

**From Gerhardt Zink:**

**Der Zug Europäischer Singvögel: ein Atlas der Wiederfunde beringte Vögel  
Vogelwarte Radolfzell. Lieferung II 1975**

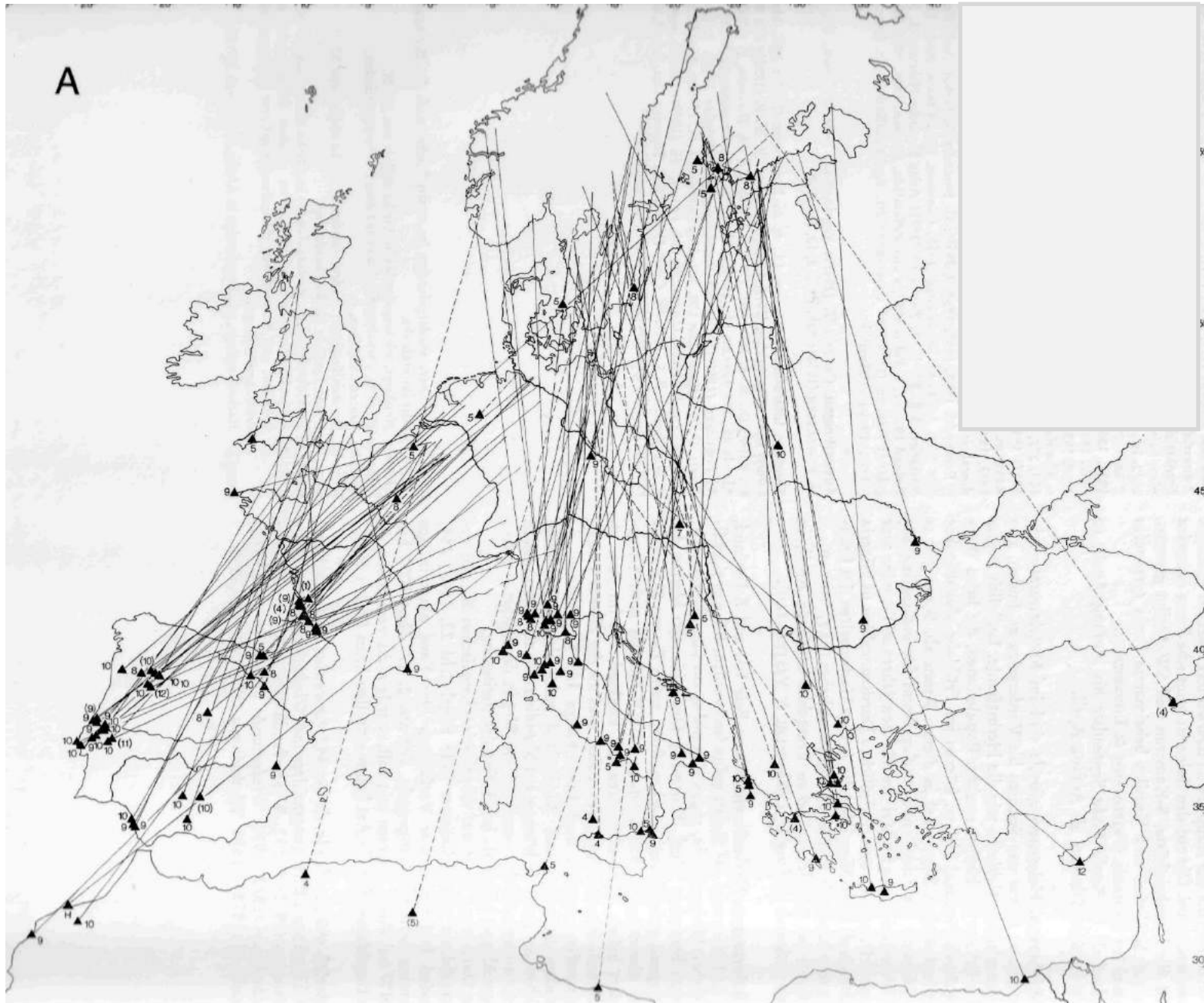
*(Translated by Michael Holdsworth)*

## SPOTTED FLYCATCHER

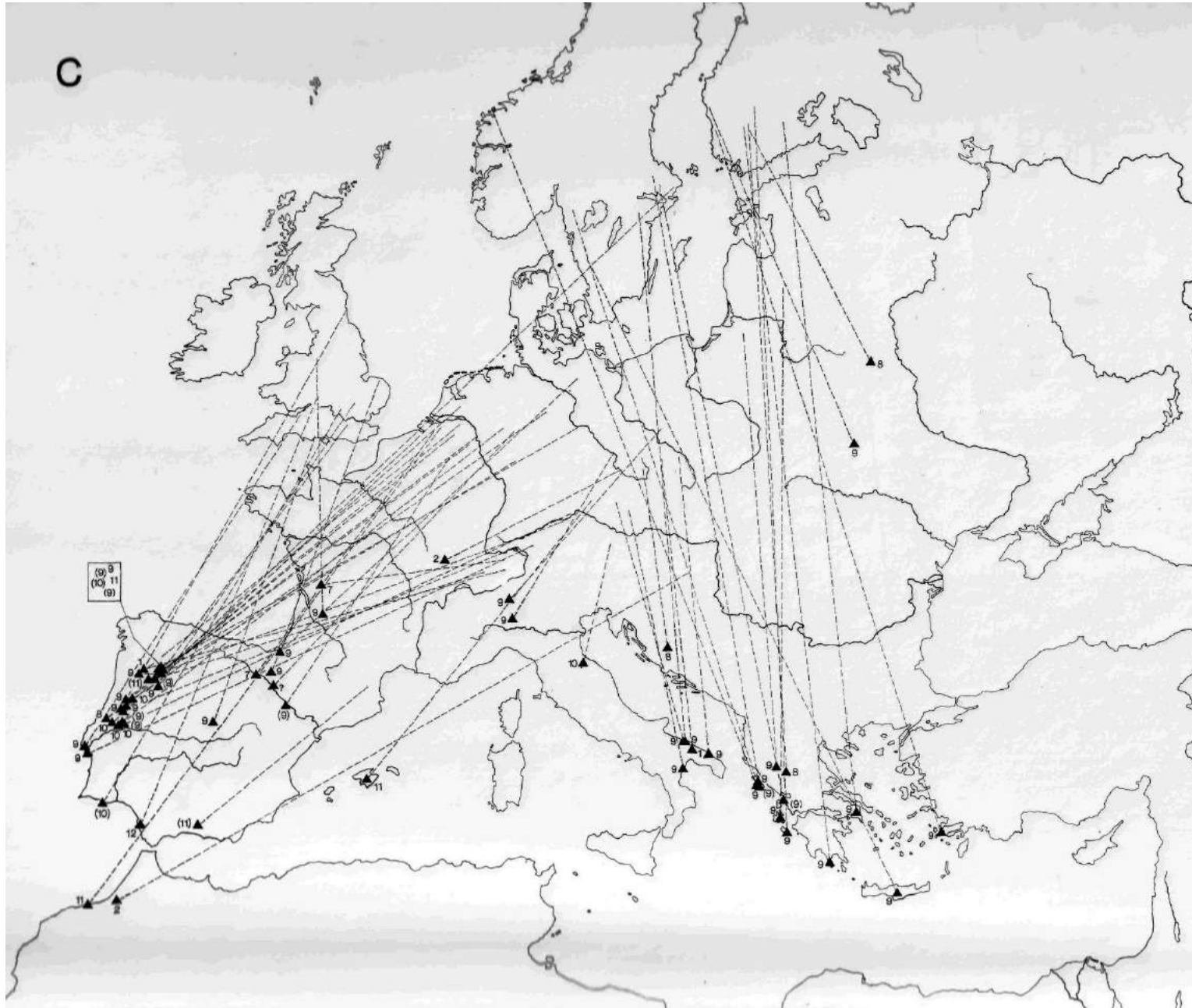
### **Autumn migration**

In Western and Central Europe west of 12° autumn migration departure is towards France and Spain. Birds from Great Britain leave towards the SSW and SSE. Subsequent orientation to the S only takes place south of the Pyrenees (see ring-recoveries in SE Spain, Map A). The majority of recoveries south of 42° N are, however, from Portugal. This means – as with other species – a pivoting of the direction of movement away from the SW. The Bay of Biscay – or at least its inner areas – is thus often avoided but can also be overflowed (recoveries from the Spanish north coast to 3° 30' W, Map H). The migration routes of birds from Belgium, the Netherlands, Switzerland and West Germany are concentrated towards the SW. Once in Portugal, where there are numerous ring-recoveries from these populations, the direction must be changed to S in order to reach the winter quarters in tropical Africa.

