

Seychelles Bird Records Committee

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The following records were accepted by the committee during 2020:

Northern Shoveler *Spatula clypeata*



One adult male in eclipse at beach section FG and airstrip, Alphonse on 30 October 2020 (C. Narty, L. Delpech).

This is the 16th record for Seychelles.

Photo: Luigi Delpech

Lesser Cuckoo *Cuculus poliocephalus*



One adult at the tortoise sanctuary, Desroches on 18 December 2019 (C. Nisbet).

This is the 18th record for Seychelles.

Photo: Craig Nisbet

Common Cuckoo *Cuculus canorus*

One 1cy hepatic female at the northeast beach, Bird Island on 4 December 2019 (R.J. Dodd).

One 1cy at the tortoise sanctuary, Desroches on 13 December and 30 December 2019 (presumed same individual, but not same as 20 November previously accepted) (F. Clair).

One 2cy at Bombay Beach, Desroches on 18 January 2020 (C. Nisbet).

One 1cy at the beach, Alphonse on 14 October 2020 (C. Narty).

One adult male at the beach on west side of Alphonse on 8 May 2020 (G. Fordham).

SBRC has now accepted 69 records for Seychelles.



Common Cuckoos (left at Alphonse: Chris Narty; right at Desroches: Craig Nisbet)

Cuckoo sp. *Cuculus sp.*

One female or 1cy near farm area at Alphonse on 3 December 2019 (K. Day).

SBRC has accepted 36 previous records in this category

Common Swift *Apus apus*



Common Swifts (left at Farquhar: Matthew Morgan; above at Alphonse: Kit Day)

One at the southeast hotel area and airstrip, Alphonse on 3 December 2019 (K. Day).

One found exhausted and later died at the village, North Island, Farquhar on 30 December 2019 (M. Morgan, A. Cupidon).

At least two at the village and airstrip, North Island, Farquhar on 13-14 October 2020 (M. Morgan, A. Cupidon).

SBRC has now accepted 45 records for Seychelles.

Pacific Swift *Apus pacificus*



One at the beach crest, Desroches on 4 December 2019 (F. Clair).

This is the 18th record for Seychelles.

Photo: Francesca Clair

Note: The 2020 Annual Meeting of SBRC discussed the split of this species into 4 species: Pacific Swift *Apus pacificus*, Blyth's Swift *A. leuconyx*, Cook's Swift *A. cooki* and Salim Ali's Swift *A. salimali*. Pacific Swift breeds from Siberia to Japan, south through eastern China, wintering from Malaysia and Indonesia to Australia and New Guinea. SBRC consider that as a long-distance migrant Pacific Swift remains a possibility in Seychelles; it has indeed turned up in Britain several times. However, Blyth's Swift breeds in the Himalayas, wintering to southwest India and is also a possibility. Cook's Swift is confined to southeast Asia and Salim Ali's Swift breeds on the east Tibetan Plateau and adjacent China and has an unknown winter range; these two species are very unlikely to reach Seychelles. It is believed all Seychelles records refer to either Blyth's Swift or Pacific Swift. However, more research will be done before any records are reassessed.

Meanwhile, it is noted that R. Charles Anderson & Mohamed Shimal in *A checklist of birds of the Maldives* Indian Birds Monograph 3 (Published 28 November 2020) accept Maldives records as attributable to Blyth's Swift.

Little Swift *Apus affinis*



Photos: Little Swift (left at Alphonse: Chris Narty; right at Cousine: Bronwyn Dunlop).

Four at the ICS A-frames (near airstrip), Alphonse on 20 January 2020 (C. Narty, G. Curd).

One at the guest pavilion, Cousine on 2 February 2020 (S. Dunlop, B. Dunlop).

SBRC has now accepted 12 records for Seychelles.

Corncrake *Crex crex*

One at the tern colony, Bird Island on 31 January 2020 (C. Nisbet).

This is the 6th record for Seychelles.

Spotted Crake *Porzana porzana*



One juvenile at Remire on 26 October 2020 (G. Savy).

This is the 3rd record for Seychelles.

Photo: Glenny Savy

Senegal Lapwing *Vanellus lugubris*



First record of Senegal Lapwing for Seychelles (Photo: Annabelle Cupidon)

Two adults at the settlement to airstrip road, Farquhar 19 December 2019 to 2 January 2020 (A. Cupidon, M. Morgan). This is the first record for Seychelles.

Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius*



One east of north end of airstrip, Desroches on 22-25 January 2020 (C. Nisbet, F. Clair).

This is the 12th record for Seychelles.

