

# The Best of Jordan

Naturetrek Tour Report

12th – 21st October 2023

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Mourning Wheatear



White-eyed Gull



Little Green Bee-eater



Little Bittern

Tour report by Marcus Kohler, photos by Dave Robinson

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Tour participants: Marcus Kohler (leader) and Mohammed Abed Al Nabi (local guide) with 12 Naturetrek Clients.

## Day 1

## Thursday 12th October

Our flight was on time, but that still meant it was early Friday morning when we checked into our airport hotel. A smooth, if long, start to the holiday.

## Day 2

## Friday 13th October

We started at 09.00, and a short walk around the grounds of the hotel introduced the more common birds of the trip: our first White-spectacled Bulbuls, Laughing Doves, and Common Redstarts. We set off east to our first stop, Qasr al Harranna, where Mohammed brought this 7<sup>th</sup>-century castle to life as we walked through its many rooms. Our first birding stop was close by and here flock of Barn Swallows and Sand Martins betrayed the presence of water. Our first Crested Larks were silhouetted on the edge of the bank, and a solitary Tamarisk tree revealed a suite of great birds: Spotted Flycatcher, Common Redstart, Willow Warbler and best of all an obliging Bluethroat. Lesser Emperor dragonflies quartered the water and, as we left, a flock of Black-crowned Night Herons arrived. We proceeded to Qasr Amra, a second castle, and Tim spotted a distant Whiskered Tern, which was patrolling a private wetland. Derek bumped into a Schokari Sand Racer snake which obligingly sat in a bush and allowing some fine photographs.

We made the short trip into the Pistachio Valley and found another pool to investigate. A Wood Sandpiper called but was flushed away, two Common Snipe flew in, and a Masked Shrike showed briefly. We took a nice lunch at RSCN's Azraq Lodge, our home for the next two nights, and then it was onto Shaumari Reserve, where our jeep trip soon gave us great views of the White or Arabian Oryx. We took some fine photos of this majestic antelope. Among the birds we found were a Northern and two Black-eared Wheatears, Red-backed Shrikes and Common Redstart.

Asraq Castle was our final grand destination today, a Roman castle built to catch traders avoiding the main caravan road and paying their dues. We returned to our lodge for a fine evening meal and early night after a late arrival

## Day 3

## Saturday 14th October

We saw the sun rise this morning at Azraq wetland. A Common Kingfisher posed and Spotted Flycatcher and Whit-eared Bulbuls greeted us on arrival: the latter is quite common in this wetland, though still scarce within Jordan as a whole. A Red-backed Shrike was on the path, and we watched a Sparrowhawk flying over into the sunrise. At the main hide, several Squacco Herons were present, with four Glossy Ibises allowing great views, and a Marsh Harrier sat in a distant tree. An Icterine Warbler flitted at the back of the pool, but we could only identify it when we were able to get a bit closer.

We had a late breakfast back at Asraq lodge and then headed east towards (but a safe distance from) the Iraqi border. Mohammed took us to Qasr Al Usay Khem, where the castle location enabled an exceptional view of the desert, and the ruin, a legacy of a very different time when the lava fields had probably supported more crops. A short distance on a stop at a vegetated wadi brought immediate results as a Hoopoe flew into view raising its crest, and a little further on, we were watching our first Temminck's Horned Larks. These stunning birds used stealth

as a means of not being detected, which enabled us to walk right up to them and take some glorious photographs. Among our targets today was the black 'basalt' morph (or species) of Mourning Wheatear, restricted to this desert across Jordan and Iraq, but which has become very difficult to see. A predominantly black wheatear beside us drew understandable excitement, but closer inspection revealed it to be an immature White-crowned Wheatear: still a very attractive bird and new for the trip.

