilst in autumn, single birds were at a private estate near Green Mubazzarah (AD) from 30th Aug to 5th Sep and at Ruwais Water Treatment plant (AD) on 15th & 16th Nov.

Spotted Crake (*Porzana porzana*) WV & PM

There were 6 records this year. Single birds were at Jebel Dhanna marsh (AD) from 24th Mar to 6th Apr, Safa Park (DUB) from 27th Apr to 30th Apr, Dubai Pivot Fields (DUB) from 28th Apr to 5th May and Sila'a (AD) on 4th May. In autumn, birds were seen at Zakher Lake (AD) on 14th Sep and Mirfa Water Treatment Plant (AD) on 10th Nov.

Unidentified crake sp. (*Porzana sp.*)

A bird flushed from cover at Wamm Farms (FUJ) on 20th Apr could not be assigned to species.

Purple Swamphen (*Porphyrio porphyrio*) RB

Only reported from Al Warsan Lakes (DUB) on 13 dates throughout the year, with 4 recorded on 21st Jan.

Common Moorhen (*Gallinula chloropus*) R & WV

Common and widespread all year, with up to 200 reported at Ruwais Water Treatment Plant (AD) on 28th Oct, easily eclipsing other sites, where the highest counts reached 50 at Al Wathba Wetland Reserve (AD) and Ajman Water Treatment Plant (AJM).

Eurasian Coot (*Fulica atra*) R & WV

Recorded every month from major wetland sites with the main concentration at Zakher Lake (AD), where up to 67 were counted on 25th Feb and 2nd Mar.

Red-knobbed / Eurasian Coot hybrid (*Fulica sp.*)

There were 2 hybrids at Al Warsan Lakes (DUB) on 22nd Dec, one of which very closely resembled Red-knobbed Coot.

Eurasian Stone-curlew (*Burhinus oediconemus*) WV & PM

Recorded sporadically throughout the year from a total of 8 sites. An impressive 14 were counted at a private plantation at Jebel Dhanna (AD) on 6th Jan, with other decent counts being 4 on Sir Bani Yas (AD) on 11th Jul and 3 on Lulu Island (AD) on 23rd Nov.

Great Stone-curlew (*Esacus recurvirostris*) V

After an absence of 6 months, the bird first reported in September 2011 was relocated at Khor Qirqishan (AD) on 27th Feb and last reported on 6th Mar. This comprises the only UAE record.

Northern Lapwing (*Vanellus vanellus*) WV

A flock of up to 18 frequented Dubai Pivot Fields (DUB) from 2nd Jan to 11th Feb.

Red-wattled Lapwing (*Vanellus indicus*) R

Seen almost anywhere and everywhere. 170 recorded at Wamm Farms (AD) on 3rd Feb and 10th Dec, and 160 at Hamraniyah nursery (RAK) on 20th Nov were the highest counts recorded during the year. Breeding was confirmed from many sites.

Sociable Lapwing (*Vanellus gregarius*) WV

Recorded from 4 sites, with birds seen up to 23rd Mar and from 25th Oct. Dubai Pivot Fields (DUB) was a reliable site to see this species, hosting up to 6 between 2nd Jan and 29th Feb and 4 from 25th Oct to the year end. Elsewhere, 1 was at Wamm Farms (FUJ) in March with 2 there in November, 2 at Al Qua'a Fodder Field (AD) in November and 1 at Lahbab Fields (DUB) on 12th Dec.

White-tailed Lapwing (*Vanellus leucurus*) R

Mostly recorded at Dubai Pivot Fields (DUB), where up to 45 were counted on 19th Oct and 14th Nov. Breeding was confirmed at this site and also at Al Wathba Wetland Reserve (AD) and Al Warsan Lakes (DUB), with young chicks observed during June and July.

Grey Plover (*Pluvialis squatarola*) WV & PM

Seen throughout the year, with a maximum count of 300 recorded at Khor al-Beida (UAQ) on 31st Aug.

Eurasian Golden Plover (*Pluvialis apricaria*) WV

Up to 7 birds reported from 5 sites during the year. Dubai Pivot Fields (DUB) with single birds on 21st Jan and 3rd Dec and Al Wathba Wetland Reserve (AD) with singles on 13th Jan and 7th Mar were the only sites to have multiple records.

Pacific Golden Plover (*Pluvialis fulva*) WV & PM

Recorded up to 17th Apr and from 31st Aug, with large numbers noted at Ra's al-Khor Wildlife Sanctuary (DUB) with 75 on 21st Jan and at Yas Island (AD) where 45 were present on 10th Dec.

Lesser Sand Plover (*Charadrius mongolus [atrifrons-group]*) WV & PM

Present year-round mainly at west coast sites, with large flocks particularly during winter. An estimate of 3500 was made at Siniya Island (UAQ) on 1st Dec, with other large counts made at nearby Khor al-Beida (UAQ) with 1500 on 17th Nov and 1000 on 31st Aug. One at Al Ain Water Treatment Plant (AD) on 24th and 26th May was an unusual inland record.

Greater Sand Plover (*Charadrius leschenaultii*) WV & PM

Seen in far lesser numbers than *C. mongolus*, with numbers decreasing significantly from the end of January to late August. The maximum count was 500 at Khor al-Beida (UAQ) on 31st Aug.

Caspian Plover (*Charadrius asiaticus*) V

There were 6 birds reported this year. In spring, a fully-plumaged adult was at Dubai Pivot Fields (DUB) from 14th to 18th Apr. There were 5 seen during the autumn and early winter, with one at Al Wathba Camel Racetrack (AD) from 25th Sep to 10th Oct, 2 at Wamm Farms (FUJ) on 5th Oct, with 1 remaining on 13th Oct, and singles at Dubai Pivot Fields from 13th Oct to 1st Nov and Al Hamraniyah nursery (RAK) on 20th Nov.

Kentish Plover (*Charadrius alexandrinus*) R & WV

Very common resident, often in very large flocks, the largest of which reached 500 at Ra's al-Khor Wildlife Sanctuary (DUB) on 20th Oct, Khor al-Beida (UAQ) on 23rd Nov, and Yas Island (AD) on 10th Dec.

Common Ringed Plover (*Charadrius hiaticula*) WV & PM

Recorded throughout the year, with a maximum count of 120 at Ra's al-Khor Wildlife Sanctuary (DUB) on 21st Jan. Breeding was reported at Dubai Pivot Fields (DUB) and Wadi al Ain (AD).

Little Ringed Plover (*Charadrius dubius*) SV & PM

Reported year-round, with reports of confirmed breeding at Al Warsan Lakes (DUB), Mafraq Marsh (AD) and Shawka Dam (RAK). Highest count was 35 at Al Hamraniyah Nursery (RAK) on 20th Nov.

Crab Plover (*Dromas ardeola*) R & WV

Seen every month, although numbers in single figures only between March and August. Highest count was 430 at Khor al-Beida (UAQ) on 11th Oct, from where many triple-figure counts were noted.

Eurasian Oystercatcher (*Haematopus ostralegus*) WV & PM

Reported throughout the year, with small numbers remaining through the summer months. Most records of large flocks relate to Khor al-Beida (UAQ), where up to 200 were noted on 5th Oct.

Black-winged Stilt (*Himantopus himantopus*) R

Common and widespread all year, with high counts being reported from Mafraq Marsh (AD) with 410 on 21st Jul, 400 at Wasit Nature Reserve (SHJ) and up to 350 at Al Wathba Wetland Reserve (AD) on 1st Jan.

Pied Avocet (*Recurvirostra avosetta*) WV & R

Birds reported throughout the year, with almost all records coming from 3 sites. Up to 85 were counted at Al Wathba Wetland Reserve (AD) on 13th Jan, with smaller numbers present at Ra's al-Khor Wildlife Sanctuary (DUB) and Mafraq Marsh (AD). Breeding was confirmed at the latter site when several juveniles were observed on 21st Jul

Terek Sandpiper (*Xenus cinereus*) WV & PM

Recorded year-round, except for June, perhaps due to reduced observer effort. Records show a heavy bias towards west coast sites in Abu Dhabi, Ra's al-Khaimah and Umm al-Qaiwain, with 8 observed flying over the sea during a Kalba (SHJ) pelagic on 27th Apr and one at puddles in the cow sheds at Wamm Farms (FUJ) on 22nd Sep being the only records from the eastern side of the country. Highest count was 173 at Khor al-Beida (UAQ) on 20th Jan.

Common Sandpiper (*Actitis hypoleucos*) WV & PM

Widespread and regularly recorded, with 25 at Emirates Palace (AD) on 12th Sep the highest count reported.

Green Sandpiper (*Tringa ochropus*) WV & PM

Seen up to 14th Apr and from 3rd Jul onwards. Highest count was 25 at Kharran Water Treatment Plant (RAK) on 31st Aug.

Spotted Redshank (*Tringa erythropus*) WV & PM

Scarce, with a total of 43 records from 8 sites up until 26th Apr and from 6th Jul onwards. Al Wathba Wetland Reserve was the most reliable site for the species, with numbers there reaching 4 on 4th Apr.

Common Greenshank (*Tringa nebularia*) WV & PM

Commonly recorded every month except June, with Khor al-Beida (UAQ) regularly holding good numbers in the high-tide roost, reaching 200 on 17th Nov.

Marsh Sandpiper (*Tringa stagnatilis*) WV & PM

Reported up to 14th May and from 13th Jul, with the vast majority of records coming from Abu Dhabi emirate, from where double-figure numbers were regularly logged at Al Wathba Wetland Reserve (AD) during winter, reaching 53 on 13th Jan.

Wood Sandpiper (*Tringa glareola*) WV & PM

Widespread and commonly recorded from many freshwater localities during the year, although there were no reports between 26th May and 20th Jul, possibly due to reduced observer effort. A count of 31 at Al Ain Water Treatment Plant (AD) on 5th Oct was the highest reported.

Common Redshank (*Tringa totanus*) WV & PM

Seen throughout the year, with large numbers recorded at Khor al-Beida (UAQ), from where the highest counts included 990 on 20th Jan and 600 on 23rd Nov.

Whimbrel (*Numenius phaeopus*) WV & PM

Regularly reported in small numbers throughout the year at sites on, or close to, the coast, with larger flocks gathering in the high-tide roost.

Eurasian Curlew (*Numenius arquata*) WV & PM

Seen year-round in small numbers close to the coast. Larger numbers recorded at the roost at Khor al-Beida (UAQ) where 111 were counted on 20th Jan.

Black-tailed Godwit (*Limosa limosa*) WV & PM

Reported for most of the year, except June, with a high count of 250 on 8th Nov at Ra's al-Khor Wildlife Sanctuary (DUB), the most reliable site for this species. Away from this site, 20 at Mafraq Marsh (AD) on 8th Dec was the only other count in double figures.

