

Review of the Current Status of the Eurasian Wryneck *Jynx torquilla*, Eurasian Treecreeper *Certhia familiaris* and Wallcreeper *Tichodroma muraria* in Iran

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Eurasian Wryneck *Jynx torquilla*

The Eurasian Wryneck has always been regarded as a rather scarce passage migrant, many of the records coming from the south Caspian region, the Tehran area and Khorasan. It was a very scarce winter visitor in the south of the country. Zarudny (1911) listed it as a breeding bird in Azerbaijan and Gilan, Records since the 1950s are: from the Caspian slope and on the coast in August–September 1959; one on 6 April south of Alborz, Robat Karim ‘Date not given; in the May 1955–58 period’ (Passburg 1959); one specimen collected from Siah-Kuh, SW of Tehran on 14 September 1957 by J. Read (D.A. Scott *in litt.*), at Kheirud-Kenar, Mazandaran (Dayani & Behrouzi-Rad 1988); at Evin, Tehran (D. Sturhan, unpubl. data); nine birds ringed in the Lar Valley in 1974–76 (Roggers 2001) and passage in Touran (Tourenq *et al.* 2000).

Between 1967 and 1978, there were 51 records of this species, all 20 spring records being between 22 March and 29 April and all 28 autumn records being between 23 August and 30 October; three other records in southern Iran probably were wintering birds (Table 1). The Wryneck occurs widely on migration throughout the Middle East, and could occur anywhere in Iran where there are shrubs and trees. A distribution map for this species is more a reflection of where observers were active during the migration seasons than a reflection of the true distribution of the Wryneck in Iran. A large proportion of the records in 1967–78 come from just four sites: Lashgarak (13 records), Miankaleh P.A. (7 records), the Upper Lar Valley (at least 10 records) and Stan Howe’s garden in Ahwaz (9 records) – all sites at which the observer effort

was extremely high (D.A. Scott *in litt.*). There was no evidence of breeding anywhere in the country in the 1970s (D.A. Scott *in litt.*), although recently it has been confirmed in Ardebil Province (R. Ghaemi, pers. comm.), suggesting other unknown breeding areas may exist elsewhere in the country.

Since then, 21 observations have been recorded between 1998 and 2008, mostly in northern Iran (Table 2, Fig. 1). Previously, twelve provinces (*i.e.* Mazandaran, Golestan, Tehran, West Azerbaijan, Gilan, Ardebil, East Azerbaijan, Semnan, Khorasan, Fars, Hormozgan, Sistan & Baluchestan) had been suggested as possible breeding, wintering or passage ground of



Figure 1. Distribution of Eurasian Wryneck, Eurasian Treecreeper & Wallcreeper in Iran, all records since 1967. Key to symbols: ★ for Eurasian Wryneck, ▲ for Eurasian Treecreeper and ○ for Wallcreeper.

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Eurasian Wryneck (Sehatisabet *et al.* 2006), but the spread of records in Table 2 had added four provinces namely Esfahan, Khuzestan, North Khorasan and Khorasan-e Razavi, to this list. It is reasonable to conclude that the Wryneck occurs over most of Iran, but remains scarce. Most observations have been from spring and late

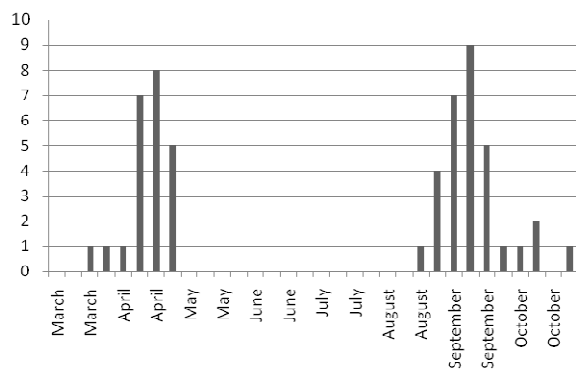
summer to early autumn. Its usual earliest date in Iran is 26 March and the latest 30 October. Usually, only single birds have been recorded, except for in Gilan Province where the observations have been of more than one bird (Table 2).