As we drove further into the desert, a roadside stop brought a great reward with fine views of the black morph Desert Lark, which is also only found in this desert, adapted to the black basalt. It was a lovely bird, with contrasting charcoal upperparts and a rustic lower body. Black Redstart and our first Isabelline Wheatears were also seen before we went to see the lone Pistachio tree, said to be 1500 years old. This magnificent tree is protected since the prophet Mohammed was said to have visited. It's a beautiful tree and it held an Eastern Olivaceous Warbler, with a Common Redstart and a Red-breasted Flycatcher close by, the latter an uncommon migrant.

A late lunch back at the lodge, and then we headed to a couple of local sites. Our first destination, which translates as 'hyena land', was dry and hot, and we could only find a Chiffchaff and Crested Larks, but we then proceeded to a wetland where, as Marcus got out of the bus he saw a Little Bittern fly across the near corner and out of sight for the group. Common Kingfishers sat obligingly, a Common Snipe was bold and brilliant in the sun, several Willow Warblers were seen and a Green Sandpiper was flushed. Also flushed were several Squacco Herons, one coming out of the tamarisk where the Little Bittern had been claimed. However, as doubts began to surface, an immature Little Bittern showed brilliantly in the same area. This is another very uncommon bird in Jordan and it was a real treat to see it so well: a great bird on which to end the day before a good meal back at the RSCN lodge

## Day 4

## Sunday 15th October

Today was predominantly a day of travel but with some superb stops en route. We left Asraq and retraced our steps towards Amman. Two Desert Larks flew up from the road by the American Base. On the outskirts of Amman, we stopped for some real Turkish coffee, which was hair-raising and got the blood racing!

Recent colonists to the area were in evidence: Common Mynas were in the field, Jackdaw and Jay were also noted. Heading south, we stopped for a large, long-winged, dark raptor showing some contrast on the secondaries: this sub-adult Eastern Imperial Eagle was an outstanding observation. Amid a lattice of electricity pylons sat a group of Steppe Eagles, with several flying close over us. Scanning the skies, we could see more. A Mourning Wheatear was on the rocks close by, our first good look at this really attractive bird, and a brief visit to a nearby pool disturbed a Green Sandpiper. A coffee stop enabled Derek to purchase a Jordanian keffiyeh (head-scarf), a look he was to master over the trip, sitting well with his "Simpsons" Braces and his 'Lawrence of Arabia' accent. We continued to ascend: a short stop at a wind farm revealed more Mourning and White-crowned Wheatears. Steppe Eagles were kettling on a thermal.

Our primary visit this morning was to Kerak Castle. This site has to be seen to be believed: the steep sides and views made it apparent why this castle had been sited here, and its vulnerability to siege too. It was an amazing spectacle walking through the tunnels and out into the warren of rooms. It was a remarkable site, and remarkably well preserved.

A Steppe Buzzard and several more Mourning and White-crowned Wheatears were seen en route to Wadi Dana RSCN lodge. We stopped for our first Blackstart and admired its blue-grey body and pure black tail. As we approached Dana, our first of many Tristram's Starlings sat obligingly on a rock, showing their russet primary panels.

The location was so spectacular: our lodge was cut into the rocks overlooking a huge ridge. After lunch, we proceeded up into the Juniper forest close by. It was hot, and birds were limited, but the views were breathtaking, as was the flowering Sea Squill (*Urginea maritima*). A visit to a watering hole only turned up House Sparrows and Greenfinch, but back at the Lodge, Tim and Caroline saw two Bonelli's Eagles and the first Scrub Warbler of the trip, below their balcony. In the evening an intrepid few walked down the valley to try for owls, but without success.

## Day 5

## Monday 16th October

The sun rose over the lodge and the dramatic ridge in front of us was spectacular in the light mist. A pair of Blue Rock Thrushes returned repeatedly to the same rock behind the building, whilst Tristram's Starlings flocked around the night light, picking off moths. A Black Redstart flitted close by and a Sardinian Warbler moved in the scrub below, showing well periodically. Chukar Partridges were calling distantly. Despite some of the party feeling unwell today, stoicism was the order of the day. It was a wrench to leave the RSCN Dana Lodge and its amazing view. Our aim was to focus on the Wadi itself and travel down to the base camp. We hadn't gone far before we stopped for a wheatear, very close to the back of the bus, originally identified as Desert, but review of photographs taken from the back of the bus revealed this to be a first-winter Eastern Black-eared Wheatear. A Red-backed Shrike was also posing a short distance further along. We swapped over to a truck for the final descent to the wadi, stopping for a singing Woodlark on a stone pine.