Photo: Craig Nisbet

Oriental Plover *Charadrius veredus*



One at the coconut plantation, North Island, Farquhar on 31 October 2020 (M. Morgan, A. Cupidon).

This is the 7th record for Seychelles.

Photo: Matthew Morgan

Little Curlew *Numenius minutus*



One juvenile at the airstrip, Alphonse on 8 October 2020 (G. Curd).

This is the 3rd record for Seychelles.

Photo: George Curd

Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*



Photo: Annabelle Cupidon

Two at the southern tip of North Island and Manahas Milieu, Farquhar on 23 December 2019, one on 7 January 2020 and up to six present thereafter to 4 March 2020 (M. Morgan, A. Cupidon).

This is the 11th record for Seychelles.

Ruff *Calidris pugnax*



One adult at the airstrip, Alphonse on 19 October 2020 (C. Narty).

This is the 41st record for Seychelles.

Photo: Chris Narty

Little Stint *Calidris minuta*



Little Stint at Desroches and at Bird Island (both photos: Craig Nisbet)

One 2cy at Bird on 4 November 2019; possibly same bird present from 21 June 2019 (Y. Coatanéa).

One adult at the airstrip, Desroches 13-28 December 2019 (C. Nisbet, F. Clair).

One at marsh near Anse la Blague, Praslin on 21 January 2020 (E. Dempsey, M. O'Clery, S. Agricole).

Three at the tern colony, beach and airstrip, Bird Island on 13-17 March 2020, one of which may have been present since 21 June 2019 (C. Nisbet, N. Savy).

The species was classed as annual until 2015, when it was reclassified as a vagrant. Since then there have been 13 records.

Common Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*

One at Bougainville Basin, Baie Lazare, Mahe on 26 November 2019 (J. Millett).

Two at the tern colony, Bird Island 31 January to 1 February 2020 (C. Nisbet).

One and two Snipe sp. the tern colony, Bird Island on 5 March 2020 possibly including previous record on 5 March 2020 (P. Finch).

SBRC has now accepted 28 records for Seychelles.

Snipe sp. *Gallinago sp.*

One east of the Indian village, Desroches on 17 January 2020 (C. Nisbet, F. Clair).

Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*



Green Sandpiper (left at Mahe: Ian Forsyth; right at Desroches: Craig Nisbet)

One 1cy at flooded area opposite Grande Anse petrol station, Mahe on 27-28 November 2019 (I. Forsyth).

One at the vegetable garden, IDC Village, Desroches on 25 December 2019 to 17 February 2020 (C. Nisbet).

SBRC has now accepted 10 records for Seychelles.

Grey-tailed Tattler *Heteroscelus brevipes*



One at the beach, Alphonse on 23 October 2019 to 15 September 2020 (C. Narty, K. Day).

This is the 7th record for Seychelles and the 4th for the Alphonse Group.

Photo: Chris Narty

Collared Pratincole *Glareola pratincola*



Collared Pratincoles (left at Alphonse: George Curd; right at Farquhar: Annabelle Cupidon)

One 1cy and one adult at the airstrip, Alphonse 12-14 October 2020 (G. Curd, C. Narty, G. Fordham).

One adult in coconut plantation, North Island, Farquhar on 16 November joined by a second adult on 19 November, both remaining to 27 November 2020 (M. Morgan, A. Cupidon).

SBRC has now accepted 33 records for Seychelles.

Oriental Pratincole *Glareola maldivarum*



One adult at the airstrip, Alphonse on 11 and 13 November 2020 (C. Narty).

This is the 27th record for Seychelles.

Photo: Chris Narty

South Polar Skua *Catharacta maccormicki*

One at Picard, Aldabra on 25 June 1988 (J. Imani).

This is the 5th record accepted for Seychelles, but chronologically it is the first.

Wilson’s Storm-petrel *Oceanites oceanicus*

One at Ignoblis Rock, St Francois on 18 April 2020 (A. Forsyth, G. Fordham). Accepted with caveat re other all-dark, white-rumped storm-petrels,

This is the 18th record for Seychelles.

***Bulweria* sp.**

Six at sea west of Aldabra at 009°24.30 'S, 043°38.37 'E on 15 February 2020 (D. C. Jardine).

Note: SBRC has reassessed all *Bulweria* records in 2020 and also discussed these at the 2020 Annual Meeting. Bulwer’s Petrel *B. bulwerii* and Jouanin’s Petrel *B. fallax* are clearly separated in biometrics, with the latter larger and heavier. However, this is difficult to assess in photographs. In addition, the discovery of a mysterious Comoros *Bulweria* intermediate in size has added to the uncertainty.