Table 1. Records of Eurasian Wryneck *Jynx torquilla* from 1967 to 1978 (D.A. Scott *in litt.*). * A very late autumn migrant or a wintering bird, ** presumably a wintering bird

Province	Locality	Spring Date	Autumn dates	No	Observer
Gilan	2 km west of Kopur-Chal	21.04.70		1	R. Newell & R. Scott
Gilan	Abbas-Abad Dam		26.09.75	1	D.A. Scott
Gilan	Galugah	29.04.70		1	R. Newell & R. Scott
Gilan	Galugah Ab-bandan	11.04.70		1	R. Newell & R. Scott
Gilan	Galugah Ab-bandan	21.04.70		2	R. Newell & R. Scott
Gilan	Galugah Ab-bandan		06.09.72	1	D.A. Scott
Mazandaran	Daryakenar, west of Babolsar		13.09.68	2	Unknown
Mazandaran	Dasht-e Naz Wildlife Refuge		30.10.71	1	D.A. Scott
Mazandaran	Dunes at east end of Miankaleh Pen.	17.04.73		1	D.A. Scott
Mazandaran	Dunes at west end of Miankaleh Pen.		31.08.72	1	D.A. Scott
Mazandaran	Dunes at west end of Miankaleh Pen.		01.09.72	1	D.A. Scott
Mazandaran	Dunes near Zargmarz Ab-bandan		18.09.71	1	D.A. Scott
Mazandaran	Farm near east end of Miankaleh Pen.		11.09.75	1	D.A. Scott
Mazandaran	Near dams at W end of Miankaleh Pen.		12.09.75	1	D.A. Scott
Mazandaran	West end of Miankaleh Peninsula		10.09.72	1	D.J. Garbutt <i>et al.</i>
Mazandaran	West end of Miankaleh Peninsula		16.09.72	1	D.J. Garbutt <i>et al.</i>
Khorasan-Razavi	Garden in Fariman		22.09.74	1	D.A. Scott
Khorasan-Razavi	Garden in Kashmar		23.09.74	1	D.A. Scott
Semnan	Anaboun spring, Touran P.A.	28.04.74		1	D.A. Scott
Semnan	Delbar oasis, Touran Protected Area	26.04.74		1	D.A. Scott
Semnan	Near Shah Abbas, Kavir Protected A.	22.03.75		1	D.A. Scott
Semnan	Spring on S side of Parvar P.A.		14.09.75	1	D.A. Scott
Tehran	Cultivated area 10 km north of Tehran	11.04.67		1	Erard & Etchecopar
Tehran	Lashgarak	05.04.73		1	D.A. Scott
Tehran	Lashgarak	13.04.73		1	P.N. Paul
Tehran	Lashgarak	19.04.73		1	P.N. Paul
Tehran	Lashgarak		23.08.73	1	D.A. Scott
Tehran	Lashgarak		26.08.73	1	P.N. Paul
Tehran	Lashgarak		09.09.73	1	D.A. Scott
Tehran	Lashgarak	26.03.74		1	D.A. Scott
Tehran	Lashgarak	14.04.74		2	D.A. Scott
Tehran	Lashgarak	18.04.74		1	D.A. Scott
Tehran	Lashgarak	22.04.74		1	D.A. Scott & P.N Paul
Tehran	Lashgarak		05.09.74	1	D.A. Scott
Tehran	Lashgarak		28.08.75	1	D.A. Scott
Tehran	Lashgarak		11.09.75	1	K.G. Rogers
Tehran	Pasteur Institute in Tehran	13.04.67		2	Erard & Etchecopar
Tehran	Upper Lar Valley above Polur		10.09.71	1	D.A. Scott
Tehran	Upper Lar Valley above Polur		04.09.75	3+	D.A. Scott
Tehran	Upper Lar Valley above Polur		05.09.75	1	D.A. Scott
Tehran	Upper Lar Valley above Polur		26/27.08.76	1	F.B. Argyle
Tehran	Upper Lar Valley above Polur		16/17.09.76	1	F.B. Argyle
Yazd	Garden in Tabas	27.04.75		1	D.A. Scott
Khuzestan	Haft-Tappeh, Dez River	28.04.78		1	C.D.R. Heard
Fars	Conifer plantation at Persepolis	17.04.67		1	Erard & Etchecopar
Fars	East end of Lake Parishan		13.12.75*	1	C. Majka
Fars	Spring in hills south of Fasa		07.10.75	1	D.A. Scott
Hormozgan	Garden east of Bandar Abbas		02.02.74**	1	D.A. Scott
Hormozgan	Garden east of Bandar Abbas		04.02.74**	1	D.A. Scott
Hormozgan	Village 22 km south of Minab		12.10.73	1	D.A. Scott
Baluchestan	Bushy valley NW of Sarbarz		14.10.75	1	D.A. Scott