At the camp, we had a panorama of spectacular rock formations: wind erosion had sculptured the rocks into a multitude of shapes. Some were named after animals (two elephant rocks and a frog rock), whilst others were simply gnarled and shaped into dramatic formations. It was a surreal and beautiful landscape.

As we passed the restaurant, a Little Owl stared angrily at us from the rock ahead. This species never looks particularly happy, but the countenance on this one seemed even more grumpy: a lovely bird. Pale Crag Martins (formerly regarded as a sub-species of Rock Martin, but now considered a separate species) circled close to us, showing their dark inner wings and small tail spots.

A fifty-strong flock of Greenfinches frequented the water hole, but only a Great Tit joined them and there was no hint of Syrian Serin. A distant Bonelli's Eagle was found on a rock on the other side of the ridge, but was only really identifiable through the scope. Chukar Partridges, which we had heard earlier in the morning, were now visible: we flushed several flocks, then watched them indignantly run up the slope. The viewpoint was so spectacular, but the Bonelli's Eagle flew out of sight. We walked back to the camp, noting Jerboa tracks in the sand and suspected signs of Rock Hyrax. A Snake-eyed Lizard (*Ophisops elegans*) was seen briefly. There were more flowering spikelets of Sea Squill, many having gone over, but some still revealing their fine florets. The floral of the day was several flowering Steven's Meadow Saffron (*Colchicum stevenii*) showing spectacular and delightful violet-pink flowers for all, but especially Jane, to enjoy. Back at the camp we savoured a coffee and tea break. A Scrub Warbler was found and soon we were watching this charming, busy bird of low Middle Eastern arid scrub with its streaked features and upright tail, flitting through the undergrowth.

Some of the group then took a short walk. Woodlark were in full song, always so special to hear, and several showed well. A juvenile Masked Shrike flew across us and then posed, as did a Red-backed Shrike, and Sardinian Warblers rattled around us.

Lunch at the Wadi was interrupted by a Short-toed Eagle flying over. This species is a frequent migrant, but also breeds in Dana. Agitated calls of Brown-necked Ravens alerted Tim to the pair of Bonelli's Eagles, which finally gave really good views, with several Steppe Eagles also seen.

It was time to leave to the Camp and head to Little Petra. However, no birdwatching trip around the world is complete without a visit to a sewage works, and we visited one en route, which did not disappoint. Another Bonelli's Eagle flew above the ridge, and Common Redstart, and an Eastern Orphean Warbler flew above us into a Eucalyptus tree. Willow Warbler and another Blackstart were seen, while by the water a hirundine flock was dominated by Barn Swallows but also contained a solitary House Martin. A Green Sandpiper sat patiently, whilst along the edge some White Wagtails were joined by three Grey Wagtails.

Little Petra introduced us to the Nabataean genius and remarkable architecture within the sandstone, a spectacular taste of what was to come. It was time to continue our short journey to Petra to our hotel and evening meal

