

Birds of Kazakhstan: new and interesting data

Arend Wassink & Gerald J Oreel

After the publication of our book on the birds of Kazakhstan (Wassink & Oreel 2007), a lot of new material was brought to our attention, including the first record of Himalayan Wagtail *Motacilla albaoides* for Kazakhstan. This selection of new and interesting data mainly consists of **1** unpublished records sent to us by correspondents now realizing their value, **2** records from recent publications, and **3** records from recent trip reports. All submitted records have been reviewed by us, which resulted into the rejection of several records. In addition, Hooded Crane *Grus monacha* and White-naped Crane *G vipio* have been removed from our systematic list of the birds of Kazakhstan (Wassink & Oreel 2007) (for details, see Removed species and rejected records).

New species and interesting records

Greylag Goose *Anser anser*

On 22 December 2007, two Siberian Greylag Geese *A a rubrirostris* were found at Sorbulak lake (43:40 N, 76:34 E), Almaty province (Valkenburg 2007). This is the first winter record outside South Kazakhstan province.

White-headed Duck *Oxyura leucocephala*

In 2006, during surveys in the lower Irgiz (48:33 N, 61:20 E) and Turgay river basins (49:16 N, 62:41 E), in Aqtöbe and Qostanay provinces, respectively (Sklyarenko 2007), 300 White-headed Ducks were found. Quantitative data for these regions have not been published before.

On 17 December 2007, an adult male White-headed Duck was found at Tengiz (46:19 N, 53:25 E), Atyrau province (Peterson 2008). This is the first winter record in Kazakhstan.

On 12 October 2007, a flock of 350 White-headed Ducks was found at Edelsor lake (49:16 N, 50:37 E), West Kazakhstan province (Bidashko & Kolbintsev in prep). This is the first time (at least in the last decades) that a flock numbering this high has been recorded in West Kazakhstan province.

Common Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula*

From the winter of 2002/03, Common Goldeneye has been found wintering at the Irtysh river at Öskemen (49:59 N, 82:37 E), East Kazakhstan province (Isabekov 2005, Scherbakov 2007). Wintering in East Kazakhstan province was previously only known from Markakol lake (48:44 N, 85:45 E) in the southern Altai (Wassink & Oreel 2007).

Pygmy Cormorant *Phalacrocorax pygmeus*

On 22 December 2007, two Pygmy Cormorants were

found at Sorbulak lake, Almaty province (Valkenburg 2007). This is the first winter record in Almaty province.

Great Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*

On 22 December 2007, 17 Great Cormorants were found at Sorbulak lake, Almaty province (Valkenburg 2007). This is the first winter record in Kazakhstan.

Great White Pelican *Pelecanus onocrotalus*

On 22 December 2007, two juvenile Great White Pelicans were photographed at Sorbulak lake, Almaty province (Valkenburg 2007). This is the first winter record in Kazakhstan.

Dalmatian Pelican *Pelecanus crispus*

In 2006, during surveys in the lower Irgiz and Turgay river basins, in Aqtöbe and Qostanay provinces, respectively (Sklyarenko 2007), a total of 300 pairs of Dalmatian Pelicans was found breeding. This is the first breeding estimate for these regions.

Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis*

On 28 May 2006, two adult Cattle Egrets were found at Tengiz, Atyrau province (Peterson 2008). Apart from breeding in 1992-93 (Wassink & Oreel 2007), this is the third record in Kazakhstan.

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*

On 13 May 2001, two Little Egrets were found at the Topar lakes (44:57 N, 75:33 E), Almaty province (Clement 2001). Records this far east of the breeding areas at the northern Caspian Sea are few.

Eurasian Spoonbill *Platalea leucorodia*

In 2001, a colony of 204 pairs of Eurasian Spoonbills was found at Shushkakol lake (43:00 N, 68:33 E), South Kazakhstan province (Triplet et al 2008). This is the largest colony found recently in Kazakhstan.

