

BREVI NOTE / SHORT NOTES

BRUNO MASSA

ON SOME INTERESTING BIRDS FROM LEBANON

*Su alcuni uccelli interessanti in Libano*

A naturalistic journey to Lebanon in May 2010 was an opportunity to make some interesting observations on local birds. Observations were carried out by binoculars Leica Trinovid 10x42 in central and north of the country (Fig. 1). In this short note ten selected species are reported and discussed. The results show that this country still needs a more careful ornithological exploration.

**Eastern White Pelican *Pelecanus onocrotalus***

North Lebanon, Tripoli 22.V.2010, 2 ind. observed by A. Carapezza on sunset.

It has been reported as occasional passage migrant by BENSON (1970) and eventual wintering by PORTER *et al.* (1996) and PORTER & ASPINALL (2010). Observations in May are very unusual.

**Great Spotted Cuckoo *Clamator glandarius***

North Lebanon, Jebel Mekmel, Aayoun Ourghouch (2000 m) 19.V.2010 (1 fledgling feeding on caterpillars of *Aglais urticae* on *Urtica* sp.).

There are few records of breeding in the Lebanon mountains (BENSON, 1970; PORTER *et al.*, 1996; PORTER & ASPINALL, 2010). This cuckoo is generally host of Magpie *Pica pica*, also present in the locality. Very probably its egg was laid in March.

**Red-backed Shrike *Lanius collurio***

North Lebanon, Fnaideq 22.V.2010 (1. ind. with prey and 1 nest with four eggs); Jebel Qamaouaa (1800 m) 22.V.2010 (one pair in courtship).

PORTER *et al.* (1996) and PORTER & ASPINALL (2010) report a small breeding area in central Lebanon.

**Lesser Gray Shrike *Lanius minor***

North Lebanon, Jebel Mekmel, Aayoun Ourghouch (2000 m) 19.V.2010 (a nest with one egg found in a thorny bush and one pair mobbing the above cited *Clamator glandarius*).

According to BENSON (1970) its breeding has not been confirmed, and also PORTER *et al.* (1996) and PORTER & ASPINALL (2010) do not record breeding areas in Lebanon. This should be the first confirmed breeding of this species, listed as Spec2 (species threatened at European level, whose global population is concentrated in Europe) by BIRDLIFE INTERNATIONAL (2017).