## Day 6

**Tuesday 17th October**

We spent a whole day in the ancient city of Petra today. Before we reached the *Siq* (the narrow entrance gorge), a pair of Palestine Sunbirds flitted in the scrub on the far side of the horse paddock. As we were reminded though, today the focus was on the magnificent Nabataean creation of Petra. Unfortunately two of our party still felt unwell and decided to rest, but were thankfully able to join the group in the late afternoon and travel to see the treasury and the heart of Petra. Walking through the *Siq*, Mohammed explained the incredible advanced engineering process of the Nabataean people and their mastery of architecture and irrigation, as he outlined the pipes and the remnants of a depiction of a caravan of travellers in the rocks. The *Siq* opened out to the remarkable treasury in full sun. Mohammed explained how it was in fact the world's biggest sun dial and pointed to the features that made it work. We continued to the theatre, stalls offered loads of ornaments that you largely never wanted, and donkey rides "with free Wi-Fi". We had an atmospheric mint tea at a café beyond the theatre and proceeded to lunch, before an afternoon open for free time to explore. An intrepid four continued up to the Monastery in the hope of finding Sooty Falcon. A deviation to a spring revealed Desert Lark and then, after much searching, a pair of Sinai Rosefinches. The male posed for us, revealing its pink underparts, red face and black lores.

It was 900 steps to the monastery, but Tim and Caroline led the way with good cheer and Derek was also in fine spirits. A pair of Fan-tailed Ravens called and then flew over with their diagnostic shape evident. We also enjoyed further scope views of White-crowned Wheatears as Tristram's Starlings called in the valleys, and several flocks of first-winter Sinai Rosefinches were found. While the Sooty Falcons were not seen, the monastery itself was magnificent. The walk back was exhausting, but we had certainly made the most of our day.

## Day 7

**Wednesday 18th October**

We left Petra today but stopped to overlook the city and could immediately see how Petra had been lost to Western knowledge for so long: only the tourists now betrayed its location within the rocks. We proceeded and stopped

for a coffee at the modestly named “most spectacular view in the world” café. Clearly, they had never been to the fanzone at Selhurst Park. The view of the wind-sculpted landscape was undoubtedly exceptional from the roof terrace, and we could look down on a Mourning Wheatear below us, but try as we might we couldn’t find a Finsch’s and suspected that they were yet to arrive. A Sparrowhawk flew over. We continued into the Valley of the Moon, as Wadi Rum is sometimes called. This amazing area, with flat bottomed valleys of alluvial sediments and salt pans cut around monoliths of erosion resistant *Umm Isbrin* Sandstone and granite comprises a truly spectacular, lunar landscape. It was first brought to the world’s attention through a young, sober, blue-eyed Peter O’Toole in the 1962 epic, *Lawrence of Arabia*, and more recently as the location for “*The Martian*” movie with Matt Damon. We stopped at the old train track, which had a real ‘wild west’ feel to it, with remnant trains present and a display of remarkable pictures of bygone days, of British occupation, *Lawrence of Arabia*, and the conflicts that sowed the seeds for the current crisis. First-winter White Crowned Wheatears were on the fence line.

Wadi Rum was a different place from the leader’s last visit when there were no camps present. There are now apparently over 400, which has impacted somewhat upon the night sky and light pollution. They are not obvious though, and it remains an exceptionally evocative landscape. We arrived at Rehayeb Desert Camp and its luxurious en suite glamping tents for a late lovely lunch. In the afternoon, we set off exploring in two Jeeps. We hadn’t travelled far before a sharp stop enabled many to catch up with a lovely male Sinai Rosefinch, the first of several we were to encounter on this journey. Desert Larks were showing well, and at another stop, we watched Scrub and Willow Warblers. A short distance further on we stopped to scan the rocks. A high-pitched call betrayed the presence of an adult and a juvenile Sooty Falcon, but regrettably the second Jeep had just got itself stuck in some sand at precisely the wrong moment and missed out on what was, alas, a fairly brief view. The falcons didn’t return and we continued into the wadi. A small partridge appeared ahead of us: Sand Partridge! This bird is difficult to see here, and unlike the falcon, the stunning male cooperated by edging up the scree slope, giving great views. The spectacle of the landscape was a constant as we moved to a sunset spot where Jeeps arrived from multiple locations. It became a multi-cultural congregation, enjoying the sun fading and the light changing the colour of the rocks. In the early evening, we were shown how the chicken was slow cooked in an oven in the sand, and it tasted delicious, especially for those who had fasted for a while.