Black × Black-eared Kite *Milvus migrans x lineatus*

Various hybrids between Black Kite and Black-eared Kite – some ('*migrans* types') more similar to the former, others ('*lineatus* types') resembling the latter – occur in Kazakhstan while documented records of pure Black Kite (Wassink & Oreel 2007) or pure Black-eared Kite (Dick Forsman in litt) seem to be lacking.

On 24 September 2001, 2000 individuals were seen flying south-west at Öskemen, East Kazakhstan province (Scherbakov 2007), indicating that the foothills of the western Altai are – at least in autumn – an important raptor migration route.

Pallas's Fish Eagle *Haliaeetus leucoryphus*

On 21 May 2007, an immature Pallas's Fish Eagle was found at Sorbulak lake, Almaty province (Balmer & Betton 2007; Hugues Dufourny in litt). On 30 May 2007, another immature (three to four years old) was found at Kolshengel (44:20 N, 75:33 E), Taukum desert, Almaty province (Kenefick 2007; Vaughan Ashby in litt). Given the species' (increasing) rarity, all records are worth mentioning.

Cinereous Vulture *Aegypius monachus*

On 16 May 2007, three Cinereous Vultures (of which one was photographed) were found feeding on a carcass west of Astana (51:10 N, 71:30 E), Aqmola province (Hendriks 2007). The species is nowadays only occasionally found in central Kazakhstan (Wassink & Oreel 2007).

Western Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus*

On 22 December 2007, a female-type Western Marsh Harrier was found at Sorbulak lake, Almaty province (Valkenburg 2007). This is the first winter record in Almaty province.

Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus*

Hen Harrier is a rare winter visitor in the Volga-Ural semi-desert (49:00 N, 47:30 E) in West Kazakhstan province (Lindeman et al 2005). Wintering in West Kazakhstan province has not previously been published.

Levant Sparrowhawk *Accipiter brevipes*

Between 30 August and 5 September 2004, a total of six Levant Sparrowhawks was trapped at Dzhanybek (49:24 N, 46:48 E), Volga-Ural semi-desert, West Kazakhstan province (Lindeman et al 2005; Nikita Chernetsov in litt). These records indicate that the species is not only a breeding migrant (Wassink & Oreel 2007) but also a passage migrant.

In late June 2006, Levant Sparrowhawk was found breeding in the Uil (east of Uil) (49:05 N, 54:40 E) and Emba valleys (at Zhagabulak) (48:33 N, 57:34 E) (Kovshar et al 2007). In 2006, an estimated total of 20 pairs was found breeding in the central Mugodzhary mountains (48:45 N, 58:48 E) (BirdLife International 2007a). In mid-May 2006, an estimated 10-15 pairs was found breeding in the Bolshiye Barsuki semi-desert (Karyakin et al 2006). These records indicate that the species breeds in Aqtöbe province, south to the middle Uil and upper Emba valleys, the central Mugodzhary mountains (the latter already suggested by Wassink & Oreel 2007) and the Bolshiye Barsuki semi-desert.

Booted Eagle *Aquila pennata*

On 15 June 2006, a pair of Booted Eagles (including a displaying bird) was found in the Emba valley (at Zhagabulak), Aqtöbe province (Kovshar et al 2007). This is the first breeding record west of the Mugodzhary mountains.

Asian Imperial Eagle *Aquila heliaca*

In the winter of 2005/06, Asian Imperial Eagles were photographed on 18 January 2006 at Badam (42:23 N,

69:15 E), South Kazakhstan province, on 19 January 2006 at Merke (42:52 N, 73:11 E), Zhambyl province, and on 26 February 2006 at Koylyk (45:39 N, 80:14 E), Almaty province (Isabekov 2006). In the winter of 2007/08, a bird was photographed on 19 January 2008 at Chemolgan (43:23 N, 76:37 E), Almaty province (Isabekov 2008). Wintering in Kazakhstan was previously only known from the western Altai and the Kalbinskiy Altai, East Kazakhstan province, the Chu valley, Zhambyl and South Kazakhstan provinces, and the Barsa-Kelmes peninsula at the Aral Sea, Qyzylorda province (Wassink & Oreel 2007).

