

UNPUBLISHED RECORDS OF RARITIES FROM THE LATE T. CONTI'S COLLECTION.

Mute Swan *Cygnus olor* : female on 18th January 1941, Marsascala Bay.
Red Kite *Milvus milvus* : one on 7th April 1943, Marsaxlokk.
Puffin *Fratercula arctica* : one on 6th January 1924, Delimara.
Alpine Accentor *Prunella collaris* : one on 16th April 1956, Limits of Zurrieq.
Moussier's Redstart *Phoenicurus moussieri* : male on 3rd December 1933, Limits of Kalafrana.
Great Tit *Parus major* : one in April 1919 (locality not recorded).

Joe Sultana & Charles Gauci

~~WARDLAW RAMSAY'S RECORDS OF *S. CANTILLANS* FROM MALTA.~~

~~Wardlaw Ramsay (1923) stated that both the nominate cantillans as well as the race albistriata of the Subalpine Warbler *Sylvia cantillans* occur in Malta and mentioned that two specimens of albistriata were obtained "4/9/14" and two others belonging to the nominate race were obtained on "9/9/14". In all past literature previous to 1975 there has been no mention of other records of albistriata except those of Ramsay. Sultana et al. (1975) included Ramsay's records and added that "a few others" trapped for ringing in both spring and autumn since 1965 belonged to the race albistriata. Bannerman and Vella Gaffiero (1976) who listed most species trinomially stated that the Subalpine Warbler was purposely named binomially in their work, obviously doubting Ramsay's records and the above statement. They wrote that both the eastern and the western subspecies "were said by Col. Wardlaw Ramsay in his Birds of Europe and North Africa, p.111 to be represented in the British Museum Collection, each by two specimens collected in the Maltese Islands". In view of this statement D.A. Bannerman asked Mr. Derek Goodwin of the British Museum staff "to examine the four specimens in the British national collection and report whether he agreed with Wardlaw Ramsay's determination". After receiving a reply from Mr. Goodwin, Bannerman and Vella Gaffiero (1976) concluded that "It appears that of the Maltese specimens in the British Museum to which Col. Wardlaw draws our attention in his book, three were presented to the Museum by a Miss Wright (no indication of original collector and probably purchased from a trapper in the island)". Four dates of specimens are then given, different from those given by Ramsay (1923) and mentioning no races.~~

~~This confusion resulted from the erroneous assumption that the four specimens of *S. cantillans* mentioned by Ramsay (1923) were at the British Museum. Contrary to what Bannerman & Vella Gaffiero (1976) stated, nowhere did Ramsay state this. It is a fact, however, that after inheriting the vast collection of birds formed by his uncle Arthur, Marquess of Tweeddale, Col. R.G. Wardlaw Ramsay generously presented it to the British Museum. But he did this on condition that a set of duplicate specimens was to be sent to the Edinburgh Museum (see in Memoriam by W.E.G. in Ramsay 1923).~~

~~Ramsay's book, which was not ready when he died, was published posthumously and in the preface by WM. Eagle Clark we find that Surgeon Rear Admiral Stenhouse~~