

# Waders in Iran

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Waders form just over ten percent of the Iranian avifauna. Of the 51 species that occur in the country, the majority are migratory as either summer or winter visitors, or occur on passage in autumn or spring. Most species of the genera *Calidris*, *Tringa*, *Limosa* and *Numenius* which occur in Iran do so on passage. Eight species migrate to breed in Iran, five species occur throughout the year, and 38 species occur only as migrants (Table 1).

The distribution of waders in Iran is linked to that of wetlands such as, rivers, lakes and coastal areas with fresh, brackish and saltwater, and is shown in Figure 1.

In the Islamic Republic of Iran hunting of waders is not allowed and all species of waders are protected.

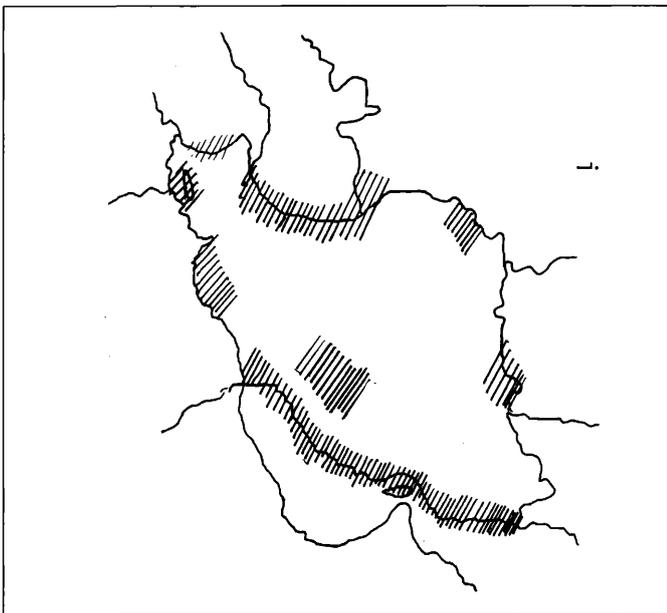


Figure 1. Wader distribution in Iran

The numbers and length of stay of migratory species in autumn are generally greater than in the spring. There is also a considerable wintering population (Table 2). Waders are counted on 110 wetlands each year during the course of co-ordinated wildfowl counts (Behrouzi-Rad 1986-1988). These wetlands are principally the south coast of the Caspian Sea, the north coast of the Persian Gulf, Lake Parishan, Lake Bakhtagan and Shadegan Marsh.

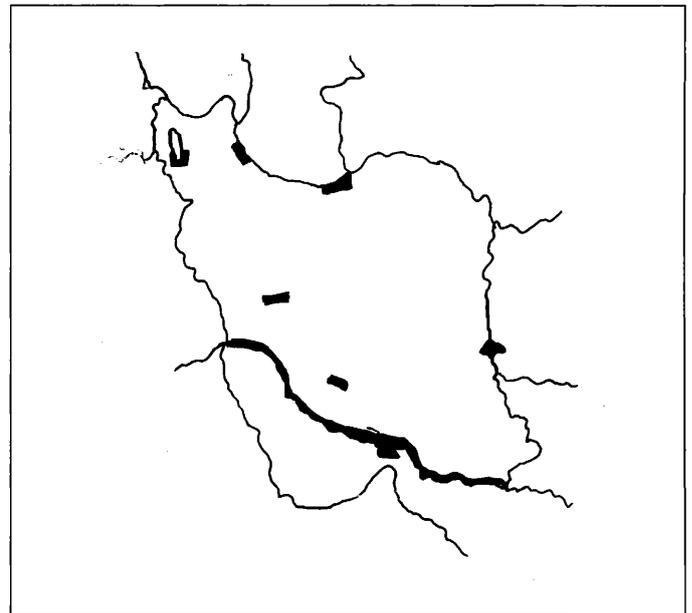


Figure 2. Wader breeding habitat in Iran

## BREEDING WADERS IN IRAN

The principal breeding distribution of waders in Iran occurs in coastal areas of the Persian Gulf, Bakhtagan and Parishan lakes, the Arjan wetland, the southern coast of the Caspian Sea, around Lake Uromiyeh, Hamon Lake and wetlands in some of south western Iran (Figure 2).