Common Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*

Common Moorhen has been found regularly wintering at Koshkurgan (43:22 N, 68:29 E), South Kazakhstan province (Ismail Uulu 2007). In the winter of 2003/04, four birds were found at the confluence of the Arys and Dzhabagly rivers (42:31 N, 70:28 E), South Kazakhstan province (Kolbintsev 2004). On 27 January 2008, one bird was found at Taraz, Zhambyl province (Vladimir Kolbintsev in litt). The only previously known winter record was on 31 December 1993 in Aksu-Dzhabagly nature reserve (42:15 N, 70:39 E), Talasskiy Alatau, South Kazakhstan province (Wassink & Oreel 2007).

Macqueen's Bustard *Chlamydotis macqueenii*

Although the contrary is repeatedly mentioned in the literature, for instance, Dolgushin (1962), Gavrilov & Gavrilov (2005), Wassink & Oreel (2007), Macqueen's Bustard does not breed in the Taysogan semi-desert (48:16 N, 53:29 E) in north-eastern Atyrau province (Saraev et al 2007). In Atyrau province, the species breeds west to the eastern side of the Ural valley (48:00 N, 51:49 E) and north to Inder lake (48:28 N, 51:55 E) and the Sagiz valley (48:16 N, 54:46 E).

Collared Pratincole *Glareola pratincola*

On 4 July 2007, a Collared Pratincole was found at Korgalzhyn nature reserve (50:28 N, 69:15 E), Aqmola province (M W Andersen 2007). This is the third record in Aqmola province.

Black-winged Pratincole *Glareola nordmanni*

On 11 October 2007, two Black-winged Pratincoles were found at Byrkazan lake (49:11 N, 50:25 E), West Kazakhstan province (Bidashko & Kolbintsev in prep). This is the first October record in Kazakhstan.

Lesser Sand Plover *Charadrius mongolus*

On 19 May 2006, four summer-plumaged Lesser Sand Plovers were found in the Taukum desert, c 25 km from Kolshengel, Almaty province (Colin Bradshaw in litt). This is the eighth record in Kazakhstan.

Sociable Lapwing *Vanellus gregarius*

On 19 October 2007, a Sociable Lapwing tagged with a satellite transmitter in Korgalzhyn nature reserve, Aqmola province, was found in a flock of 3200 birds in Ceylanpinar district in south-eastern Turkey. This number confirms, as already suggested by Sheldon et al (2006),



113 Hybrid Black x Black-eared Kite / hybride Zwarte x Oostelijke Zwarte Wouw *Milvus migrans x lineatus* ('*migrans* type'), second-year, Sorbulak lake, Almaty province, Kazakhstan, 1 June 2007 (Aurélien Audevard)

114 Cinereous Vulture / Monniksgier *Aegypius monachus*, immature, with Steppe Eagle / Stepparend *Aquila nipalensis*, west of Astana, Aqmola province, Kazakhstan, 16 May 2007 (Rob Bouwman)



that the previous estimate of the world population (600-1800 birds) was too low. From the breeding area, the bird flew west through the Volga-Ural region (48:55 N, 49:21 E) and then followed a southerly direction (through the Caucasus) to Turkey (BirdLife International 2007b). This means that not only the western Kazakhstan population passes through the Volga-Ural region (Wassink & Oreel 2007) but, at least partly, also the central Kazakhstan population.

Asian Dowitcher *Limnodromus semipalmatus*

On 4 July 2007, a summer-plumaged Asian Dowitcher was found at Korgalzhyn nature reserve, Aqmola province (M W Andersen 2007). This is the seventh record in the Korgalzhyn nature reserve-Astana region (where the total number of recorded birds now stands at 20). There are only two records of migrating birds outside this region (Wassink & Oreel 2007).

Common Black-headed Gull *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

In the winter of 2001/02, three Common Black-headed Gulls were found at Taraz (42:54 N, 71:22 E), Zhambyl province (Kolbintsev 2004). On 22 December 2007, 13 birds were found at Sorbulak lake, Almaty province. These are the first winter records away from the Caspian Sea.