Bar-tailed Godwit (*Limosa lapponica*) WV & PM

Present year-round, though numbers considerably lower during May to mid-July. The majority of reports of large flocks came from Umm al-Qaiwain emirate, with maximum counts of 505 at Khor al-Beida (UAQ) on 23rd Mar and 400 at Siniya Island (UAQ) on 1st Dec. Further south and westwards, 345 were at Abu al-Abyadh Island (AD) on 27th Nov.

Ruddy Turnstone (*Arenaria interpres*) WV & PM

Regularly recorded throughout the year, with numbers reaching a peak of 300 at Khor al-Beida (UAQ) on 21st Dec. Away from the typical coastal habitats, there were 3 reports of one at Al Ain Water Treatment Plant (AD) between 10th Aug and 5th Oct.

Great Knot (*Calidris tenuirostris*) WV & PM

Only 13 records this year, all from Umm al-Qaiwain sites up to 23rd Mar and from 8th Nov. Khor al-Beida (UAQ) continued to be the only reliable and accessible site, with numbers reaching 62 on 23rd Nov. This number was eclipsed, however, by a count of 70 on nearby Siniya Island (UAQ) on 1st Dec. Two birds at Dreamland (UAQ) on 17th Nov was the only other record away from Khor al-Beida.

Red Knot (*Calidris canutus*) V

One was regularly seen at Al Jazirah Khor (Khor Muzahmi) (RAK) from 17th Nov to 16th Dec. The 10th UAE record.

Sanderling (*Calidris alba*) WV & PM

The majority of records were within the months of Jan-May and from August onwards, with 2-3 lingering on Sir Bani Yas (AD) until the end of June. The highest count of the year was at Umm al-Qaiwain breakwater (UAQ), where 100 were counted on 14th Dec.

Little Stint (*Calidris minuta*) WV & PM

Extremely common and numerous during winter and on passage, with numbers reaching 1650 at Al Wathba Wetland Reserve (AD) on 13th Jan and 1000 at Ra's al-Khor Wildlife Reserve (DUB) on 20th Oct. Inland, 1000 were recorded at Al Ain Water Treatment Plant (AD) on 10th Feb.

Temminck's Stint (*Calidris temminckii*) WV & PM

Seen up to 18th May and from 29th Jul onwards, with a highest count of 75 at Mafraq Marsh (AD) on 9th Oct.

White-rumped Sandpiper (*Calidris fuscicollis*) V

The first record for Arabia was found at Al Ain Water Treatment Plant (AD) on 18th May and remained until 26th May.

Dunlin (*Calidris alpina*) WV & PM

Common and numerous at coastal sites during winter, with birds recorded through to the end of April, with a single bird lingering at Mafraq Rubbish Tip (AD) until 29th May. Returning birds were recorded from 6th Jul onwards. Maximum count was 5000 at Khor al-Beida (UAQ) on 23rd Nov and 21st Dec.

Curlew Sandpiper (*Calidris ferruginea*) WV & PM

Seen throughout the year, with a small number remaining through the months of May and June. Large flocks recorded included 300 at Khor al-Beida (UAQ) on 28th Jan, 200 at Al Wathba Wetland Reserve (AD) on 25th Apr, with the same number at Al Jazirah Khor (Khor Muzahmi) (RAK) on 24th Nov.

Broad-billed Sandpiper (*Limicola falcinellus*) WV & PM

Only recorded on 13 dates during the year, mostly at west coast sites. A late spring bird was found on a small pool near Zakher Lake (AD) on 1st May, an exceptional record for not only being so late in the year, but so far inland. Returning birds were recorded from 3rd Aug, with a count of 9 at Ra's al-Khor Wildlife Sanctuary (DUB) on 20th Oct being the highest count. Two at Abu Dhabi Officer's Club (AD) on 18th Sep was the only other record of multiple birds, one of which remained until the 21st. One in the cow sheds at Wamm Farms (FUJ) on 8th Sep was the only east coast record.

Ruff (*Philomachus pugnax*) WV & PM

Fairly common during the year, although only reported in single figures from the end of April to late July. Highest count: 250 at Dubai Pivot Fields (DUB) on 24th Sep.

Jack Snipe (*Lymnocyptes minimus*) WV

There were 13 records of this species during the year. Single birds were seen up to 31st Mar and from 5th Oct onwards, with the Al Ain area being the most prolific. Wadi Al Ain (AD) held at least one bird from 4th to 21st Dec, with 2 there on 20th Dec, whilst Al Ain Airport Pools (AD) on 5th Oct, Ain al-Fayda (AD) on 25th Oct and a private estate near Green Mubazzarah (AD) between 28th and 30th Dec were the other sites in the area to hold single birds. In the east, one was at Wamm Farms (FUJ) on 31st Jan.

Common Snipe (*Gallinago gallinago*) WV & PM

Recorded up to 18th May and from 20th Aug onwards, with numbers reaching 108 on 2nd Dec at Dubai Pivot Fields (DUB), from where the majority of large flocks were reported.

Pin-tailed Snipe (*Gallinago stenura*) WV

There were 22 records from only 6 sites, with Wamm Farms (FUJ) being the most reliable, with birds seen on 10 dates and numbers reaching 12 on 10th Feb. A bird at Emirates Palace (AD) was notable for being exceptionally late, being present from 11th to 15th May. Returning birds were recorded from 16th Oct.

Red-necked Phalarope (*Phalaropus lobatus*) PM & WV

Reported up to 26th May and from 10th Aug, often in large flocks on the sea off the east coast, from where counts included 1600 on 13th Jan, 1000 on 2nd Mar and 700 on 21st Dec.

Cream-coloured Courser (*Cursorius cursor*) R

Seen year-round, with an impressive 49 on 24th Nov at Dubai Polo & Equestrian Club (DUB) the highest count of the year by far. Records of successful breeding were received from the Ajban desert (AD), where a nest containing 2 eggs was found on 27th Apr, Saih as Salam desert reserve (DUB) on 3rd May, when a 2 day old chick was photographed, and Bab al-Shams desert (DUB) on 12th May.

Collared Pratincole (*Glareola pratincola*) PM

First reported on 29th Feb, with numbers steadily increasing during passage, mainly during the period of 14th to 22nd April, when numbers increased from single figures to a peak of 26 at Dubai Pivot Fields (DUB) on 16th Apr. Single birds continued to be reported during the rest of the year from the end of May to 23rd Nov

Black-winged Pratincole (*Glareola nordmanni*) V

Two were recorded at Wamm Farms (FUJ) on 5th May.

Black-legged Kittiwake (*Rissa tridactyla*) V

An adult photographed in the harbour at Dibba Port (FUJ) on 7th and 11th Dec was the 5th record for the UAE.

Slender-billed Gull (*Chroicocephalus genei*) WV & PM

Present year-round, with a significant increase in numbers during the mid-winter months of Dec – Feb. Up to 10,000 were estimated to be at Fujairah Port Beach (FUJ) on 3rd Feb; part of a huge gathering of gulls close inshore on that day.

Common Black-headed Gull (*Chroicocephalus ridibundus*) WV & PM

Very common during winter, with flocks often in the thousands, peaking at an estimated 20,000 on 3rd Feb at Fujairah Port Beach (FUJ). Recorded throughout the year, with small numbers over-summering.

Brown-headed Gull (*Chroicocephalus brunnicephalus*) V

One was seen at Dibba Port (FUJ) on 11th and 12th Dec. The 7th record for the UAE.

Mediterranean Gull (*Ichthyaeetus melanocephalus*) V

An adult frequented the area around Mafraq Rubbish Tip (AD) between 4th Feb and 19th Mar. 9th record.

Sooty Gull (*Ichthyaeetus hemprichii*) PM

Reported throughout the year, mainly from the east coast, though generally scarce from the end of August. There were two counts in excess of 1000 birds: 3000 at Fujairah Port Beach on 3rd Feb with 1400 there on 11th May. Breeding was proven on Sir Abu Nair Island (AD), with a colony of 350 counted on 17th May, with at least 3 chicks already hatched by that date.

Great Black-headed Gull (*Ichthyaeetus ichthyaeetus*) WV

Fairly common in low numbers at coastal sites during winter up to 14th Apr and from 22nd Nov. An incredible 230 were photographed at Jebel Dhanna (AD) on 22nd Feb, easily eclipsing the next highest count of 20 birds.

Common Gull (*Larus canus*) WV

The only record of the year was of a first-winter photographed at Khor Fakkan (SHJ) on 30th Dec.

Steppe/Caspian/Heuglin's Gull (*Larus sp.*)

Large white-headed gulls, of any taxon, are generally scarce in the UAE between the end of March and mid-August, with numbers down to single figures through the summer. Identification difficulties obscure the true status of all three taxa involved although it is generally believed that a large majority of records refer to Steppe Gull *L.f.barabensis*. Hence, many records relating to unspecified (sub)species were received, the highest single count reported being 500 at Al Warsan Lakes (DUB) on 27th Jan, Fujairah Port Beach (FUJ) on 3rd Feb and Khor Qirqishan AD) on 29th Feb.

Caspian Gull (*Larus cachinnans*) WV

There were only 19 records assigned to this species, with sightings up to 24th Mar and from 9th Nov. Highest count was of 14 birds at Siniya Island (UAQ) on 1st Dec.

Heuglin's Gull (*Larus fuscus heuglini*) WV

Mostly recorded on the west coast up to 1st Apr and from 27th Sep. A count of 59 at Sir Bani Yas (AD) on 16th Jan was the highest of the year.

Steppe Gull (*Larus fuscus barabensis*) WV

Seen up to 1st Apr and from 1st Sep onwards, with an estimated 2000 at Al Warsan Lakes (DUB) the highest count.

Brown Noddy (*Anous stolidus*) SV

A fairly poor year for this species, with only 10 reports between 19th May and 16th Nov during Kalba (SHJ) pelagics. The only major counts were 17 on 10th Aug, 7 on 1st Sep and 9 on 9th Sep.

Lesser Noddy (*Anous tenuirostris*) V

One was seen during a pelagic off Khor Kalba (SHJ) on 16th Nov. The 5th UAE record.

Sooty Tern (*Onychoprion fuscatus*) V

There were 2 records. One first-summer was seen from Fujairah Port Beach (FUJ) on 12th Jul, whilst two 1st summers and a recently fledged juvenile were recorded during a Khor Kalba (SHJ) pelagic on 10th Aug.