After dinner, Mohammed revealed more of his exceptional knowledge, as he interpreted the night sky and talked us through the stars and their constellations. Through the scope, we could see four moons of Jupiter, and Mohammed’s interpretation was both brilliant and inspiring. A great end to a fine day.

## Day 8

## Thursday 19th October

We spent a lovely night in the desert and after a fine breakfast it was time for the short journey to Aqaba. As we left the wadi, a raptor was perched on a large monolith next to the road. The heavy bill and “trousers” identified it as a Long-legged Buzzard.

Our journey was to follow the Nabataean trade route to the ancient city of Aqaba. Five Spur-winged Lapwings were alongside the road in a ploughed field and flying in front of the bus, showing their attractive two-tone plumage. Mourning Wheatears and Steppe Eagles were at another viewpoint. The primary destination, the sewage works on the border, was closed but our alternative option of the Ayal Golf course and lakes proved to be a great location for migration. Ringed Plovers and Spur-winged Lapwings were on the lake edge, a Marsh Harrier flew across, soon to be followed by two Black Storks, which circled low to return later. Then a pale phase Booted Eagle

showed so well above us that its “landing lights” on the shoulders were much in evidence. Steppe Eagles were occasional, and a flock of Red-throated Pipits flew over us. A short distance further and an explosive call in the shrubbery betrayed a Graceful Prinia. The species is superficially similar to Scrub Warbler, but lacks the supercilium and extent of streaking of the latter species, and has a more graduated tail. It was very obliging, but was quickly usurped by our first (Arabian) Green Bee-eaters posing in a tree and flying around us. A juvenile Bonelli’s Eagle was unexpected overhead, a Steppe Eagle less so. On the water, a pair of Pied Kingfishers hunted and Little Grebes were numerous. On the fairway were several Red-throated Pipits, one still showing its red throat wash of spring and a mix of White and Yellow Wagtails. Other birds seen included Common Sandpiper, Hoopoe, Masked Shrike, Whiskered Tern, Little Egret and several Willow Warblers. It was just a great two hours of birding.

We continued to the heart of Aqaba, where we had an exceptional lunch of sea bream before checking in to our hotel. The afternoon was free, but a group of us headed to the port area. Our first stop was bereft of birds, but a little further on a group of White-eyed Gulls of various age classes was roosting on a beach, a Whimbrel was seen briefly and Ringed Plovers were busy on the coastline. A large group of Lesser Sand Plovers was present, a bird not noted as present in the autumn in *The Birds of Jordan*, but perhaps reflecting more the age of the book and the changes in bird distribution, rather than exceptional rarities. In the distance a large flock of Common Terns fed, with some landing on a distant buoy.

An evening catch-up checklist on the roof terrace was all the more welcome for beer and a gin and tonic being available, pre-dinner, whilst the central location enabled some to explore the economic free zone of Aqaba in the evening

## Day 9

## Friday 20th October

An early morning walk to the terraces on the coast was a bit of a shock for the leader: they were much diminished and developed since his last visit (albeit some 18 years ago). The sea yielded a Sooty Gull, White-eyed gulls and Heuglin’s Gulls, while the small terraces held Hoopoe and Common Redstart. On the coast was a Striated Heron, a recent colonist of the Aqaba coast. After breakfast we were soon on our way to the Dead Sea. Today, on a remarkable journey we would travel from sea level to -400m, and ultimately back up 1100m to Amman.

Our first stop in some Acacia scrub had a low density of birds, but slowly a Common Redstart, two Blackstarts, Palestine Sunbirds, Green Bee-eaters and a Red-backed Shrike were seen. As we headed north the desert became sandier. We stopped at a wadi in Fidan, where Namaqua Doves and a bold Southern Grey Shrike were highlights, with a wary herd of camels adding to the Middle Eastern ambience. Derek was able to catch up with Palestine Sunbird as a pair flitted through.

