

# Oman - Arabia's Finest Birding

Naturetrek Tour Report

27th October – 8th November 2025

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Persian Shearwater



Green Warbler



Sooty Falcon



Indian Roller

Tour report by Chris Griffin



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Tour participants: Chris Griffin (leader) with ten Naturetrek clients

## Day 1

**Monday 27th October**

### Departure

Our overnight flight departed London Heathrow on time.

## Day 2

**Tuesday 28th October**

### Al Ansab wetlands

We arrived in Muscat early in the morning. We navigated security and passport control, collected our baggage, and then met our local guide Hisham, who warmly welcomed us to Oman, before boarding our bus and heading to the hotel for a quick refresh and some breakfast.

An hour later we were back on our way out, heading towards the water treatment site at Al Ansab. After a short delay waiting for the gate to be opened, we were soon welcomed to the site by the local wardens and started viewing the first lagoon. Glossy Ibis, Black-winged Stilt and Temminck's Stints were quickly found, and it seemed every couple of minutes a new bird was added to the list: a Greater Spotted Eagle perched in a tree, Red-wattled Lapwings, Ruffs, Common Snipe, Little Ringed, Ringed and Kentish Plovers all feeding away along the fringes, a pair of Egyptian Vultures drifting overhead. This place was fantastic! We carried on scanning for a while, still adding new birds, when Chris excitedly pointed out a White-tailed Lapwing, an uncommon and sought-after visitor to Oman! After everyone got a decent look through telescopes, we jumped on the bus to head towards some of the other pools on the site, pausing briefly on the way for our first look at Arabian Green Bee-eater, and a very close Greater Spotted Eagle which flushed from a small pool next to the track as we drove past.

After parking up, we made our way on foot underneath the canopy of some nearby trees and got our first views of Purple Sunbirds flicking around in the trees. Chris found a Diederik Cuckoo, but unfortunately it moved off before all the group could see it, but some close Arabian Green Bee-eaters and a (slightly) showier Wryneck somewhat made up for it. As we arrived at the next pool a flight of herons erupted from the reeds just in front of us: several Purple, a few Indian Pond and a Western Reef Heron all took flight giving great views as they went off to different parts of the lagoon, before mostly disappearing into the reeds to carry on their foraging. But a couple of Indian Pond Herons remained in view, if a little hidden by vegetation.

As we carried on towards a small hide, a Marsh Harrier caused a bit of havoc, and a Whiskered Tern flew in to dart around the lagoon. We entered the hide carefully and quietly, and were rewarded with superb views of both Temminck's and Little Stints feeding together on the weir in front of us, giving us a great opportunity to compare the two species and go through the identification features. A couple of Indian Pond Herons also showed excellently on the weir, and in the pond below a collection of ducks proved diverse, with Wigeon, Shoveler, Mallard, Teal and Garganey. Two Marsh Sandpipers and a Redshank were also found walking around the little island in the pond, before they both flew and joined the stints on the weir. Hearing a buzzy call and seeing a wagtail drop in made Chris quickly grab the scope to put it on a very smart Citrine Wagtail, which perched for a couple of minutes before dropping down to feed on the pond fringes. Perusal of a small party of warblers in the bushes opposite the hide revealed Chiffchaffs and a lone Willow Warbler.

It was soon time to make our way back to the bus to head off for lunch in a local restaurant, but not before we watched five Greater Spotted Eagles soaring above us. After lunch (and being full to the eyeballs with rice, it seemed) we headed back to the hotel for an early finish so that we could recuperate from the overnight flight, before an early dinner, completing the checklist and retiring for the night.

## Day 3

Wednesday 29th October

### The Grand Mosque – Al Sawadi

We woke up refreshed and raring to go, and after a fine breakfast we were aboard the bus and underway on our journey to our first stop of the day, the fabulous Grand Mosque. As we made our way through the entrance gates, we were greeted by the spectacular sight of the mosque, framed by trees right in front of us. Some movement in the trees beside us revealed a small party of Indian Silverbills, and Purple Sunbirds flittered around, chipping away at each other. Just before we made it to the entrance to the mosque itself, we found an Indian Roller relaxing and taking in the morning sunshine on top of one of the ornate archways. We then explored the mosque buildings, expertly guided by Hisham. The Grand Mosque is the third largest in the Middle East after Mecca and Dubai, and took eleven years to complete. Under the enormous dome, the beautiful interior can house as many as 17,000 people, on one of the largest carpets we'd ever seen (handmade by 600 Omani ladies!). The extraordinary centrepiece of the building was a huge eight-tonne crystal chandelier, the largest in the world until 2022, when Egypt installed a 24.3 tonne one in the Masjid Misr.

