

Paper show 2016

INTERNATIONAL WHINCHAT WORKING GROUP

On the following pages you find abstracts of new papers with „Whinchat in main focus“ published in 2016. The British papers can be found on the previous pages compiled by Jennifer Border.

International

Broyer J, Sukhanova O, Mischenko A 2016: How to sustain meadow passerine populations in Europe through alternative mowing management. *Agriculture, Ecosystems & Environment* 215, 133-139.

Abstract: Two decades of agri-environmental policy did not prevent a long term decline of grassland birds in Europe. Additional measures are therefore needed to sustain the populations. This study explored alternative mowing management regimes likely to secure demographic sources in the early mown grassland systems of western Europe, and to limit habitat loss after farming abandonment in countries of the former Eastern Bloc. Postponing grass cutting until after mid-July from 2009 to 2014 in half of the area of 4 study sites (29-55. ha each) in the Saône Valley (France), led to increased territory density and improved hatching success. Bird response however was species-specific: Corn Bunting *Emberiza calandra* territory density benefited the most from the alternative management, Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava* territory distribution tended to match the late mown areas, whereas the Whinchat *Saxicola rubetra* did not change its initial distribution. Temporary interruption of mowing in 8 meadow units (11.7-15.1. ha) of the Moskva Valley (Central Russia) was similarly correlated with higher territory density. Whinchat territory density decreased after one single year of mowing. After two consecutive years of mowing, Whinchat hatching success was lower and the Lesser Citrine Wagtail *Motacilla citreola* werae virtually disappeared.

The tested alternative mowing regimes may therefore locally increase population density without negative density dependent effects on hatching rates. Implementing rotational mowing could reduce habitat loss caused by farming abandonment in Russia. Postponing mowing until after mid-July in patches of hay fields may sustain meadow bird demography in the remaining strongholds of western Europe.

Germany

Feulner J, Rudroff S, Brendel U 2016: Ein Schwarzkehlchen-Männchen *Saxicola torquata* als Bruthelfer beim Braunkehlchen *S. rubetra*. *Ornithol. Anz.* 54, 297-299.

Abstract: An unpaired male stonechat appeared as a breeding helper for the whinchat in the Teuschnitzaue/ Franconian Forest. The aggressions between both males that were determined in the first instance were disappearing after a couple of days and the male stonechat began to support the breeding whinchat pair by feeding, removing of feces, warning and leading of fledglings.

Heindl, M 2016: Brutbestandsentwicklung von Braunkehlchen *Saxicola rubetra* und GrauParammer *Emberiza calandra* auf einer Photovoltaik-Freiflächenanlage bei Demmin. *Ornithol. Rundbr. Mecklenbg.-Vorpomm.* 48, 303-307.

Development of the breeding populations of Whinchat and Corn Bunting in an open-area photovoltaic plant near Demmin.

Poland

Orlowski G, Frankiewicz J, Karg J 2016: Nestling diet optimization and condition in relation to prey attributes and breeding patch size in a patch-resident insectivorous passerine an optimal continuum and habitat constraints. J. Ornithol. 158/1.

Abstract: Direct observational studies are needed to address dietary adjustment in species breeding in isolated non-forest habitat islands with respect to the energy demands of growing nestlings and breeding patch size. Using new dietary records determined for nestlings of Whinchat *Saxicola rubetra*, a dramatically declining insectivorous passerine and an indicator species of the cessation of agricultural activity, we investigated the relationships between changes in the main dietary characteristics, numerical and biomass contributions of major taxonomic and functional prey groups (expressing chitin content, vertical distribution, habitat preference and vagility within the landscape) and brood age, nestling condition and size of abandoned fields (i.e., breeding patches). Broods from larger abandoned fields received more sedentary and heavier prey like *Orthoptera* and soil-dwelling invertebrates, whereas the proportion of caterpillars, aerial insects and prey from vegetation decreased with increasing patch size. Nestling condition was positively correlated with the proportion of caterpillars and *Orthoptera* or sedentary prey taxa, but negatively with the proportion of *Coleoptera* or vagile prey taxa in the diet, though not with patch area. This suggests that parent Whinchats can overcome the habitat constraints resulting from the small area of an abandoned field by interchangeably incorporating the two major prey groups (*Orthoptera* or *Lepidoptera*) into the diet they feed to their nestlings. This implies a continuum in dietary optimization that is a trade-off between a brood's nutritional demands and the parents' ability to deliver top-ranked invertebrates present mostly within the breeding patch.

Zawadzki M, Tańczuk T 2015 : Próby zimowania pokląskwy *Saxicola rubetra* na Śląsku [Wintering of the Whinchat *Saxicola rubetra* in Silesia]. Ptaki Śląska 22, 156–158.

This paper is from 2015, but we will present it here, because it is not too easy to find.

Summary: On 17.12.2014 a Whinchat in female plumage was observed near Chrzastowice (Opole Province). On the same day 3 kilometers north of this site, near Łędziny (Opole Province), a male and a bird in female plumage were observed. The male observed in Łędziny was last seen in this location on 27.12.2014. This is the latest observation of this species in Poland and the first recorded wintering attempt.

Switzerland

Horch P, Spaar R 2016: Landwirtschaft und Naturschutz im oberen Goms: Gemeinsamer Einsatz für das Braunkehlchen. Jahresbericht 2015.

Zusammenfassung: Seit 2014 werden durch das Vernetzungsprojekt im Oberen Goms vier „Fördergebiete Braunkehlchen“ gesichert, die für die Braunkehlchen wichtig sind. Die Wiesen müssen für acht Jahre extensiv oder wenig intensiv genutzt werden und können als Biodiversitätsförderflächen angemeldet werden. Die erste Nutzung erfolgt ab dem 15. Juli und muss eine Mahdnutzung sein. Das Braunkehlchen-Monitoring, das die Vogelwarte seit 2006 auf Teilflächen durchführt, wurde 2015 fortgesetzt. Aufgrund der neuen Perimeter ist nur ein Vergleich der Dichten pro 10 ha sinnvoll. Über die letzten 10 Jahre gesehen geht der Bestand zurück, hat sich aber im Vergleich zu 2014 in den meisten Flächen leicht erholt. 2016 wird das Monitoring des Braunkehlchenbestands im oberen Goms fortgesetzt.

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