We hadn’t found our target bird, Hoopoe Lark, but it was time to leave. However, a short distance on in the bus and a cry of ‘stop!’ from Mohammed, a quick reverse, and there next to the bus was a handsome Hoopoe Lark, quickly joined by another. It walked around the bus very obligingly for photographs: it is always special when you have to leave a much sought-after bird, rather than it flying off into the distance. We journeyed on, and Green Bee-eaters were now becoming frequent roadside companions and as we entered the Jordan valley, a lush habitat of tomato fields dominated. A flock of Red-throated Pipits was seen and then to our surprise we stopped for a Black-winged Kite, which obligingly posed on a telegraph wire, to the irritation of a mobbing Red-backed Shrike.

We later learned that this species, which has expanded its range in Europe, has also recently colonised the Jordan Valley in small numbers: an unexpected bonus.

Lunch was in a small café just before the Dead Sea. Security was very high in light of the recent terrible events that had commenced just before our trip. Due the proximity of Israel across the Dead Sea and planned protests that day, only tourist buses were being allowed through. The police stops were brief, cordial and straightforward as we passed the now farmed area that had been part of the Dead Sea a mere forty years ago, but shows the pressures on water in this region. As we approached the potash factory, a pair of Fan-tailed Ravens flew obligingly close. We could not stop here, but it enabled those who had missed this bird at Petra to catch up with this attractive corvid, with its highly idiosyncratic flight silhouette.

We continued to the Holiday Inn hotel, where four members of our team enjoyed a lovely and unique “swim”, returning to join us looking enviably well. Alas, restrictions were such at this difficult time that the rest of us could only relax and enjoy the hotel lounge and bar, rather than visit some birding sites. This curtailed any opportunities for Dead Sea Sparrow, although this species has become incredibly rare on this side of the border.

We now continued for the hour’s drive to Amman, as we ascended a ‘mere’ 1500m. Two more Black-winged Kites were spotted from the bus, emphasizing how quickly the birding landscape can change, and our final new bird for the trip was a very charismatic one, as we stopped for two White-throated Kingfishers on the telegraph wire, one showing its eponymous features and impressive thick red bill, while the other obligingly had its back to us, showing that wonderful turquoise contrast. This species is a common bird of South-east Asia but is on the western edge of its range here. It was a suitably charismatic final bird of our trip.

We said our goodbyes to our exceptionally cool and brilliant driver, Khalel, and Tim gave a witty eulogy of thanks to our polymorphic Jordanian guide, Mohammed. In the evening, after dinner, we reflected on our trip and the great camaraderie that had been a constant though some potentially challenging moments. We held an awards ceremony where everyone was a winner for their positive contribution to our journey, but as for the details, what is said in Jordan, stays in Jordan!

## Day 10

## Saturday 21st October

We headed to the airport early, except for Jane, who was to spend her birthday largely on her own waiting for her flight back to Melbourne. Customs challenges with binoculars were quickly resolved and we were through to the airport lounge in good time for our flight home

We recorded 117 species of bird and visited all the key archaeological sites, and, in spite of the tragic escalation of conflict in the region, we had been made very welcome throughout the country. Thank you to all participants for such a great tour. Your positivity and warmth made it a very enjoyable trip to lead.



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## Species lists

Birds (H = Heard only)