Table 1. Status of waders in Iran

<b>RESIDENT</b>	
Kentish Plover	<i>Charadrius alexandrinus</i>
Red-Wattled Lapwing	<i>Vanellus indicus</i>
Avocet	<i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>
Crab Plover	<i>Dromas ardeola</i>
Great Stone Plover	<i>Esacus recurvirostris</i>
<b>BREEDING (Migratory)</b>	
Oystercatcher	<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>
White-tailed Plover	<i>Vanellus leucurus</i>
Lapwing	<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>
Stone Curlew	<i>Burhinus oedicnemus</i>
Redshank	<i>Tringa totanus</i>
Solitary Snipe	<i>Gallinago solitaria</i>
Black-winged Stilt	<i>Himantopus himantopus</i>
Common Sandpiper	<i>Tringa hypoleucos</i>
<b>OCCURRING ON MIGRATION ONLY</b>	
Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>
Little Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius dubius</i>
Terek Sandpiper	<i>Xenus cinereus</i>
Mongolian Plover	<i>Charadrius mongolus</i>
Greater Sand Plover	<i>Charadrius leschnaultii</i>
Caspian Plover	<i>Charadrius asiaticus</i>
Dotterel	<i>Eudromias morinellus</i>
Golden Plover	<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>
Asiatic Golden Plover	<i>Pluvialis dominica</i>
Grey Plover	<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>
Sociable Plover	<i>Vanellus gregarius</i>
Turnstone	<i>Arenaria interpres</i>
Little Stint	<i>Calidris minuta</i>
Temminck's Stint	<i>Calidris temminckii</i>
Dunlin	<i>Calidris alpina</i>
Curlew Sandpiper	<i>Calidris ferruginea</i>
Sanderling	<i>Calidris alba</i>
Ruff	<i>Philomachus pugnax</i>
Broad-billed Sandpiper	<i>Limicola falcinellus</i>
Spotted Redshank	<i>Tringa erythropus</i>
Marsh Sandpiper	<i>Tringa stagnatilis</i>
Greenshank	<i>Tringa nebularia</i>
Green Sandpiper	<i>Tringa ochropus</i>
Wood Sandpiper	<i>Tringa glareola</i>
Black-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa limosa</i>
Bar-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa lapponica</i>
Curlew	<i>Numenius arquata</i>
Slender-billed Curlew	<i>Numenius tenuirostris</i>
Whimbrel	<i>Numenius phaeopus</i>
Woodcock	<i>Scolopax rusticola</i>
Snipe	<i>Gallinago gallinago</i>
Great Snipe	<i>Gallinago media</i>
Jack Snipe	<i>Lymnocyptes minimus</i>
Grey Phalarope	<i>Phalaropus fulicarius</i>
Red-necked Phalarope	<i>Phalaropus lobatus</i>
Cream-coloured Courser	<i>Cursorius cursor</i>
Pratincole	<i>Glareola pratincola</i>
Black-winged Pratincole	<i>Glareola nordmanni</i>

The population size and density of waders in the southern part of Iran is greater than in more northerly areas, and the Red Wattled Lapwing *Vanellus indicus*, Crab Plover *Dromas ardeola*, Great Stone Plover *Esacus recurvirostris* are observed only in coastal areas of the Persian Gulf in southern Iran (Figure 3).

Table 2. Total wader numbers counted during mid-January waterfowl censuses of 110 Iranian wetlands (from Behrouzi-Rad 1986-1988).

Species	Year	
	1988	1989
Oystercatcher	575	217
Black-winged Stilt	1,430	1,350
Avocet	303	120
Ringed Plover	2,352	2
Little Ringed Plover	18	38
Kentish Plover	24	13
Lapwing	13,386	13,835
Little Stint	1,205	102
Temminck's Stint	2,211	-
Redshank	1,496	175
Marsh Sandpiper	1,904	95
Greenshank	14	102
Green Sandpiper	495	280
Wood Sandpiper	-	120
Common Sandpiper	515	225
Black-tailed Godwit	1,285	18
Bar-tailed Godwit	900	10
Curlew	922	5,549
Whimbrel	2,667	161
Other wader spp.	132	1,416

