

On the occurrence of Eleonora's Falcon, *Falco eleonora*, in Turkey

by Max Kasperek and Dietrich Ristow

Keywords: Falconiformes – Middle East – Turkey – seasonal movements

1. Introduction

The breeding season of Eleonora's Falcon is from July to October. It breeds mostly in colonies, which are distributed from Cyprus in the east to the Canary Islands of the Atlantic in the west. The world population is estimated to be between 2,000 and 6,800 pairs, 70 percent of which breed on desolate, rocky islands in the Aegean Sea. One would therefore expect that an appreciable number of these birds would occur along the Turkish coast. As there is no comprehensive paper on Eleonora's Falcon in Turkey, we present here a list of all the scattered published observations together with data that we have obtained from various ornithologists.

2. Data

Eastern Marmara Sea

A breeding ground was found by KAYMAS (1980) on an island in the Marmara Sea in 1978. The colony consisted of 18 - 21 pairs. For reasons of conservation, the locality is treated confidentially.

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| about 1858 | J. ANTINORI bought a specimen in İstanbul and sold it to G. v. GONZENBACH at İzmir, from where it was forwarded to Halle (Germany) and then to the collection at Dresden. The assumption that this specimen originated from the İzmir area (KRÜPER 1862) is based on the fact that Eleonora's Falcon was not known from the İstanbul area at that time. |
| 1890 | between Kartal and Pendik, nowadays suburbs of İstanbul (MATHEY-DUPRAZ 1921). |
| Aug 1890 | at Heybeliada (Princes Islands) (MATHEY-DUPRAZ 1921). |
| 15.7.1934 | one dark phase male collected at Uludağ (Bursa) by G. NEUHÄUSER (v. JORDANS & STEINBACHER 1948). |
| 18.8.66 | one dark phase at Küçük Çamlıca in İstanbul (PORTER & WILLIS 1968, also BR 1966/67). |
| 23.9.68 | one at Kartal (İstanbul) (R. J. H. RAINES in BR 1968/69). |

- 29.6.70 one near Manyas (C.-A. BAUER in BR 1970-73).
 18.8.71 one at the Çamlıca hills (M. BEAMAN, S. SØGARD et al. in BR 1970-73).
 12.8-6.9.72 one dark and one light phase several times at Burgaz Ada (Princes Islands) during the period described (M. BEAMAN et al. in BR 1970-73).
 09.5.73 one individual, probably of this species, at the Kocaçay Delta (J. A. LOTERIJMANTE).
 28.6.73 30 at Manyas Gölü. Only one of these was of the dark phase (S. CRAMP & R. F. PORTER in BR 1970-73).
 21.4.74 one near Mudanya (north of Bursa), probably belonging to this species (N. KOCH).
 22.5.74 one at the Kocaçay Delta (N. KOCH).
 04.6.74 one dark phase between Apolyont Gölü and the Kocaçay Delta (PANS 1974).
 12-13.5.75 two at Çımarcık, west of Yalova, seen on both days (K. BREEK & H. GELDERBLOM, see also BR 1974/75).
 06.9.76 one at the Forest of Belgrade near İstanbul (W. G. VERGOSSEN in BR 1976-81).
 29.4.77 one individual, probably of this species, near Bandırma (N. KOCH).
 16.9.77 one at Büyük Ada (Princes Islands) (W. G. VERGOSSEN in BR 1976-81).
 18.9.77 one at Çamlıca (W. G. VERGOSSEN in BR 1976-81).
 25.9.77 three dark phase over the sea off Suadiye (İstanbul) (J. HIGGINS & P. J. CARLTON in BR 1976-81).
 25.9.78 one at the Princes Islands (W. GOWING in BR 1976-81).
 24.7.79 one hunting at Burgaz Ada (M. VAN DEN BERG & R. DAMHUIS).
 15-22.8.79 up to 3 at the Çamlıca hills (R. F. PORTER in BR 1976-81).
 03.7.81 4-5, all of the light phase, on the southern shore of Manyas Gölü (B. O. POULSEN).
 02-03.10.81 two at the Çamlıca hills (R. VLEK et al. in BR 1976-81).
 12-13.7.85 one at the Kuşçenneti National Park (Manyas Gölü) on both days (P. BISON, P. GNODDE & J. VAN DER LAAN).

