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Ornithological observations on Karadağ, Konya province, Turkey

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Abstract: Few ornithological observations are available from the isolated massifs of the Central Plateau; and for Karadağ, Konya province there exists only the records of Ramsay (1914) in the summer of 1907. Observations from a visit in June 1996 are presented and compared with those of Ramsay and data from other sources, principally Roselaar (1995). The total number of bird species recorded on the mountain is 53, of which 18 have been proven to breed; it seems probable that the globally threatened White-tailed Eagle formerly bred in the study area.

Karadağ'da (Konya İli, Türkiye) Ornitolojik Gözlemler

Özet: İç Anadolu'nun ayrı durum masiflerinden ornitolojik gözlemlerin sayısı çok azdır; üstelik Karadağ (Konya ili) ile ilgili olarak sadece Ramsay'nin 1907 yazında yaptığı gözlemlerin kayıtları (1914) vardır. Şimdiki çalışmada, Paziran 1996'da yapılan gözlemler sunulup, Ramsay'nin gözlemleri ve Roselaar (1995) başta olmak üzere başka kaynaklardan alınan verilerle karşılaştırılmıştır. Dağ'da 18'nin ürettiği kanıtlanan toplam 53 kuş türünün kaydı vardır; dünya çapında soyu tükenmek üzere olan Akkuyruklu Kartal'ın çalışma bölgesinde eskiden ürettiği olasıdır.

Introduction

Ornithological observations from the isolated massifs of Inner Anatolia or Turkey's Central Plateau are few. Here, records from a visit to Karadağ, Konya province on 19 June 1996 are presented and compared with data supplied by Ramsay (1914), the only other ornithologist to have visited the mountain, in the summer of 1907, and Roselaar (1995) who presents specimen and sight data from a number of other such massifs in the region.

Karadağ is a volcanic mountain with a peak of 2288 m, situated c. 78 km south-east of Konya. The principal geographical features of the area are adequately described in Ramsay (1914). Despite the latter's observations (of 33 species), its breeding avifauna is incompletely known, the present author's observations add 20 new species (Honey Buzzard *Pernis apivorus*, Short-toed Eagle *Circaetus gallicus*, Golden Eagle *Aquila chrysaetos*, Saker Falcon *Falco cherrug*, Horned Lark *Eremophila alpestris*, House Martin *Delichon urbica*, Water Pipit *Anthus spinoletta*, Black Redstart *Phoenicurus ochruros*, Stonechat *Saxicola torquata*, Northern Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe*, Common

Whitethroat *Sylvia communis*, Blue Tit *Parus caeruleus*, Great Tit *Parus major*, Masked Shrike *Lanius nubicus*, Chough *Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax*, Rock Sparrow *Petronia petronia*, Snowfich *Montifringilla nivalis*, Linnets *Carduelis cannabina*, Crimson-winged Finch *Rhodopechys sanguinea* and Rock Bunting *Emberiza cia*), of which seven were proven to breed. Such observations are helpful in further elucidating the distribution of Turkish birds, especially passerines, which have received insufficient attention, with the exception of Roselaar (1995).

Notes on Species Recorded

All undated observations refer to 19 June 1996.

Honey Buzzard *Pernis apivorus*

Pair seen calling near the summit. Not recorded by Ramsay (1914). There remain relatively few observations of this species in suitable nesting habitat during the breeding season in Turkey, especially for Inner Anatolia (Kasperek 1992).

Black Kite *Milvus migrans*

Two at the base of the mountain. Ramsay (1914) found the empty nest belonging to a pair on 26 May 1907.

Egyptian Vulture *Neophron percnopterus*

One bird. Two or three pairs were discovered nesting in late May 1907 (Ramsay 1914).

Short-toed Eagle *Circaetus gallicus*

One. Not recorded by Ramsay (1914)

Golden Eagle *Aquila chrysaetos*

One near the summit. Not recorded by Ramsay (1914).

Saker Falcon *Falco cherrug*

One at the base of the mountain. Not recorded by Ramsay (1914) but recorded comparatively frequently in nearby areas of the Central Plateau.

Chukar *Alectoris chukar*

One. Common throughout the massif, although hunted by local people, with two nests containing fresh eggs discovered in late May and other recently laid eggs brought to the author in June 1907 (Ramsay 1914).

Turtle Dove *Streptopelia turtur*

One. Considered to be common by Ramsay (1914), who found a nest of this species, containing two small young on 13 June 1907.

Common Cuckoo *Cuculus canorus*

One calling. Fairly common (Ramsay 1914).

Wood Lark *Lullula arborea*

Three singing in oak woodland on the south-east side of the massif. One or two pairs were found in patchy oak scrub by Ramsay (1914).

Horned Lark *Eremophila alpestris kumerloevae*

30 including at least one fledged juvenile near the summit. Not recorded by Ramsay (1914).

Crag Martin *Ptyonoprogne fuligula*

Two. Ramsay (1914) found a number of this species, including a nest on 11 June 1907.

House Martin *Delichon urbica*

50 around nestholes near the summit. Not recorded by Ramsay (1914) and Roselaar (1995) considered it to be largely absent from the Central Plateau.