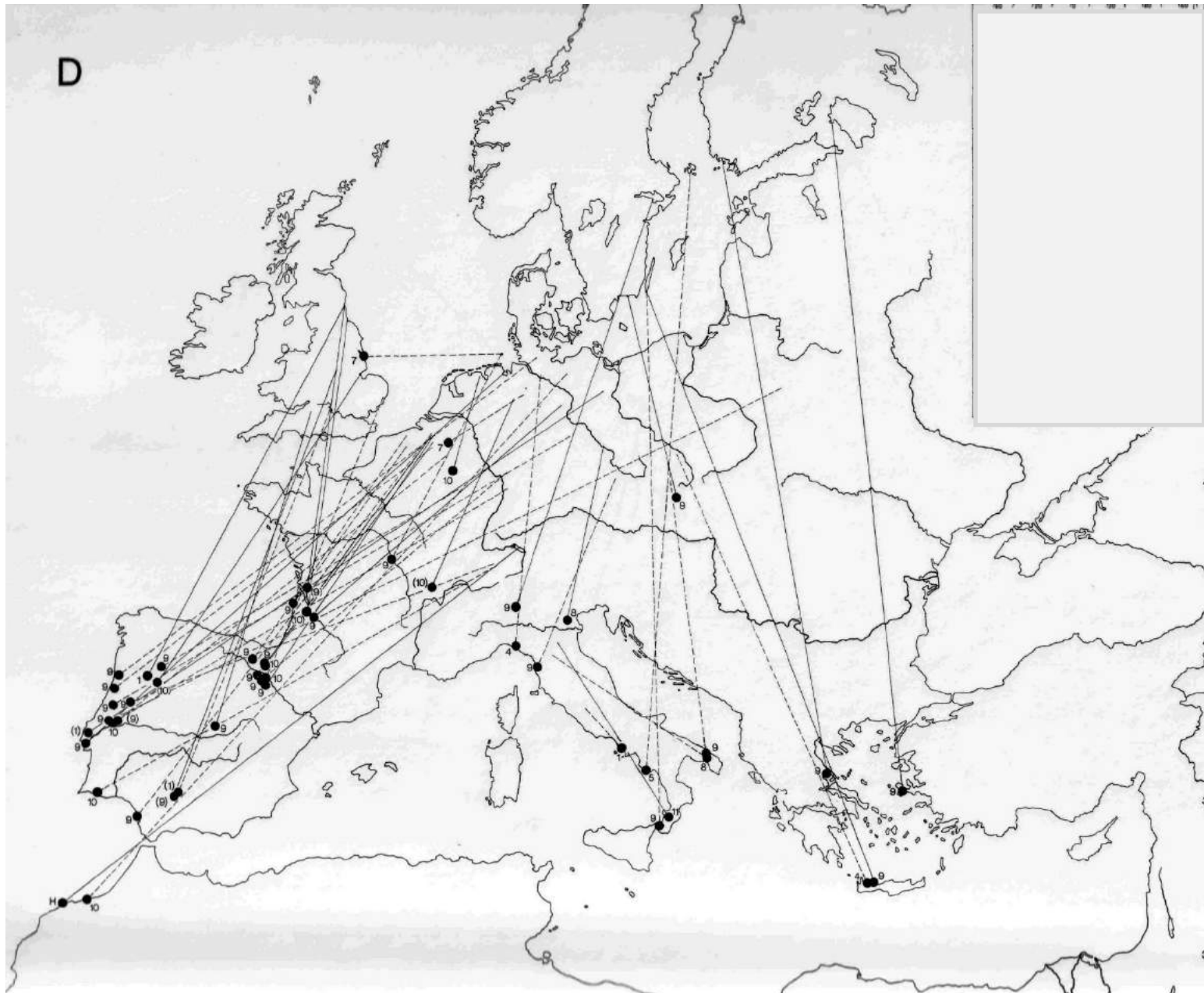
There are only a handful of recoveries in the direction of Spain from areas east of 12° E. The extremes come from the area of Brest (Belarus) and from S Finland (Maps D, A). In Central Europe between 12° and 15° E the orientation is overwhelmingly SSW towards Italy. Further east departures are distributed between SSE and SE through Italy and Greece. The most easterly departure record is of a December bird on Cyprus (Map A). There is thus a migratory divide at about 12° E, between SW departure and departures between SSW and SSE, to which CREUTZ has already referred. Flycatchers from Norway move SSE towards Italy and Greece. An autumn bird from the Scottish east coast, which was found in the following breeding season in Norway, and a May bird from Heligoland, which was found in Orkney Islands a year later (Map F) suggest that some Norwegian birds may also leave on a SW heading. Birds from Sweden and Finland heading between SSW and SSE reach the Mediterranean between northern Italy and W Turkey. An autumn juvenile from Heligoland found on Cyprus is likely also to be of Scandinavian origin, as may be the two birds found in Portugal, also from Heligoland, which also contribute to the number of Scandinavian birds tracking SW (Map G).



