



# The Carl Zeiss Award

The Carl Zeiss Award is presented every year as an encouragement to photographers to submit to the British Birds Rarities Committee prints and transparencies which might be helpful during the process of assessment of records of rare birds. Attention is drawn by BBRC members to especially useful or instructive photographs as the records are in circulation, and by the Committee's Secretary, Michael J. Rogers. All photographs circulated with records during the preceding 12 months are then re-examined by the Committee's Chairman, Rob Hume, and by *BB's* Managing Editor, Tim Sharrock, and a combined short-list drawn up from which, after detailed discussion, the winner is selected.

This year's short-list was:

**Dr Adrian Wander** Wilson's Storm-petrel *Oceanites oceanicus*, at sea off Scilly, August 1993

**Christine & Norman Winterman** Bridled Tern *Sterna anaethetus*, Rye, East Sussex, May 1993

**R. C. Wilson** Pacific Swift *Apus pacificus*, Norfolk, May 1993

**Robin Chittenden** Lanceolated Warbler *Locustella lanceolata*, Norfolk, September 1993

**J. P. Moulton** Pallas's Reed Bunting *Emberiza pallasi*, East Sussex, October 1990

Dr Adrian Wander's photographs of Wilson's Storm-petrel in flight about 60 km SSW of Bishop Rock (plates 111 & 112) showed not only the species' plumage and jizz, but also—astonishingly—the yellow patches on the webbed feet, a diagnostic feature difficult enough to see let alone photograph.

Mr & Mrs Winterman found the East Sussex Bridled Tern late in the evening of 16th May and obtained documentary photographs of it in flight and at rest which were invaluable evidence to augment the notes supplied by the reserve warden, Dr Barry Yates. The bird was seen by about 40 observers early the following morning, before it flew out to sea at 04.00 GMT, disappointing all those who failed to see it later on 17th May.

Several photographers supplied photographs of the Cley Pacific Swift, but those by R. C. Wilson showed the bird's diagnostic features especially well. The judges also noted that seven of Rob Wilson's photographs of other rarities were of an exceptionally high standard and had been selected for inclusion with the annual 'Report on rare birds'.

Robin Chittenden was not the only person to photograph the Norfolk Lanceolated Warbler, but his shots of it were not just portraits but were especially evocative, capturing the species' characteristic postures. (The account of this bird will be published shortly, in the series 'From the Rarities Committee's files', as an example of a very high-quality submission.)

J. P. Moulton's photographs of the Pallas's Reed Bunting established the identity of the bird that, when caught, was considered to be an aberrant Reed Bunting *E. schoeniclus*. It was only the publication of Dr Colin Bradshaw's paper on the identification of Black-faced Bunting *E. spodocephala*, with the section on 'Similar species' dealing with the two reed buntings and, especially,

**111 & 112.** CARL ZEISS AWARD:  
Wilson's Storm-petrel *Oceanites  
oceanicus*, at sea off Scilly, 1st  
August 1993 (A. Wander)



Ren Hathway's colour plate showing a female Pallas's Reed Bunting (*Brit. Birds* 85: 653-665, fig. 5), that prompted Julian Moulton to realise that the bird had been a Pallas's Reed Bunting and resulted in its submission to the BBRC three years after its occurrence. Without the photographs, the record could not even have been properly assessed, for the only written details were the wing-length (72 mm) and the weight (15.7 g), both low for (but still within the normal range of) *schoeniclus*.

After due deliberation, cogitation and digestion (in the best traditions of high-quality competition assessment), the judges selected Adrian Wander's amazing foot-flashing Wilson's Storm-petrel photograph (plate 111) as the winner.

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