Dardanelles

- 16.09.1888 one at the Dardanelles (MATHEY-DUPRAZ 1921).
 08.08.1915 one at Gallipoli Yarımadası ("Krithia Nullah") (BOYD 1916).
 09.10.69 one dark phase at the Dardanelles (G. K. BROWN in BR 1968/69).

- 26.05.76 one near Yalova north of Çanakkale (E. KIEFT).

Aegean Coastal Region

- 1861 (?) G. v. GONZENBACH bought a specimen, apparently of the dark phase, from a hunter in İzmir in 1861 (1860?). He sent it to Halle a.d.S. (Germany) (KRÜPER 1862). It is apparently the specimen mentioned by CABANIS & BALDAMUS (1862).
- 01.7.64 one dark phase near Ayvalık (KUMERLOEVE 1970).
- 27.7.66 five light phase at the Büyük Menderes Delta (BR 1966/67).
- 20.7.67 four near the Büyük Menderes Delta (BR 1966/67).
- 25-27.5.69 up to five at Bodrum (A. R. KITSON in BR 1968/69).
- 2.10.70 one dark and one light phase near Teos, west of İzmir (J. R. HOPKINS in BR 1970-73).
- 19.8.71 one dark phase at the Büyük Menderes Delta (J. C. BEAUDOIN in BR 1970-73).
- 20.8.71 one light phase at Priene near Söke (J. C. BEAUDOIN in BR 1970-73).
- 16.5.74 one at the Büyük Menderes Delta (M. H. ROWNTREE in BR 1974/75).
- 25.5.75 one at Karaburun, between İzmir and Çeşme (P. THOMSEN & P. JACOBSEN in BR 1974/75).
- 01.6.75 about 10 at the Büyük Menderes Delta (F. G. ROZENDAAL in BR 1974/75).
- 08.8.75 four at the Büyük Menderes Delta (D. K. BALLANCE in BR 1974/75).
- 8-12.5.78 at Kuşadası, one light phase on 8.5 and on 12.5 and one dark phase on 9.5 and 11.5 (BR 1976-81).
- 13.5.78 8 above fields west of Bafa Gölü and 3 in the Büyük Menderes Delta (D. HOLMAN).
- 28.5.79 five at the Büyük Menderes Delta near Karine (M. J. INSKIP, -see also BR 1976-81).
- 02.6.79 two dark phase at Muğla (BR 1976-81).
- 15.5.80 four at the Samsun Dağı National Park near Davutlar (N. KOCH).
- 21.5.80 one dark phase east of Bafa Gölü, near Çamıçı (N. KOCH).
- 23.5.80 six in the Latmos Mountains near Kapıkırı (= Herakleia) on the north side of Bafa Gölü (N. KOCH).
- 04.6.81 a total of 112 flying along the same flight path over the course of two hours near Bodrum (BR 1976-81).
- 22.7.81 one dark phase on the north coast of Samsun Dağı National Park (P. BOYE, C. HOLZAPFEL, K. LUTZ, M. SCHLORF, A.

- TESCH & R. VÖLKER).
- 01.5.82 two falcons at Selçuk, one with prey, probably belonging to the light phase of this species (M. SIERING).
- 26.10.82 at least one hunting near Akgöl at the Büyük Menderes Delta (B. PÖRER).
- 04.8.83 three individuals, courtship feeding, at Foca north of İzmir (E. THIEME).
- 1-10.7.82 both phases daily on the northern side of Dilek Yarımadası (Samsun Dağı National Park). Maximum 16 on 10.7 (R. AKÇAKAYA, S. BARIŞ & C. BILGIN).
- 31.5-1.6.84 one dark phase at Bafa Gölü between Herakleia and Çamıçı on both days (A. NOESKE).
- 18.5.86 three dark phase and two light phase at the fishery of Bafa Gölü (M. KASPAREK, E. & M. RADDATZ).
- 20.5.86 three light phase in the southern part of the Büyük Menderes Delta (D. KAUS).
- 21.5.86 six (dark and light phase birds) at the Samsun Dağı National Park (D. KAUS).
- 28.5.86 a flock of 12 (both phases) south of Milas towards Güllük (D. KAUS).