Bridled Tern (*Onychoprion anaethetus*) SV & PM

Recorded throughout the year, though in small numbers outside of Mar-Sep. Highest count was 3500 during a Kalba (SHJ) pelagic on 10th Aug. Breeding was confirmed from several offshore islands in the Arabian Gulf during May, with 200 pairs nesting on Zirku Island (AD), 500 pairs on Hail shoal (AD) and 250 pairs on Sir Abu Nair Island (AD).

Little Tern (*Sternula albifrons*) PM

Seen from 23rd Mar to 15th Sep, mainly along the east coast, with numbers reaching 30 at Fujairah Port Beach (FUJ) on 5th May. There were 2 records of inland birds, both from Zakher Lake (AD) where 3 birds were seen on 24th Mar and 2 on 18th May.

Saunders's Tern (*Sternula saundersi*) R

Present year-round, with only one record away from the west coast, with 4 reported from Al Ghurfa Breakwater (FUJ) on 15th Jun. Nesting was noted on Hail shoal (AD) on 6th & 7th May, where up to 15 individuals were counted. A record of 87 at Sir Bani Yas (AD) was the highest count.

Little/Saunders's Tern (*Sternula albifrons/saundersi*)

There were 63 records of unspecified *Sternula* terns throughout the year with up to 125 being counted at Musaffah (AD) on 17th Mar and Fujairah Port Beach (FUJ) on 7th Sep. It should be noted that accurate identification of *Sternula* terns is often difficult, even with full breeding-plumaged adults, with many birds showing inconclusive features, eg ambiguous forehead pattern or inconsistent combinations of black outer primaries and rump colour. Identification of juveniles and winter birds is generally impossible.

Gull-billed Tern (*Gelochelidon nilotica*) WV & PM

Regularly recorded along the west coast, with numbers reaching 60 at Khor al-Beida (UAQ) on 28th Jan. There were only 4 records from the east coast with single birds seen at Fujairah Port Beach (FUJ) on 13th Jan and 7th Sep, and Khor Kalba (SHJ) on 13th Jan and 22nd Feb.

Caspian Tern (*Hydroprogne caspia*) WV & PM

Widely reported throughout the year from west coast site; no reports from the east coast during the year. Highest count: 95 at Musaffah (AD) on 17th Nov.

Black Tern (*Chlidonias niger*) V

A winter adult was found roosting on Fujairah Port Beach on 1st Sep. 14th UAE record.

White-winged Tern (*Chlidonias leucopterus*) PM

Recorded in small numbers throughout the year, with number of birds and records increasing during Jul – Oct, reaching a high count of 9 birds on 27th Oct at Al Wathba Wetland Reserve (AD).

Whiskered Tern (*Chlidonias hybrida*) WV & PM

Present year-round in small numbers, reaching a maximum count of 14 at Mafraq Marsh (AD) on 8th Dec.

Common Tern (*Sterna hirundo*) WV & PM

Seen throughout the year, often in their hundreds and mainly on the east coast, with a peak count of 1500 at Fujairah Port Beach (FUJ) on 27th Apr.

White-cheeked Tern (*Sterna repressa*) SV & PM

Recorded year-round in varying numbers and reaching a peak during the breeding season, when 610 were recorded nesting on Hail shoal (AD) on 6th May with 600 on Arc Island and only 10 on the low-lying Gull Island. Breeding was also noted at Zirku Island (AD) on 3rd May, where there were 200 pairs and 60 pairs near the Dalma Island ferry terminal at Jebel Dhanna (AD) on 15th Jun.

Swift Tern (*Thalasseus bergii*) WV & PM

Seen all year from both coastlines, with numbers increasing during the winter months, when 95 were recorded at Al Jazirah Khor (Khor Muzahmi) (RAK) on 8th Dec.

Sandwich Tern (*Thalasseus sandvicensis*) PM

Present in low numbers throughout the year, with an increase in numbers during late winter /early spring. There were two records of flocks greater than 50 birds, both from Fujairah Port Beach (FUJ): 320 on 13th Jan and 300 on 3rd Feb.

Lesser Crested Tern (*Thalasseus bengalensis*) R & PM

Regularly recorded during the year, with 300 at Fujairah Port Beach (FUJ) on 3rd Feb the highest recorded count.

Pomarine Skua (*Stercorarius pomarinus*) WV & PM

Very scarce this year, with only 4 records, all from the Fujairah coast. Single birds were seen off the Fujairah Hilton Hotel on 11th Feb (an adult), during a Kalba pelagic on 25th May, off Fujairah Port Beach on 28th Oct and Ra's Dibba on 15th Nov.

Arctic Skua (*Stercorarius parasiticus*) PM

Recorded every month, with a total of 42 reports. Highest count was of 16 seen from various locations between Dibba (FUJ) and Bidiya (FUJ) on 14th Apr, though it is possible that some of these birds may have been double-counted.

Long-tailed Skua (*Stercorarius longicaudus*) UC

There were 4 reports during the year, all seen during pelagics out of Kalba (SHJ). One bird was seen on 11th May, 2 on 13th Jul, with a 1st summer two weeks later, on the 27th. Towards the end of the year, 2 were seen on 9th Nov.

Un-identified small Skua (*Stercorarius parasiticus/pomarinus/longicaudus*)

There were 10 reports between Apr - Dec of up to 17 *Stercorarius* skuas left unspecified due to the difficulties in judging size and subtle plumage features of immature birds.

Chestnut-bellied Sandgrouse (*Pterocles exustus*) R

Fairly common resident recorded year-round, with 250 at Zakher Lake (AD) on 3rd Feb the highest count.

Lichtenstein's Sandgrouse (*Pterocles lichtensteinii*) R

Only 9 reports of this crepuscular resident this year, mainly from Fujairah emirate. 20 were recorded at Wadi Bih (RAK) on 2nd Nov and along the Huwaylat Road (FUJ) on 15th Dec. A single individual photographed at a private estate near Green Mubazzarah (AD) on 12th Dec was the only record away from the usual sites.

Feral Rock Dove (*Columba livia*) R

Common and widespread resident with estimated counts of 500 reported from Madinat Zayed Camel Racetrack (AD) and Al Wathba Camel Racetrack (AD) on 29th Sep and 29th Dec respectively.

European Turtle Dove (*Streptopelia turtur*) PM

Recorded from 29th Mar to 16th Nov, with significant flocks being 250 at Madinat Zayed (AD) on 2nd Aug, 200 at Wamm Farms (FUJ) on 20th Apr and 100 at Al Qua'a Fodder Field (AD) on 22nd Sep.

Oriental Turtle Dove (*Streptopelia orientalis*) PM

There were 2 records this year. One was at Al Qua'a Fodder Field (AD) on 5th Oct, whilst another was seen in the plantation surrounding Sila'a public park (AD) on 15th Nov.

Eurasian Collared Dove (*Streptopelia decaocto*) R

Abundant and widespread. Maximum count: an estimated 2500 in Mushrif National Park (DUB) on 18th Jan.

Laughing Dove (*Streptopelia senegalensis*) R

Common and widespread resident, with the highest count being around 1000 birds at Al Ankah (AD) on 10th Feb.

Namaqua Dove (*Oena capensis*) R

Fairly scarce with only 46 reports during the year. Significant counts included 28 at Nahel (AD) on 10th Feb and up to 25 at Al Dhahra (AD) on 8th Feb and 4th Dec. One at Abu Dhabi Golf & Equestrian Club (AD) on 22nd Sep was an unusual find in the heart of the city; there are, however, several previous autumn records from Abu Dhabi island.

Alexandrine Parakeet (*Psittacula eupatria*) R

Seen year-round, especially in the environs of Abu Dhabi city (AD). The highest count was 38 at Mushrif Palace Gardens (AD) on 17th Jan.

Rose-ringed Parakeet (*Psittacula krameri*) R

Widely reported through the year, with a high count of 100 at Hamraniyah Fields (RAK) on 14th Dec.

Great Spotted Cuckoo (*Clamator glandarius*) V

A first-summer was at Wamm Farms (FUJ) from 20th to 26th Apr. The 3rd UAE record.

Common Cuckoo (*Cuculus canorus*) PM

Fairly common on spring passage between 9th Apr and 3rd May, with 4 birds present at Wamm Farms (FUJ) on 20th and 21st Apr. There were 4 autumn records, with single birds seen between 12th Sep and 13th Oct.

Asian Koel (*Eudynamys scolopaceus*) V

A male was photographed in Green Mubazzarah (AD) on 5th Dec. The 14th UAE record.

Barn Owl (*Tyto alba*) R

There were up to 9 birds reported during the periods of Jan-Mar and Sep-Dec. In Dubai, one was seen at the Palm Jumeirah (DUB) from 14th to 28th Nov, whilst up to 2 were seen or heard on several occasions in the Zakher area of Al Ain (AD).

Pallid Scops Owl (*Otus brucei*) R

Eleven records were received throughout the year, from 6 locations, the most prolific being, as usual, Mushrif National Park (DUB) where there were 5 reports of birds between 7th Jan and 30th Apr, including an adult feeding a fully-fledged juvenile on 26th Apr. In Madam Plain (SHJ), 3 young birds were found to have fallen out of a palm tree on 28th May and were subsequently taken into care where they fared well.

Eurasian Scops Owl (*Otus scops*) PM

Recorded at 4 locations during the year. One was photographed on Airport Road, Abu Dhabi (AD) on 7th and 8th Mar, whilst single birds were seen at Al Mamzar Park (SHJ) on 11th Mar, and 1st and 15th Apr. Singles were also reported from Sharjah University City (SHJ) on 16th Mar and Emirates Palace (AD) on 28th Nov.

Pharaoh Eagle-owl (*Bubo ascalaphus*) R

Reported from 6 localities during the year, with breeding confirmed at 3 of them: Bab al-Shams desert (DUB) where a pair raised one chick, 2 young fledged at Mushrif National Park (DUB), and a single youngster was recorded at Saih al Salam desert reserve (DUB). Elsewhere, birds were seen at the regular site at Qarn Nazwa (SHJ), Dubai Desert Conservation Reserve (DUB) and Dabb'iyah Peninsula (AD).

Little Owl (*Athene noctua*) R

There were 21 records from a total of 12 sites, with Ajban (AD) proving especially reliable due to a particularly accommodating and photogenic pair. A total of 4 birds were counted at the site on 23rd Mar, with 3 seen on 7th Mar and 1st Sep.

Long-eared Owl (*Asio otus*) V

At least one wintering bird continued to be seen or heard at Mushrif National Park (DUB) until 18th Jan.

