

# A White Wagtail *Motacilla alba* feeding on tadpoles

A. BORRÀS

*A White Wagtail Motacilla alba was observed at Castellnou de Bages (Barcelona, NE Spain) feeding on tadpoles of the Natterjack Toad Bufo calamita. In a swimming pool in which there was only a little rain water, the bird stood on a floating piece of wood and picked the tadpoles out of the water. This is the first record of White Wagtails preying on amphibia.*

Key words: White Wagtail, *Motacilla alba*, tadpoles, diet.

Antoni Borràs. Museu de Zoologia. Ap. 593, 08080 Barcelona.  
Rebut: 18.11.94; Acceptat: 29.12.94

The White Wagtail *Motacilla alba* feeds mainly on small invertebrates. Other animal prey recorded includes earthworms, small crustaceans or molluscs, and also small fish (e.g. Minnows *Phoxinus* or fry of Perch *Perca fluviatilis*, Cramp 1988).

On 10 May 1976 a White Wagtail was observed in Castellnou de Bages (Barcelona, NE Spain) feeding on tadpoles of the Natterjack Toad *Bufo calamita*. The tadpoles were in a swimming pool in which only some rain water remained. The tadpoles were very small (c. 1-2 cm), and were abundant (several thousand in a surface area of 5 x 5 m). The bird picked the tadpoles out of the water while it stood on a floating piece of wood, and it swallowed them immediately.

The practice of wagtails preying on amphibia has already been noted for the Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea* (Cramp

1988), but this is the first record for the White Wagtail.♦

## RESUM

*Una Cuereta Blanca Motacilla alba menjant cap-grossos.*

*Una Cuereta Blanca Motacilla alba va ser observada a Castellnou de Bages (Barcelona, NE d'Espanya) menjant cap-grossos de Gripau Corredor Bufo calamita. En una zona entollada amb aigua de pluja l'ocell romania damunt una fusta tot agafant els cap-grossos que hi havien a la vora. Aquest és el primer cas de Cuereta Blanca predant sobre amfibis.*

## REFERENCES

CRAMP, S. 1988 (ed.). *The Birds of the Western Palearctic*. Vol. V. Oxford: Oxford University Press.