Southern coast (western half)

- 14.6.56 one dark phase in the bay of Antalya (KUMERLOEVE 1961).
- 05.9.63 one dark phase at Gazipaşa (H. HECKENROTH in HERRN 1966).
- 29.4.74 five in the Alanya area (B. ARMSTRONG in BR 1974/75).
- 27.8.74 one south of Kemer south of Antalya (C. BANGHAM & P. E. O. WILLIAMS in BR 1974/75).
- 27.9.74 one in the Alanya area (D. PARR et al. in BR 1974/75).
- 24.5.75 two in the Dimçayı Valley east of Alanya (EGGERS & STREESE 1978).
- 04.6.75 one pair, both of the light phase, at the same locality as on 24.5.75 (EGGERS & STREESE 1978).
- 07.6.75 one at the same locality as on 24.5 and 4.6.75 (EGGERS & STREESE 1978).
- 12.5.78 one on an island west of Fethiye (BR 1976-81).
- 11.10.82 three or four east of Gazipaşa (A. SIDOW & R. VÖLKER).
- 02.9.83 one adult female of the light phase soaring above pine forest near Olympos, south of Antalya (D. RISTOW).
- 19.9.85 a nestling ringed off Crete on 3.9.84 shot near Kizilot Köyü, west of Manavgat.

Southern coast (eastern half)

- 17.4.62 one light phase near Silifke (EGGERS & LEMKE 1964).
- 3.7-13.8.63 one light phase near Kızkalesi northeast of Silifke during the period described (HENSS in KUMERLOEVE 1970).
- 13.5.69 two or three, one belonging to the dark phase, at Silifke (BR 1968/69).
- 05.6.71 one on an island near Aydıncık, between Anamur and Silifke (WARNCKE 1972, also BR 1970-73). "Gilindire" and "Gelendere" as used by WARNCKE and BR, are old names for Aydıncık.
- 14.5.72 one on a hillside near Taşuçu (L. BAUM, see also EGGERS & STRESE 1978).
- 26-27.6.73 one dark and three light phase birds near Nusratlı west of Edremit (Mersin) on both days (S. CRAMP & R. F. PORTER, see also BR 1970-73).
- 24.9.73 one at the Göksu Delta (G. M. S. EASY & M. T. BARNES in BR 1970-73).
- 30.8.77 one at the ruins at Kanlıdivane northeast of Silifke (K. SCHMIDKE & H. UTSCHICK).
- 08.5.78 one bird, probably of this species, at Taşuçu (S. GYSEL & N. KOCH).
- 11.5.78 one bird, probably of this species, at the Göksu Delta (S. GYSEL & N. KOCH).
- 12.5.78 one individual, probably of this species, near Ovacık, west of Silifke (S. GYSEL & N. KOCH).
- 21.4.80 two light phase and one dark phase soaring on the coast about 10 km west of Ovacık (E. BEZZEL & N. KOCH).
- 20.5.81 two light phase near Taşuçu (BR 1976-81).
- 16.6.82 four light phase at Kızkalesi, northeast of Silifke (B. KING).
- 16.7.82 one dark and one light phase on the coast near Taşuçu (M. VAN BEIRS).
- 29.9-4.10.82 one in the area of Iskenderun - Belen Pass during the period described (TH. SCHMID & F. TURRIAN).
- 02.6.83 two at the Göksu Delta (CH. MURPHY, see also MARTINS, MURPHY & ROBSON 1984).
- 24 + 26.4.84 one dark phase at the Göksu Delta on both days (H. JACOBY & B. PORER).
- 27.4.84 one individual, probably of this species, on the coast south of Tarsus (H. WILDE).
- 02.5.84 one at the Göksu Delta (N. KOCH et al.).
- 04.5.84 one at Uzuncaburç in the mountains north of Silifke (N. KOCH et al.).