Short-eared Owl (*Asio flammeus*) WV

There were 8 birds, with all but one found in Nov or Dec. On 24th Mar, 1 in the desert south of Sila'a (AD) was the only record from the first half of the year. Two were found on the Dabb'iya peninsula (AD) on 13th Nov, with 2 at Al Wathba Camel Racetrack (AD) on 15th to 19th Nov. A further 2 were at Dubai Pivot Fields (DUB) on 24th Nov, with one remaining to at least the 6th Dec. At the end of the year, one was in the grounds of the Mirfa Hotel (AD) from 18th to 25th Dec.

European Nightjar (*Caprimulgus europaeus*) PM

Seen in small numbers, mainly on passage, with spring birds recorded from 25th Apr to 24th May, peaking around 1st May with an amazing 17 at Green Mubazzarah (AD). Early migrants were noted at Abu Dhabi (AD) on 29th Feb and Jebel Dhanna (AD) on 31st Mar. In the autumn, returning birds were seen from 21st Sep onwards. The now regular late-autumn/early-winter stop-over spot of Emirates Palace (AD) held birds until 14th Jan and from 29th Sep to the year end, reaching 5 birds on 15th Dec.

Egyptian Nightjar (*Caprimulgus aegyptius*) WV

There were 16 records from 8 sites from 5th Mar to 6th Apr and from 4th Sep to the year end, possibly involving as few as 11 birds in total. A report of 2 at Wamm Farms (FUJ) on 29th Jun was exceptionally unseasonal.

Unidentified Nightjar sp. (*Caprimulgus* sp.)

There were 2 reports of unidentified nightjars. One was at Al Qua'a Fodder Field (AD) on 29th Sep and the other at the Palm Jumeirah (DUB) on 8th Dec

Alpine Swift (*Apus melba*) UC

One was seen hunting insects and drinking from the swimming pool at the Atlantis Hotel on the Palm Jumeirah (DUB) on the 6th and 7th Aug.

Common Swift (*Apus apus*) PM

Six reports were received during the year. 20 were reported from Maleha (SHJ) on 27th Apr with 2 at Safa Park (DUB) two days later. One was at Jebel Dhanna (AD) on 3rd May and 2 at Wamm Farms (FUJ) on 5th May. Another at Wamm Farms on 10th Aug was an unusual summer record, whilst one at Dubai Pivot Fields (DUB) on 17th Nov was particularly late.

Pallid Swift (*Apus pallidus*) WV & PM

Seen virtually year-round, with numbers decreasing through the summer months and no records from 15th Jul to 20th Sep. Highest counts of 250 were made at Al Warsan Lakes (DUB) on 27th Jan and 16th Dec, and at nearby Dubai Pivot Fields (DUB) on 17th Nov. A colony of 40 birds was found nesting under a bridge over the Emirates Road (E311) north of Sharjah (SHJ) on 8th Nov.

Little Swift (*Apus affinis*) UC

One was seen at Kharran Water Treatment Plant (RAK) on 8th Jun.

Common Kingfisher (*Alcedo atthis*) WV

Departing wintering birds seen up until 20th Apr, with returning birds first recorded on 30th Aug. Highest count was of 6 at Khor Kalba (SHJ) on 22nd Feb.

White-throated Kingfisher (*Halcyon smyrnensis*) V

One was seen and photographed at Jebel Dhanna (AD) on 1st Apr. The 11th UAE record.

Arabian Collared Kingfisher (*Todiramphus chloris kalbaensis*) R

Records of this endemic subspecies were limited to only 14 reports due to access restrictions to the mangrove areas at Khor Kalba (SHJ) with the creation of a protected reserve by Sharjah Department of Conservation. A maximum of 8 were counted on 22nd Feb.

Green Bee-eater (*Merops orientalis*) R

Widely recorded throughout the year, with 26 at Hamraniyah Fields (RAK) on 22nd Jun the highest count of the year.

Blue-cheeked Bee-eater (*Merops persicus*) SV & PM

First recorded on 16th Mar and present throughout the summer months, with birds remaining until 16th Nov. Highest count was 100 at Wamm Farms (FUJ) on 1st Sep. Breeding was noted along the Fujairah Mountain Pipeline Road (RAK) with the discovery of recently-fledged young on 11th Jul.

European Bee-eater (*Merops apiaster*) PM

Seen from 23rd Mar through to 2nd Nov, with birds remaining during the summer, reaching 120 at Wamm Farms (FUJ) on 29th Jun.

European Roller (*Coracias garrulus*) PM

Mainly seen on spring and autumn passage, though some individuals remained through the summer and into the winter. Reports ranged from 11th Apr through to 4th Dec, with a high of 21 at Mushrif Palace Gardens (AD) on 29th Apr and Wamm Farms (FUJ) on 4th May.

Indian Roller (*Coracias benghalensis*) R

Regularly and widely reported throughout the year eastwards from south Dubai. Not recorded from Abu Dhabi or areas westwards. Largest count was 60 at Wamm Farms (FUJ) on 10th Dec.

Eurasian Hoopoe (*Upupa epops*) R & PM

Common and widespread, with a high count of 100 at Sila'a (AD) on 16th Mar, on a day when a total of 147 were reported across the country.

Eurasian Wryneck (*Jynx torquilla*) WV & PM

Regularly reported throughout winter and on passage up to 28th Apr and from 11th Sep. Five reported from Sila'a (AD) on 28th Sep was the highest count of the year.

Red-backed Shrike (*Lanius collurio*) PM

Seen from 6th Apr to 29th May and from 7th Sep to 23rd Nov. Highest count was 6 at Al Mamzar Park (SHJ) and Emirates Palace (AD), both on 27th Apr, when a total of 17 were recorded.

Daurian Shrike (*Lanius isabellinus*) WV & PM

Reported until 5th May and from 15th Sep to the year end. The highest count reported was of 27 at Sila'a (AD) on 16th Mar.

Turkestan Shrike (*Lanius phoenicuroides*) PM

Recorded from 21st Feb to 18th May and from 12th Jul to 29th Nov. An amazing count of 90 at Wamm Farms (FUJ) on 15th Apr was the highest number reported.

Un-identified Isabelline Shrike (*Lanius isabellinus/phoenicuroides*)

There were 41 records of unspecified Isabelline Shrike, including a *karelini*-type bird photographed at Wamm Farms (FUJ) on 6th Apr.

Brown Shrike (*Lanius cristatus*) V

A first-winter of the subspecies *cristatus* was in Colin's Farm in Wadi Bih (RAK) from 20th Nov, remaining until early in the new year. The 7th UAE record.

Bay-backed Shrike (*Lanius vittatus*)

There were at least 3 birds seen at Wamm Farms (FUJ) during the spring. An adult male was present from 8th to 14th Apr, with a sub-adult there on the 15th April, whilst an immature was present on 4th May.

Southern Grey Shrike (*Lanius meridionalis*) R

Common and widespread, with a maximum count of 12 at Ghantoot (AD) on 14th Mar.

Steppe Grey Shrike (*Lanius meridionalis pallidirostris*) WV & PM

Regularly reported during winter and on passage, with a total of 88 sightings up to 30th Apr and 51 from 11th Sep until the year end. A count of 11 at Sila'a (AD) on 10th Mar was the highest during what was an exceptionally good year for this sub-species.

Lesser Grey Shrike (*Lanius minor*) PM

There were 29 reports, 22 of which were from 20th Apr to 1st May. In the autumn, there were 7 records of birds from 10th Aug to 20th Sep. The highest count was of 3 at Al Mamzar Park (SHJ) and Wamm Farms (FUJ), both occurring on 27th Apr, when a total of 8 birds were reported country-wide.

Masked Shrike (*Lanius nubicus*) PM

Regularly recorded up to 4th May and from 21st Sep onwards, with counts reaching a peak at the end of April, when 8 were seen on the 26th Apr, 5 of which were at Al Mamzar Park (SHJ) and 4 seen at Wamm Farms (FUJ) the following day. Wintering birds were seen erratically at Emirates Palace (AD) at both end of the year and at Mushrif Palace Gardens (AD) in Dec.

Eastern Woodchat Shrike (*Lanius senator niloticus*) PM

An exceptional year, with some 315 records spanning from 17th Feb to 14th Sep. The highest counts were 12 at both Wamm Farms (FUJ) on 14th Apr and Emirates Palace (AD) on 10th Mar, the latter date seeing an incredible total of 36 birds. At least one bird remained at Wamm Farms throughout the summer, with another seen at Kharran Fodder Field (RAK) on 31st Aug.

Eurasian Golden Oriole (*Oriolus oriolus*) PM

Surprisingly, there were only 3 spring records, with 2 on 25th Apr at Sila'a (AD), 1 at Wamm Farms (FUJ) on 27th Apr, and a high count of 7 at Sila'a on 4th May. In the autumn, there were 9 records between 1st Sep and 6th Oct, with a maximum of 6 at Sila'a on 28th Sep.

Eurasian/Indian Golden Oriole (*Oriolus oriolus/kundoo*)

There were 3 unspecified Golden Orioles during the year. Single birds were at Mushrif Palace Gardens (AD) on 24th Apr and 3rd Oct, and Dabb'iya Peninsula (AD) on 10th and 16th Oct.

Black-naped Oriole (*Oriolus chinensis*) V

The first UAE record of this species was seen on four dates in Safa Park (DUB) from 18th to 25th Feb.

Black Drongo (*Dicrurus macrocercus*) V

A bird that took up residence in Al Barsha Pond Park (DUB) between 18th Jan and 1st Feb was only the 2nd confirmed record of this species. What is presumed to be the same individual was later seen at Dubai Pivot Fields (DUB) on 11th Mar and 15th Apr.

Ashy Drongo (*Dicrurus leucophaeus*) V

One was in Ain al-Fayda Park (AD) from 18th Feb to 26th Mar. The 6th UAE record.

House Crow (*Corvus splendens*) R

Common and widespread close to coastal locations, with a high count of 600 roosting in the mangroves at Khor al-Beida (UAQ) on 6th Oct.

Mesopotamian Crow (*Corvus cornix capellanus*) V

The first UAE record was found during survey work of a Socotra Cormorant colony on Siniya Island (UAQ) on 26th Nov and subsequently seen on visiting boat charters on 1st and 7th Dec. The bird remained in the area, though obviously not recorded due to the difficulty of accessing the island, and was to be seen on the mainland early in 2013.

Brown-necked Raven (*Corvus ruficollis*) R

Regularly seen in inland areas, especially dune deserts, with 160 along the Dhaid to Madam Road (SHJ) on 10th Jul the most counted.

Greater Hoopoe-lark (*Alaemon alaudipes*) R

Typically scarce and hard to find, with only 29 reports all year; up to 6 were found in the Bab al-Shams desert (DUB) on 22nd Mar, with breeding proven on 10th May. Breeding was also reported from the vicinity of Al Qua'a Fodder Field (AD) when an adult was found tending to 3 juveniles on 9th June.

