

however, could not be determined. On March 9<sup>th</sup>, we observed Common Cranes at Hutovo blato: in the fields near Karaotok, ten (10) cranes, including two (2) second-year birds, were seen searching for food. Later on that day, two (2) more adults were observed in the meadows along the eastern shore of Buško jezero as well as separate groups of cranes (2 ad. + 1 juv., 2 ad. + 1 juv., 2 ad., 2 ind., 4 ind.), total 14 birds on the SE part of Livanjsko polje. A few days earlier, on March 3<sup>rd</sup> 2002, two flocks were seen flying over the Biokovo Mts. towards Sinjsko polje, Croatia (I. GABRIĆ pers. comm.). Reiser [REISER, O. (1939): *Materialien zu einer Ornithologie der Balkanica, I. Bosnien und Herzegowina nebst Teilen von Serbien und Dalmatien*, Wien] recorded several pairs of breeding Common Cranes at Livanjsko polje in 1896, 1899 and 1904. In the northern part of the field (which is owing to the clearly constant presence of these birds called Ždralovac blato, i.e. Crane Mire) he even found nests with eggs and chicks. They were in pairs as early as on March 23<sup>rd</sup> 1899, and he estimated the population at 8 pairs. In view of the fact that this largest karst polje in Europe, where large areas of bog have survived, is relatively well preserved, at least sporadic breeding of Common Cranes cannot be totally excluded.

Borut Rubinič, Institute Ornithologica, Pražakova 11, SI-1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia, e-mail: rubinic@siol.net

### RED-RUMPED SWALLOW *Hirundo daurica*

**Rdeča lastovka** – več opazovanj gnezdečih parov v letu 2002 med obalnim in osrednjim delom Bosne in Hercegovine: en par v bližini mostu pri Neumu na jadranski obali (UTM YH15) 12.6. in 12.7.; dva para v bližini hidrocentrale Grabovica pri Jablanici (UTM YJ22); trije pari v bližini Ostrožca (UTM YJ24); in štiri pari ob Neretvi v vasi Bradina pri Konjicu (UTM YJ44)

The Red-rumped Swallow is Eumediterranean species breeding in dry and warm habitats, particularly in river valleys and canyons [CRAMP, S., ed. (1988): *The Birds of the Western Palearctic*, Vol. 5, Oxford]. Similar as the Cetti's Warbler *Cettia cetti*, Syrian Woodpecker *Dendrocopos syriacus* and Spanish Sparrow *Passer hispaniolensis*, it spreads from Asia Minor along the Balkan Peninsula and the Adriatic coast towards the north and northwest (CRAMP 1988). As far as Croatia is concerned, the bird had been until 1980 known to occur only in Southern Dalmatia, while more recently it has also colonised central and northern Dalmatia, the Kvarner and Istra [STIPČEVIĆ, M. (1988): *Dauriska lastovica, Hirundo daurica rufula* Temminck 1835; novi podaci o gniježdenju u Hrvatskoj (Jugoslavija). *Ornitologija u Hrvatskoj*, JAZU, Zagreb] and as a breeder occurs even in Slovenia [MIHelič, T. (2000): Prva potrjena gnezditve rdeče lastovke *Hirundo daurica* v Sloveniji (Kraški rob, JZ Slovenija). *Acrocephalus* 21 (102-103): 261-263]. In Herzegovina, it was for the first time recorded as late as in 1976 at Hutovo blato. Later on, its nest-sites were discovered at Popovo polje (1978), in the

Neretva canyon up to Jablanica (1979), and in the Bregava valley (1980) [OBRATIL (1976 & 1980) In: STIPČEVIĆ, M. & G. LUKAČ (1991): Survey of spreading and breeding range changes of the Red-rumped Swallow (*Hirundo daurica*) in Yugoslav territory. *Larus* 43: 37-49]. In Herzegovina, I observed it for the first time on June 12<sup>th</sup> 2002. A pair was seen flying under and around the bridge on the Adriatic thoroughfare just before the centre of Neum. Here the pair clearly bred, for I observed, in the very same place, few more swallows – most probably a family with fledged young – a month later, i.e. on July 12<sup>th</sup> 2002. Pairs of Red-rumped Swallows were also seen along the Mostar-Sarajevo road running through the narrow Neretva canyon. I observed pairs and families deeper in the interior of the country as well, i.e. at the bridges crossing the river: 2 pairs near the Grabovica hydroelectric power plant in the vicinity of Jablanica, 1 family near Ostrožac, and 1 family near the bridge over the right tributary of the Neretva river some 3 km south of the village of Bradina near Konjic. The place of the last observation lies in the heart of Bosnia, where the impact of the Mediterranean climate along the Neretva valley is almost entirely lost.

Borut Rubinič, Institute Ornithologica, Pražakova 11, SI-1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia, e-mail: rubinic@siol.net

### WALLCREEPER *Tichodroma muraria*

**Skalni plezalček** – trije osebkii v ostenjih doline Sutjeske v predelu kanjona Vrtar (650 m n.v.; UTM CP10, JV Bosna) 16.4.2002 v primernem gnezditvenem okolišju. Avtor je tu opazoval še jato 20 planinskih hudournikov *Tachymarptis melba* in par planinskih orlov *Aquila chrysaetos*.

While searching for the endemic plant species *Daphne malyana* in the crevasses of the Sutjeska rock walls (in the part of the canyon called Vrtar at approx. 650 m a.s.l.) on April 16<sup>th</sup> 2002, I was attracted by the characteristic fluttering of the Wallcreeper looking for food in the warm afternoon just a couple of metres above my head. While having a more thorough look at the rest of the walls above the right bank of the Sutjeska river, I saw two more Wallcreepers. On the same day, a flock of some 20 Alpine Swifts *Tachymarptis melba* flew over the canyon towards the north where the Sutjeska joins the Drina. Above the rocky slopes over the Sutjeska left bank – the slopes are situated in the Zelengora mountain chain and are overgrown with the stands of Scots pine – a pair of Golden Eagles *Aquila chrysaetos* was seen gliding virtually all day. The data on the Wallcreeper's breeding in Bosnia are scarce and, as far as NE Bosnia is concerned, completely unknown [HERNÁNDEZ, A., R. HAURI & M. SANIGA (1997): Wallcreeper *Tichodroma muraria*. p. 651 In: HAGEMAJER, W.J. & M.J. BLAIR, eds.: *The EBCC Atlas of European Breeding Birds*. T & AD Poyser, London].

Boštjan Surina, Župančičeva 22, SI-6250 Ilirska Bistrica, Slovenia, e-mail: boštjan.surina@guest.arnes.si