

Record flock of Sociable Lapwings discovered in Oman

Title

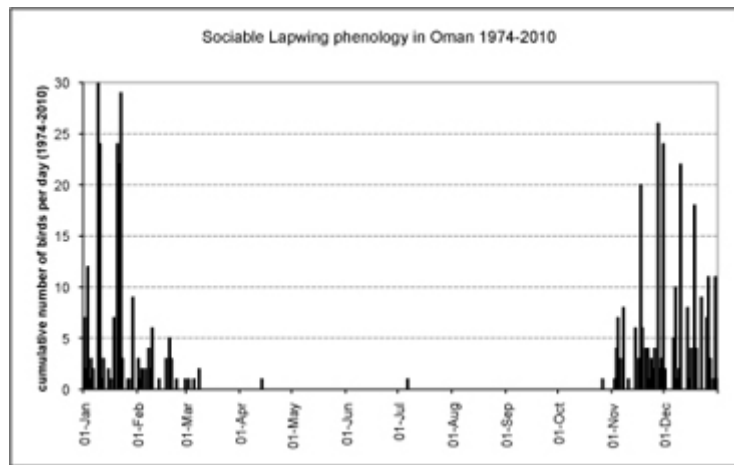
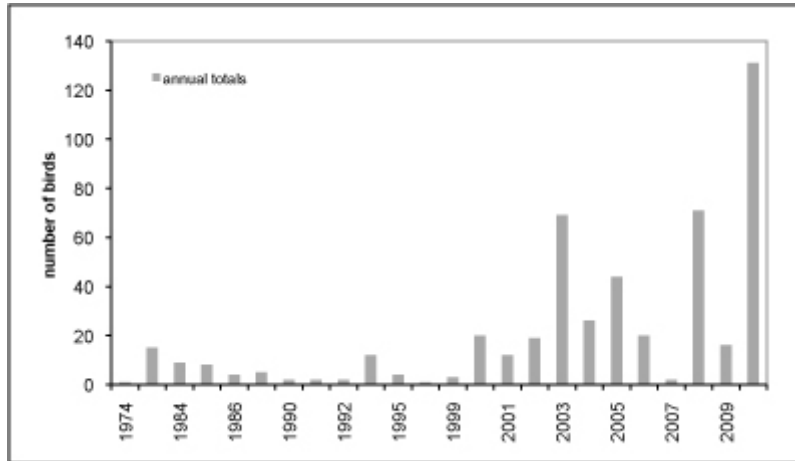
Exciting news has just reached us that a country record flock of 90+ Sociable Lapwings was present at Salalah in Oman on December 25th, 2010. The record was submitted to the *Amazing Journey* team by Spanish birder Daniel Lopez Velasco who was on a birding trip to Oman with friends when they encountered the birds. You can see Daniel's excellent images of part of the flock in this post and watch his short video of one of the birds feeding [here](#). "Having spent a couple of days searching for the BIG flock of Sociable Lapwings in south-eastern Turkey two Novembers ago without luck, I was very pleased to see this one!" reports Daniel. "We spent a couple of days birding Jarziz Farms, where the lapwings were located on the grassy, green, circular fields to the north west of the farm. They appeared fairly settled and were mainly feeding or roosting. During both our visits no one disturbed the birds which was good news!"



Record Sociable Lapwing flock, Salalah, Oman December 2010.

Oman is one of the best watched countries on the Arabian peninsula and there have been 105 previous records of single birds or small flocks of Sociable Lapwings occurring there between 1974 and 2010. Nearly all of these have been from three farms with large, irrigated fields. This latest flock of more than 90 individuals is the largest ever recorded - 48 were found present at Sahnout Farm, Salalah on 9th January 2010 and 29 at Jarziz Farm on 22nd

January 2010. There is also a record of 24 at Jarziz Farm on 30th November 2008.



Although it is not possible to separate the apparent increase in records from greater observer effort and coverage, there does seem to be an increase in numbers since 2001. This corresponds with the encouraging population recovery now being experienced in Kazakhstan and is mirrored in the increasing number of winter records from India too. Historical records show that Oman has always been a wintering area for small numbers of Sociable Lapwings. The possibility of it just being a stopover site for birds then moving on to north-east Africa via Yemen is possible though unlikely (only three Yemen records) and it is probable birds stay there until the end of February at least. As a result of this record being reported local observers will now make an attempt to see if any of this flock is still present in the area. If you, or anyone you know, has seen birds at the site this winter (and particularly since this record) we'd be very grateful for an update. Like Daniel you can submit records of any Sociable Lapwings you encounter using our [online reporting form](#). The increase in numbers in recent years suggests that the region is becoming increasingly important as a regular wintering area alongside East Sudan and India. It is possible to keep abreast of recent bird records in Oman by visiting [the Birds Oman website](#) run by Jens & Hanne Erikson. If you are fans of stunning Sociable Lapwing pictures check out their [incredible photographs](#).