

## **Booted Eagle** *Hieraetus pennatus* (0, 1, 0). **RV**

(Breeds southern Europe, North Africa, across Asia, western South Africa and Namibia. Winters Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia).

### **Published record:**

#### **1999**

One: Pale morph. Second-calendar year. Rathlin Island, County Antrim, 22nd to 24th August (Tom Ennis *et al.*). *NIBA* 2001.

One: Pale morph. Second-calendar year. Ballyholme, Bangor, County Down, 9th April (Colin Guy). *NIBA* 2001.

This bird was originally observed briefly at the North Slob, County Wexford in February 1999, later relocating to Rogerstown Estuary, County Dublin in early March when it was identified. It then visited locations in Waterford (March) and Wexford (March and April) and Bangor on 9th April. However, the *NIBA* (2002) stated that 'the views of the Bangor bird were not sufficient to be absolutely sure it was the Rogerstown bird'. It then went back to Wexford (April) and Dublin (June and July) before being found on Rathlin Island by Tom Ennis on 22nd August. After Rathlin it crossed the Irish Sea and was observed variously from September 1999 in Kent, Cornwall, Somerset, Devon and Essex (seen flying across the Thames Estuary) before finally making its way to Orkney, Scotland where it was last seen in June 2000.

The reasons for non-acceptance of the Booted Eagle were published in *NIBA* 2002 and they are as follows:

A / The arrival date was unusually early.

B / The length of stay (for more than one year) in contrast to most other vagrant raptors.

C / Although rare, it is not unknown in captivity.

D / The state of the plumage, with damage to the wing and tail feathers, raised questions about the bird's origin.