

# 'The Carl Zeiss Award'

All colour transparencies, colour prints and black-and-white prints which circulated to the Rarities Committee in support of records during the past year were considered for this annual Award, announced last December (*Brit. Birds* 84: 589). The four short-listed sets of photographs, all of which were published last month, were:



- Franklin's Gull *Larus pipixcan*, Shetland, May 1991 (*Eleanor K. McMahon*)(plates 220 & 221)  
Olive-backed Pipit *Anthus hodgsoni*, Borders, October 1991 (*A. Kerr*)(plate 232)  
Pechora Pipit *A. gustavi*, Shetland, September 1991 (*R. Proctor*)(plates 230 & 231)  
Citrine Wagtail *Motacilla citreola*, Leicestershire, May 1991 (*M. Cross*)(plate 240)

The Franklin's Gull was found by Eleanor and Neil McMahon and well described, but flew off with other gulls and, despite searching, was never seen by any other observers. The photographs provided useful confirmatory evidence.

The Olive-backed Pipit was caught in a mistnet by R. Stuart Craig and A. Kerr. The basic ringers' details of a trapped bird (mostly measurements) were helpfully augmented by the photographic evidence.

The Pechora Pipit was also caught in a mistnet (erected to catch a Scarlet Rosefinch *Carpodacus erythrinus*) and a very detailed in-the-hand description was supplied by Chris Donald. The photographs by Bob Proctor were, however, carefully perused and much admired by the members of the Rarities Committee.

The Citrine Wagtail was found by Ian Merrill and Chris Hubbard, who provided excellent documentation of this one-day-stayer, but M. Cross's photograph helped to bring the occurrence to life for the Committee (and rub salt in the wound for those who had tried but failed to see it).

The rules of this competition call for the winning photograph to have been taken in the field in Britain and to have included details which helped to clinch the identification (and also, perhaps, to have added to ornithological knowledge of the species' identification, ageing or sexing criteria).

Strictly speaking, the photographs of the two pipits were not of birds 'in the field', but the judges agreed to bend the rules (which they themselves had originally drafted) to allow the inclusion of such useful pictures in the short list.

After considerable debate, the two judges selected Bob Proctor's Pechora Pipit photographs as the winning entry. These excellent photographs of this little-known species are likely to be used frequently for reference purposes. Bob has chosen as his prize a pair of Zeiss West Dyalyt 10 × 40 BGATP binoculars, presented by the Award sponsors, Carl Zeiss—Germany. The three runners-up, and also all photographers whose rarity photographs have appeared in *British Birds* during the past year (in 'Seasonal reports' or the 'Report on rare birds in Great Britain'), will each be presented with a high-quality, sew-on, woven badge featuring the Carl Zeiss Award logo.

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