Mew Gull *Larus canus*

On 21 January 2007, 24 Mew Gulls (20 adults and four immatures) were found at Tengiz, Atyrau province (Peterson 2008). This is the second winter record in Kazakhstan.

Caspian Gull *Larus cachinnans*

Caspian Gulls ringed as chicks at Alakol lake (46:08 N, 81:42 E), in both East Kazakhstan and Almaty provinces, have been recorded in colonies of Baraba Gull *L. heuglini barabensis* at Lake Chany, Novosibirsk province, Russia (Veen et al 2005). These records indicate that Caspian Gull may have a more northerly breeding distribution in Kazakhstan than previously assumed (Wassink & Oreel 2007), (partly) within the breeding range of Baraba Gull.

On 22 December 2007, nine Caspian Gulls were found at Sorbulak lake, Almaty province (Valkenburg 2007). This is the first winter record in Almaty province.

Pallas's Sandgrouse *Syrnhaptes paradoxus*

On 31 July 2007, a Pallas's Sandgrouse was found at Ters Asthibulak lake (42:40 N, 70:54 E), Zhambyl province (De Schampelaere 2007). Records in the Talasskiy Alatau foothills are few.

Hill Pigeon *Columba rupestris*

During 2000-04, Hill Pigeon has not been found breeding in the Manrak mountains (47:24 N, 84:13 E) (Berezovikov & Levin 2007). This seems to indicate that, after the (almost) disappearance from the Altai (49:18 N, 85:13 E) and the Tien Shan (43:03 N, 76:06 E) (Wassink & Oreel 2007), the species has (almost) disappeared from the Manrak mountains as well.

European Turtle Dove *Streptopelia turtur*

During 2000-04, European Turtle Dove *S. t. arenicola* has not been found breeding in the Manrak mountains. This is in line with the overall declining breeding numbers in eastern and south-eastern Kazakhstan (Berezovikov & Levin 2007). After formerly being common, the species is now apparently rare or even absent in the Manrak mountains, East Kazakhstan province.

Oriental Turtle Dove *Streptopelia orientalis*

In June 2003 and on 15 June 2006, a Western Oriental Turtle Dove *S. o. meena* was found in forest at Zhagabulak in the Emba valley, Aqtöbe province (Kovshar et al 2007). These are the first records west of the Mugodzhary mountains, Aqtöbe province, possibly indicating breeding.

Oriental Cuckoo *Cuculus optatus*

On 5 May 2007, a singing Oriental Cuckoo was found in the Topar valley (45:03 N, 75:00 E), Almaty province (B Andersen 2007). Records away from the breeding areas are few. The species is only more or less regularly reported in May in the Tengiz-Korgalzhyn region, Aqmola province (Wassink & Oreel 2007).

Boreal Owl *Aegolius funereus*

On 28 October 2002, two exhausted Boreal Owls were found at Öskemen, East Kazakhstan province (Scherbakov 2007). There are only few records away from the breeding areas.

European Roller *Coracias garrulus*

On 16 May 2007, a European Roller was found at Korgalzhyn (50:35 N, 70:01 E), Korgalzhyn nature reserve, Aqmola province (Hendriks 2007). This is the fifth record in the Tengiz-Korgalzhyn region since 2000 (Wassink & Oreel 2007).

Eurasian Wryneck *Jynx torquilla*

On 21 June 2006, a singing Eurasian Wryneck was heard in forest along the Uil river (south of Uil), Aqtöbe province. The next day (22 June), two birds were seen in the same area (Kovshar et al 2007). These may be the first breeding records in Aqtöbe province, away from the Ile valley (50:16 N, 57:17 E).

Black Woodpecker *Dryocopus martius*

On 18 March and between 31 March and 8 April 2006, Black Woodpeckers attending nestholes were photographed at Oral (51:14 N, 52:22 E) (at Kirov park and in the Chagan valley, respectively), West Kazakhstan province (Isabekov 2006). These are the first breeding records in western Kazakhstan. At least some of the previous records from the Ural valley (Wassink & Oreel 2007) might, in fact, have referred to local breeders.