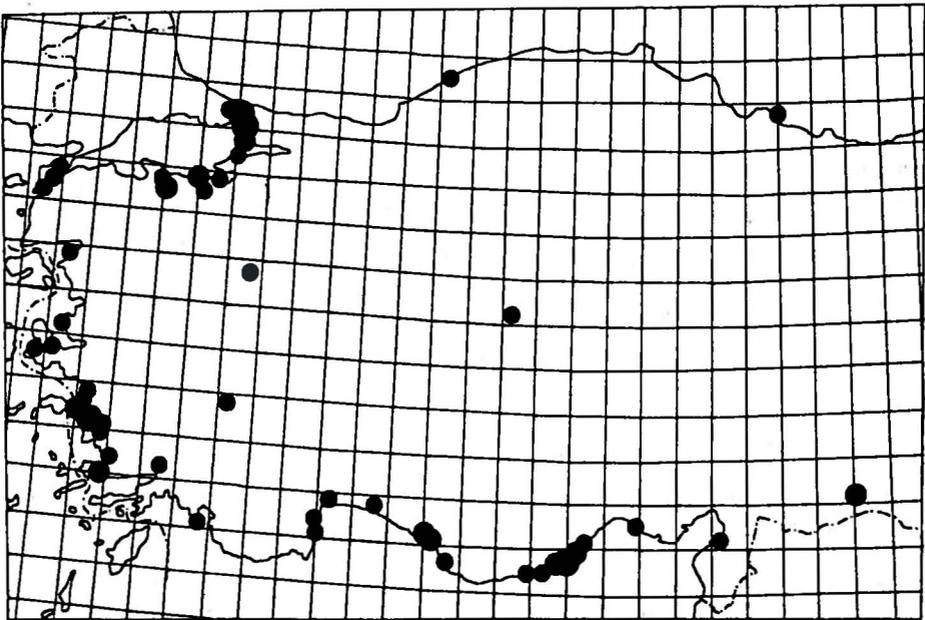


Fig. 1. Distribution of the records of Eleonora's Falcon, *Falco eleonora*, in Turkey. Small dots represent single records, medium size dots two to four records and large dots five or more records.

- 26.6.85 one offshore of the Göksu Delta (P. BISON, P. GNODDE & J. VAN DER LAAN).
 09.4.86 one light phase between Taşucu and Aydınçık (CH. HUSBAND, M. GIERTZ, N. GOLAY et al.).

Inland records and Black Sea region

- 21.7.66 one dark phase and one light phase at Eğrigöz Dağ southwest of Tavşanlı (Kütahya) (BR 1966/67).
 20.10.68 one juvenile north of Kulu (A. VITTEY in BR 1968/69).
 June 70 a nestling ringed off Crete on 14.9.69 was shot near Ordu.
 04.7.76 a dark phase individual or perhaps a Sooty Falcon (*Falco concolor*) hunting bats near Birecik (P. SCHIERMACHER HANSEN, also BR 1976-81).
 20.9.81 one individual, probably of this species, at Hisarönü near

Zonguldak (E. G. B. POWELL)

06.6.84 one light phase near Pamukkale (A. NOESKE).

summer 84 one above the Euphrates near Birecik (HARRAP 1984).

3. Discussion

All pre-1950 records are from the western parts of Turkey between İstanbul and İzmir. This is simply due to the fact that the occasional observations in those days were made primarily by diplomats, foreign teachers and merchants who worked in that area. Now that tourists visit the archaeological sites in the west as well as on the southern coast, the distribution of the observation sites has become more realistic (fig. 1). As expected, most of the falcons have been observed close to the coast. The highest numbers have been recorded close to the Marmara Sea and the Aegean Sea at Manyas Gölü and the Büyük Menderes Delta, where the rich insect fauna of the wetlands attracts the falcons. A good number of records is also from the surroundings of İstanbul, namely the Çamlıca hills and the Princes Islands. This concentration of records might be due to the high observation activity there, especially during migration of storks and raptors. There is another concentration of observations in the area of Silifke and the Göksu Delta. As only three single birds out of a total of 36 were seen from the end of July till October this concentration cannot be interpreted as an indication of a nearby and hitherto unknown colony. Perhaps the majority of these birds seen from April to June breed on Cyprus. We interpret the almost absence of records east of Bodrum up to the bay of Antalya as due to a lack of observers, because there is a small falcon colony off Rhodes and the species must occur occasionally on the opposite Turkish coast. One record on Rhodes indicate this: three Eleonora's Falcons were seen flying towards Turkey at sea off the island on 13.5.78 (BR 1976-81).

