Situation of the Aquatic Warbler Acrocephalus paludicola in León province (NW Spain) first data on its phenology, stopover and problems of conservation


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Introduction

Thousands of birds use the wetlands of the south-eastern part of the province of León (NW Spain) during their migrations, from the breeding areas, until the quarters of wintering. Among them, Aquatic Warbler (Acrocephalus paludicola) species globally threatened. For this reason in 2004, a study based on the scientific ringing was begun whose objective was to study the stopping of this species at the different parts of the province. To study the importance of the habitat that occurs and detecting its main problems of conservation. In this present work, the first collected data from a bibliographical revision and from its ringing in the field are presented.

Material and Methods

In our first phase, we have made a bibliographical revision of the published observations of Aquatic Warbler to date in the province of León, together with a query to the local ornithologists and farmers. Using these data, a list of the species of the province was made. The second phase consisted of a ringing campaign during the autumn migration of 2004 in two wetlands of the south-eastern part of the province. The detection of the ringing locations was based on the previously experience, favourable habitat, observation of birds and bird ringing journeys.

As a second assumption, it has calculated: the minimal period of permanence as the distance in days between the date of capture and the last date of recapture, and the radius of foraging have been considered as the distance in relation between the date of recapture and the time of capture in relation to the number of passed days. For birds as the percentage of radial that represents the difference between the real and the radial use, and the ranges from the weight and the bias of fat, according some modified of Forcada’s formulas.

Zetes wetland habitat

- 50% herbaceous vegetation and small area of the water
- 25% aquatic species of Zetes sp., Palaemon sp., Chironomus sp., and Odonata

Zetes stream

- 15% grassland

- 75% aquatic vegetation: Zetes sp., Palaemon sp., and Odonata

- 10 birds were captured: 4 adults (Burley 6 and 6 young (Burley 8)

- Low water level in 3 different birds were obtained. Many have allowed to collect the following additional data on:

  - Birds of 13.36% in the capture method
  - For the deposition rate (0.63) in 0.85 days
  - Stopover pattern: minimum stay near 3-5 days
  - Observation flight range (3.65 km)

Conclusions

Aquatic Warbler in León province is a regular but scarce migrant. It uses wetlands of the south-eastern part of the province of León as zones of feeding and stopover sites during its autumn migration, streams mainly associated to irreparable crops.

The volume of registries during 2004 supports the idea of an important step of Aquatic Warbler through interior of the Mata de Hierbas, in concrete through the river basin of the Duero during its autumn migration.

It is necessary to provide these wetlands with some type of official protection in the future, with the objective to avoid their degradation and to manage them appropriately.

References


Photo credits

Zetes

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Elevation 775 m

Length 370 m

Width 20 m

Maximum width 170 m

Minimum width 115 m

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The wetland consists of the temporary lake basins of large rivers,

This is the case of theDegradation of the Duero, which comprises the south-eastern part of the province. Aquatic Warbler is considered to be a rare and locally associated with water-borne vegetation or marshland areas.

In the last decades, the wetland surface has been modified, promoting the destruction many ecosystems.

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