Table 2. Observations of Eurasian Wryneck *Jynx torquilla* between 1998 and 2008. NA=Not Available.

Province	Place	Date/period	No	Observer/source
Gilan	Kolvir, W Anzali	Sep. 1998	Several	Sachanowicz <i>et al.</i> (2000)
Mazandaran	Noor plain forest	1999	1 Dead	M.E. Sehatiasabet (pers. comm.)
West Azerbaijan	Rashkan, 40 km SE Urumieh	16 Sep. 2000	1	Jalving & Vos (2003)
Golestan	Tang-e Gol, Golestan N.P.	2001	NA	Petutschnig <i>et al.</i> (2002)
Semnan	Touran	17 Apr. 2003	1	M. Ullman (via the Editor)
Semnan	Biyarjomand	18 Apr. 2003	1	M. Ullman (via the Editor)
Semnan	south of Parvar	19 Apr. 2003	1	M. Ullman (via the Editor)
Esfahan	Maranjab caravanserai	10 Apr. 2005	1	M. Ullman (via the Editor)
Gilan	Boujagh N.P., Kiashahr	Apr. 2004–2006	Several	A. Ashoori (pers. comm.)
Gilan	Lisar P.A, Astara	May 2006	1	A. Ashoori (pers. comm.)
Gilan	Boujagh N.P, Kia-Shahr	18 Aug. 2006	1	A. Ashoori (pers. comm.)
Gilan	Boujagh N.P, Kia-Shahr	Late Aug. 2006	1	B. Nezami (pers. comm.)
Khuzestan	Karkheh Koor	20 Apr. 2007	1	M. Ullman (via the Editor)
Tehran	Khojir N.P., Tehran	Apr. 2007	1	B. Nezami (pers. comm.)
Tehran	Enqelab Sport Complex	May 2007	1	P. Bakhtiari (pers. comm.)
Khuzestan	Korkhe Koor, Hamidieh Plains, W Ahvaz	May 2007	1	R. Ghaemi (pers. comm.)
Gilan	Siahkeshim P.A., Anzali	Spring 2007	1	E. Hadipour (pers. comm.)
North Khorasan	Golol, Sarani P.A, 60 km NE of Bojnord	7 Sep. 2007	1	S.B. Musavi (pers. comm.)
Khorasan-e Razavi	Sarakhs, 150 km E Mashad	Mar. 2008	1	S.B. Musavi (pers. comm.)
Khuzestan	Ahvaz	May 2008	1	S.B. Musavi (pers. comm.)
Tehran	15 Km on the Firouzkuh-Semnan road	13 Apr. 2008	1	M. Tohidifar (pers. obs.)

**Figure 2.** Number of bird/days of Eurasian Wryneck *Jynx torquilla* by quarter-monthly period from March to October (1-7; 8-15; 16-23; 24-30/31) 1967–78 (D.A. Scott *in litt.*).**Table 3.** Records of Eurasian Treecreeper *Certhia familiaris* in the 1970s (D.A. Scott *in litt.*).

