

Short Communication

Record of Bohemian Waxwing *Bombycilla garrulus* in Meshkin Shahr, Ardabil Province, and its Status in Iran

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Received 4 December 2005; accepted 25 February 2006

At about 10:00 hrs on 7 January 2005 – a day of heavy snowfall - the author found a weak Bohemian Waxwing *Bombycilla garrulus* below an apple tree in Arablou village near Meshkin Shahr, Ardabil Province. After some hours, the bird died (Figure 1). This is the first record of the species in this part of Ardebil Province.

The Bohemian Waxwing is listed by Zarudnyi (1911) as a rare winter visitor to the south Caspian region, Atrek valley and northern Khorasan. Schüz (1959) seems not to have recorded it himself, but refers back to Radde (1881, 1884) who mentions the species for Gilan and Mazandaran. Hübner & Etchécopar (1970) included south-western Iran in the distribution of the species in Iran, and Scott *et al.* (1975) added Baluchistan.

There were only two records of the species in Iran in the 1970s: a small party seen by M. Bosch at Tangigol in Golestan National Park, Golestan Province, in November or December 1970; and two adults seen by D.A. Scott in a garden in Chahbahar, Seistan & Baluchistan Province, on 5 March 1971 (D.A. Scott, pers. comm.).

B. Behrouzirat (pers. comm.) mentions the occurrence of the species in the Arasbaran area (East Azarbaijan Province) in the spring of 1982 and 1984, and lists Golestan National Park as the only protected area in Iran in which it has occurred (Behrouzirat 1990). Recent reports of Bohemian Waxwings in Iran have included a dead bird found near Dasht-e Naz Wildlife Refuge, Mazandaran Province in 1989 (H. Ziaie, pers. comm.), a record from Chahbahar in 1997 (R. Ghaemi, pers. comm.), another record from Tangigol in Golestan National Park in about 1999 (B. Darehshori, pers. comm.), many other observations in Golestan Province (R. Ghaemi, pers. comm.), an observation in Zabol, Seistan & Baluchistan Province, in 2004 (J. Mansoori, pers. comm.), and finally an observation at the Department of the Environment's station at Mobarakeh in the Kavir National Park, Tehran Province in 2004 (J. Mansoori, pers. comm.).

These records suggest that the Bohemian Waxwing, a species renowned for its irruptive behaviour, is an irregular winter visitor to Iran (especially Golestan National Park). However, the occurrence of the species in south-western Iran has not been confirmed in recent years.

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Figure 1. The dead Waxwing at Arablou village, Meshkin Shahr, Ardabil Province, 6 January 2005 (Photo by F. Ahmadzadeh).

