

BIRDS
of
BAHRAIN

HORNER

1989

Patrick Bergier

A new breeding record.

Common Name: Trumpeter Finch.

Genus: Rhodopechys.

Zoogeography: 4 species. sanguinea disjunct in High Atlas, Morocco and SW Asia, obsoleta in E, Central, and SW Asia, mongolica in Central Asia from E and NE Iran to Khangai and Gobian Altai, githaginea from Canary Islands, the Mediterranean Basin to Iran and through N Africa.

Species: R. githaginea

Distribution: Breeding amantum Canary Islands. zedlitzi Morocco S to Mauritania, Algeria S to Central and S Sahara, Tunisia, and Lybia. githaginea-S Egypt to ca. 18°N. crassirostris- Sinai, Palestine, Arabian peninsula, Iraq?, Iran to S Transcaspia, Bukhara, Baluchistan, Afghanistan, W Sind (Vaurie 1959), and Bahrain (Bergier 1988). Non-breeding crassirostris- moves down to the plains of NW India and Pakistan in winter (Vaurie 1959). Bahrain- 9 & 10 April (King 1978).



Size: 12.5cm / 5in.

Winglength 87-93 mm (Meinertzhagen 1954).

Habitat: Bare and arid stony-plateau and hills; rocky-slopes and ravines; and stony edges of desert. Avoids sandy tracts, trees, and high vegetation (Vaurie 1959) but is present in alfa steppe of Morocco (Bergier 1982 notes). Needs water.

Bahrain Population localized at the foot of NW slopes of Jabal ad Dukhan. One seen in Zygophyllum assemblage N of Al Areen 23 May (Bergier 1987 notes).

Nest: Site under rocks, hole in a bridge, or under tussock of Alfa Stipa sp. (Bergier 1982 notes).

Material dried plant stems lined with wool and hair.

BREEDING CYCLE

Locality	Month/Day	Nest	Egg	Fledge
N Morocco ¹			4-6	
Mauritania ²			1	
Bahrain	4/3			5/8

¹ Bergier 1980-1982 notes
² Naurois fide Bergier

Construction 3 April (Bergier 1988).
Eggs: Color pale blue (greenish blue Meinertzhagen 1954) with small black (reddish brown Meinertzhagen 1954) dots on the blunt end (Harrison 1975). **Size** 18.4 x 14.7 mm (Harrison 1975); N Morocco 19.7 (18.9-21.7) x 15.6 (15.0-16.2) n=6 (Bergier 1982 notes). **Number** 4 (11%), 5 (64%), or 6 (25%) n=106 for zedlitzi (Heim de Balsac and Mayaud 1962). **Date** N Africa - mid March to beginning June (Heim de Balsac and Mayaud 1962). **Incubation** 13-14 days (Harrison 1975).



Fledging: ca. 14 days (Harrison 1975).

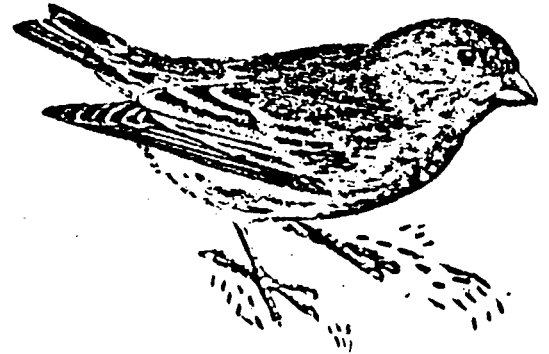
Bahrain 8 May (Bergier 1988).

Emancipation 11 days after fledging (Harrison 1975). June - nr. najran (Meinertzhagen 1954).

Food: Seeds.

Behavior: Group display - 3-4 birds on the ground and female climbing on a male's back (Bergier 1987 notes). **Male** - picks up and throws twigs. **Flocking** all birds seen together in April and May.

Plumage: Male pale-brown shaded with pink. Top of head and wings - grey, tail - dark brown, bill - red, legs and feet - flesh. **Female** duller throughout but with bill orange or yellowish-brown. **Young** like female but lacking pink.



Vocalization nasal chirp likened to a trumpet call. First heard at 06:30 hr. (30 April, Bergier 1987 notes).

Molt: Adult in full molt at Mahd Dhabab (sic) Saudi Arabia 31 July (Meinertzhagen 1954); 30 September (Nightingale 1987 notes).

Ecology Movements depend on climatic conditions and the extent of its breeding grounds change.

Population size: ca. 10 birds. At least one pair breeding in 1987 (Bergier 1988).

Notes: Recorded on Bahrain in 1977 but no confirmed breeding until 1987.