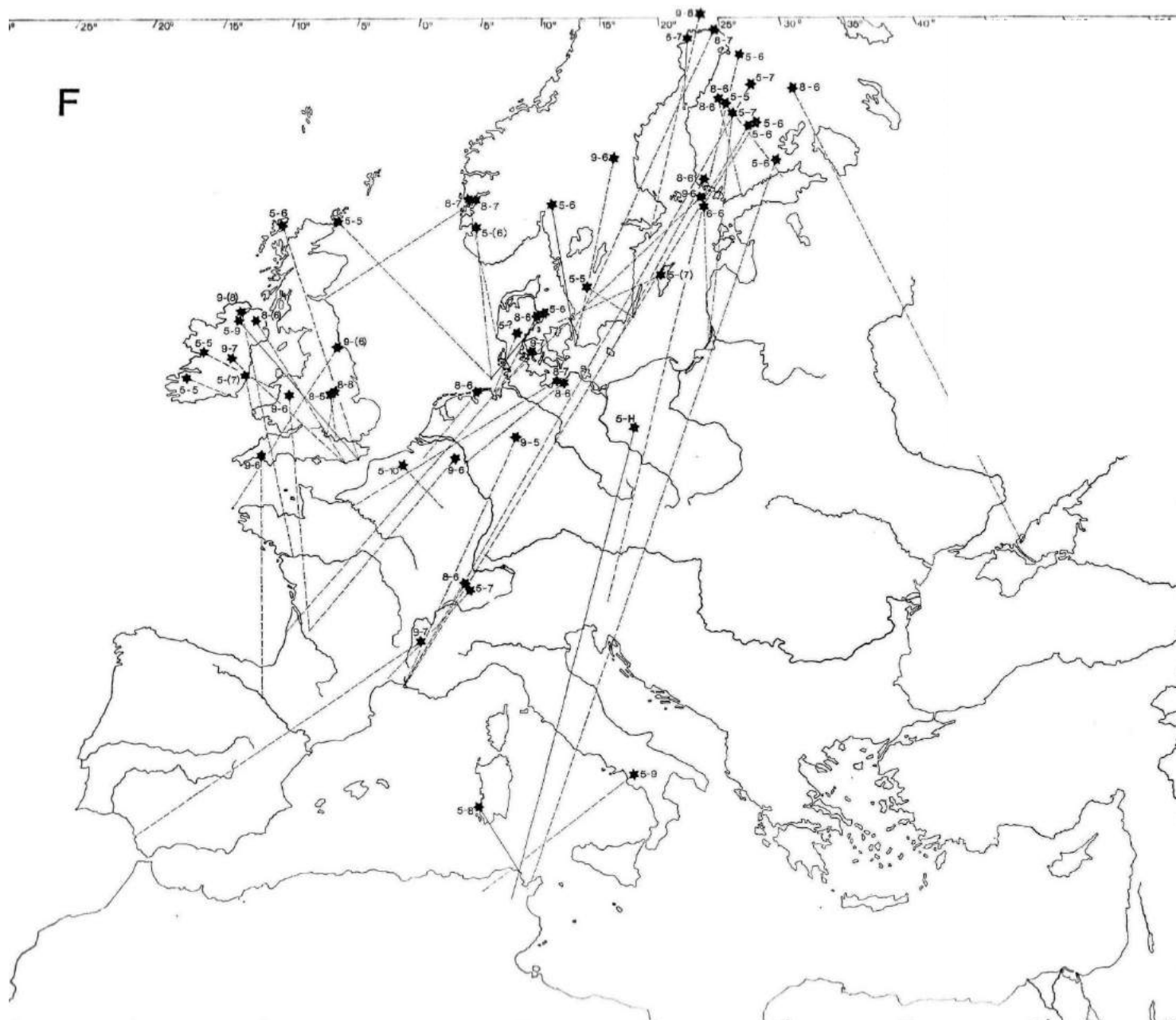
**Map A: Ringed as pulli, recovered in their first autumn or the following spring.**



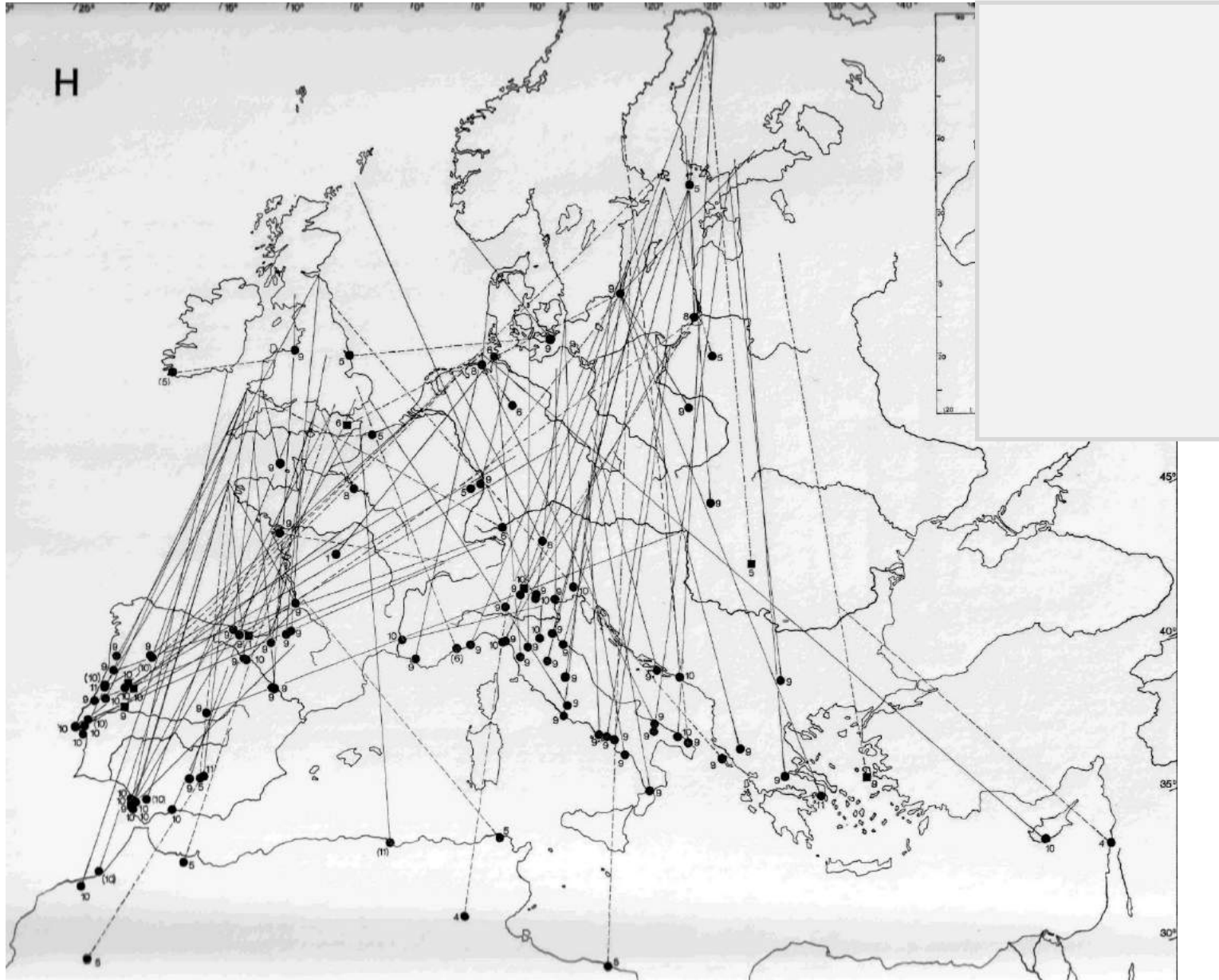
Map C: Ringed as pulli, recovered in later autumns.



