

Short Notes — Notes Courtes

Observation of a Heuglin's Wheatear *Oenanthe heuglini* in the Djoudj National Park: a new species for Senegal

In the cool morning of 18 Jan 2007, in a small acacia wood with large areas of open steppe, at Poste de Gainthe (16°23'N, 16°15'W) in the Djoudj National Park, NW Senegal, our attention was drawn to a bird running across the open sandy ground under the trees. It resembled a female Northern Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe* but was generally darker. We spent 10 min. observing the bird, which seemed to stand a little more upright, with relatively longer legs, than Northern Wheatear (Fig. 1). The median and greater coverts, secondaries and primaries were dark brown with indistinct narrow yellowish fringes. The dark brown was uniform, with no paler area on the secondaries. The back, nape and crown were all a uniform dark brown and there was little contrast between the dark remiges and dark brown back. The narrow white supercilium, which was not very extensive behind the eye, contrasted strongly with the dark brown crown and blackish eye-stripe and lores. Behind the eye, the dark eye-stripe merged into the brown of the nape. The ear coverts were brown and the throat whitish. The primary projection was shorter, or similar in length, to the tertials. The tail appeared all black, with no white visible on the sides; but we did not see the bird fly, so narrow white sides to the base of the tail may have been hidden by the wings. Below, the breast and flanks were orange-buff, the belly and vent whiter, not uniform but with scattered orange-buff feathers. The legs were black.

Although it appeared to be a Heuglin's Wheatear *O. heuglini*, in order to rule out other possible *Oenanthe* spp., we thereafter paid special attention to all that we saw (tens of Northern Wheatears, a few Isabelline Wheatears *O. isabellina* and one Black-eared Wheatear *O. hispanica*) in January and February that year and in January 2008 in SW Mauritania. Moreover, we are familiar with Desert Wheatear *O. deserti* in Morocco and the Middle East. These observations confirmed us in our belief that the bird we report here was a Heuglin's Wheatear. The wing plumage of this bird was fresh, which explained the uniform brown colour and the thin, regular and clear fringes of the coverts and remiges. It was acquiring fresh feathers on the breast and belly which explained the sparse new orange-buff feathers on the underparts.

This appears to be the first record of Heuglin's Wheatear for Senegal (Morel & Morel 1990, Keith *et al.* 1992, Borrow & Demey 2001, Hoyo *et al.* 2005). It is a rare to locally common migrant between the W African sahel and savanna zones, and is recorded from nearby in southern Mauritania, and in Mali, Guinea and Burkina Faso.

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Figure 1. Painting from field notes of the Heuglin's Wheatear seen in Djoudj N.P., Senegal, 18 Jan 2007 (painting: A. Le Nevé).

References

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Arnaud Le Nevé¹, Bruno Bargain² & Gaétan Guyot³
¹5 rue Le Guennec, 29200 Brest, France. <arnaud.le-neve@wanadoo.fr>
²Trunvel, 29720 Tréogat, France
³Kerguien, 29720 Plonéour-Lanvern, France

Movements of a Lesser Flamingo *Phoeniconaias minor* in West Africa

West Africa hosts the smallest and least known population of the Lesser Flamingo *Phoeniconaias minor* (Trolliet & Fouquet 2001, Childress 2005, Childress *et al.* 2008). In 2009, the Max Planck Institute for Ornithology initiated a project to investigate movements of Lesser Flamingos by satellite telemetry (Salewski *et al.*