A Checklist of the Birds of Greece

The Hellenic Rarities Committee


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Hellenic Rarities Committee

- Establishment in 2004, 5 members
- With the collaboration of HOS - HBRC
- Records that have been submitted: 771
- Accepted Records: 677
- Not Accepted Records: 94
Previous Checklists

- First Checklists: von Mühle (1844), Reiser (1905)
- “Catalogus Faunae Graeciae” (1969-1973)
- “Red Data Book” (1992)
- “The Birds of Greece” (1997) = 422 species
- Since 2004, HRC Unofficial List (in HOS’ and HRC’s web-sites)

More species today:

a) records that have been accepted
b) splits / taxonomic changes
Presentation of the current Greek List

Five Species Categories

- **A:** Species that were recorded in an apparently natural state at least once since 1 January 1950

- **B:** Species that were recorded in an apparently natural state at least once between 1 January 1800 and 31 December 1949, but not ever since.
C: Species that, although introduced, now derive from the resulting self-sustaining populations (6 subcategories - BOU).

C1 Naturalized introduced species: species that have occurred only as a result of introduction (*Psittacula krameri*)

C2 Naturalized established species: species with established populations resulting from introduction by Man, but which also occur in an apparently natural state (*Cygnus olor*)

C4 Naturalized feral species: domesticated species with populations established in the wild (*Columba livia*)
- **D** Species that would otherwise appear in Category A except that there is reasonable doubt that they have ever occurred in a natural state. Species in Category D only are not included in the Greek List. *(Gyps rueppelli)*

- **E** Species that have been recorded as introductions, human-assisted transporters or escapes from captivity and whose breeding populations (if any) are thought not to be self-sustaining. Species in Category E are not included in the Greek List. *(Cygnus atratus)*

- A few species have been placed in more than one category (e.g. A-C1).
Status codes

**RB**: Resident Breeder

**MB**: Migrant Breeder

**OB**: Occasional Breeder (one or more successful breeding attempts since 1 January 1950).

**FB**: Former Breeder (no breeding attempt is known since 31 December 1949)

**Ext**: Extinct (Former Resident with no record since 31 December 1949)

**NB**: Naturalized Breeder

**WV**: Winter Visitor

**PM**: Passage Migrant

**V**: Vagrant (11-50 records)

**Acc**: Accidental (1-10 records)

V and Acc: descriptions are required

(denoted by † within the systematic list)
The problem of subspecies

- Lack of validity in many cases
- Not enough studies in Greece
- Recent publications – more taxa

Passer (domesticus) italae case

Troglodytes troglodytes case
Examples of presentation of species

- **Anser anser** (Linnaeus) A
  Σταχτόχηνα Greylag Goose
  Subspecies in Greece: *anser* (Linnaeus) RB-WV-PM; *rubrirostris* (Swinhoe) WV

- **Anser caerulescens** (Linnaeus) † A
  Λευκόχηνα Snow Goose
  Subspecies in Greece: undetermined; Acc
Ordering major groups

- Greek birds belong to *Neognathae*.
- "*The Birds of Greece*" and other previous publications have followed the taxonomy of Vouous (1977), starting from *Gaviiformes*.
- Due to modern evolutionary studies *Neognathae* are split to *Galloanserae* (ordering first) and *Neoaves* (all remaining birds).
- The *Galloanserae* are composed of two ‘sister’ groups
  - *Anseriformes* (waterfowl)
  - and *Galliformes*. 
Another major change is to list *Podicipediformes* between *Phoenicopteriformes* and *Accipitriformes*

This, because modern studies show a relation of Flamingos and Grebe which consists a group known as “*Mirandoniformes*” (*Ibis* 149: 853–857).
Other examples of differences

Splits of Large Gulls

*Larus cachinnans* split to 3 species

- *armenicus*
- *michahellis*
- *cachinnans*
## Genus changes Major Example in Paridae family:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Original Genus/Species</th>
<th>New Genus/Species</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parus caeruleus</td>
<td>Cyanistes caeruleus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Parus major</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parus cristatus</td>
<td>Lophophanes cristatus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parus ater</td>
<td>Periparus ater</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parus lugubris</td>
<td>Poecile lugubris</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parus montanus</td>
<td>Poecile montana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parus palustris</td>
<td>Poecile palustris</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Examples of differences

- *Lanius meridionalis* case
Conclusions

- No 422 increased up to 442 species (21 - 1)
- One species (*Calidris subminuta*) was removed from the list
- Subspecies are listed only if fully documented

### Species Total
- Cat A: 436
- Cat B: 4
- Cat C: 2

(introduced bird species have increased, but only with a few years of established populations)
Further Studies?

- What is going on in Avian Systematic?

- How we will clarify the actual taxonomic status of the subspecies of birds occurring in Greece?

- Who is going to work about? Who cares?

- Do we really need a Bird Taxonomic Committee in Greece?
And now....

- This is just the start of more lists on the way
- Local lists – people’s needs
- Please submit your Record Forms to the HRC! http://rarities.ornithologiki.gr/en/index.php
- Need for more studies in systematic
This work never stop...

Thank you