**Map D: Ringed as adults in the breeding season.**



Map F: Ringed in winter or on migration, recovered in probable breeding areas



**Map H: Ringed as full-grown in autumn, recovered in the same autumn or the following spring; and a selection from later years.**

Since the likelihood of reported ring-recoveries in Greece and in Turkey is self-evidently lower than in Italy, the proportion of birds leaving in these directions, namely to the S and SSE, will be higher than the actual number of ring-recoveries might suggest.

In contrast to other long-distance migrants, which overfly the Mediterranean and the Sahara in non-stop flight, there are numerous autumn records of Flycatchers in North Africa. In Tunisia on 3 September the species was the most numerous passage migrant after Barn Swallow. Even in the Libyan desert it was found in almost all suitable sites until the middle of October (SNOW & MANNING). It was also abundant even in the middle of the Sahara (at Djanet) in autumn (LAFERRERE). In southern Senegal, autumn passage is insignificant, likewise in Nigeria north of about 9° N (MOREL, FRY, SMITH). In contrast, there are reports of substantial autumn passage through E Chad. (GILLET, SALVAN).

Studies on Signilskar (Aland Islands) show that adult Flycatchers leave the breeding area 2-3 weeks before the young of the year (HYYTIA & VIKBERG).

Departure is mid-July to mid-October. A nestling from Belgium was already in N Spain by 31 July. Passage through Senegal and Chad was noted in September and October.

### **Wintering.**

Africa south of a line from the Gambia to Mount Kenya, and as far south as the Cape. Only areas of dense jungle and desert are avoided. There are only occasional winter records from north of that line: a December record from NW Nigeria, and from Aden (MUNDY & COOK) and an additional few January ring-recoveries from Portugal, Spain, France and Italy; and a February recovery from Morocco.

The relatively large number of ring-recoveries in Sub-Saharan Africa (46 recoveries) cannot tell us very much about the winter distribution of individual populations as these recoveries have occurred almost entirely within the migration seasons. In the months of December and January only four Finnish birds have been found, all four in the eastern part of South Africa. According to the directions of departure from Europe, autumn ring-recoveries of Western and Central European birds breeding west of 12° E might be expected in the far west of West Africa. This only matches a single Scottish nestling recovered on the coast of Mauritania (Map B). Of the remaining nine recoveries from the same breeding area one was an English nestling to Ghana; all the others were found between southern Niger and southern Congo, thus far to the east of their passage areas in SW Europe. The outbound migration direction of these populations must therefore either change through a full 90° in Spain and Portugal; or change by a less drastic amount there to be adjusted once again when in northwest Africa. The recoveries along the coast of Morocco would suggest the latter possibility, but equally one would not necessarily exclude the other. Either might explain the relatively small-scale passage reported from Senegal. It must be therefore assumed that only part of the Western Europe populations winter in West Africa – with a substantial component continuing on to winter either in Equatorial Africa or further south. Over six years, DOUAUD has only observed through-passage in the coastal area of Togo (3 September to 12 December.): "there is certainly an east-west movement along the coast, towards a more eastern wintering area". Within Togo, there are even later dates. An autumn bird from Wales, found in March in the Eastern Cape of South Africa could be an example of a possible extreme. (Map J).