After marvelling at the incredible mosque, we made our way back outside to be greeted by lovely views of a Delicate Prinia, and trickier views of a Red-vented Bulbul, just before we boarded the bus to get underway to our next stop.

An hour later we had made our way north-west out of Muscat, and arrived at Ras Al Sawadi. As we walked towards the beach, a Shikra flashed through the trees in front of us. On the beach, a small wader was found to be a Tibetan Sand Plover, and terns were moving back and forth. They were mostly Greater and Lesser Crested Terns, but also included single Gull-billed, Sandwich and Bridled Terns. Several Sooty Gulls were perched further up the beach, and a flock of Lesser Black-backed and Caspian Gulls was perched on the beach on the island in front of us. One of the Caspian Gulls flew and landed on the water, looking to pick at a dead fish on the surface of the sea, but after a little scrutiny, we realised that a Green Turtle was also going after the fish, at one point causing a tug-of-war with the gull for the prize!

Before long it was time to head back to the bus and make our way into Muscat, for lunch at a local restaurant. After lunch we made our way into the mountains to the south of Muscat, where we explored dry wadis, looking for some of the specialists found in the area. We took a walk along, scouring the bushes, and were rewarded with Ménétrie's and Plain Leaf Warblers, several Lesser Whitethroats, and a gorgeous *phoenicuroides* Black Redstart. But a black-and-white wheatear really caught our attention: it was a Hume's Wheatear, of which we enjoyed great views through the scope. We followed it down the wadi, bumping into another Plain Leaf Warbler, when another small warbler with a long tail bounced into a tree next to us. It was quickly identified as a Streaked Scrub Warbler, and we watched it for a minute or two creeping through the tree, before it carried on up the wadi. We had one last close encounter with a Hume's Wheatear before boarding the bus again to make our way back to Muscat, stopping along the way for a gorgeous male Desert Wheatear, before freshening up at the hotel, having a well-earned dinner, then heading to our rooms for the night.

## Day 4

## Thursday 30th October

### Al Fahal island – Al Qurm Park – Muscat River mouth – Wadi Adai NR – Al Qurm beach

An earlier start to the morning saw us head out to the east of Muscat, to the Marina Bandar Al Rowdha, where we were to take a boat trip to Al Fahal island, a renowned hotspot for Sooty Falcons. We were welcomed warmly by the skipper, and after everyone boarded safely we were soon underway. As we left the harbour a couple of Little Herons were found skulking among the rocks on the breakwater, and Sooty Gulls and Greater Crested Terns flew back and forth past the boat as we reached open water. We hugged the coast, checking out little islets for anything using them, and came across a lovely Osprey, watching imperiously from its perch above us. A flock of small birds was then found on the surface of the sea, gleaming white in the sun, and as we got closer, we found they were Red-necked Phalaropes. Our skipper skilfully and gently manoeuvred us into position, and we got exceptional views as they pirouetted and delicately picked food from the surface, all the while giving their 'clipping' contact calls to each other. We spent several minutes enjoying this spectacle before moving on, heading ever closer to Al Fahal island, which had appeared in the distance.

Scanning the tops of the mainland cliffs proved fruitful, with a small party of Pallid Swifts wheeling about, and a juvenile Bonelli's Eagle perched on the ridge, but the best bird was a European Nightjar which flew past the boat in off the sea, most likely fresh in from leaving the Iranian coast earlier that morning. It was a totally unexpected and amazing encounter! Arriving at a small fish farm, we noticed lots of terns sitting on the buoys, so we slowly made our way around them to see what was among them. They were mainly Greater Crested and Sandwich Terns, with a few Little and Common Terns, but hidden in the perching flock were singles of both White-cheeked and Bridled Terns; Oman is one of the best places to catch up with these species.

After checking the rest of the terns, we motored across the open sea towards our destination, and straight away two Sooty Falcons circled above the peaks, both juveniles. Excellent! Sooty Falcons breed late on in the year, so that the young have opportunities to learn to hunt during migration, so we mused how lucky the Nightjar had been to have missed flying by the island by only a couple of kilometres! We rounded the west side of the island and suddenly it was all action; we had the most awesome ten minutes of birding ever! Sooty Falcons seemed to be everywhere, with both juveniles and adults flying around the cliffs, before Chris shouted "tropicbird!". Indeed, a stunning adult Red-billed Tropicbird with full tail streamers wheeled about, giving outstanding views of this highly-sought-after seabird. To add to the adrenaline, one of the young falcons decided to go after the tropicbird, and watching them briefly twist and turn together caused plenty of 'ooohs' and 'ahhhhs' from the boat! The tropicbird, having avoided the falcon rather adeptly, took a couple of close flybys by the boat before landing in its nest cavity in the cliff, and disappearing from sight. We continued round the island, finding a Grey Heron lurking in a cave at the base of the cliff, no doubt avoiding trouble, and enjoying some more excellent views of a couple of adult Sooty Falcons circling over us, before it was time to make our way back towards the harbour.

