

Acknowledgements

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Recent unprecedented numbers of Red-necked Phalaropes *Phalaropus lobatus* in Tanzania, and some older undocumented records

In Kenya, Red-necked Phalaropes *Phalaropus lobatus* have frequently been recorded in offshore waters between October and April, sometimes with scores or even hundreds together. Occasional inland records have been mainly of small numbers on the Rift Valley lakes, but with up to 30 together at Ferguson's Gulf, Lake Turkana, and up to 15 at Lake Nakuru (Hopson & Hopson 1975, Britton 1980, East African Bird Reports for 1979–1992, Pearson & Turner 1998).

For Tanzania, however, Britton (1980) gives only two records: a single bird near Tabora on 10 October 1962 and a few at Lake Masek in January and February 1975.

Subsequently, four additional records were added to the Tanzanian Atlas data base up to 2011, all of single birds: Arusha NP, April 1981 (John Beesley); Kunduchi Salt Pans, Dar-es-Salaam, January–February 1984 (Neil and Liz Baker); Saadani Salt Pans, January 2005 (Jan Olsen); and Bagamoyo Salt Pans, January 2005 (Thomas Jacobsen.) Then, early in 2012, unprecedented numbers were recorded at two coastal sites.

On 30 January Mark and Alison Muller counted 25 birds on salt pans north of the Wami River on the edge of Saadani NP. Then on 5 February at least 28 birds were found on the salt pans north of Bagamoyo, the site that held the single bird in January 2005. The first six birds were found feeding, not by moving in tight circles but simply swimming and rapidly inserting their bills just below the surface of the flooded pans. Minutes later successive groups of three, two and four birds were noted resting along the banks of adjacent pans. Within 30 minutes a larger flock of 13 birds was found, two feeding in a similar manner to the first group, the others resting on exposed substrate. A small flock of Marsh Sandpipers *Tringa stagnatalis* and a single Ruff *Philomachus pugnax* were observed feeding in the same manner as the phalaropes among a larger flock of Black-winged Stilts *Himantopus himantopus*. The stilts were also catching prey just below the surface but were tall enough to wade in the shallow water. All 28 phalaropes were still present on 11 March.

These phalaropes were presumably from the wintering population known to occur well offshore in the northwest Indian Ocean (Cramp 1983). Their unprecedented numbers suggest either weather or food related movements of this population away from their traditional wintering grounds.

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The first four records of Slender-billed Gull *Larus genei* for Tanzania

Four recent Tanzanian records of Slender-billed Gull *Larus genei* have all been accepted by the East African Rarities Committee.

On 28 February 2010 at Speke Bay Lodge on the southeastern shore of Lake Victoria NEB located a flock of seven birds. They were on the water some 100 m offshore with a small flock of Grey-headed Gulls *L. cirrocephalus* and a lone Black-headed Gull *L. ridibundus*. Also present were a number of Gull-billed *Gelochelidon nilotica*, Whiskered *Chlidonias hybridus* and White-winged Black Terns *C. leucopterus*. The light conditions were far from perfect but the long necks of the Slender-billed Gulls, their whiteness