Black-crowned Sparrow-lark (*Eremopterix nigriceps*) R

Recorded sporadically throughout the year, with larger flocks congregating at fodder fields during the winter. Al Ankah (AD) had the highest count with 50 on 10th Feb, whilst Al Dhahra (AD) provided the most regular sightings with 11 out of the 32 reports submitted and a flock of 40 on 8th Feb.

Bar-tailed Lark (*Ammomanes cinctura*) R

There was only one record of this scarce resident, with 6 seen in the Bab al-Shams desert (DUB) on 4th Feb.

Desert Lark (*Ammomanes deserti*) R

Common year-round in wadis and rocky areas, with a high count of 30 at Wadi Bih (RAK) on 20th Jan.

Calandra Lark (*Melanocorypha calandra*) V

One was found and photographed on Dalma Island (AD) on 3rd Dec. The 7th UAE record.

Bimaculated Lark (*Melanocorypha bimaculata*) WV

Only 20 records of this scarce winter visitor, with birds seen up to 16th Mar and from 2nd Nov. Al Wathba Camel Racetrack (AD) and Wamm Farms (FUJ) proved the only semi-reliable places to see them, with multiple sightings of up to 6 and 7 respectively. However, the highest single count, by far, was 32 at the fodder drying field at Sila'a (AD) on 10th Mar.

Greater Short-toed Lark (*Calandrella brachydactyla*) PM

Recorded up to 25th May and from 3rd Aug onwards, with numbers increasing during spring passage in March. Counts of 100 at Wamm Farms (FUJ) on 9th Mar and 350 at Sila'a fodder field (AD) the following day were the only triple-figure totals recorded, the flock on the 10th Mar contributing to an overall daily tally of 453.

Lesser Short-toed Lark (*Calandrella rufescens*) R & WV

There were 15 reports, with birds seen from 11th Jan to 27th Apr and from 21st Sep onwards. Highest count was 16 on Dalma Island (AD) on 6th Dec.

Crested Lark (*Galerida cristata*) R

Common and widespread. Highest count: 200 at Al Qua'a Fodder Field (AD) on 30th Mar and 9th Jun.

Eurasian Skylark (*Alauda arvensis*) WV

Seen up to 17th Apr and from 6th Oct, with major flocks at Wamm Farms (FUJ) with 120 on 3rd Feb and Dubai Pivot Fields (DUB) with 105 on 28th Dec.

Oriental Skylark (*Alauda gulgula*) WV

Seen in small numbers up to 14th Apr and from 14th Sep onwards, mainly at Wamm Farms (AD) and Dubai Pivot Fields (DUB), from where the highest count of 7 was made on 1st Dec at the latter site.

Sand Martin (*Riparia riparia*) PM

Recorded throughout the year, with numbers typically below 50, but generally more common during autumn. The two highest counts were 160 on 28th Sep and 500 on 3rd Oct at Al Wathba Wetland Reserve (AD).

Pale Martin (*Riparia diluta*) UC

One at Dubai Pivot Fields (DUB) on 2nd Mar was the only report of the year.

Eurasian Crag Martin (*Ptyonoprogne rupestris*) UC

There were only 3 records during the year. Singles were at Jebel Dhanna (AD) on 31st Mar, Al Foah Wheat Farm (AD) on 13th Nov and Green Mubazzarah (AD) on 29th Nov.

Pale Crag Martin (*Ptyonoprogne obsoleta*) R

Present year-round in Dubai city and mountain wadis, with 75 on 3rd Feb at Wadi Bih (RAK) the highest count.

Barn Swallow (*Hirundo rustica*) WV & PM

Recorded every month, with numbers swelling during mid-spring and early autumn passage. A count of 1100 roosting birds at Al Wathba Wetland Reserve (AD) on 28th Sep was this highest flock recorded.

Wire-tailed Swallow (*Hirundo smithii*) V

One was at Al Warsan Lakes (DUB) on 7th Feb, whilst another was at Zakher Lake (AD) on 30th Dec, remaining into the new year. The 11th and 12th UAE records.

Red-rumped Swallow (*Cecropis daurica*) PM

There were 33 records between 3rd Feb and 26th Apr, with a high of 8 at Dalma Island (AD) on 10th Apr. Outside of this period, 1 bird was at Al Warsan Lakes (DUB) on 3rd Dec.

Common House Martin (*Delichon urbicum*) WV & PM

Recorded up to 26th Apr and from 15th Sep to the year end in small numbers. There was an unusual mid-summer record of a bird that remained at Wamm Farms (FUJ) until at least 12th Jul. The highest number reported was 8 at Kharran Water Treatment Plant (RAK) on 10th Feb.

Red-vented Bulbul (*Pycnonotus cafer*) R

Common resident mainly seen in city parks. Highest count was 70 at Safa Park (DUB) on 27th Jan.

Red-whiskered Bulbul (*Pycnonotus jocosus*) R

A couple of birds continued to be seen erratically at Mushrif Palace Gardens (AD), with sightings from 21st to 26th Apr, 6th Jun and 19th to 21st Sep.

White-spectacled Bulbul (*Pycnonotus xanthopygos*) R

Regularly recorded resident in the mountain regions, with a high count of 30 at Wamm Farms (FUJ) on 15th Nov. Breeding was proven at Palm Sports Resort (AD) on 24th Aug where 3 recently-fledged juveniles were found.

White-eared Bulbul (*Pycnonotus leucotis*) R

Commonly seen resident. Highest estimated counts were of 500 at Mushrif National Park (DUB) on 18th Jan and Dalma Island (AD) on 6th Dec.

Scrub Warbler (*Scotocerca inquieta*) R

There were, surprisingly, only 8 records during the year, with sightings at Mahtarraqah (FUJ), Wadi Bih (RAK), Wadi Wurrayah Protected Area (FUJ), Fujairah Mountain Pipeline Road (RAK) and Masafi Wadi (FUJ), with 5 seen at the latter site being the highest single count.

Willow Warbler (*Phylloscopus trochilus*) PM

Commonly reported during spring passage between 3rd Mar and 9st Jun, with numbers reaching 35 at Al Mamzar Park (SHJ) on 16th Apr. There was a single autumn record of 1 bird at Mushrif Palace Gardens (AD) on 19th Sep.

Common Chiffchaff (*Phylloscopus collybita*) WV & PM

Common throughout winter and, in lesser numbers, on spring passage up to 3rd May and from 10th Oct onwards. The highest count was 200 at Jebel Dhanna (AD) on 13th Mar, easily surpassing the 31 seen at Mushrif Palace Gardens (AD) on 7th Mar.

Plain Leaf Warbler (*Phylloscopus neglectus*) WV

Widely seen up to 27th Feb and from 5th Oct, with up to 16 on Dabb'iya Peninsula (AD) on 13th Nov.

Wood Warbler (*Phylloscopus sibilatrix*) PM

There were only 2 records, both of single birds in Safa Park (DUB) on 26th Apr and 1st Oct.

Yellow-browed Warbler (*Phylloscopus inornatus*) V

One was found at Mafraq Marsh (AD) on 21st Oct. The 11th UAE record.

Hume's Leaf Warbler (*Phylloscopus humei*) WV

A long-staying bird was at Safa Park (DUB) from 27th Jan to 1st Mar, with singles recorded at Ain al-Fayda (AD) on 24th Feb and Emirates Palace (AD) on 3rd Mar. Another long-stayer was at the latter site from 11th Nov until the year end, when it was joined by a second bird on 29th Dec.

Sykes's Warbler (*Iduna rama*) R

Only recorded from the mangroves at Khor Kalba (SHJ) until 11th May, with 6 recorded there on 20th Apr. Access to this site was restricted from March due to the formation of Kalba Protected Reserve, under the management of Sharjah Department of Conservation.

Eastern Olivaceous Warbler (*Iduna pallida*) PM & localised R (Abu Dhabi island)

Recorded throughout the year, with no records in July. Highest counts: 16 at Mushrif Palace Gardens (AD) on 3rd Oct and 15 at Dabb'iya Peninsula (AD) on 10th Oct.

Upcher's Warbler (*Hippolais languida*) PM

Common spring migrant recorded from 23rd Mar to 30th Jun, peaking at 6 individuals on 13th Apr at Wamm Farms (FUJ). There were 3 autumn records of single birds from 31st Aug to 6th Oct.

Moustached Warbler (*Acrocephalus melanopogon*) V

Two birds, found on 26th Dec 2011, remained in reeds at the inflow to Zakher Lake (AD) until 18th Jan.

Sedge Warbler (*Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*) PM

One at Emirates Palace (AD) from 24th to 27th Apr was the only record.

Caspian Reed Warbler (*Acrocephalus scirpaceus fuscus*) R

Regularly reported up to 1st Aug (61 records), but only 2 records after that date, suggesting birds becoming less obvious as juveniles disperse and they cease calling. Breeding confirmed at Al Wathba Wetland Reserve (AD) and Al Warsan Lakes (DUB) during late May – mid-Jul. A count of 50 at the latter site was the highest reported.

Blyth's Reed Warbler (*Acrocephalus dumetorum*) V

One bird was found at Safa Park (DUB) on 29th Sep.

Marsh Warbler (*Acrocephalus palustris*) PM

Renowned for being late migrants, there were 67 reports in a period from 30th Apr to 1st Jun, with an amazing count of 400 in the public park at Sila'a (AD) on 4th May, part of a major arrival that saw a total 470 around Sila'a that day.

Great Reed Warbler (*Acrocephalus arundinaceus*) PM

There were up to 11 birds this year, between the periods of 9th Feb to 22nd May and 15th Sep to 19th Nov. Wamm Farms (FUJ) with singles on 9th Mar and 27th Apr, and Mushrif Palace Gardens (AD) with birds on 11th to 15th Apr and 12th to 22nd May, were the only sites to host either multiple, or long-staying, birds.

Indian Reed Warbler (*Acrocephalus stentoreus brunescens*) R

Common and widespread throughout the year with a peak count of 30 at Al Wathba Wetland Reserve (AD) on 18th Jul.

Common Grasshopper Warbler (*Locustella naevia*) PM

Reported from only 3 locations during the spring. Wamm Farms (FUJ) provided records on 5 dates between 9th Mar and 27th Apr, with 3 birds there on 15th Apr. Elsewhere, the park at Sila'a (AD) held showy individuals on 10th Mar and 11th Apr, whilst one was at Safa Park (DUB) on 27th Apr.

Savi's Warbler (*Locustella luscinioides*) UC

One at Wamm Farms (FUJ) on 14th Apr was the only record.

Graceful Prinia (*Prinia gracilis*) R

Commonly seen resident, with 34 at Al Warsan Lakes (DUB) on 13th Jan being the highest count.