Calandra Lark *Melanocorypha calandra*

On 5 July 2007, a Calandra Lark was found in Korgalzhyn nature reserve, Aqmola province (M W Andersen 2007). This is the fourth record in Aqmola province.



115 White-headed Wagtail / Witkopkwikstaart
Motacilla leucocephala, male, Kolshengel, Taukum desert, Almaty province, Kazakhstan, 10 May 2007
(Rob Bouwman)

Yellow-headed Wagtail *Motacilla lutea*

On 7 May 2007, a male Yellow-headed Wagtail was found at Kolshengel, Taukum desert, Almaty province (Bird 2007). On 18 May 2007, two males were found at Korgalzhyn, Korgalzhyn nature reserve, Aqmola province (Hendriks 2007). This species is only irregularly recorded in the eastern half of Kazakhstan.

White-headed Wagtail *Motacilla leucocephala*

On 9-11 May 2007, five White-headed Wagtails (including three males, of which one was photographed) were found at Kolshengel, Taukum desert, Almaty province (Hendriks 2007). This species is not recorded annually in Kazakhstan.

Citrine Wagtail *M. citreola*

On 15 March 2008, a male Black-backed Citrine Wagtail *M. c. calcarata* was found at Chemolgan (43:23 N, 76:37 E), Almaty province (Valkenburg 2008). This is the first March record in Kazakhstan. Previously, birds were not recorded before late April (Wassink & Oreel 2007).

Himalayan Wagtail *Motacilla alboides*

On 30 May 2007, a male Himalayan Wagtail was photographed at Kaskelen (43:12 N, 76:37 E), Almaty province (Hugues Dufourny in litt). This is the first record in Kazakhstan.

East Siberian Wagtail *Motacilla ocularis*

On 7-11 May 2007, at least five East Siberian Wagtails were found at Kolshengel, Taukum desert, Almaty province (Bird 2007, Hendriks 2007). Two previous records were known from Kazakhstan (Wassink & Oreel 2007).

Winter Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*

On 3-6 October 2004, three Winter Wrens *T. t. troglodytes* were trapped at Dzhanlybek in the Volga-Ural semi-desert, West Kazakhstan province (Nikita



116 Himalayan Wagtail / Himalayakwikstaart
Motacilla alboides, male, Kaskelen, Almaty province, Kazakhstan, 30 May 2007 (Alain Baccaert)

Chernetsov in litt). This indicates that (autumn) migration also takes place considerably west of the Ural valley and that the species is not only a winter visitor (Wassink & Oreel 2007) but also a passage migrant.

Dunnock *Prunella modularis*

Between 28 September and 6 October 2004, a total of 17 Dunnocks was trapped at Dzhanlybek in the Volga-Ural semi-desert, West Kazakhstan province (Nikita Chernetsov in litt). These are the first documented records west of the Ural valley.

Common Nightingale *Luscinia megarhynchos*

In June 2006, Common Nightingale proved to be a common breeder in the Uil (at Uil), Temir (48:29 N, 57:26 E) and Emba valleys (at Zhagabulak), Aqtöbe province (Kovshar et al 2007). These breeding occurrences are well west of the Mugodzhary mountains, formerly regarded as the north-westerly limit of the breeding range in Kazakhstan.

Pied Bush Chat *Saxicola caprata*

On 21 May 2007, a first-summer male Pied Bush Chat was found at Sorbulak lake, Almaty province (Hugues Dufourny in litt). This is the first record in Almaty province.

Redwing *Turdus iliacus*

On 22 December 2007, two Redwings were found c 3 km north of Chemolgan (43:23 N, 76:37 E), Almaty province (Valkenburg 2007). This is the first winter record in Almaty province.

Upcher's Warbler *Hippolais languida*

On 9 July 2007, an Upcher's Warbler was found at Karaoy (45:52 N, 74:48 E), Almaty province (M W Andersen 2007). This is the second record at this location (the previous one was on 24 May 2006), well east of

the nearest breeding area, the Assa valley (42:40 N, 71:00 E) in Zhambyl province (Wassink & Oreel 2007).