The number of inland (plus Black Sea) records in proportion to the Mediterranean Sea coast records are typical for Eleonora's Falcon, and it is characteristic that the two (three) records which deviate most from the regular pattern, i.e. at Kulu and at Ordu, are both of immature birds.

All observations were made between April and October, 9.4 and 26.10 being the extremes. The table below shows the seasonal distribution of the observations.

month	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	sum
number of observations	9	33	19	12	11	14	6	104

Eleonora's Falcon usually arrives at the end of April/beginning of May, as in other Mediterranean countries. The numbers remain more or less constant until September, the end of the tourist season. For this reason we hesitate to explain the decline in numbers during October with the suggestion that at this time the Turkish falcons are on their breeding islands elsewhere.

From observations at the Aegean breeding colonies it is known that falcon pairs are present in their territories within a colony in April/May; that quite a few falcons travel away for at least several days in May to July; that eggs are laid in the second half of July, but due to lack of food on the desolate islands the parents regularly have to visit the mainland up to the middle of August. The distance that adults travel away from the nest at this time of the year is unknown, but fifty kilometers may be the rule. Only a small proportion of the first-year females are tolerated in a breeding colony and none of the first-year males. Second-year males are still an exception. So a substantial part of the population is continuously off the breeding cliffs, and one may wonder how many of the Turkish birds are non-breeders. Some yearlings still have their juvenile plumage in September, while others moult almost completely in August but can still be recognised by the buffish tips of the old feathers on the shoulder. It would be worthwhile to observe Turkish falcons in more detail and to determine the relative number of yearlings.

Although Eleonora's Falcons winter in Madagascar and East Africa, there are a few winter records from other Mediterranean countries. The lack of any winter activity of observers along the Turkish coasts could explain the discrepancy with other countries. As Eleonora's Falcon could scarcely feed on insects during the winter, it is most likely to be seen near the roosting sites of small passerine birds such as Starlings (*Sturnus vulgaris*) close to the coast.

The ratio of light phase to dark phase individuals from the data discussed above is almost 50:50 for groups of up to four individuals, but it shifts strongly towards light phase birds for larger groups. However, at the breeding colonies the ratio is about 70:30. The reason for this discrepancy is not clear. One explanation could be that observers have difficulty in distinguishing light phase Eleonora's Falcon from the Hobby (*Falco subbuteo*) in the field - this is indeed difficult - whereas dark phase birds cannot be mistaken. This favours definite records of dark phase birds. In larger groups there is usually a dark phase individual present, which usually enables the other light phase falcons to be correctly identified.

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**New records of Alexander's Parrot, *Psittacula krameri*,
from Egypt and the Levant countries**

by Ragnar Kinzelbach

Keywords: Psittaciformes — Mesopotamia — Levant countries — Egypt — neozoa — zoogeography — crop pest

1. Introduction

Alexander's Parrot, *Psittacula krameri* (Scopoli, 1769) was originally confined in antiquity to a distribution area covering parts of Africa South of the Sahara on the one hand, and the Indian subcontinent including Ceylon and parts of East India as far as Burma on the other. Since then the species expanded its area in a textbook fashion, using man and his activities to establish a number of footholds, although at the same time it has become a pest of fruit plantations and efforts have been made to control it.

Following the conquests of Alexander the Great and his successors, the species was imported from India to the West, where Alexandria in Egypt became the most important trading centre for luxury goods from the East. DIODOROS (quoted by KELLER 1909) mentioned one area further to the west where the species occurred, in "outer Syria". But this term also underlines its Indian origin, since it was used for the eastern parts of the Seleucid Empire,