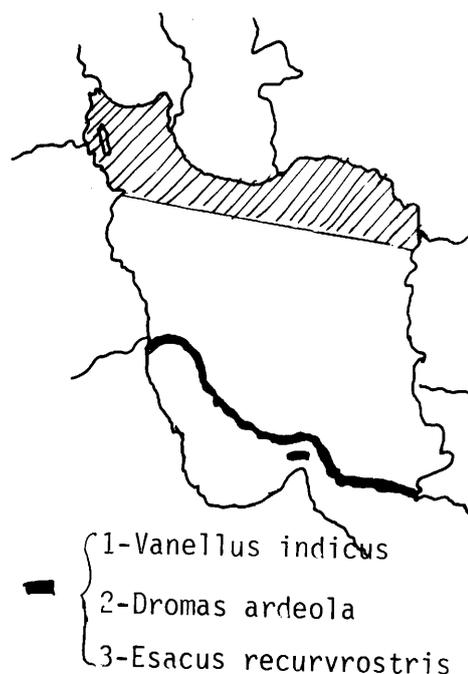
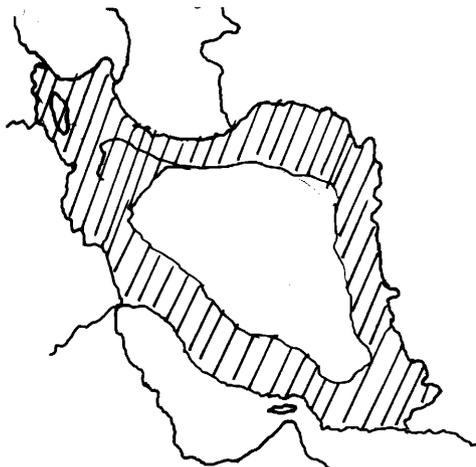


Figure 3. Variations in population size and density in Iran





- 1-Charadrius hiaticula
- 2-Tringa totanus
- 3-Burhinus oedicnemus
- 4-Himantopus himantopus

Figure 4. Distribution of wader species in Iran

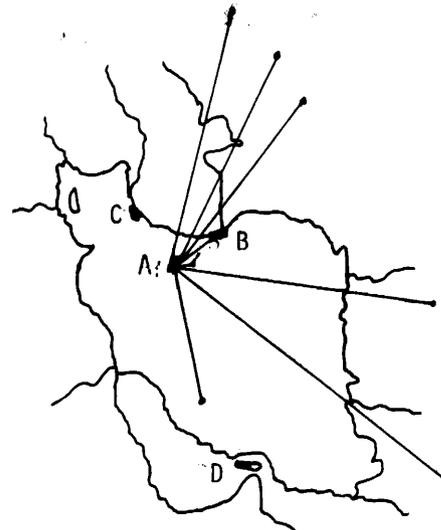


Figure 5. Wader ringing sites and migration routes. A. Galenow B. Miankaleh C. Lavanavil D. Hara

In contrast, the distribution of the Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus* and Common Sandpiper *Tringa hypoleucos* is restricted to the northern parts of Iran (Figure 3). Other species, such as Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*, Redshank *Tringa totanus*, Stone Curlew *Burhinus oedicnemus*, and Black-winged Stilt *Himantopus himantopus* occur more widely through most of Iran (Figure 4). Migratory species especially are observed in wetlands wherever they occur in Iran.

#### RINGING WADERS IN IRAN

Wader ringing in Iran has been undertaken since 1970. A total of 3,820 waders of 35 species was caught and ringed over 18 years (Table 3). At present I am the only person in Iran actively ringing waders. Catches are made at night using mist nets. Of the total ringed, 90% have been ringed during autumn and spring. Figure 5 shows the principal wader ringing sites in Iran.

The majority of waders ringed (95%) have been trapped on Galenow, 30 km south-east of Tehran (35°24'N, 51°30'E). The remainder have been ringed at Miankaleh W.R. (36°50'N, 53°25'E) and Lavandavil P.R. 2 km south of Astara (38°26'N, 48°52'E) in the

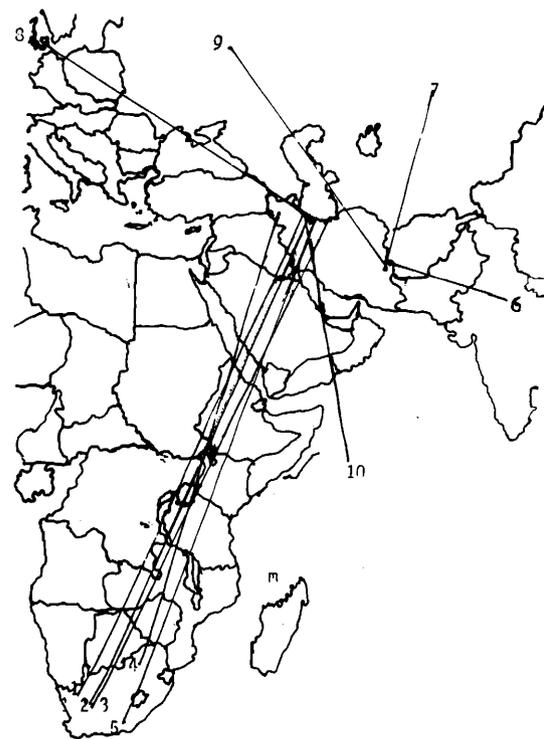


Figure 6. Waders recovered in Iran. 1. *Calidris minuta* 2. *C. alba* 3. *C. ferruginea* 4. *Philomachus pugnax* 5. *Limosa limosa* 6. *Vanellus leucurus* 7. *V. gregarius* 8. *Charadrius dubius* 9. *Tringa ochropus* 10. *Arenaria interpres*



Table 3. Iranian wader ringing totals.