Blyth's Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus dumetorum*

On 13 June 2006, two Blyth's Reed Warblers were trapped at Pokrovka (49:20 N, 57:03 E) in the Temir valley, Aqtöbe province (Kovshar et al 2007). However, the authors' claim that they were breeding (what would be the first breeding record in Aqtöbe province) is without supporting evidence. Since the record falls within the spring migration period (which continues to mid-June; Wassink & Oreel 2007), we prefer to treat them as migrants.

Sykes's Warbler *Acrocephalus rama*

On 3 July 2005, a pair of Sykes's Warblers with juveniles was found and sound-recorded in Korgalzhyn nature reserve, Aqmola province (Lindholm & Aalto 2005). This is the first (breeding) record in Aqmola province.

Ménétries's Warbler *Sylvia mystacea*

On 8 July 2007, a male Ménétries's Warbler was found at Zhelturanga (45:04 N, 75:15 E), Almaty province (M W Andersen 2007). This is the second record in Almaty province.

Yellow-browed Warbler *Phylloscopus inornatus*

On 25 August (two) and 20 September 2004 (one), Yellow-browed Warblers were trapped at Dzhanybek in the Volga-Ural semi-desert, Kazakhstan province (Lindeman et al 2005; Nikita Chernetsov in litt). These are the first records in West Kazakhstan province.

Common Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita*

Between late August and early October 2003-04 and in late May 2005, a total of 349 Common Chiffchaffs was trapped at Dzhanybek in the Volga-Ural semi-desert, West Kazakhstan province. All belonged to the subspecies *P c abietinus* (Nikita Chernetsov in litt). Therefore, it seems safe to assume that Siberian Chiffchaff *P c tristis* does not migrate west through the Volga-Ural region, at least not in West Kazakhstan province.

Collared Flycatcher *Ficedula albicollis*

On 23 (one), 24 (one) and 28 August 2004 (two), first-winter Collared Flycatchers were trapped at Dzhanybek in the Volga-Ural semi-desert, West Kazakhstan province (Lindeman et al 2005; Nikita Chernetsov in litt). These are the second to fifth records in Kazakhstan; all five records are from West Kazakhstan province.

Long-tailed Bushtit *Aegithalos caudatus*

On 14 June 2001, a pair of White-headed Long-tailed Bushtits *A c caudatus* with juveniles was found at Dzhanybek in the Volga-Ural semi-desert, West Kazakhstan province (Lindeman et al 2005). This is the first breeding record west of the Ural valley in West Kazakhstan province.

European Blue Tit *Cyanistes caeruleus*

Between late August and early October 2004, a total of

759 European Blue Tits *C c caeruleus* was trapped at Dzhanybek in the Volga-Ural semi-desert, West Kazakhstan province (Nikita Chernetsov in litt). Although the species also breeds in the Volga-Ural semi-desert in West Kazakhstan province south to Urda (48:46 N, 47:26 E) (Lindeman et al 2005, Wassink & Oreel 2007), a significant proportion of the trapped birds is assumed to refer to passage migrants. This indicates that the species is not only a resident (Wassink & Oreel 2007) but also a passage migrant and winter visitor.

On 15 June 2006, eight European Blue Tits (adults feeding juveniles) were found at Zhagabulak in the Emba valley, Aqtöbe province. This is the first breeding record in Aqtöbe province.

Great Tit *Parus major*

From 1998, Great Tit has been found breeding at Dzhanybek in the Volga-Ural semi-desert, West Kazakhstan province (Lindeman et al 2005). This is the first documented breeding record west of the Ural valley.

Between late August and early October 2004, a total of 212 Great Tits was trapped at Dzhanybek in the Volga-Ural semi-desert, West Kazakhstan province (Nikita Chernetsov in litt). Although the species also breeds in the Volga-Ural semi-desert in West Kazakhstan province (Lindeman et al 2005), a significant proportion of the trapped birds is assumed to refer to passage migrants. This indicates that the species is not only a resident (Wassink & Oreel 2007) but also a passage migrant and winter visitor.