Province	Location	Date	No
Golestan	Golestan N.P.	2 Feb. 1972	2
Mazandaran	Forest of Galand-Rud Valley, S Alam-Deh	4 Sep. 1972	1
Golestan	Golestan N.P.	20 Nov. 1972	1
Mazandaran	Forest of Galand-Rud Valley, S Alam-Deh	15 Apr. 1973	2
Mazandaran	Dasht-e Naz W.R., Sari	23 Jan. 1974	2
Mazandaran	Forest 20 km S Amol	21 Dec. 1974	1
Gilan	In the forest of Masuleh Valley	12 Jul. 1975	1
Golestan	Golestan N.P.	29 Jul. 1975	1
Mazandaran	Forest 20 km S Amol	31 Jan. 1976	1
Mazandaran	Kelar-Dasht forest, SW Chalus	8 Jul. 1976	1
Mazandaran	Kelar-Dasht forest, SW Chalus	15 Jul. 1976	2
Mazandaran	Forest 20 km S Amol	5 Apr. 1978	1

Eurasian Treecreeper *Certhia familiaris*

The Eurasian Treecreeper is a scarce resident in the Caspian forest, probably occurring throughout (D. A. Scott *in litt.*). Zarudny (1911) listed it as a breeding species in the south Caspian region. Its earliest record from the 1950s was Passburg (1959), who noted a few in his trip to the Caspian slope forests. There were only 12 records in the 1970s (Table 3) and only seven documented in Iran during the 1990–2008 period; these were mainly in Golestan Province (Table 4, Fig. 1). However, it has also been observed several times in various seasons by local hunters in Gilan forests (A. Ashoori, pers. comm.). It would seem that the paucity of Eurasian Treecreeper records relates to these reasons: the difficulty of seeing this unobtrusive little bird (D.A. Scott *in litt.*) and due to lack of familiarity with the calls (they can sound like Goldcrest *Regulus regulus*) or even to not expecting the species to be present (M.J. Blair *in litt.*) and so it is probably more common than the records would suggest (D.A. Scott *in litt.*). We need to find the species in the deciduous forest of northern Azerbaijan (*e.g.* Arasbaran) where Hüé & Etchécopar (1970) imply that it breeds.

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Table 4. Observations of Eurasian Treecreeper *Certhia familiaris* between 1990 and 2008. NA=Not Available.

Province	Location	Date/period	No Observer/source
Golestan	Near a waterfall in Golestan N.P.	6 Jul. 1990	1 R. Ghaemi (pers. comm.)
Golestan	Golestan N.P.	1995–98	NA H.-R. Rezaee (unpubl. data)
Mazandaran	Noor plain forest	Autumn 1997– spring 2000	1 Sehhatisabet & Khaleghizadeh (2004)
Mazandaran	Noor forest. Race <i>persica</i> .	21 Feb. 2000	1 Dubois <i>et al.</i> (2000)
Golestan	Tang-e Gol	11–26 May 2001	NA Petutchnig <i>et al.</i> (2002)
Golestan	Golestan N.P.	25 Apr. 2004	2 M. Ullman (via the Editor)
Mazandaran	Golestanak Core Zone, Alborz P.A.	7 July 2006	2 B. Nezami (pers. comm.)

Wallcreeper *Tichodroma muraria*

The breeding grounds of the Wallcreeper are rocky ravines, sheer cliffs and rock faces, from about 2000 m a.s.l. up to the snowline (Porter *et al.* 1996). Zarudny (1911) lists it as a breeding bird in the south Caspian (Alborz), Khorasan, the Zagros and possibly Kuhestan/Kerman, and this is repeated by Hüé & Etchécopar (1970). It is probably a widely distributed but rather scarce breeding bird at high altitudes in the Alborz and Zagros mountains, but elusive during the breeding season and much under-recorded because of its preference for remote and inaccessible cliffs and crags; it is to some extent an altitudinal migrant, descending to lower elevations, including coastal cliffs (Porter *et al.* 1996) and appears in the foothills during winter. Occasionally it reaches isolated hill ranges and artificial stone structures, often ruins, out on the plains (D.A. Scott *in litt.*). Early records since the 1950s include a pair on 2 August below Alam-Kuh, Gilan and a single bird on 3 August west of the main massif, Gilan. Streseman's only record refers to Pish-Kuh, Gilan (Norton 1958). Only three records from Passburg's trip suggests that it must be quite rare in the Alborz (Passburg 1959). Schütz (1957) lists this species among the birds observed in the Alborz. In the 1970s, 24 records were added by D.A. Scott (*in litt.*) from six provinces (Table 5).