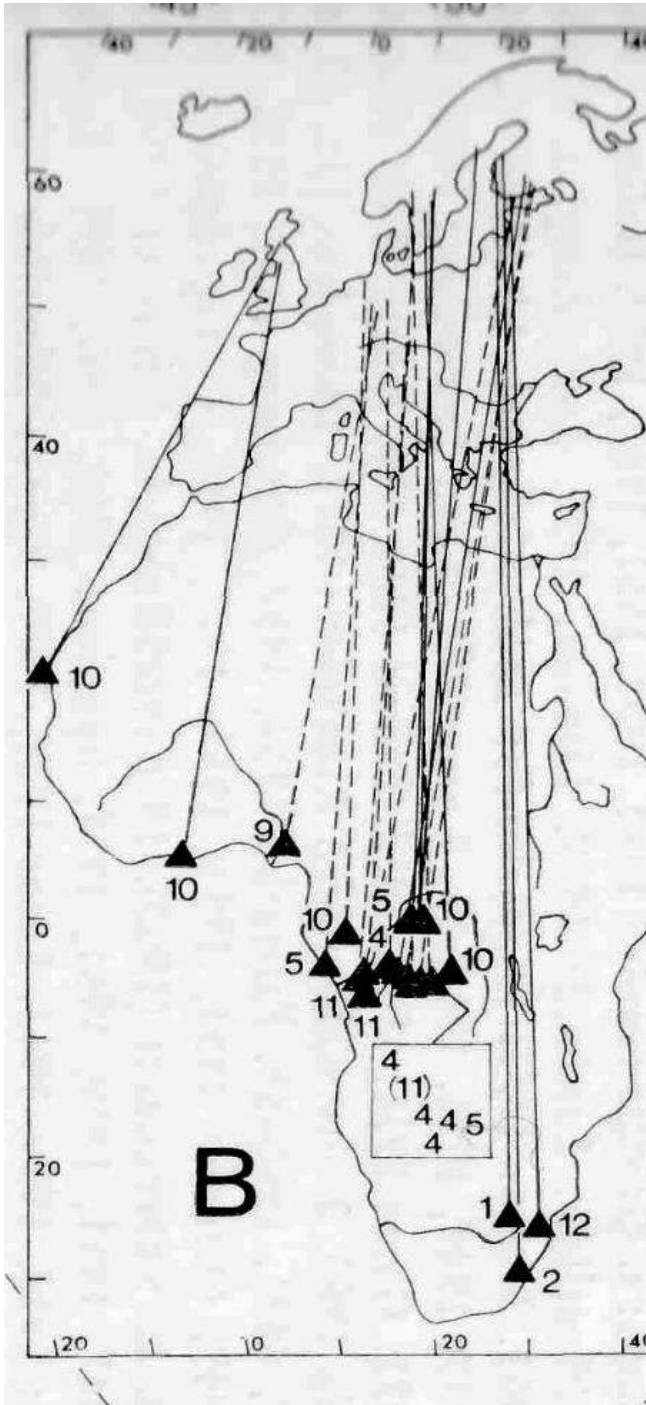
Flycatchers from Scandinavia and Finland could reach the areas in Africa in which they have been recovered without or with only a minimal change of direction. It is striking that the autumn and spring recovery locations of Swedish birds are predominantly (in 9 out of 11 cases) more easterly than the places where the birds were ringed.

This also suggests a greater proportion of S and SSE headings than the number of ring-recoveries in Europe would suggest. Furthermore, the four Finnish winter recoveries from the Cape lie 3–8° further east than their places