Coal Tit *Periparus ater*

On 29 September 2004, three Coal Tits *P a ater* were trapped at Dzhanybek in the Volga-Ural semi-desert, West Kazakhstan province (Nikita Chernetsov in litt). This is the first record west of the Ural valley, indicating that the species is not only a resident and winter visitor (Wassink & Oreel 2007) but also a passage migrant.

Willow Tit *Poecile montanus*

Between early September and early October 2004 and in mid-May 2005, 19 and four Willow Tits, respectively, were trapped at Dzhanybek in the Volga-Ural semi-desert, West Kazakhstan province (Nikita Chernetsov in litt). Since the nearest breeding areas are situated in the eastern half of Kazakhstan, these records must refer to passage migrants. These are the first records west of the Ural valley, indicating that the species is not only a resident and winter visitor (Wassink & Oreel 2007) but also a passage migrant.

Eurasian Treecreeper *Certhia familiaris*

On 27 September 2004, a Eurasian Treecreeper *C f familiaris* was trapped at Dzhanybek in the Volga-Ural semi-desert, West Kazakhstan province (Nikita Chernetsov in litt). This is the first record west of the Ural valley, and indicates that the species is not only a winter visitor (Wassink & Oreel 2007) but also a passage migrant.

Eurasian Golden Oriole *Oriolus oriolus*

Eurasian Golden Oriole *O o oriolus* breeds at Dzhanybek

in the Volga-Ural semi-desert, West Kazakhstan province (Lindeman et al 2005). This is the first evidence of breeding west of the Ural valley in West Kazakhstan province.

Turkestan Shrike *Lanius phoenicuroides*

On 20 June 2006, a male Turkestan Shrike feeding two juveniles was observed in the northern Taysogan semi-desert, and, on 21 June 2006, a pair was found in the Uil valley (at Miyaly) (48:53 N, 53:47 E). The males involved belonged to the 'karelini type' (Kovshar et al 2007). These records, both in north-eastern Atyrau province, indicate a considerable north-westerly extension of the breeding range (c 220 km north-east of the middle Emba valley, previously regarded as the most north-easterly limit of the breeding range; Wassink & Oreel 2007).

Long-tailed Shrike *Lanius schach*

On 4 April 2004, a Long-tailed Shrike was photographed at Almaty (43:15 N, 76:57 E), Almaty province (Isabekov 2004). This is an exceptionally early date since spring birds usually start returning from late April (Wassink & Oreel 2007).

Steppe Grey Shrike *Lanius pallidirostris*

On 11 June 2007, a Steppe Grey Shrike was found at Korgalzhyn nature reserve, Aqmola province (Kenefick 2007). This is the first record in Aqmola province.

Eurasian Jay *Garrulus glandarius*

From late March to mid-April and from late September to October, Eurasian Jay is common in the Volga-Ural semi-desert, West Kazakhstan province; it was not recorded in winter (Lindeman et al 2005). Eurasian Jay was not known to occur west of the Ural valley. This also indicates that the species is not only a resident and visitor (Wassink & Oreel 2007) but also a passage migrant.

Pander's Ground Jay *Podoces panderi*

The subspecies *P. p. ilensis* is becoming increasingly rare. One of the few areas where this subspecies (the only endemic bird taxon of Kazakhstan) has been found recently is situated north of Karaoy, Almaty province, where, on 10 July 2007, two juveniles were observed (M W Andersen 2007).

Northern Raven *Corvus corax*

On 7 October 2007, a Northern Raven was found in the Ural valley, c 30 km west of Chapaev (50:20 N, 51:17 E), West Kazakhstan province (Bidashko & Kolbintsev in prep). This is the first record in West Kazakhstan province.

Desert Finch *Rhodospiza obsoleta*

From 2002, Desert Finch has been found breeding at Tengiz, Atyrau province (Peterson 2008). These are the first (breeding) records in Atyrau province.