Eurasian Blackcap (*Sylvia atricapilla*) PM

Mainly recorded in spring, with birds seen from 12th Mar through to 1st Jun. One wintering bird was at Mushrif Palace Gardens (AD) on 28th Jan, this site providing 26 of the 43 records during 2012. In the autumn, singles were seen on 3 dates between 28th Sep and 10th Nov. The highest count was 7 at Jebel Dhanna marsh (AD) on 23rd Apr.

Garden Warbler (*Sylvia borin*) UC

One at Mushrif Palace Gardens (AD) from 25th Apr to 6th May was the only reported bird during the year.

Barred Warbler (*Sylvia nisoria*) PM

Regularly reported from 28th Mar to 9th Jun and from 22nd Sep to 12th Oct, with main passage observed during April and May. Outside of these dates, wintering birds were at Sila'a public park (AD) on 6th Jan, with 2 there on 15th Nov. Highest count: 7 on Ghagah Island (AD) on 6th Oct.

Desert Whitethroat (*Sylvia minula*) WV

Commonly seen up to 14th Apr and from 29th Sep. Highest number recorded was 23 at Mushrif Palace Gardens (AD) on 2nd Dec.

Eastern Orphean Warbler (*Sylvia crassirostris*) WV

There were 27 records from 13 sites this year, all but 5 in the period up to 8th Apr, and mostly single birds. Many lingered for several weeks, with Lulu Island (AD) holding 2-3 birds between 9th to 17th Mar.

Asian Desert Warbler (*Sylvia nana*) WV

Seen up to 26th Mar and from 28th Sep, usually in low numbers. 14 at Sila'a (AD) on 6th Dec was the highest count.

Common Whitethroat (*Sylvia communis*) PM

Recorded primarily on spring passage, with birds seen from 6th Feb to 9th Jun (65 records) and from 1st Sep to 1st Dec (23 records). Highest count was 50 at Sila'a (AD) on 4th May.

Lesser Whitethroat (*Sylvia curruca*) PM

Reported through to 29th May and from 20th Sep, with the majority of sightings in March, April and October, with highs of 12 at Sila'a (AD) on 31st Mar and 10 at Jebel Dhanna (AD) on 28th Oct. Owing to the complexities of Lesser Whitethroat taxonomy and the difficulty in obtaining adequate views to positively identify them, it is likely that many records of Desert and Lesser Whitethroats are intermixed.

Menetries's Warbler (*Sylvia mystacea*) WV & PM

Widely reported up to 30th Apr and from 7th Sep, with a high count of 12 recorded at Mushrif Palace Gardens (AD) on 26th Mar, Lulu Island (AD) on 12th Oct and Jebel Dhanna (AD) on 14th Oct.

Arabian Babbler (*Turdoides squamiceps*) R

Common and widespread in drier habitats throughout the year, with major counts being 25 at Mushrif National Park (DUB) on 21st Jan, 17 at Banyan Tree Al Wadi (RAK) on 10th Nov and 14 at Hamraniyah Fields (RAK) on 14th Dec.

Spotted Flycatcher (*Muscicapa striata*) PM

Seen from 29th Feb to 24th May and from 24th Aug to 10th Nov, with a late bird found on Dalma Island (AD) on 3rd Dec. Main spring passage late Apr to early-May, peaking on 30th Apr when a total of 33 birds were recorded. Highest single count was 20 on 4th May at Sila'a (AD). In autumn, peak return passage was at the end of September, when 36 were seen on 29th Sep.

Black Scrub Robin (*Cethiotrichas podobe*) V

The UAE's 6th record was found in the harbour marsh scrub at Sila'a (AD) on 15th Nov and remained until the new year.

Rufous-tailed Scrub Robin (*Cercotrichas galactotes*) SV & PM

Reported from 23rd Feb to 20th Oct, though only 2 records during Jul-Aug probably reflecting reduced observer effort. Highest count was 34 at Sila'a (AD) on 4th May, with a total of 45 being reported country-wide. Breeding was suspected at Jebel Dhanna (AD) with a displaying pair seen on 3rd Jun, and confirmed at Sila'a when a recently-fledged juvenile was seen on 28th Sep.

European Robin (*Erithacus rubecula*) UC

Four records, including the wintering bird at Sila'a (AD) found in 2013 that was last reported on 6th Jan. At the other end of the year, a long-staying bird was at Emirates Palace (AD) from 11th Nov to the year end, one at Wadi Bih (RAK) from 24th to 30th Nov and one on Dalma Island (AD) on 6th Dec.

White-throated Robin (*Irania gutturalis*) PM

A good year for this species, with many birds seen from 14th Apr to 11th May, with a peak around 22nd – 23rd Apr, when 6 were seen at Al Mamzar Park (SHJ). A rather early male was also seen at the same site on 11th Mar.

Thrush Nightingale (*Luscinia luscinia*) PM

There were 3 records this year, with, unusually, the majority in autumn. Sila'a (AD) hosted two birds – one on 4th May and another on 28th Sep. One was also at Abu Dhabi Golf & Equestrian Club (AD) on 29th Sep.

Common Nightingale (*Luscinia megarhynchos*) PM

Recorded on spring and, to a lesser extent, autumn passage, with birds reported from 14th Apr to the end of May and from 8th Sep to 17th Oct. One bird appeared to spend the summer in the Jebel Dhanna (AD) area, being recorded between 10th Jun and 12th Jul. Wintering birds were reported from Jebel Dhanna where 1 remained from the start of the year to at least 13th Feb, with another at Emirates Palace (AD) on 7th and 10th Jan. There was an impressive 20 seen at Green Mubazzarah (AD) on 1st May.

Bluethroat (*Luscinia svecica*) WV

Common in wetland areas in winter up to 11th Apr and from 14th Sep. The highest count was 30 at Al Warsan Lakes (DUB) on 3rd Jan. There were at least 4 white-spotted birds reported, but these could not be assigned to a specific taxon.

Semi-collared Flycatcher (*Ficedula semitorquata*) UC

Four records. Two singles at Mushrif Palace Gardens (AD) on several (but non-overlapping) dates from 15th Apr to 24th Apr, with others at Al Mamzar Park (SHJ) and Jebel Dhanna (AD) both on 16th Apr.

Taiga Flycatcher (*Ficedula albicilla*) V

The 4th and 5th national records were both long-staying individuals. One was at Wamm Farms (AD) from 25th Nov to 3rd Dec, whilst one found at Safa Park (DUB) on 30th Nov stayed into 2013, eventually developing a nice red throat.

Red-breasted Flycatcher (*Ficedula parva*) WV

Only 2 reported from January to 23rd Apr, but up to 12 individuals recorded at 8 sites from 16th Oct onwards, including several long-staying birds.

Eversmann's Redstart (*Phoenicurus erythronotus*) UC

The only record of the year was of a first-winter male in Wadi Bih (RAK) on 3rd Dec.

Common Redstart (*Phoenicurus phoenicurus*) PM

Very common in spring, from 2nd Mar to 12th May, especially common in Al Mamzar Park (SHJ), peaking at 45 on 26th Apr. A single bird at Sila'a (AD) on 6th Oct was the only autumn record.

Ehrenberg's Redstart (*Phoenicurus phoenicurus samamisicus*) PM

Recorded almost daily in small numbers from 29th Feb to 6th Apr, with 4 at Jebel Dhanna (AD) on 22nd Mar the highest count.

Eastern Black Redstart (*Phoenicurus ochruros*) WV & PM

Common during the winter months and on passage up to 31st Mar and from 2nd Nov. Highest count was 7 birds recorded on several days, particularly at Green Mubazzarah (AD).

Western Black Redstart (*Phoenicurus ochruros gibraltariensis/aterrimus*) V

A male found in a restricted area at Jebel Dhanna (AD) on 27th Dec remained until 13th Jan; presumably the same individual recorded the previous year.

Rufous-tailed Rock Thrush (*Monticola saxatilis*) PM

Primarily seen during spring passage, with 123 records from 9th Feb to 9th May, with a peak on 30th Apr, when a total of 34 were reported, with 20 at Green Mubazzarah (AD) the following day the highest single count. There were only 6 records in autumn, with birds seen 28th Sep to 6th Oct.

Blue Rock Thrush (*Monticola solitarius*) WV & PM

Regularly recorded in winter and on passage up to 27th Apr and from 21st Sep, with a maximum count of 9 at Green Mubazzarah (AD) on 24th Feb.

Whinchat (*Saxicola rubetra*) PM

In a good year for this species, there were 42 records from 1st Apr to 16th May and only 6 from 22nd Sep to 13th Oct. Highest count was 7 at Abu Dhabi Golf & Equestrian Club (AD) on 26th Apr.

European Stonechat (*Saxicola rubicola*) WV

Widely reported during winter, with records up to 11th Apr and from 29th Oct. Highest count: 6 at Sir Bani Yas (AD) on 15th Jan.

Siberian Stonechat (*Saxicola maurus*) PM

There were 33 reports up to 11th Apr and 12 from 12th Sep onwards, with 8 at Jebel Dhanna (AD) on 6th Mar the highest count. However, due to the difficulties in identifying stonechats conclusively in the field, it is likely that many Jan/Feb (2 records) and Nov/Dec (7) reports may refer to *rubicola*.

Caspian Stonechat (*Saxicola maurus variegatus*) UC

An excellent spring with 31 reports between 6th Feb and 31st Mar, numbers peaking at 5 at Jebel Dhanna (AD) on 24th Mar. There was a single autumn record, the first ever for this season of one at Al Wathba Camel Racetrack (AD) on 22nd Nov. In total, a minimum of 12 individuals were seen during the year, contrasting with only 7 previous records totalling 9 birds.

Hooded Wheatear (*Oenanthe monacha*) R

Records were scarce, with only 15 reports of single birds all year. All came from the Al Ain area, with one seen at Wadi Tarabat (AD), Jebel Hafit (AD) twice and 11 records from Green Mubazzarah, with all of the latter presumed to involve the same pair of birds.

Hume's Wheatear (*Oenanthe albonigra*) R

Fairly common in the mountains throughout the year, with 14 at Green Mubazzarah (AD) on 13th Dec the highest number reported. Signs of breeding were noted at this site with an adult feeding recently-fledged young on 11th May; 3 juveniles at Wadi Bih (RAK) on 18th May confirmed breeding was also successful there.

Northern Wheatear (*Oenanthe oenanthe*) PM

Very common in spring passage with 153 records from 6th Feb to 4th May, peaking on 10th Mar when a total of 36 were recorded, including 15 at Al Qua'a Fodder Field (AD). In autumn, only 2 birds were recorded, with singles at Green Mubazzarah (AD) from 21st Sep to 11th Oct, and Wamm Farms (FUJ) on 27th Nov.