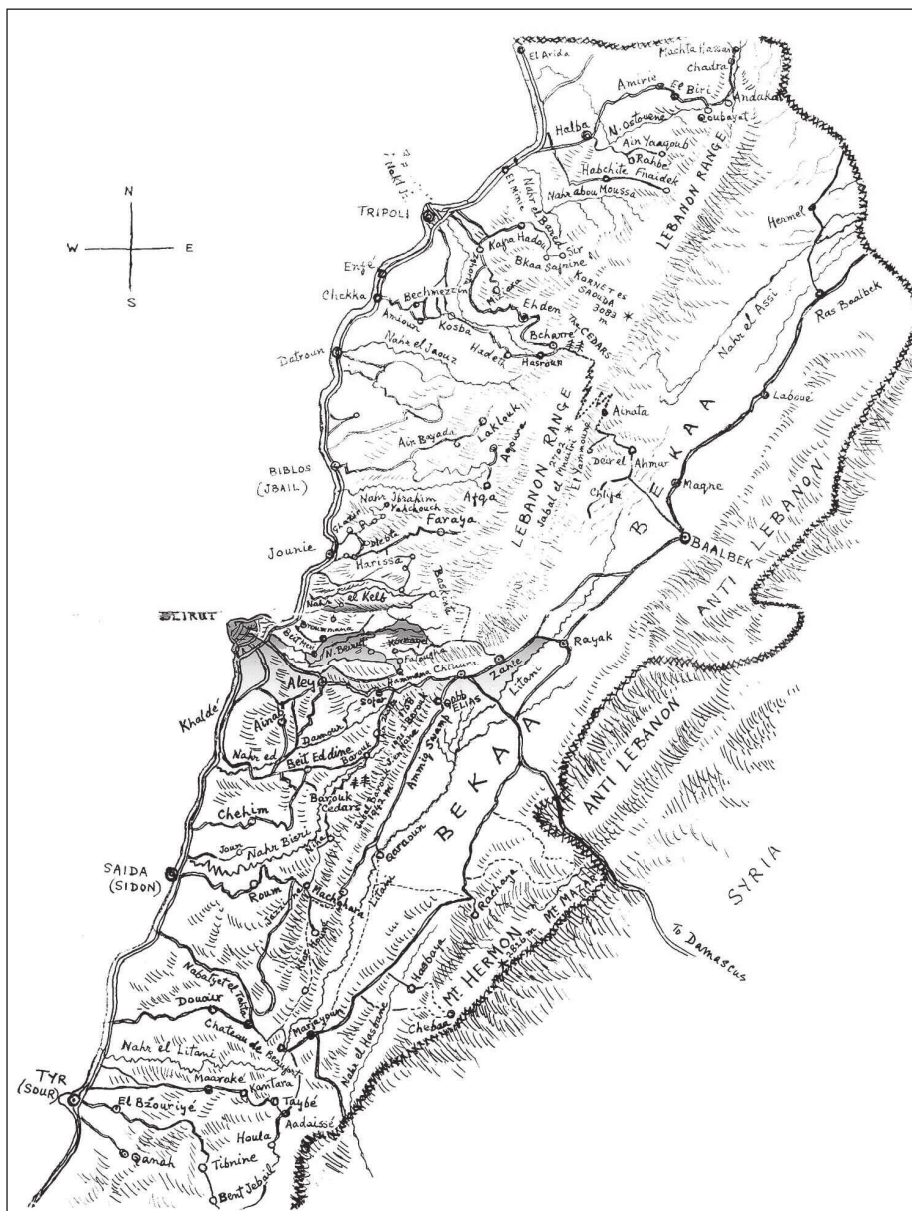


Fig. 1 — Lebanon

**Yellow-billed Cough *Pyrhocorax graculus***

North Lebanon, Ed Danniye (El Minie), loc. Nabaa Ras en Nahr (2200 m) 21.V.2010 (a colony amounting to ca. 20 individuals breeding on cliffs over the Pass).

According to BENSON (1970) in Lebanon its status is uncertain and there were no recent breeding records; PORTER *et al.* (1996) and PORTER & ASPINALL (2010) report a breeding area in central Lebanon. The present record concerns a very high and steep mountain with numerous karst manifestations not far from the border with Syria.

**White-throated Thrush *Irania gutturalis***

North Lebanon, Ed Danniye (El Minie), loc. Nabaa Ras en Nahr (2200 m) 21.V.2010 (some pairs among bushes of *Juniperus excelsa*).

BENSON (1970) considers it occasionally breeding, PORTER *et al.* (1996) and PORTER & ASPINALL (2010) report some scattered breeding areas in anti-Lebanon chain. Present records confirm the presence in the Lebanon chain.

**Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita***

North Lebanon, Cedars Bcharré 19.V.2010 (some singing individuals); Batroun, Tannourine Reserve (1400-1850 m) 20.V.2010 (singing ind.); Ehden Reserve 20.V.2010 (singing ind.).

According to BENSON (1970) it is a passage migrant, PORTER *et al.* (1996) and PORTER & ASPINALL (2010) report its breeding in south-west Syria, next to the border with Lebanon. Present records confirm the presence of breeding pairs in north Lebanon.

**Coal Tit *Periparus ater***

Central Lebanon, Reserve of Barouk 16.V.2010; North Lebanon, Cedars Bcharré 19.V.2010 (some individuals singing); Batroun, Tannourine Reserve (1400-1850 m) 20.V.2010; Ehden Reserve 20.V.2010.

Reported to breed in Lebanon by BENSON (1970); PORTER *et al.* (1996) and PORTER & ASPINALL (2010) give a small breeding area in the south Lebanon. Here it is recorded in central and north Lebanon.

**Blue Tit *Cyanistes caeruleus***

Central Lebanon, Bmehraya (Chouf) 16.V.2010 (male and female near to the nest); North Lebanon, Ehden Reserve 20.V.2010 (pairs alarming).

According to BENSON (1970) it is an occasional winter visitor, PORTER *et al.* (1996) and PORTER & ASPINALL (2010) do not include Lebanon within the breeding area. Here it is recorded for the first time to breed in central and north Lebanon.

**Rock Bunting *Emberiza cia***

North Lebanon, Ed Danniye (El Minie), loc. Nabaa Ras en Nahr (2200 m) 21.V.2010.

Breeding in the high mountains has been reported by BENSON (1970), PORTER *et al.* (1996) and PORTER & ASPINALL (2010).

**Common Serin *Serinus serinus***

Central Lebanon, Bmehraya (Chouf) 16.V.2010 (male and female in mating); North Lebanon, Fnaideq 22.V.2010 (many singing ind.).

BENSON (1970) considers it as winter visitor, PORTER *et al.* (1996) and PORTER & ASPINALL (2010) do not include Lebanon within the breeding area. Here it is recorded as breeding bird in central and North Lebanon.

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