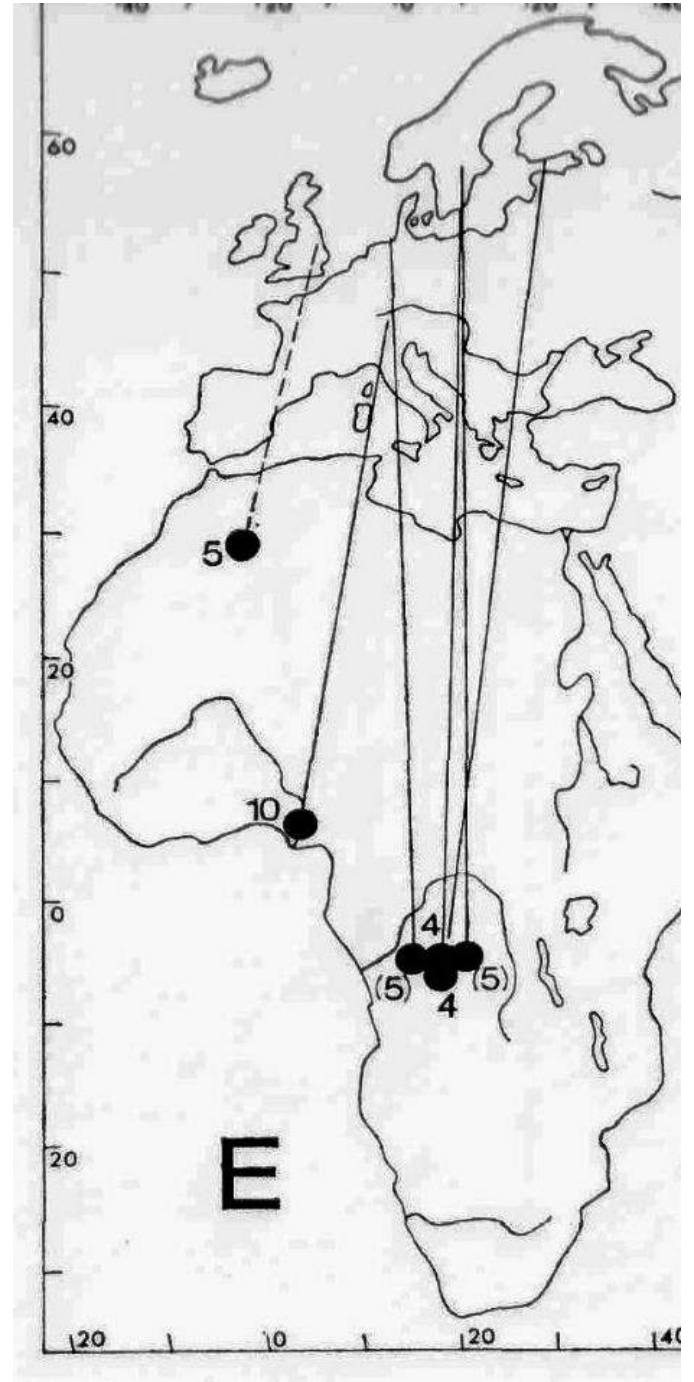


of origin. Eleven Finnish birds were recovered in spring in the Congo, all significantly further west than the winter recoveries, nine of which with directions west of south. Since there is only one autumn recovery in the same area as those in spring, the possibility of a loop migration cannot be ruled out.

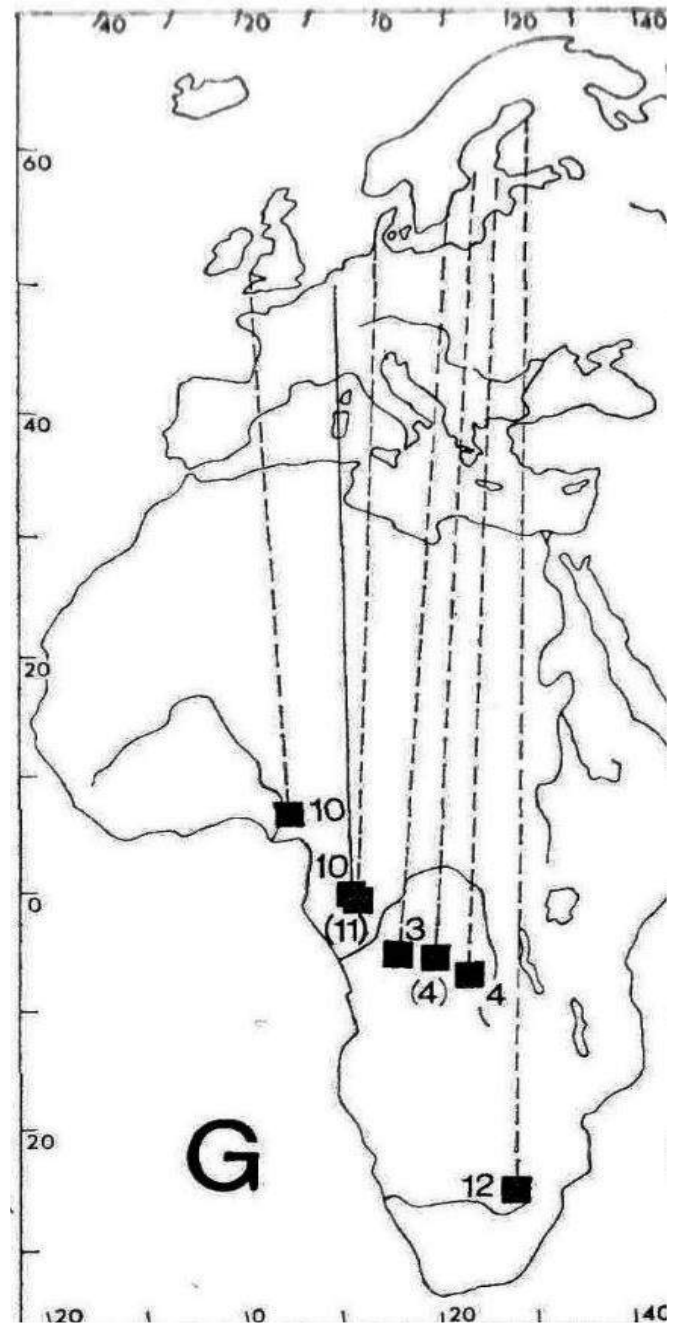
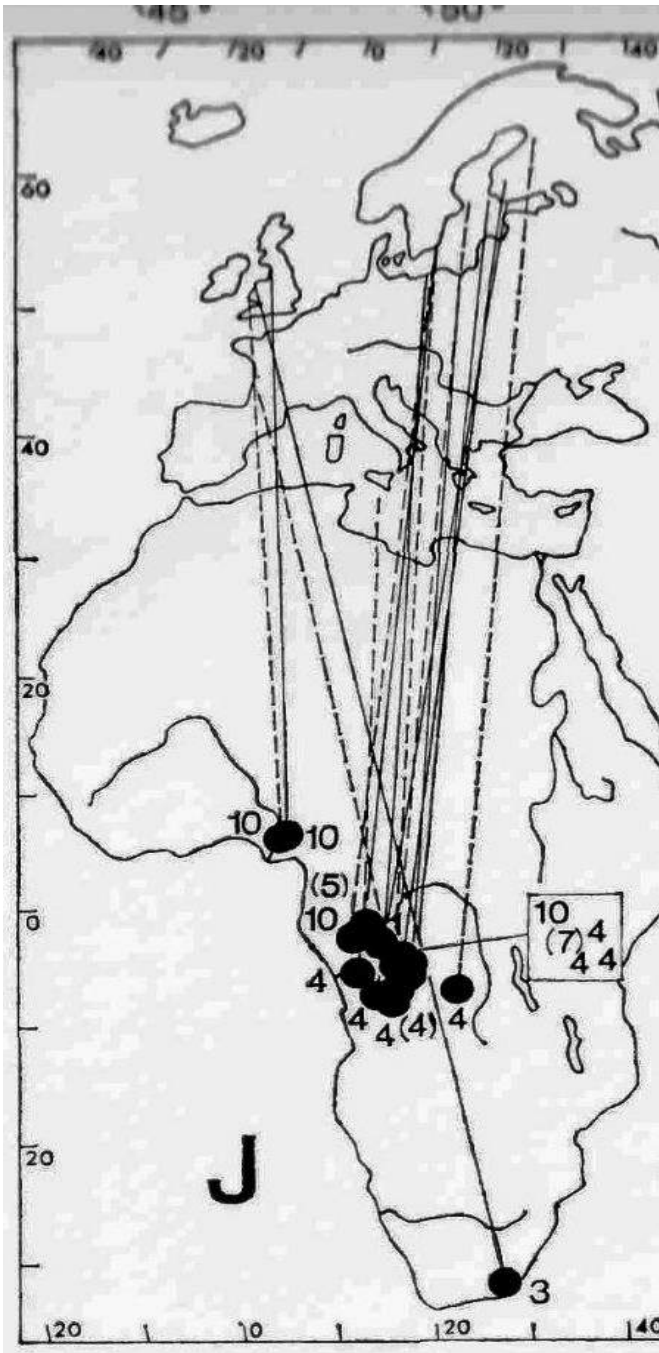
The Asian race *neumannii* overwinters in East Africa south to the Cape Province. The form endemic to the Balearic Islands *balearica* is known from the Ivory Coast, S Cameroon and SW Africa. The Sardinian and Corsican form *tyrrhenica* has been recorded once in Tanzania (FRIEDMANN & LOVE RIDGE). Found in Kenya from late September to early April, in Zambia from mid-October to early April.



