

Nightingale of eastern subspecies on Fair Isle

A Nightingale found dead on Fair Isle by G. J. Barnes on 30th October 1971 was examined by I. S. Robertson, Dr B. Marshall and myself and appeared to have the characteristics of the eastern race *Luscinia megarhynchos hafizi*. The identification was later confirmed by D. Goodwin of the British Museum.

The bird was freshly dead but in a sorry state, with a number of feathers missing and others matted. It was nonetheless possible to make a comprehensive description; the salient features were: wing formula close to Nightingale; general plumage and size similar to Thrush Nightingale *Luscinia luscinia* except that the pale greyish tips to coverts were very prominent; the tail was noticeably long. The description agreed closely with that of a bird trapped at Sharjah in the Trucial States on 13th April 1971 (B. Etheridge, pers. comm.). A comparison of its dimensions with those of other nightingales examined at Fair Isle is given in the table below.

Dimensional comparison of nightingales ringed on Fair Isle

	Wing mm	Bill mm	Tarsus mm	Tail mm	Weight gm	No. examined
<i>L. m. megarhynchos</i>	78-83.5	16-18	26-29	63-68	18.0-21.3	10
<i>L. luscinia</i>	86-94	13.5-18	26.5-30	63-70	19.7-24.5	8
<i>L. m. hafizi</i>	93	17.5	28.5	82	19.7	1

This is the first autumn record of a Nightingale on Fair Isle.

R. A. BROAD.

(This is the first British record of this subspecies, which breeds in Soviet Central Asia and winters in East Africa*. A similar bird, trapped at Ottenby in Sweden in the autumn of 1964, was the first European record†.—Ed.)

*VAURIE, C. 1959. *The Birds of the Palearctic Fauna* and DEMENTIEV, G. P., GLADKOV, N. A. et al. 1954. *Birds of the Soviet Union*.

†SVENSSON, L. 1970. Första fyndet av sydnakttergal i Sverige galilde ostligaste rasan *Luscinia megarhynchos hafizi* (Sev.). *Var Fagelvarld* 29, 67-71.

Reviews

The Coastline of Scotland. By J. A. Steers. Cambridge University Press, 1973. Pp xvi + 335; 32 black-and-white plates, 68 text figures and maps, pull-out map. 24 x 16 cm. £10.50.

This book gives a general description of each part of the Scottish coast from the point of view of the geomorphologist. The factors leading to the present coastal land-forms are described, as far as they are known. Unfortunately, the Scottish coastline is a more difficult subject than that of England and Wales and has been less well studied, so