Removed species and rejected records

Shikra *Accipiter badius*

On 14 June 2006, an adult female Shikra was reported at Zhagabulak in the Emba valley, Aqtöbe province (Kovshar et al 2007). This would be the first record in Aqtöbe province. However, the description contradicts the identification on several points and there is no photographic evidence supporting the identification.

Hooded Crane *Grus monacha*

On 7 June 1885, a Hooded Crane was reportedly shot at Atyrau (47:07 N, 51:53 E), Atyrau province (Wassink & Oreel 2007). However, its skin could not be traced in collections (Kovshar & Kuzmina 1984; Roman Kashkarov in litt, Vladimir Loskot in litt, Yaroslav Red'kin in litt), and there is no written or photographic evidence supporting the identification. Consequently, Hooded Crane has been removed from our systematic list of the birds of Kazakhstan (Wassink & Oreel 2007).

An (undocumented) report of Hooded Crane at the Kurchum delta (48:26 N, 83:53 E), Zaysan region, East Kazakhstan province (Gavrilov & Gavrilov 2005), had already been rejected (Wassink & Oreel 2007).

White-naped Crane *Grus vipio*

In late April 1909, a White-naped Crane was reportedly shot from a group of five at Qyzylorda (44:51 N, 65:31 E), Qyzylorda province, and, on 23 October 1913, a bird was reportedly shot at Kamyshlybash lake (46:11 N, 61:56 E), Qyzylorda province (Wassink & Oreel 2007). However, their skins could not be traced in collections (Kovshar & Kuzmina 1984; Roman Kashkarov in litt, Vladimir Loskot in litt, Yaroslav Red'kin in litt), and there is no written or photographic evidence supporting the identifications. Consequently, White-naped Crane has been removed from our systematic list of the birds of Kazakhstan (Wassink & Oreel 2007).

Variable Wheatear *Oenanthe picata*

On 13 July 2007, two Variable Wheatears *O. p. capistrata* were reported in the Sharyn canyon (43:37 N, 79:18 E), Almaty province (M W Andersen 2007) (what would be the first record in Almaty province). The nearest breeding area is situated c 850 km away at Darbaza (41:34 N, 69:05 E), South Kazakhstan province (Wassink & Oreel 2007). There are no descriptions or photographs supporting the identification.

Hume's Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus humei*

On 9 July 2007, 30 Hume's Leaf Warblers were reported between Zhelturanga and Karaoy, Almaty province (M W Andersen 2007). However, this report falls well outside the migration periods. In summer, the species is expected to occur in the higher mountains in southern and eastern Kazakhstan (Wassink & Oreel 2007), rather than in a (semi-)desert environment.

Plea for assistance

There remain enormous gaps in our knowledge of the birds of Kazakhstan. We would, therefore, be most grate-

ful to receive records and other relevant data for future publications and to improve and update any second edition of *The birds of Kazakhstan* (Wassink & Oreel 2007). All correspondence should be sent to: Arend Wassink, Postweg 64, 1795 JR De Cocksdorp, Netherlands (arendwassink@texel.com).

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Samenvatting

VOGELS VAN KAZACHSTAN: NIEUWE EN INTERESSANTE GEGEVENS In dit artikel wordt een overzicht gegeven van interessante vogelwaarnemingen die aanvullingen of correcties vormen op de informatie in Wassink & Oreel (2007). Ook wordt een aantal waarnemingen vermeld waarvan de documentatie volgens de auteurs onvoldoende is zekergestellt. Het overzicht bevat één nieuwe soort voor Kazachstan, Himalayakwikstaart *Motacilla alboides*. Twee soorten zijn door de auteurs van de nationale lijst afgevoerd vanwege het feit dat de documentatie niet (meer) te traceren is, Monnikskraanvogel *Grus monacha* en Witnekraanvogel *G vipio*.

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Arend Wassink, Postweg 64, 1795 JR De Cocksdorp, Netherlands (arendwassink@texel.com)
Gerald J Oreel, Deurganck 15, 1902 AN Castricum, Netherlands (gerald.oreel@planet.nl)