

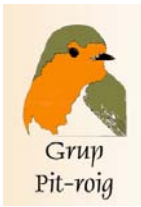
# Summary of the post breeding season bird ringing campaign at Pego Marshes, Valencian Community, Spain

## August-September 2017

A total of 1146 birds of 23 different species were ringed during the postnuptial bird ringing campaign at Pego Marshes which lasted from August 15<sup>th</sup> to September 30<sup>th</sup> (Table 1). Although the number of birds ringed in August 2017 were above the number recorded in the same period in 2016 (557 against 406), in September 2017 the captures went down. For instance, 315 birds were captured during the first two weeks in September 2017 against 407 birds of the same period in 2016.

**Table 1.** Total number of birds captured and ringed per fortnight, autumn 2017.

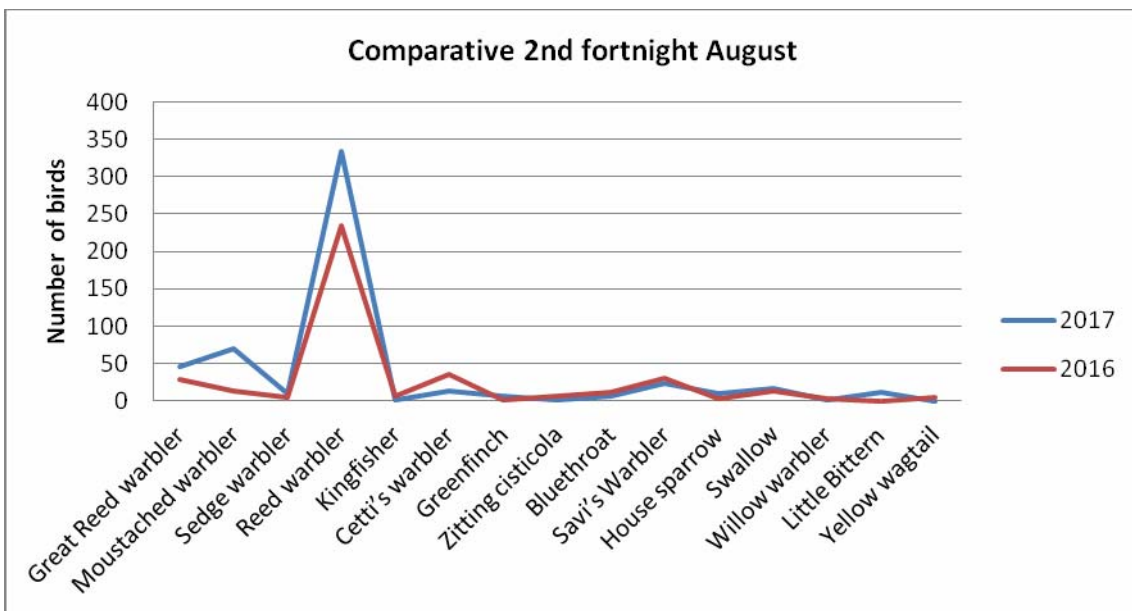
Species	From 15/08 to 31/08	From 1/09 to 15/09	From 16/09 to 30/09	Total per species
Great reed warbler	45	11	9	65
Moustached warbler	70	13	18	101
Sedge warbler	10	3	2	15
Reed warbler	334	204	137	675
Kingfisher	2	2	2	6
Cetti's warbler	14	35	46	95
Greenfinch	6	2	3	11
Zitting cisticola	1	0	1	2
Bluethroat	6	11	26	43
Savi's Warbler	24	17	7	48
House sparrow	10	7	1	18
Tree sparrow	0	1	2	3
Swallow	17	0	12	29
Willow warbler	2	5	3	10
Whinchat	0	0	1	1
Whitethroat	0	0	1	1
Sardinian warbler	0	0	1	1
Blackcap	1	0	0	1
Subalpine warbler	0	1	1	2
Spotted flycatcher	0	0	1	1
Little bittern	11	1	0	12
Great tit	4	1	0	5
Yellow wagtail	0	1	0	1
<b>Total per fortnight</b>	<b>557</b>	<b>315</b>	<b>274</b>	<b>1146</b>



In relation to species, the reed warbler was the most numerous species with 675 birds, followed by 101 moustached warblers and closely followed by 95 Cetti's warblers. This year we have not captured any grasshopper warbler or spotless starling; but on the other hand, some new birds species captured in 2017 (in comparison with 2016) include whinchat, whitethroat and spotted flycatcher.

Regarding birds' recoveries, sadly this campaign we didn't capture any bird from any foreign bird ringing scheme. However, during November we got a French moustached warbler and a Dutch bluethroat.

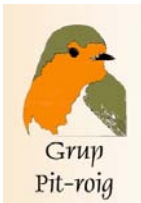
Figure 1 gives an idea of the comparison between 2016 and 2017 for the last two weeks of August. It is worth mentioning the increase of little bittern with 12 birds ringed in 2017. It is a remarkable increase as in 2016 only one bird of this species was ringed.



**Figure 1.** Comparison of captures during the 2<sup>nd</sup> fortnight of August in 2016 and 2017.

All in all, this campaign has been a bit unusual. We have the impression that it has not been a good breeding year for some species such as bluethroat and Cetti's warbler in central and northern Europe. In addition, the peak of the migration occurred a bit earlier than last year, in late August, so there were fewer birds caught in September than expected.

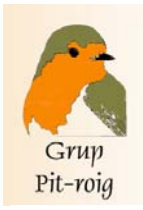
On the other hand, the number of Scandinavian birds wintering in Spain this year is remarkable. Fieldfares, redwings, bramblings, ring ouzels and hawfinches are showing up in unusual areas. For instance, a couple of weeks ago, I captured a gorgeous male ring ouzel subspecies *alpestris* in the hills of the Mondúber Mountain while we were ringing birds in a spring. Photo below.



**Figure 2.** Unusual to see a Ring Ouzel surrounded with thermophile (heat-loving) vegetation such as dwarf fan palm.



**Figure 3.** Two little bitterns ready to be ringed at the Pego Marshes ringing station.



**Figure 4.** A sleepy kingfisher.

Pau Lucio for Grup Pit-roig  
December 2017