Common name	Scientific name	October 2023							
		13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Chukar Partridge	<i>Alectoris chukar</i>			H	10	H			
Sand Partridge	<i>Ammoperdix heyi</i>						2		
Gadwall	<i>Mareca strepera</i>		2						
Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>		2						
Little Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>		8					25	
Black Stork	<i>Ciconia nigra</i>							3	
Glossy Ibis	<i>Plegadis falcinellus</i>		4						
Little Bittern	<i>Ixobrychus minutus</i>		1						
Striated Heron	<i>Butorides striata</i>								1
Black-crowned Night Heron	<i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>	12							
Squacco Heron	<i>Ardeola ralloides</i>		5						
Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>		3					6	1
Great Egret	<i>Ardeas alba</i>								1
Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>		1					3	
Great Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>							4	
Black Kite	<i>Milvus migrans</i>							1	
Black-winged Kite	<i>Elanus caeruleus</i>								3
Short-toed Snake Eagle	<i>Circaetus gallicus</i>				1				
Western Marsh Harrier	<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>		1		1			1	
Eurasian Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>		1				1		
Steppe Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>			1					
Long-legged Buzzard	<i>Buteo rufinus</i>							1	
Steppe Eagle	<i>Aquila nipalensis</i>			18			10	6	
Eastern Imperial Eagle	<i>Aquila heliaca</i>			1					
Bonelli's Eagle	<i>Aquila fasciata</i>				3	1		1	
Booted Eagle	<i>Hieraaetus pennatus</i>							1	
Sooty Falcon	<i>Falco concolor</i>								
Common Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	1	1	5	1	1	1	1	1

Common name	Scientific name	October 2023							
		13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Water Rail	<i>Rallus aquaticus</i>		H						
Common Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>		15						
Eurasian Coot	<i>Fulica atra</i>		45					1	
Spur-winged Lapwing	<i>Vanellus spinosus</i>							12	
Common Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>							8	
Lesser Sand Plover	<i>Charadrius mongolus</i>							8	
Common Snipe	<i>Gallinago gallinago</i>	2	1						
Whimbrel	<i>Numenius phaeopus</i>							1	
Common Greenshank	<i>Tringa nebularia</i>							1	
Green Sandpiper	<i>Tringa ochropus</i>		1	1	1				
Wood Sandpiper	<i>Tringa glareola</i>	H							
Common Sandpiper	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>							1	
Black-headed Gull	<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>								4
White-eyed Gull	<i>Ichthyaetus leucophthalmus</i>							24	3
Sooty Gull	<i>Ichthyaetus hemprichii</i>								1
Lesser Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus fuscus heuglini</i>								2
Armenian Gull	<i>Larus armenicus</i>								1
Common Tern	<i>Sterna hirundo</i>							50	
Whiskered Tern	<i>Chlidonias hybrida</i>	1						1	
Rock (Feral) Pigeon	<i>Columba livia 'feral'</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Eurasian Collared Dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>		6					1	
Laughing Dove	<i>Spilopelia senegalensis</i>	40	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Namaqua Dove	<i>Oena capensis</i>								4
Rose-ringed Parakeet	<i>Psittacula krameri</i>							2	20
Little Owl	<i>Athene noctua</i>				1				
White-throated Kingfisher	<i>Halcyon smyrnensis</i>								2
Common Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>		4						
Pied Kingfisher	<i>Ceryle rudis</i>							2	
Green Bee-Eater	<i>Merops orientalis</i>							7	50
Eurasian Hoopoe	<i>Upupa epops</i>		2	1				1	1
Red-backed Shrike	<i>Lanius collurio</i>	1	2		1	2		1	1
Southern Grey Shrike	<i>Lanius meridionalis</i>								1
Masked Shrike	<i>Lanius nubicus</i>	1			1			1	
Eurasian Jay	<i>Garrulus glandarius</i>			2	1				
House Crow	<i>Corvus splendens</i>							20	X
Jackdaw	<i>Corvus monedula</i>			6					
Brown-necked Raven	<i>Corvus ruficollis</i>		2	6	5		30	10	6
Fan-tailed Raven	<i>Corvus rhipidurus</i>					4			2
Great Tit	<i>Parus major</i>			2	3				
Greater Hoopoe-Lark	<i>Alaemon alaudipes</i>								2
Desert Lark	<i>Ammomanes deserti</i>		6	2	2	1	10		5
Lesser Short-toed Lark	<i>Calandrella rufescens</i>	30							
Crested Lark	<i>Galerida cristata</i>	10	10	6	4	2	3	6	6
Woodlark	<i>Lullula arborea</i>				3				
Temminck's Lark	<i>Eremophila bilopha</i>		8						
White-eared Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus leucotis</i>		4						
White-spectacled Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus xanthopygos</i>	6		10	15	5	4	10	4
Sand Martin	<i>Riparia riparia</i>	3							
Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	20	30	30	4	10	6	10	20
Pale Crag Martin	<i>Ptyonoprogne obsoleta</i>			6	30	50	20	6	5
Common House Martin	<i>Delichon urbicum</i>				1				