Mourning Wheatear (*Oenanthe lugens*) UC

Almost exclusively recorded at a private location in Jebel Dhanna (AD), from where numbers reached 6 on 3rd Dec. Birds were seen up to 13th Feb, with returning birds from 6th Oct. Away from this hotspot, 1 was seen at Zakher Lake (AD) on 3rd Nov.

Variable Wheatear (*Oenanthe picata*) WV

There were 24 reports from only 6 sites up to 2nd Mar and from 31st Aug, the majority coming from Wamm Farms (FUJ) where 3 on 15th Nov was the maximum count.

Pied Wheatear (*Oenanthe pleschanka*) PM

Recorded from 22nd Feb to 4th May and from 7th Sep to the year end. Peak spring passage observed on 10th Mar, with 220 counted across the country, including 120 at Al Qua'a Fodder Fields (AD), and a high of 112 on 6th Oct in autumn, when 65 were recorded at Sila'a (AD). There were 15 reports of the *vitatta* form between 2nd Mar and 21st Apr, and 2 on 28th Sep and 18th Nov,

Eastern Black-eared Wheatear (*Oenanthe hispanica melanoleuca*) PM

A good spring for this species, with 44 records from 2nd Mar to 14th Apr and a single autumn record of 1 at Wamm Farms (FUJ) on 27th Nov. Numbers peaked on 10th Mar with a total of 16 birds being reported, 8 of which were at Emirates Palace (AD). There were also 8 at Al Qua'a Fodder Field (AD) on the following day, the 11th Mar.

Pied x Black-eared Wheatear (*Oenanthe pleschanka x hispanica*)

One bird, closely resembling Finsch's Wheatear (*Oenanthe finschii*), was at Jebel Dhanna (AD) on 21st and 22nd Mar.

Red-tailed Wheatear (*Oenanthe chrysopygia*) WV

Winter visitor regularly seen up to 4th May, with returning birds seen from 15th Sep. Highest count was 10 at Green Mubazzarah (AD) on 13th Dec.

Kurdistan Wheatear (*Oenanthe xanthopyrna*) V

A first-winter male present in a private plantation at Jebel Dhanna (AD) from 22nd Mar to 31st Mar was the 2nd record for the UAE.

Desert Wheatear (*Oenanthe deserti*) WV

Common winter visitor recorded up to 14th Apr and from 12th Sep, with up to 20 at Saadiyat Island Golf Course (AD) on 29th Feb and Dubai Desert Conservation Reserve (DUB) on 16th Oct.

Isabelline Wheatear (*Oenanthe isabellina*) WV & PM

Common and widespread during winter and on passage until 25th May and from 10th Aug onwards. Peak passage observed during early March, with 70 at Wamm Farms (FUJ) on 9th Mar the highest single count. A total of 208 were reported from 15 locations the following day.

Redwing (*Turdus iliacus*) V

One found at Sila'a (AD) in December 2011 was seen only once this year, with flight-only views on 6th Jan.

Song Thrush (*Turdus philomelos*) WV

Common winter visitor seen up to 5th Apr and from 10th Nov. Highest count was 10 at Jebel Dhanna (AD) on 27th Jan.

Bank Myna (*Acridotheres ginginianus*) R

Common resident, especially at Wamm Farms (FUJ) and Dubai Pivot Fields (DUB), with up to 500 were reported on 30th Mar at the latter site.

Common Myna (*Acridotheres tristis*) R

Very common and widespread, with a highest count of 500 at Wamm Farms (FUJ) on 20th Oct.

Pied Myna (*Gracupica contra*) R

Locally common resident around Dubai and Sharjah, with a high of 45 at Al Mamzar Park (SHJ) on 15th Apr.

Brahminy Starling (*Temenuchus pagodarum*) R

Only 9 reports from 5 sites this year. Up to 2 were seen in the Jumeirah (DUB) area from 1st Jan to 21st Feb and on 16th Dec, and at nearby Safa Park (DUB) on 29th Apr. One was at Al Mamzar Park (SHJ) on 18th Mar, whilst a juvenile at Wasit Nature Reserve (SHJ) on 19th Jul and 20th Aug was evidence of successful breeding.

Rose-coloured Starling (*Pastor roseus*) PM

Recorded up to 22nd Apr and from 10th Aug, with a high of 15 at Wamm Farms (FUJ) on 1st Sep, from where wintering birds were recorded at both ends of the year. One was also found wintering at Asab Oilfield (AD) on 11th Dec.

Common Starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*) R & WV

Generally scarce away from regular sites, with records up to 22nd Jun and from 9th Nov onwards. Birds found nesting at Hamranyah Fields (RAK) on 17th Apr, from where counts of up to 20 were recorded. Also seen in good numbers regularly at Dubai Pivot Fields, where 21 were counted on 28th Jan and 3rd Dec.

Purple Sunbird (*Cinnyris asiaticus*) R

Common and widespread across most of the country, with 100 at Safa Park (DUB) on 27th Jan the highest recorded. Rather rare and localised to the west of Abu Dhabi; 1 was seen at Mirfa (AD) on 14th Oct.

Radde's Accentor (*Prunella ocularis*) V

The first record for the UAE went undetected by resident birders and was photographed in Safa Park (DUB) by a visiting birder on 10th and 14th Apr.

Western Yellow Wagtail (*Motacilla flava*) WV & PM

Commonly recorded throughout the year, though many not assigned to subspecies (for which, see below). Highest number recorded: 50 at Dubai Pivot Fields (DUB) on 4th Nov.

Grey-headed Wagtail (*Motacilla flava thunbergi*) WV & PM

Commonly seen spring migrant through to 11th May, with many fewer records from 14th Sep onwards. Highest count was 6 at Wamm Farms (FUJ) on 27th Apr.

Blue-headed / Sykes's Wagtail (*Motacilla flava flava/beema*) WV & PM

The commonest subspecies positively identified, seen up to 28th Apr and from 8th Aug onwards. A count of 30 at Wamm Farms (FUJ) on 20th Apr was the highest reported.

Yellow-headed Wagtail (*Motacilla flava lutea*) PM

Ten birds were reported during the year, six between 16th Mar to 23rd Apr and four from 19th Aug to 21st Sep.

Black-headed Wagtail (*Motacilla flava feldegg*) PM

Recorded throughout the year in low numbers, with a high of 12 at Dubai Pivot Fields (DUB) on 3rd Mar. Breeding also confirmed at this site with the finding of an adult male feeding a juvenile on 22nd Jun.

White-chinned Wagtail (*Motacilla flava melanogrisea*)

One was at Dubai Pivot Fields (DUB) from 3rd to 12th Mar.

Yellow Wagtail 'superciliaris' (*Motacilla flava 'superciliaris'*)

Single birds were at Dubai Pivot Fields (DUB) on 3rd Mar and Abu Dhabi Golf & Equestrian Club (AD) the following day.

Yellow Wagtail 'xanthophrys' (*Motacilla flava 'xanthophrys'*)

Singles were at Dubai Pivot Fields (DUB) from 2nd to 20th Jan and from 2nd to 12th Dec.

Citrine Wagtail (*Motacilla citreola*) WV & PM

Widely recorded up to 4th Apr and from 31st Aug, with a high count of 23 at Dubai Pivot Fields (DUB) on 6th Dec.

Grey Wagtail (*Motacilla cinerea*) WV & PM

Recorded up to 25th Apr and from 14th Sep onwards, with a maximum of 4 seen at Saadiyat Island (AD) on 9th Mar and the Palm Jumeirah (DUB) on 21st Nov.

White Wagtail (*Motacilla alba*) WV & PM

A very common winter visitor with birds remaining up to 15th May. The first returning birds were reported on 3rd Oct. There were several triple-figure counts, the largest being 260 at Madinat Zayed (AD) on 12th Mar.

Masked Wagtail (*Motacilla alba personata*) WV

Reported from 5 sites, with Wamm Farms (FUJ) proving the most regular with one over-wintering until 27th Feb and up to 2 the following winter from 22nd Sep. An impressive 5 were at Mafraq Water Treatment Plant (AD) from 11th Oct to 29th Nov.

Richard's Pipit (*Anthus richardi*) WV & PM

Fairly common during winter and on passage with records up to 28th Apr and from 22nd Sep. Highest count: 12 at Wamm Farms (FUJ) on 26th Nov.

Long-billed Pipit (*Anthus similis*) R

Not recorded during the summer months, with records up to 17th Mar and from 13th Oct. Highest number observed was 9 at Wamm Farms (FUJ) on 9th Nov.

Blyth's Pipit (*Anthus godlewskii*) WV & PM

Recorded at only 5 locations during the year, with sightings up to 24th Apr and from 28th Sep. An obliging and long-staying bird was at Emirates Palace (AD) from at least the 7th Jan to 24th Apr, whilst Wamm Farms (FUJ) held up to 5 on 13th Jan and 10th Feb.

Tawny Pipit (*Anthus campestris*) WV & PM

Very common in winter and on passage. Birds were reported up to 27th Apr, with returning birds first seen on 20th Sep. Up to 130 were reported from Wamm Farms (FUJ) on 10th Dec.

Meadow Pipit (*Anthus pratensis*) WV

Scarce during winter, with birds seen up to 9th Mar and from 15th Nov. Highest count was 7 at Sila'a Public Park (AD) on 6th Jan.

Tree Pipit (*Anthus trivialis*) PM

Regularly recorded in small numbers throughout winter and during passage up to 17th May and 7th Sep onwards. A count of 11 on 15th Sep at Emirates Palace (AD) was the highest recorded.

Olive-backed Pipit (*Anthus hodgsoni*) UC

One at Emirates Palace (AD) from 18th to 23rd Nov was the only one found this year.

Red-throated Pipit (*Anthus cervinus*) WV & PM

Common in winter and on spring passage, being seen until 4th May and from 29th Oct, with numbers reaching 95 at Wamm Farms (FUJ) from 14th to 20th Apr.

Water Pipit (*Anthus spinoletta*) WV

Very common in winter and spring, with birds seen until 29th Apr and from 28th Oct. Highest count was 380 at Al Hamraniyah Nursery (RAK) on 20th Nov.

Buff-bellied Pipit (*Anthus rubescens japonicus*) WV

There were at least 8 birds during the year. Emirates Palace (AD) held 2 birds from the previous year until 10th Mar, and again from 29th Nov to the year end. Wamm Farms (FUJ) was another site to host birds in consecutive winters with singles from 20th Jan to 2nd Mar and 15th Dec onwards. Elsewhere, one was at Palm Sports Resort (AD) on 27th Jan and Al Hamraniyah Nursery (RAK) on 26th Nov.

