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Došlo: 3. 9. 2009
Prijaté: 10. 9. 2009

The third record of breeding Citrine Wagtail (*Motacilla citreola*) in Slovakia

*Tretí prípad hniezdenia trasochvosta žltohlavého (*Motacilla citreola*) na Slovensku*

Tomasz Wilk[1], Łukasz Kajtoch[2] & Wojciech Bielański[3]

[1]Polish Society for the Protection of Birds, Odrowaza 24, 05-279 Marki k. Warszawy, Poland; tomasz.wilk@otop.org.pl
[2]Institute of Systematics and Evolution of Animals PAS, Sławkowska 17, 31-016 Kraków, Poland; kajtoch@isez.pan.krakow.pl
[3]Institute of Nature Conservation PAS, Al. Mickiewicza 33, 31-120 Kraków, Poland; bielanski@iop.krakow.pl

Citrine Wagtail is a summer visitor in Europe, wintering in southern Asia (Alström & Mild 2003). It occupies many types of open habitats with close proximity to water including tundra-like areas, sedge-mires, swampy meadows and peat-bogs (Baumanis et al. 1997, Alström & Mild 2003). It is widely distributed species, with a main breeding range in Central Asia and its European breeding population is reaching Eastern Europe. The biggest populations in Europe are located in Russia (250000–300000 pairs) and Ukraine (8300–13800 pairs). In total European population constitutes less than 25% of its global population (BirdLife 2004). However, the breeding range of this species is expanding westwards during the last decades (Alström & Mild 2003), with the first breeding attempts recently recorded in Lithuania – 1987 (Pranaitis 1990), Latvia – 1989 (Kalvans & Keišs 2003), Estonia – 1991 (Baumanis et al. 1997), Poland – 1997 (Meissner & Skakuj 1997) and Switzerland – 1997 (Maumary 1998).

In Slovakia, Citrine Wagtail is a rare vagrant, with ca 20 records up to date (D. Karaska, pers. comm.). There have been two breeding records of Citrine Wagtail in Slovakia – both in 1997: Turiec (district Turčianske Teplice) in NW Slovakia and Turňanský rybník fishpond (district Košice okolie) in SE Slovakia (Dobrota & Topercer 1998, Mošanský & Karaska 2002).

On May 16, 2009, while counting birds along the Polish-Slovak border near Lipnica Wielka village, we encountered a female of a Citrine Wagtail feeding on water plants on the Polish side of the border. Then, after ca 7 minutes of observation the bird moved to Slovak part of the area (the course of the border was clearly visible thanks to the border posts), where it was observed for another five minutes. The bird disappeared in the short vegetation covering

Fig. 1. The nest of Citrine Wagtail found in Orava region, Slovakia in May 2009 (Photo by T. Wilk).
Obr. 1. *Hniezdo trasochvosta žltohlavého, nájdeného na Orave v máji 2009 (Foto: T. Wilk).*

the pasture, where the nest was discovered (N 49°27′18″, E 19°38′27″, 603 m a.s.l., territory of Trstená, district Tvrdošín). The nest was located on the ground among the short vegetation, close (ca 50 m) to the trail frequently used by humans. The cup of nest was hidden under the patch of grass and contained 6 eggs (Fig. 1). During our short stay close to the nest (ca 3 min), a male of this species appeared nearby and was observed together with a female, on the ground and on taller plants. The presence of female and a nest was documented with photos and the record was accepted by the Rarities Committee of the Slovak Ornithological Society/BirdLife Slovakia.

This finding represents the third breeding record of the Citrine Wagtail in Slovakia, and the first for Orava region. Interestingly, two pairs were seen in this area a day before (May 15, 2009, D. Karaska, pers. comm.), but on the Polish side of the border, suggesting that there might be even more (2–3) breeding pairs on this site. There is a possibility that Citrine Wagtail was breeding on this site also in the previous years, as there were records of this species on the Polish side of the border during breeding season also in 2006 (1 pair on May 2, Komisja Faunistyczna 2007) and 2007 (1 adult male on May 1, Komisja Faunistyczna 2008). It is expected, that this recently expanding species will colonize new areas in the near future. Thus the proximity of Oravská priehrada water reservoir and other places with suitable habitats in Slovakia should be surveyed.

Súhrn

Dňa 16. 5. 2009 počas sledovania vtáctva na Orave pri poľsko-slovenskej hranici (k. ú. Trstená, okres Tvrdošín) bol zistený samec a samica trasochvosta žltohlavého (*Motacilla citreola*). Počas niekoľkominútového pozorovania bolo o. i. zistené zletovanie samice z hniezda a tiež bolo nájdené hniezdo so 6 vajcami. Pozorovanie bol zdokumentované fotograficky. Jedná sa o 3. prípad hniezdenia tohto vtáčieho druhu na Slovensku a prvý na Orave. Je pravdepodobné, že táto lokalita bola trasochvostami žltohlavými obsadená už v predchádzajúcich rokoch, pretože na poľskej strane tu boli v hniezdnom období pozorované adultné vtáky. Dokonca v r. 2009 dva páry. V posledných rokoch boli prvé hniezdenia zaznamenané tiež v Estónsku, Litve, Poľsku, Švajčiarsku i na Slovensku. Tretie hniezdenie na Slovensku zapadá do zaznamenaného rozširovania európskeho hniezdneho areálu na západ.

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank Dušan Karaska for sharing his observations in Orava, providing Slovak literature and help with translation of summary into Slovak language.

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Došlo: 7. 7. 2009
Prijaté: 4. 10. 2009

Interspecific feeding at bird nests: *Ficedula albicollis* as a helper at the nest of *Turdus philomelos*

Medzidruhové kŕmenie na vtáčích hniezdach: Ficedula albicollis *ako pomocník na hniezde* Turdus philomelos

Anton Krištín

Institute of Forest Ecology SAS, Štúrova 2, 960 53 Zvolen, Slovakia; kristin@savzv.sk

Since Hamilton's influential work in 1963 much attention has been paid to seemingly altruistic helping behaviour in animals. Helpers have been detected among many animal species, especially in birds (e.g. Skutch 1961, 1999) and social mammals (McNutt 1996), less in poikilothermic (cold-blooded) vertebrates or invertebrates (Taborsky & Limberger 1981).

In birds, a helper means an individual which assists in the nesting of an individual other than its mate, or feeds or otherwise attends a bird of whatever age which is neither its mate nor its dependent offspring (Skutch 1961). Status of a helper needs to meet the requirements from at least three topic areas: i) the status or condition of the helper, age and sexual maturity, a parent or a nonnbreeder; ii) its relationship to the bird or birds which it assists; and iii) the activities in which it engages.

The most common are conspecific helpers, occurring in various bird groups and species, for example woodpeckers Piciformes (Pasinelli et al. 2004), rollers (*Coracias garrulus*, Aviles & Sanchez 1999), hoopoes (*Upupa epops*, Vivaldi et al. 2002), and mostly in passerines (Shy 1982, Magrath & Yezerinac 1997). Conspecific helpers assisting in young feeding are frequently involved in the extrapair paternity of their putative young (e.g. Blomqvist et al. 2005). This holds also for our studied species *Ficedula albicollis* (Sheldon et al. 1997). In general, males are more frequent helpers than females, perhaps because they have more time and opportunities (Cockburn 1998). Furthermore, in many cooperatively breeding species, the presence of one or more helpers improves the reproductive performance of the pair receiving the help (Lloyd et al. 2009).