Common name	Scientific name	October 2023							
		13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Scrub Warbler	<i>Scotocerca inquieta</i>			1	4	1	3		
Willow Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus trochilus</i>	1	3		1			2	
Common Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>		1				1		
Eurasian Reed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus scirpaceus</i>		1						
Eastern Olivaceous Warbler	<i>Iduna pallida</i>		1						
Icterine Warbler	<i>Hippolais icterina</i>		1						
Graceful Prinia	<i>Prinia gracilis</i>							3	1
Eurasian Blackcap	<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>	h							h
Eastern Orphean Warbler	<i>Sylvia crassirostris</i>				1				
Sardinian Warbler	<i>Sylvia melanocephala</i>				4				
Eurasian Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>			H					
Tristram's Starling	<i>Onychognathus tristramii</i>			10	50	60	30	10	6
Common Myna	<i>Acridotheres tristis</i>		2	8				1	
Common Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>		H		1	1			1
Song Thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>		H						
Bluethroat	<i>Luscinia svecica</i>	1							
Black Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus ochruros</i>		2		1				
Common Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus phoenicurus</i>	5	3	1	1		1		2
Isabelline Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe isabellina</i>		2						2
Northern Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe oenanthe</i>	1					1		
Cyprus Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe cypriaca</i>								
Black-eared Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe hispanica</i>	2			1				
Mourning Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe lugens</i>			5	4	5	4		
White-crowned Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe leucopyga</i>		2	1		2	4	1	2
Blackstart	<i>Oenanthe melanura</i>			2	1	1			4
Blue Rock Thrush	<i>Monticola solitarius</i>				2	2			
Spotted Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa striata</i>	1	4						
Red-breasted Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula parva</i>		1						
Palestine Sunbird	<i>Cinnyris osea</i>					2			4
House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	✓		10	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Spanish Sparrow	<i>Passer hispaniolensis</i>	20	✓						
Western Yellow Wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava</i>							4	
Grey Wagtail	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>				3				
White Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>	3	1	1	4	2	1	4	50
Red-throated Pipit	<i>Anthus cervinus</i>		1					10	8
European Greenfinch	<i>Carduelis chloris</i>	6			50				
Common Linnet	<i>Carduelis cannabina</i>	2							
Sinai Rosefinch	<i>Carpodacus synoicus</i>					25	8		

## Others

Common name	Scientific name
<b>Reptiles</b>	
Turkish Gecko	<i>Hemidactylus turcicus</i>
Blue (Sinai) Agama	<i>Pseudotrapelus sinaitus</i>
Schokari Sand Racer	<i>Psammophis schokari</i>
<b>Butterflies</b>	
Painted Lady	<i>Vanessa cardui</i>
Southern Comma	<i>Polygonia egea</i>

Common name	Scientific name
Clouded Yellow	<i>Colias croceus</i>
Orange Tip	<i>Anthocharis cardamines</i>
Small White	<i>Pieris rapae</i>
African Grass Blue	<i>Zizeera knysna</i>
Spotted Fritillary	<i>Melitaea didyma</i>
Scarce Swallowtail	<i>Iphiclides podalirius</i>
white sp.	
Salmon Arab	<i>Colotis fausta</i>
<b>Dragonflies</b>	
Epaulet Skimmer	<i>Orthetrum chrysostigma</i>
Lesser Emperor	<i>Anax parthenope</i>
<b>Others</b>	
a seed bug	<i>Spilostethethus pandurus</i>
Arabian Oryx	<i>Oryx leucoryx</i>



Scrub Warbler by Marcus Kohler