

mededelingen

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Leucistische Groenpootruiter Op 7 augustus 1989, om 20:30, nam ik in de HW-duinen, Wassenaar, Zuidholland, een leucistische Groenpootruiter *Tringa nebularia* waar. De vogel vloog samen met een normaal gekleurde exemplaar laag over een duinmeer zodat ik schuin van boven op ze neerkeek.

De snavel van de leucistische vogel was licht hoornkleurig. De mantel en bovenvleugels waren geheel lichtbeige of crèmekleurig. De witte stuit en rugwig leken iets breder dan bij het normaal gekleurde exemplaar en contrasteerden nauwelijks met de overige bovendelen. De kleur van de poten was identiek aan die van mantel en bovenvleugels. De vogel liet twee maal de karakteristieke Groenpootruiter-roep horen.

Op een verzoek betreffende leucistische ruiters in de DB Nieuwsbrief van september 1989 ontving ik vier reacties. Vooral die van M Markx en G de Wit was interessant. Zij ontwaarden op dezelfde dag tussen 11:00 en 12:00 een leucistische Groenpootruiter of Zwarte Ruiter *T erythropus* tussen Burgervlotbrug en Sint Maartensvlotbrug, Noordholland. De grote afstand liet geen soortsbepaling toe. Later op de dag werd de ruiter niet meer aangetroffen.

De overige drie reacties waren van K Eigenhuis, P Gnodde en K Kraayeveld, en betroffen waarnemingen van albinisme of leucisme bij Zwarte Ruiter, Tureluur *T totanus* en Oeverloper *Actitis hypoleucos*.

Genoemde personen worden hartelijk bedankt voor hun reacties.

summary

LEUCISTIC GREENSHANK On 7 August 1989, a leucistic Greenshank *Tringa nebularia* was observed at Wassenaar, Zuidholland. Its upperparts were pale cream-coloured, hardly contrasting with the white rump and flash on back. The bill was pale horn, leg-colour as upperparts.

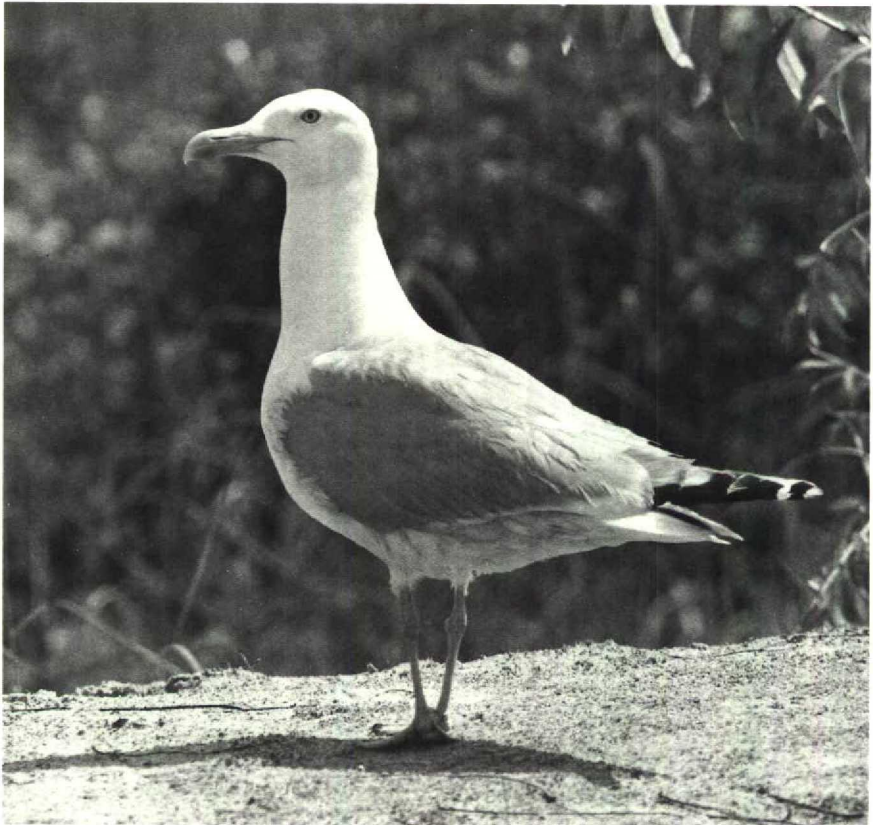
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Occurrence of Yellow-legged Gull in Poland The Yellow-legged Gull *Larus cachinnans* (sensu Glutz von Blotzheim & Bauer 1982) occurs in small numbers along the Polish Baltic coast, mainly during autumn and winter. Here, it may constitute up to one percent of the Herring Gull *L argentatus* population (W Meissner pers comm, Michal Skakuj pers obs). Among the adults, two types can be distinguished, most likely representing different subspecies: 1 Gulls with variably coloured legs and feet, ranging from pale flesh and yellowish (knee and webs) to uniform yellow, mantle colour close to that of *L a argentatus*, amount of black on the wing-tip similar to *L a argentatus*, and head variably streaked, sometimes appearing white at a distance; these birds presumably belong to the northern 'subspecies' *L c omissus*, which breeds in Finland and northern Russia; 2 Gulls with yellow to bright