SBRC has concluded that it is not possible to confirm almost all reports to species level at the present time. After review, there are now 17 records of *Bulweria* sp. There are no 100% confirmed records of Jouanin’s Petrel *B. fallax* and just a single record of Bulwer’s petrel *B. bulwerii*: One at Cousin Island on 15 June 2009 (D. J. R. Andrews, M. Hammers, J. Love); accepted with caveat re ‘Comoros petrel’.

Great Egret *Ardea alba*



Great Egrets (left at La Digue: Ellen Askum; right at Aldabra: Martin van Rooney)

One at L’Union Estate, La Digue on 13 February 2012 (E. Askum).

One at southern Cinq Cases, Grand Terre, Aldabra on 21 September 2020 (M. van Rooyen, B. Souyana).

SBRC has now accepted 24 records for Seychelles.

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*



One at the beach, Alphonse on 30 March 2020 (C. Narty).

This is the 45th record for Seychelles.

Photo: Chris Narty

Indian Pond-heron *Ardeola grayii*



One adult at L'Union Estate, La Digue on 23 February 2020 (D. C. Jardine).

This is the 7th record for Seychelles.

Photo: D. C. Jardine

Madagascar Pond-heron *Ardeola idae*



One 1cy at Lamar Torti, North Island, Farquhar on 31 October to 18 November 2020 (M. Morgan, A. Cupidon).

This is the 9th record for Seychelles east of the Aldabra Group.

Photo: Matthew Morgan

Eleonora's Falcon *Falco eleonora*



Eleonora's Falcons (left at Farquhar: Matthew Morgan; right at Aldabra: Martin van Rooyen)

One 1cy at the settlement to airstrip road, Farquhar on 19 December 2019 (A. Cupidon, M. Morgan).

Four pale morph (one pale morph adult and three 2cy) at the road to the airstrip, Farquhar on 7 January 2020 (M. Morgan).

One 2cy at Dune d'Messe, Aldabra on 9 March 2020 (M. van Rooyen).

Three at Settlement beach, Picard, Aldabra (one adult female dark morph, one adult male pale morph and one 2cy) on 5 April 2020 (M. van Rooyen).

SBRC has now accepted 52 records for Seychelles.

Common/Lesser Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus/naumanni*

One at the airstrip, Pointe Larue, Mahe on 7 December 2019 (AP Skerrett, J. Skerrett).

This is the 2nd record in this category.

Amur Falcon *Falco amurensis*



One 1cy at Settlement Beach, Picard Aldabra on 23 December 2019 (M. Bielsa, L. A'Bear).

This species is now considered an annual visitor to the granitics and Amirantes and a vagrant further south. This is the 4th record south of the Amirantes.

Photo: Maria Bielsa

Eurasian Hobby *Falco subbuteo*



One 1cy at Praslin on 16 November 2009 (E. Lehtovirta).

This is the 34th record for Seychelles.

Photo: Erkki Lehtovirta

Black Kite *Milvus migrans*

One 2cy at the Old Settlement, Picard, Aldabra on 8 February 2020 (C. Sanchez, N. Pettigrew, other SIF staff & cruise visitors from *Serenissima*).

One 2cy at Middle Camp, Malabar, Aldabra on 24-25 February 2020 (M. van Rooyen, M. Bielsa, L. A'Bear), possibly the same individual as the previous record.

One adult at Middle Camp, Malabar, Aldabra on 22 May 2020 and 3 June 2020, presumably the same individual (M. van Rooyen, M. Esparon).

One subadult at Settlement Beach, Picard, Aldabra on 25 September 2020 (M. van Rooyen).

SBRC has accepted 8 records for Seychelles, including 5 from Aldabra.

Yellow-billed Kite *Milvus aegyptius*

One adult at Settlement Beach, Picard, Aldabra on 11-13 September 2020 (M. van Rooyen, M. Bielsa, M. Esparon, L. A'Bear).

This is the 9th record for Seychelles, including 7 from Aldabra.

Kites at Aldabra. All photos by Martin van Rooyen



Above & left: Black Kite at Middle Camp 24 February 2020

Middle: Yellow-billed Kite at Picard 13 September 2020

Bottom: Black Kite at Picard 25 September 2020



European Bee-eater *Merops apiaster*

Three at Bassin Cabris, Picard, Aldabra on 19 March 2020 (M. van Rooyen).

This is the 4th record for Seychelles.

Red-backed Shrike *Lanius collurio*

One adult female at the solar construction site, Cousine on 2 December 2019 (S. Dunlop & M. Keeley).