In total, there are 14 observations from 1990 to 2008; Tehran Province having half of the records (in particular from birdwatching activities) (Table 6). Although Scott (2007) encountered Wallcreeper as an occasional winter visitor from the high Alborz to the Lashgarak area, it is probably resident in the Alborz mountains and adjacent areas supported by seven

observations in recent years in Tehran and one from Larijan, on the border of Mazandaran Province (Table 6). More field surveys are needed in the high mountain ranges of Azerbaijan and the Zagros mountains to obtain a better indication of the species' distribution in western Iran (D.A. Scott *in litt.*). This species has low population throughout its range; in Europe it typically requires a large territory and has strict habitat requirements (Cramp & Simmons 1988). It is also vulnerable to large-scale outdoor recreation activities, such as skiing, in rocky ecosystems (Monavari 2004).

Table 5. Records of Wallcreeper *Tichodroma muraria* in 1970s. (D.A. Scott *in litt.*)

Province	Location	Date	No
Tehran	Near Polur in Lar Valley	9 Oct. 1970	1
Tehran	Upper Lar Valley	20 Nov. 1970	1
Tehran	Latian Dam/Lashgarak area	7 Dec. 1972	1
Tehran	Latian Dam/Lashgarak area	5 dates between 14 Feb and 15 Mar 1974	1
Tehran	Latian Dam/Lashgarak area	7 dates between 27 Dec. 1974 and 13 Mar. 1975	1
Tehran	Latian Dam/Lashgarak area	27 Feb. 1976	1
Fars	Near Soltan-Abad marshes, Shiraz	12 Dec. 1970	1
Tehran	Early of Firouz-Kuh road	6 Feb. 1971	1
Tehran	Ilerrud Range, North of Karaj	15 May 1971	1
E Azerbaijan	Gorges of Vinak, Arasbaran P.A.	2 Dec. 1971	1
W Azerbaijan	At a bridge on the plains N of Lake Urumiyeh	29 Dec. 1971	1
Tehran	Ilerrud Range, North of Karaj	1 May 1972	1
Ghazvin	Hills between Avaj & Abgarm	9 Nov. 1973	1
Tehran	Shah Abbas Caravanserai, Kavir N.P.	20 Nov. 1975	1

Table 6. Observations of Wallcreeper *Tichodroma muraria* between 1990 and 2008. NA=Not Available.

Province	Location	Date/period	No	Observer/source
Golestan	Alireza straits, Jahan-Nama P.A.	11 Sep. 1990	1	R. Ghaemi (pers. comm.)
Golestan	Northern gorges of Jahan-Nama P.A.	3 May 1993	1	R. Ghaemi (pers. comm.)
Golestan	Tang-e Gol, Golestan NP	11-26 May 2001	NA	Petutschnig <i>et al.</i> (2002)
North Khorasan	Dasht, Bojnord	11-26 May 2001	NA	Petutschnig <i>et al.</i> (2002)
Tehran	Darakeh gorges/Tehran	6 Mar. 2000	1	Dubois <i>et al.</i> (2000)
Tehran	Do-Qolu waterfall, N Tehran	Late spring 2002	1	P. Bakhtiari (pers. comm.)
Semnan	Parvar P.A.	29 Apr. 2004	3	M. Ullman (via the Editor)
Tehran	Tang-e Savashi, Firouz-Kuh	Late spring 2004	1	P. Bakhtiari (pers. comm.)
Tehran	Tang-e Savashi, Firouz-Kuh	Early summer 2004	1	P. Bakhtiari (pers. comm.)
Tehran	East of Latian Dam	11 Nov. 2004	1	Khaleghizadeh & Sehhatiasabet (2007)
Tehran	Dar-Abad gorges	Autumn 2005	1	M. Pourhedayat (pers. comm.)
Khorasan-e Razavi	Kardeh Dam, near Mashad	22 Jan. 2007	1	B. Musavi (pers. comm.)
Mazandaran	Gorges of Shahan Dasht, Larijan	3 Aug. 2008	1	M.A. Mazhari (pers. comm.)
Tehran	Tang-e Savashi, Firouz-Kuh	6 Aug. 2008	1	M. Pourhedayat (pers. comm.)

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