Water Pipit *Anthus spinoletta*

10 including a pair feeding two fledged young near

the summit. Not recorded by Ramsay (1914) and Roselaar (1995) maps very few breeding localities in Inner Anatolia.

Black Redstart *Phonicuros ochreus*

20 including a pair feeding fledged young, principally near the summit. Not recorded by Ramsay (1914).

Stonechat *Saxicola torquata*

Five including one fledged young. Not recorded by Ramsay (1914) and regarded as largely absent from the Central Plateau by Roselaar (1995).

Northern Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe*

15 birds. Not recorded by Ramsay (1914).

Finsch's Wheatear *Oenanthe finschii*

One. Ramsay (1914) found it not uncommon and watched a family party in mid-June.

Rock Thrush *Monticola saxatilis*

Eight including several adults food-carrying. Ramsay (1914) regarded it as less common than its close congener but recorded a pair food-carrying on 30 May and a family with just fledged young on 10 June 1907. Only known from the fringes of the Central Plateau (Roselaar 1995).

Blue Rock Thrush *Monticola solitarius*

One. Ramsay (1914) considered it not uncommon. It is absent from much of the Central Plateau (Roselaar 1995)

Blackbird *Turdus merula*

20 birds. Ramsay (1914) found it 'not uncommon' and was led to a nest, containing very young birds, in the oak scrub on 26 May 1907. Known only from the fringes, and in isolated forests, of the Central Plateau (Roselaar 1995).

Lesser Whitethroat *Sylvia curruca*

10 birds. Ramsay (1914) found nests containing fresh eggs (four to six eggs in each clutch) or newly hatched young in the lower parts of the mountain during the last week of May 1907, but in another nest found subsequently, the eggs were not laid until after 8 June.

Common Whitethroat *Sylvia communis*

One. Not recorded by Ramsay (1914).

Blue Tit *Parus caeruleus*

Two birds. Not recorded by Ramsay (1914) and considered to be largely absent from the Central Plateau by Roselaar (1995).

Great Tit *Parus major*

Heard. Not recorded by Ramsay (1914) and regarded as scarce on the Central Plateau by Roselaar (1995).

Rock Nuthatch *Sitta neumayer*

Five birds. Regarded as fairly common by Ramsay (1914) who discovered a nest of this species on 30 May 1907 and observed a family party during the first half of June.

Lesser Grey Shrike *Lanius minor*

Pair on the north-west side of massif. Described as fairly common but local by Ramsay (1914), who found six nests belonging to this species between 27-29 May, and further one still under construction on 21 June 1907.

Masked Shrike *Lanius nubicus*

Pair mobbing the previous species. Not recorded by Ramsay (1914). Breeding season records from the Central Plateau appear to be confined to the northern fringes (Roselaar 1995).

Jay *Garrulus glandarius*

Five. Ramsay (1914) saw three birds in oak woodland on 26 May 1907.

Chough *Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax*

11 near the summit. Not recorded by Ramsay (1914).

Rock Sparrow *Petronia petronia*

Five including a pair food-carrying. Not recorded by Ramsay (1914).

Snowfinch *Montifringilla nivalis*

One near the summit. Not recorded by Ramsay (1914) but expected as known from all mountains over 2000 m (Roselaar 1995).

Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*

c. 20 singing in oak woodland on the south-east side of the massif. In contrast, Ramsay (1914) heard just two or three birds on one occasion in late May. Considered to be local in forests fringing the Central Plateau (Roselaar 1995).

Linnet *Carduelis cannabina*

40 birds. Not recorded by Ramsay (1914).

Crimson-winged Finch *Rhodopechys sanguinea*

Six including a fledged juvenile. Not recorded by Ramsay (1914) and still known from relatively few localities on the Central Plateau (Roselaar 1995) since its discovery there by Lehmann & Mertens (1969) see below.

Rock Bunting *Emberiza cia*

10 birds. Not recorded by Ramsay (1914) and considered by Roselaar (1995) to be virtually absent from the Central Plateau.

Ortolan Bunting *Emberiza hortulana*

10 birds. Ramsay (1914) described the species as fairly common but provides no further information, and Roselaar (1995) regarded the species as largely absent from the Central Plateau.

Species observed by Ramsay (1914) but not by the author

(*) indicates species recorded breeding.

Griffon Vulture *Gyps fulvus*, Lesser Kestrel *Falco naumanni*, Little Owl *Athene noctua*, Rock Dove *Columba livia* (*), Alpina Swift *Apus melba*, Bee-eater *Merops apiaster*, Calandra Lark *Melanocorypha calandra* (*), Swallow *Hirundo rustica* (*), Isabelline Wheatear *Oenanthe isabellina*, White-throated Robin *Irania gutturalis* (*), Red-backed Shrike *Lanius collurio*, Magpie *Pica pica* (*), Rose-coloured Starling *Sturnus roseus*, Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis* (*), Black-headed Bunting *Emberiza melanocephala* (*) and Corn Bunting *Miliaria calandra*.

In addition, Ramsay also mentions probable records of White-tailed Eagle *Haliaeetus albicilla* and Great Spotted Cuckoo *Clamator glandarius*, the former probably nesting.

A total of 53 species have been recorded on Karadag, of which 18 have been proven to breed, and several others must surely do so.

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