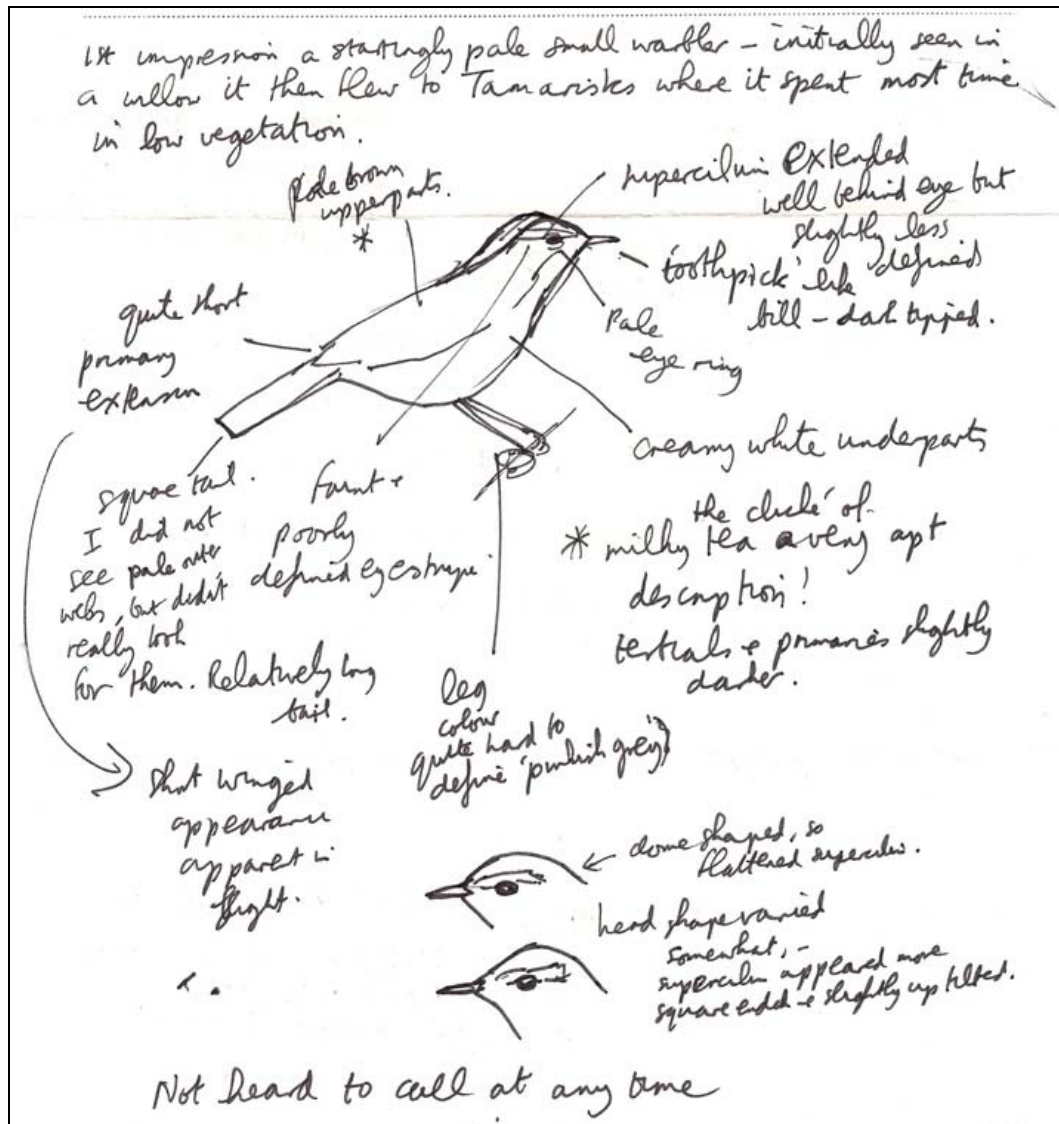


Booted Warbler at The Naze
9th September 2006
The First Essex Record
by Julian Thomas

The warbler was first seen in a Willow and gave the impression of being startlingly pale. It flew down to the tamarisks and spent most of its time low down in the vegetation. When it was relocated, my immediate impression was 'This is a *Hippolais*' based on the open bland expression and the absence of any yellowish or greenish tones and small size (comparable to a Willow Warbler). I began to eliminate first Icterine and then Melodious Warbler. This then brought me back to why was it not a *Phylloscopus* warbler. The behaviour and jizz were all wrong for a Phyllosc – it clearly wasn't one!

At this point I strongly suspected that it was a Booted Warbler and so with my mind racing I set about eliminating other possibilities such as Sykes's, Olivaceous and *Acrocephalus* warblers. Thankfully several other observers got onto the bird and one vital photo was taken by Steve Bunn. The bird was only around for 30 minutes before being lost.



Field notes by Julian Thomas