

Decrease in number of captured Cetti's Warbler in north-eastern Spain in autumn passage: is the global warming the cause of that a partial migrant becoming sedentary?

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Throughout Europe, the Cetti's Warbler population is increasing. However, the programmes of bird-ringing in autumn migration developed in southern Catalonia (NE Spain) show a significant decrease in the number of captured individuals. The programmes that have been running from 1993 to 2005 at two ringing stations (Delta de l'Ebre and Flix) located in wetland areas with suitable habitat for the stopover of the Cetti's Warbler show a decrease in the number of captured individuals over the last years: a decrease of about two thirds. On the study sites the Cetti's Warbler is a common migrant with a peak passage between 50th and 60th pentads. Apart from the decrease in the number of captures, we have observed a slight but significant increase of weight and fat over the studied years. Our data suggests that the Cetti's Warbler is showing a sedentary behaviour in Europe migrating less than years ago and is staying close to the breeding areas. Global warming could be the responsible factor of the milder winters that allow individuals to spend the winter close to the breeding grounds. The increase in weight and fat of captured animals could indicate that birds are coming from areas further away. It could mean that populations from southern Europe are becoming sedentary.