Forest Wagtail (*Dendroanthus indicus*) V

One was near the Al Dhafra Hotel in Jebel Dhanna (AD) from 2nd to 5th Dec.

Hypocolius (*Hypocolius ampelinus*) WV

Seen up to 14th Apr and from 2nd Nov. The regular locations of Lulu Island (AD) and Dalma Island (AD) produced highest counts of 85 and 10 respectively, but this was eclipsed by the discovery of a roosting flock of up to 100 birds in mangroves beside Yas Links Golf Course (AD) in Nov.

Eastern Cinereous Bunting (*Emberiza cineracea semenowi*) PM

There were only 3 records during the year. One was photographed at Saadiyat Island Golf Course (AD) on 9th Mar, whilst two other single birds were reported from Wamm Farms (FUJ) and Abu Dhabi Golf & Equestrian Club (AD) on 6th and 11th Apr respectively.

Ortolan Bunting (*Emberiza hortulana*) PM

Common passage migrant seen from 10th Feb to 9th May and from 7th Sep to 1st Dec, with a maximum count of at least 50 at Jebel Dhanna (AD) on 22nd April, part of an amazing passage of this species which saw a total of 144 recorded on this day.

Striolated Bunting (*Emberiza striolata*) R

Regularly recorded resident of wadis and stony areas near mountains, with a highest count of 50 at Al Aqqah (FUJ) on 15th Nov.

Little Bunting (*Emberiza pusilla*) VB

One was found and photographed at Wadi Bih (RAK) on 26th Oct; the 17th UAE record.

Black-headed Bunting (*Emberiza melanocephala*) PM

Out of 8 reports, 7 were from Wamm Farms (FUJ), with 3 birds there on the 14th and 27th Apr being the highest single count and the only spring reports. In the autumn, the farms held one on 1st Sep, 2 on 7th Sep and singles on 14th and 22nd Sep. The only record away from this site was of 2 at Al Qua'a Fodder Field (AD) on 20th Sep.

Corn Bunting (*Emberiza calandra*) WV

Seen during winter and early spring up to 10th Apr and from 5th Nov, sometimes in large flocks, reaching an impressive 82 at Al Dhahra (AD) on 10th Feb. Other decent peak counts included 38 at Wamm Farms (FUJ) on 15th Dec, 29 on Dalma Island (AD) on 6th Dec and 20 at Al Ankah (AD) on 10th Feb.

Brambling (*Fringilla montifringilla*) V

A female was found at a roadside puddle on Dalma Island (AD) on 3rd Dec.

Trumpeter Finch (*Bucanetes githagineus*) WV

Only 8 reports during the year, with only one record from the first half of the year: 2 at Green Mubazzarah (AD) on 28th Jan. The remaining records were all within a period of 5th Nov to 6th Dec, with 3 at Wamm Farms (AD) on 15th Nov the highest count, the same day that one was also seen on Ghagah Island (AD).

Common Rosefinch (*Carpodacus erythrinus*) UC

A very good year for this species, with a total of 11 reports, all but one from a period between 8th Sep and 28th Oct, all single birds except for 2 at Emirates Palace (AD) on 8th Sep and Sila'a (AD) on 28th Sep. Earlier in the year, one was with House Sparrows at the public park at Sila'a (AD) on 4th May.

House Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*) R

Common and widespread, with estimated counts reaching 1000 at various sites including Wamm Farms (FUJ), Dubai Pivot Fields (DUB), Al Qua'a Fodder Field (AD) and Al Ankah (AD).

Spanish Sparrow (*Passer hispaniolensis*) UC

A male at Wamm Farms (FUJ) on 14th Apr was the only record of this once local resident.

Yellow-throated Sparrow (*Petronia xanthocollis*) SV

Recorded from 14th Apr to 15th Jun, with a highest count of 12 from Hamraniyah Fields (RAK) on 17th Apr and Ain al-Ghamour (FUJ) on 15th Jun. One on Lulu Island (AD) on 27th Jan was an exceptional record.

Pale Rockfinch (*Carpospiza brachydactyla*) PM

A good year for this species, with 55 records between 13th Feb and 9th May, with a large flock of up to 400 at Al Dhahra (AD) on 9th Mar. In the autumn, 1 or 2 were seen at Wamm Farms (FUJ) between 1st Sep and 13th Oct.

Golden-backed Weaver (*Ploceus jacksoni*) UC

Almost exclusively seen at Emirates Palace (AD), with up to 4 being sporadically recorded. Away from this site, 2 were seen nest-building at Abu Dhabi Hilton Hotel (AD) on 16th Mar, whilst one was seen in the Al Jazeera area of Sharjah (SHJ) on 24th Mar.

Streaked Weaver (*Ploceus manyar*) R

Mostly reported from Al Warsan Lakes (DUB), where breeding was confirmed on 10th Jul and a high count of 30 was recorded on 8th Sep. Wadi Al Ain (AD) was also a reliable site, with up to 18 being seen on 4th Dec. Elsewhere, small numbers were reported on one or two dates from Wamm Farms (FUJ), Dubai Pivot Fields (DUB) and Zakher Lake (AD).

Indian Silverbill (*Euodice malabarica*) R

Common and widespread, with a high count of 75 at Nahel (AD) on 10th Feb.

Scaly-breasted Munia (*Lonchura punctulata*) R

There were 19 records from various sites throughout the year, with up to 40 being seen regularly at Wadi Al Ain (AD) from 25th Oct to the year end, including several juveniles.

BIRDS OF PRESUMED CAPTIVE ORIGIN

The following birds were recorded during the year and presumed to be of captive origin, including domestic wildfowl, falconers' birds and birds thought to originate from captive-breeding programs or private collections:

Black Swan (*Cygnus atratus*)
 Helmeted Guineafowl (*Numida meleagris*)
 Chukar (*Alectoris chukar*)
 Arabian Partridge (*Alectoris melanocephala*)
 Black Francolin (*Francolinus francolinus*)
 Common Pheasant (*Phasianus colchicus*)
 Indian Peafowl (*Pavo cristatus*)
 Marabou Stork (*Leptoptilos crumeniferus*)
 Yellow-billed Stork (*Mycteria ibis*)
 Sacred Ibis (*Threskiornis aethiopicus*)
 Lanner Falcon (*Falco biarmicus*)
 Saker Falcon (*Falco cherrug*)
 Macqueen's Bustard (*Chlamydotis macqueenii*)
 Pin-tailed Sandgrouse (*Pterocles alchata*)
 Zebra Dove (*Geopelia striata*)
 Budgerigar (*Melopsittacus undulatus*)
 Australian King Parrot (*Alisterus scapularis*)
 Plum-headed Parakeet (*Psittacula cyanocephala*)
 Blossom-headed Parakeet (*Psittacula roseata*)
 Nanday Parakeet (*Nandayus nenday*)
 Great Kiskadee (*Pitangus sulphuratus*)
 Common Hill Myna (*Gracula religiosa*)
 Superb Starling (*Lamprotornis superbus*)
 Lesser Masked Weaver (*Ploceus intermedius*)
 Village Weaver (*Ploceus cucullatus*)
 Baya Weaver (*Ploceus philippinus*)
 Southern Red Bishop (*Euplectes orix*)
 Black-winged Bishop (*Euplectes hordeaceus*)
 Yellow-crowned Bishop (*Euplectes afer*)
 Common Waxbill (*Estrilda astrild*)
 Zebra Waxbill (*Sporaeginthus subflavus*)
 Red Avadavat (*Amandava amandava*)
 Java Sparrow (*Lonchura oryzivora*)
 Black Swan (*Cygnus atratus*)
 Helmeted Guineafowl (*Numida meleagris*)
 Chukar (*Alectoris chukar*)
 Arabian Partridge (*Alectoris melanocephala*)
 Black Francolin (*Francolinus francolinus*)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This report is based on sightings reported by both visiting and resident birders, submitted either via the UAE birding website (www.uaebirding.com) or directly to the UAE Bird Recorder, Tommy Pedersen. The authors would like to thank all who contributed records during the year (listed below).

LIST OF OBSERVERS

Records were received from the following observers during the year:

Abdallah Al Zaabi	Hans-Peter Bieri	Noel Reynolds
Ahmed Al Ali	Hermis Haridas	Omar F. Al-Sheikhly
Ahmet Karatash	Huw Roberts	Oscar Campbell
Aideen & Ian Cunningham	Ian Boustead	Paul Jaquith
Aimee Cokayne	Jaap Westra	Paul Stewart
Ajmal Hasan	Jacky Judas	Paulo Paixao
Aki Pesic Pedersen	James Lewis	Peter Arras
Alan Jones	Jim Ward	Peter Hellyer
Alex JP Scott	Johannes Ferdinand	Peter Roosenschoon
Alistair McLee	John Iversen	Phil Hardwick
Andras Schmidt	John Waterbury	Raimundo
Andrew Bailey	Jonathan Angliss	Raimundo Soto
Andrew Twyman	Josh Smithson	Rex Andrew Bean
Andrew Ward	Justin Ede	Reza Khan
Aziz Ahmed	Kartikya Puri	Richard Hornby
Benjamin Baker	Kevin Hyland	Rick Pettebone
Brian & Doreen Harrison	Khalifa Al Dhaheri	Rob Gubiani
Christoph Moning	Lisa Banfield	Rob Quested
Christophe Gouraud	Liz Stewart	Robin Willbond
Cyrus Moqtaderi	Luke Naismith	Rod Fox
Daniel Handysides	Maarten Verhage	Ruan Davey
Dave Bowen	Magnus Ullman	Ryan Ingram
Dave Clark	Maitha Bint Khalid	Sajin Varghese
David Radnell	Maja Pesic Pedersen	Salma Alsuwaidi
Derrick Wilby	Maral Khaled Shuriqi	Sanalkumar Sreevalsan
Desmond Lobo	Marek Malinowski	Scott Young
E.N.H.G.	Mark Smiles	Shahid Khan
EAD	Mattias Ullman	Simon Peter Lloyd
Elis and Rick Simpson	Mike Barth	Simon Powell
Forrest Rowland	Mike Charlton	Simon WL Strickland
Francois Hupet	Mike Parr	Stephen Bell
Gary Feulner	Mitka Engebretsen	Steve James
George Armistead	Mohamed Almazrouei	Steve Parr
Gordon Atkins	Morten Gunther	Stuart Bargery
Graham Langley	Neil Crossley	Tommy Pedersen
Graham Talbot	Neil Tovey	Vaughan Ashby
Greg Simkins	Neil, Thomas & Christopher Dursley	Wim Heylen
Gregory Askew	Nick P. Williams	Yousif Al Ali
Gwen Appere	Nimeesh Suseelan	