Species	before 1970	1970	1975	1976	1977	1978	Total
		-1974				-1988	
Crab Plover <i>Dromas ardeola</i>	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
Black-winged Stilt <i>Himantopus himantopus</i>	22	-	8	19	12	4	65
Ringed Plover <i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>	-	8	15	4	7	2	36
Little Ringed Plover <i>Ch. dubius</i>	2	12	48	45	14	-	121
Kentish Plover <i>Ch. alexandrinus</i>	4	10	96	108	26	1	245
Greater Sand Plover <i>Ch. leschenaulti</i>	-	-	2	5	-	-	7
Grey Plover <i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>	-	6	-	-	-	-	6
Golden Plover <i>P. apricaria</i>	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
White-tailed Plover <i>Vanellus leucurus</i>	-	-	1	5	21	-	27
Lapwing <i>V. vanellus</i>	1	-	-	6	-	-	7
Turnstone <i>Arenaria interpres</i>	-	5	15	1	-	-	21
Little Stint <i>Calidris minuta</i>	36	162	716	378	41	10	1343
Temminck's Stint <i>C. temminckii</i>	4	21	49	48	15	-	137
Dunlin <i>C. alpina</i>	7	39	53	14	2	-	106
Curlew Sandpiper <i>C. ferruginea</i>	8	37	150	58	8	-	260
Broad-billed Sandpiper <i>Limicola falcinellus</i>	11	2	2	2	-	-	17
Sanderling <i>Calidris alba</i>	-	10	8	-	-	-	18
Ruff <i>Philomachus pugnax</i>	2	9	91	113	53	-	278
Spotted Redshank <i>Tringa erythropus</i>	3	2	5	-	1	-	12
Redshank <i>T. totanus</i>	19	2	20	7	2	2	52
Terek Sandpiper <i>T. cinereus</i>	5	-	13	-	-	2	20
Marsh Sandpiper <i>T. stagnatilis</i>	3	2	23	5	20	-	53
Greenshank <i>T. nebularia</i>	-	5	1	9	-	-	15
Green Sandpiper <i>T. ochropus</i>	5	18	1	12	24	2	62
Wood Sandpiper <i>T. glareola</i>	26	32	172	159	91	2	482
Common Sandpiper <i>T. hypoleucos</i>	10	11	37	80	23	2	162
Black-tailed Godwit <i>Limosa lapponica</i>	2	-	-	2	-	-	4
Curlew <i>Numenius arquata</i>	-	-	-	2	2	-	4
Slender-billed Curlew <i>N. tenuirostris</i>	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Snipe <i>Gallinago gallinago</i>	12	6	5	33	20	-	76
Jack Snipe <i>Lymnocyptes minimus</i>	3	-	-	1	-	-	4
Great Snipe <i>Gallinago media</i>	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
Stone Curlew <i>Burhinus oedicephalus</i>	-	1	1	1	-	-	3
Collared Pratincole <i>Glareola pratincola</i>	-	-	5	-	-	-	5
Red-necked Phalarope <i>Phalaropus lobatus</i>	95	46	17	7	-	3	168

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north of Iran, and Hara N.P. on the Persian Gulf to the south of Bandarabbas (26°50'N, 55°49'E) in southern Iran. To date, all recoveries have been of birds which were ringed on Galenow. Figure 5 shows migration routes of the waders which have been ringed on Galenow, and Figure 6 shows the migration routes of those waders recovered in Iran which had been and ringed in other countries.

Two Russian waders have been found wintering or on migration in Iran. These were a Sociable Plover *Vanellus gregarius* and a Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*. Five waders have been ringed on their wintering grounds in South Africa and recovered during the migration season in the south Caspian region. These were a Ruff *Philomachus pugnax*, a Little Stint *Calidris minuta*, a Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea*, a Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*, and a Sanderling *Calidris alba*. Other recoveries include: from India, a White-tailed Plover *Vanellus leucurus*, from Europe, a

Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius* and, from the Indian Ocean near the shores of Somalia, a Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*.

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