yellow legs and feet, mantle on average distinctly darker, more ash-grey, black on the wing more extensive than in *L a argentatus*, and a white head, sometimes with faint streaking; these birds probably belong to the Black Sea subspecies *L c cachinnans*.

The assumption that both *L c omissus* and *L c cachinnans* may regularly occur along the Baltic Sea coast received support from Philippe Dubois, who has extensive field experience with several Western Palearctic subspecies of Yellow-legged Gull. On 21 and 25 September 1987, in the vicinity of the mouth of the river Vistula, near Gdansk, PD, Michal Skakuj and Tadeusz Stawarczyk found about 10 Yellow-legged Gulls showing characters of *L c cachinnans*. They averaged a little smaller than the Mediterranean subspecies *L a michahellis* and showed a slightly paler mantle. In addition, the tips to the outer primaries, especially the first and second outer ones,

8 Adult Yellow-legged Gull *Larus cachinnans*, showing characters of *L c cachinnans*, middle course of Vistula river, Poland, spring-summer 1984 (I Chojnacki)





9 Wing of adult Yellow-legged Gull *Larus cachinnans*, showing characters of *L c cachinnans*, mouth of Vistula river, Poland, September 1987 (Philippe J Dubois)

showed a little more white. On 25 September, some gulls with features of *L c omissus* could be compared with *L cachinnans*. They differed from these by their larger average size, straw-yellow legs and feet, paler mantle (close to that of *L a argentatus*) and much more streaking on the head. Finally, wings of specimens collected along the Polish Baltic coast clearly show the typical pattern of Yellow-Legged Gull (cf Dubois & Yésou 1984); these specimens include both immatures and adults.

The occurrence of *L c cachinnans* along the Baltic coast in autumn and winter may result from northward dispersal after the breeding season, when many birds leave the Black Sea region. This phenomenon is also observed in *L c michahellis*: from June onwards birds leave their Mediterranean breeding grounds and disperse northward along the Atlantic coast of France and, probably, the river Rhone; substantial numbers reach north-western Europe, including Belgium, Britain and the Netherlands (Nicolau-Guillaumet 1977, Devillers & Potvliege 1981, Devillers 1983, Grant 1983, Baudoin & le Maréchal 1988). Breeding along the Atlantic coast of France has been documented and has now become regular (Marion et al 1985, Dubois et al 1988). The autumn and winter occurrence of *L c omissus* along the Polish Baltic Sea coast is not unexpected as the nearest breeding sites are situated in Latvia (Viksne 1983).

In interior Poland, significant numbers of Yellow-legged Gulls began to appear in June-August during the mid-1970s, especially along the river Vistula, central Poland, and at Nysa and Turawa reservoirs, southern Poland, where flocks of up to 13 birds were recorded (Tomialojc in press). Their pale yellow to bright yellow legs and feet and comparatively dark mantle, together with their geographical and temporal distribution, suggested that they belonged to *L c cachinnans* or *L c michahellis*. In 1981, two pairs of Yellow-legged Gulls were found nesting on islands in the middle course

of the Vistula river; this number had increased to six by 1987 (Wesolowski et al 1984, Bukacinski et al in press). These birds showed characters of *L c cachinnans* or *L c michahellis* as well; one individual, however, had pale grey legs and feet (Bukacinski et al in press).

On geographical grounds, it is likely that the small Vistula breeding population belongs to *L c cachinnans*. In Hungary, this subspecies is a common non-breeding resident; birds probably reach this country by following the river Danube upstream. The Vistula Gulls may have followed a more south-eastern route, through the Ukraine, where *L c cachinnans* is a common bird of the major rivers, such as the Dnepr and Dnestr, especially along their lower courses (Glutz von Blotzheim & Bauer 1982). Interestingly, there is a ringing recovery from the Vistula river of a Yellow-legged Gull ringed in the Black Sea. Taking into consideration the geographical and temporal aspects of the range extension of *L c michahellis* in central Europe, it is unlikely that the Polish population belongs to this subspecies. Only recently, *L c michahellis* has started to colonise Switzerland (Winkler et al 1987).

Clearly, more research is needed to confirm the subspecific identity of the Yellow-legged Gulls occurring in Poland.

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