This is the 11th record for Seychelles.

Greater Short-toed Lark *Calandrella brachydactyla*



One at the northwest beach, Bird Island on 1-4 December 2019 (J. Dodd).

This is the 11th record for Seychelles.

Photo: J. Dodd

Note: At the 2020 SBRC Annual meeting, the fact that Sykes's Short-toed Lark *Calandrella dukhunensis* and Greater Short-toed Lark *C. brachydactyla* have been split was discussed. Until recently, these two species have been considered conspecific, but molecular evidence places Sykes's Lark as sister to Hume's Short-toed Lark *C. acutirostris*. Based on distribution, either species might be considered likely in Seychelles. R. Charles Anderson & Mohamed Shimal in *A checklist of birds of the Maldives* Indian Birds Monograph 3 (Published 28 November 2020) list Sykes's Lark for Maldives records. SBRC agreed that Seychelles records will be reassessed. An initial review has taken place and it is considered there is no reason to recirculate records for potential reclassification and these all remain accepted as Greater Short-toed Lark.

African Plain Martin *Riparia paludicola*



One at Basin Cabris, Picard, Aldabra on 15 March 2020 (M. van Rooyen).

This is the first record for Seychelles.

**Photo of African Plain Martin
silhouetted against an Aldabra Drongo,
Martin van Rooyen**

Sand Martin *Riparia riparia*



Sand Martins at Alphonse (in April, left: George Curd; in October, right: Chris Narty)

One 2cy at the beach between the spa and hotel bar, Desroches on 24 January 2020 (C. Nisbet).
Two at the beach, St Francois on 21 January 2020 (C. Narty, G. Fordham, G. Curd).
One at the airstrip, Alphonse on 2 April 2020 (G. Curd, G. Fordham, T. Russell).
One at Point Tamatave, Alphonse 2 and 4 May 2020, presumably the same individual (C. Narty, G. Curd).
One at the airstrip, Alphonse on 23 October 2020 (C. Narty).

SBRC has now accepted 48 records for Seychelles.

Mascarene Martin *Phedina borbonica*

On at St Francois on 12 March 2020 (G. Curd, G. Fordham).

This is the 18th record for Seychelles.

Common House Martin *Delichon urbicum*



Common House Martins at Alphonse (left: Chris Narty; right: George Curd)

One 1cy at Bird on 5 November 2019 (Y. Coatanéa).

One adult at the airstrip, Bird Island on 1 December 2019 (R.J. Dodd, J. Dodd).
Two (one adult and one 2cy) at the airstrip, Alphonse on 6 March 2020 (C. Narty).

Up to three at Pointe Huteau and the solar farm, Alphonse 4 and 7 June 2020, three present on 6 June (G. Curd, G. Fordham).

SBRC has now accepted 28 records for Seychelles.

Wattled Starling *Creatophora cinerea*



One adult male in non-breeding plumage at the airstrip, Alphonse on 9 March 2020 (G. Curd).

This is the 7th record for Seychelles.

Photo: George Curd

Rosy Starling *Pastor roseus*



One adult at the northwest end of the tern colony, Bird Island on 1 February 2020 (C. Nisbet).

This is the 6th record for Seychelles.

Photo: Craig Nisbet

Pied Wheatear *Oenanthe pleschanka*



One adult male at the beach crest, Alphonse on 3 December 2019 (C. Narty).

This is the 8th record for Seychelles and the first for the Amirantes.

Photo: Chris Narty

Western Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava*



One adult female at Point Dot, Alphonse on 2-3 December 2019 (C. Narty).

One 2cy at the south end of the airstrip, Alphonse on 24 April 2020 (G. Curd).

One adult male, probably *beema* at Beach Bar, Alphonse on 19 October 2020 (C. Narty)

SBRC has now accepted 62 records for Seychelles.



Photos: Yellow Wagtails at Alphonse (both: Chris Narty)

White Wagtail *Motacilla alba*

One at the northeast beach, Bird Island on 3 December 2019 (J. Dodd).

One at La Passe, Silhouette on 4 December 2019 (T. Baboorun).

SBRC has now accepted 51 records for Seychelles.

Red-throated Pipit *Anthus cervinus*



One adult at the tortoise sanctuary, Desroches on 23 January 2020 (C. Nisbet).

One adult male-type at the airstrip, Alphonse on 2-3 March 2020 (C. Narty, G. Curd).

Photo: Craig Nisbet

SBRC has now accepted 36 records for Seychelles, including 10 at Alphonse (more than any other island).