Map B: Ringed as pulli, recovered south of 30° N.



Map E: Ringed in the breeding season, recovered south of 30° N



Map J: Ringed as full-grown in autumn, recovered south of  $30^{\circ}$  N.

Map E: Ringed as full-grown in spring, recovered south of  $30^{\circ}$  N

Spring ring-recoveries are recorded across the whole breadth of the Mediterranean from Spain to the Middle East exactly as in autumn. Records from Portugal are only from the autumn. Populations which pass through Portugal take a shorter route in spring. Otherwise there is evidence of loop migration only from the passage numbers in Nigeria and Chad – apart from a full-grown bird from SW France found in Tunisia the following May. In Nigeria the species is uncommon in autumn but abundant in spring; in E Chad it is the other way round. (FRY, SALVAN). Arrival in central W European breeding areas from the end of April, in S Sweden from the beginning of May (RENDAHL & VESTERGREN).

### **Discussion**

Full-grown autumn birds from Fair Isle and E England, found in Italy and Corfu, could be of Scandinavian origin, so do not help with the migration routes of British birds (Map H). If they did originate in Scandinavia, then both these autumn-ringed birds must have changed direction from SW in NW Europe to SE. Full-grown autumn birds from England, found in June on the Italian-French border and on the upper Danube do not provide any evidence for loop migration, as more than a year had elapsed from first ringing to recovery. They, too, may have come from Scandinavia and have taken a different route to their winter quarters in another autumn than they did in the autumn of their first ringing.

Documentation for four Swedish ringed Flycatchers found on Capri (Var Fagelvarld 22, 1963, 244) is unfortunately not available. The recovery in Poznan of a Ukraine-ringed bird 1000km WNW on 2 December can equally not be confirmed (Polen 1942).

### **Data.**

490 distance ring-recoveries, of which 442 used (201 nestlings, 241 full-grown). Ringing totals and recovery rates:

Great Britain (1972) 32,132, recoveries (1973) 229 = 0.71%

Netherlands (1972) 8,935, recoveries (1973) 48 = 0.54%

Radolfzell (1972) 10,698, recoveries (1973) 41 = 0.38%.