

Terek Sandpiper

Terekrüter

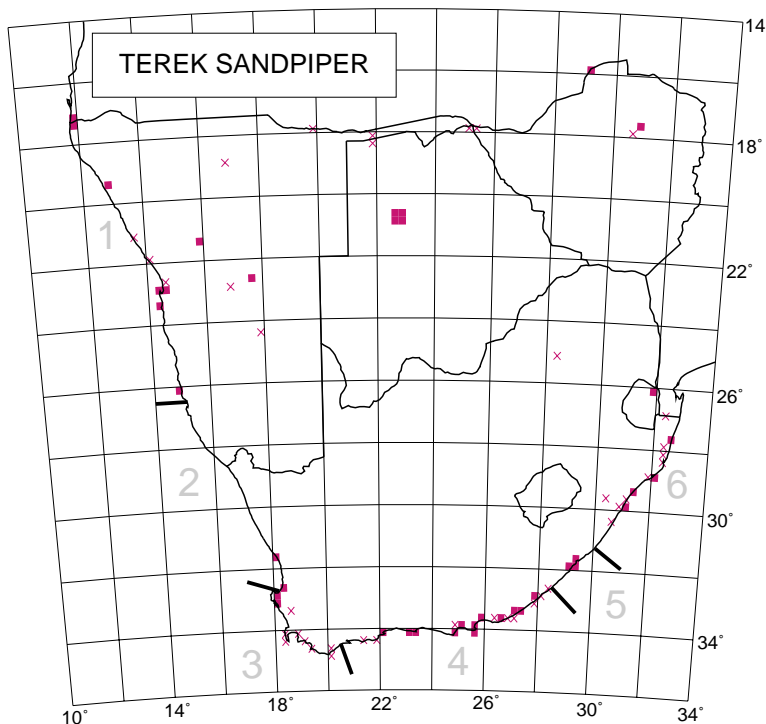
Xenus cinereus

The Terek Sandpiper is a nonbreeding migrant from the Palearctic. It breeds in the taiga zone from Finland eastwards across Siberia (Hayman *et al.* 1986; Rogacheva 1992). In the nonbreeding season it is distributed mainly along the Indian Ocean coast of Africa, Asia and Australasia (Hayman *et al.* 1986). At some localities in Mozambique it is the dominant wader (Waltner & Sinclair 1981). Densities decrease southwards; the largest recorded concentration in southern Africa was 500 birds at Richards Bay (2832CC) (Waltner & Sinclair 1981). The only locality on the Atlantic Ocean coast where it occurs regularly is at Langebaan Lagoon (3318AA) where the median of 12 mid-summer counts was 78 birds (Underhill 1987a). Inland records are rare (e.g. Irwin 1981; Tarboton *et al.* 1987b; Borello 1992b; Penry 1994); most occur during southward migration with a peak in October (Dowsett 1980a).

The number migrating to Africa and the Arabian Peninsula was estimated to be *c.* 44 000 by Rose & Scott (1994). The southern African population was estimated by Summers *et al.* (1987a) to be 560 birds, but more recent data suggest a total of *c.* 1000 (A.J. Tree *in litt.*), i.e. *c.* 2% of the flyway population.

It is distinctive but, because it is relatively rare in southern Africa, it may be overlooked in flocks of similar-sized waders. It is attracted to muddier sections of lagoons and estuaries, frequently several kilometres upstream of the mouth. Along tropical shores it is associated with open mangrove swamps (Waltner & Sinclair 1981).

There have been two recoveries of birds ringed at Langebaan Lagoon (Waltner & Sinclair 1981; SAFRING). A bird ringed on 11 December 1966 was recovered in Komi (65°N 52°E), Russia, on 15 June 1967. Because the locality is within the breeding grounds and the date within the normal incubation period, the bird was likely to have been nesting there. One ringed on 25 February 1976 was retrapped on northward migration at Lake Koka (8°N 39°E), Ethiopia, on 21 April 1976. There are numerous records of site faithfulness to Langebaan Lagoon (Western Cape Wader Study Group unpubl. data).



Recorded in 75 grid cells, 1.7%
 Total number of records: 646
 Mean reporting rate for range: 3.6%

It is frequently found in flocks of Curlew Sandpipers *Calidris ferruginea* and other small waders, both while feeding and, to a lesser extent, while roosting.

The breeding range is thought to have been expanding westwards into Finland since 1950, resulting in an apparently new migration route through western Europe to western Africa (Glutz von Blotzheim *et al.* 1977; Hayman *et al.* 1986). Waltner & Sinclair (1981) speculated that the birds migrating to Namibia belong to this population.

L.G. Underhill

