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Abstracts

SHORT COMMUNICATIONS

SEX-BIASED MORTALITY OF COMMON TERNS IN WIND FARM COLLISIONS

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Abstract. We studied sex differences in collision mortality in adult Common Terns (*Sterna hirundo*) at a wind farm in the direct vicinity of a breeding site in Zeebrugge, Belgium in 2005–2007. In total, 64 fatalities were collected and sexed, of which 64 % were males. Uneven sex ratio among these birds was most pronounced during the period of incubation and early chick feeding (15 May–15 June), when 78% of the 28 mortalities were male. During prelaying and feeding of young, the sex ratio of mortalities did not differ from equality. We argue that sex-biased collision mortality in Common Terns does not result from morphological differences between the sexes, but rather reflects differences in foraging frequency between males and females during egg-laying and incubation.

Key words: Belgium, Common Tern, mortality, sex differences, *Sterna hirundo*, wind turbine.