Several more flocks of Red-necked Phalarope were found along the way, which we paused to watch, but soon we were back at the dock and disembarking after a fabulous boat trip. One last lovely surprise was waiting for us, though: five Green Turtles and a veritable rainbow of different fish species were coming to some food that one of the deckhands was throwing in for them, so we spent a good few minutes having wonderful views of the turtles, before making our way back to the bus and heading off for a restaurant lunch in Muscat.



Green Turtle



European Nightjar



Red-billed Tropicbird



Masked Booby

With full bellies, we took the bus on a short ride to Al Qurm Park, a noted migrant hotspot in Muscat. Straight away, we found a party of Blue-cheeked Bee-eaters hawking and calling above us. Moving along the trees, White-eared and Red-vented Bulbuls showed well, and Pale Crag Martins wheeled around. A small river gave good views of Indian Pond Heron and Common Sandpiper, and a couple of Common Snipes darted away. We made our way into the park itself, and Hisham pointed out two gamebirds scurrying across the lawn. Initially thought to be sandgrouse, they were quickly reidentified as Grey Francolins, but they were gone in a flash, disappearing into cover. Walking further into the park, good flocks of House Sparrows flitted here and there, and Laughing and Collared Doves almost littered the floor.

Migrants seemed a bit thin on the ground, but a Spotted Flycatcher proved there were birds around; a calling Tree Pipit remained elusive. Chris then noticed another pair of Grey Francolin calmly feeding in short grass, rather distantly, so we walked a little closer to get good views in the telescopes. While we watched them, a stunning Indian Roller appeared and flew to the top of a small tree right next to us, giving us superb head-height views for a few moments before flying off in a blaze of iridescence. A small lake in the middle of the park provided some good views of Red-wattled Lapwings and a surprise female Northern Pintail, and the surrounding trees near a children's play area held Lesser Whitethroats, Purple Sunbirds and a Delicate Prinia.

We made our way out to the other side of the park and met up with the bus, in which we all took a bit of respite from the heat in the lovely air-conditioning as we travelled a little way west, to reach the Muscat River mouth. There were waders everywhere: Kentish, Tibetan and Greater Sand Plovers, Redshank, Ruff, Greenshank, Temminck's and Little Stints, Dunlin and Curlew Sandpipers were all scurrying about. A few Greater Flamingoes waded in the deeper water, and White-winged Terns danced over the fringes. A sudden call of "sandgrouse!" from Chris alerted the group to a pair of Chestnut-bellied Sandgrouse; they flew in and landed on some waste ground

next to the main road, and thankfully stayed in view long enough for everyone to see them in the scopes before they dropped down into a ditch and out of sight.

We ventured down towards the beach, watching the comings and goings of the Sooty, Caspian, Lesser Black-backed and Slender-billed Gulls, before heading back to the bus to head towards our final stop for the day, but not before the sandgrouse had been refound, allowing slightly closer and more prolonged views.

Setting off in the bus once more, we headed to another wetland area, Wadi Adai and Qurum beach, where a pair of Grey Francolins greeted us as we arrived. More waders were found on the lagoons, many of them roosting underneath the mangroves. A reasonable number of Pacific Golden Plovers concealed a few Common Snipes, but one snipe took a brief flight to relocate itself, showing no white trailing edge to the wing: a Pin-tailed Snipe! Moving a little further on in the bus, we stopped at a bridge overlooking the mudflats, and after going through more waders, Bar-tailed Godwit and two Terek Sandpipers were added to the list. Before long, it was time to get back on the bus and finish our day back at the hotel, for our last night in Muscat.

## Day 5

## Friday 31st October

### Quriyat estuary and salt pans – Sur – Khawr Jirama

The next morning saw us piling into 4×4s, ready to make our way east along the coast. Our first port of call was the estuary at Quriyat, where as soon as we arrived a young Egyptian Vulture cruised overhead. A small park held a couple of Lesser Whitethroats and a small party of Common Mynas, and Whiskered Terns quartered the edge of the breakwater, giving great views. A walk around the little headland led us to the beach and an inlet, where Tibetan and Greater Sand Plovers, Kentish Plovers and a few Little Stints were scurrying around, an 'interesting-looking' stint was found, but it was quite distant and unfortunately vanished before we could get an adequate view to identify it; but while trying to relocate it, we came across a Little Heron, which gave point-blank views.

We got back to the vehicles and went off road for the first time, heading towards the salt pans, and made a quick stop at some loos along the beachfront. This proved to be a great idea, as a quick scan resulted in an Indian Roller and a Great Grey Shrike perched in the distance. The best was to come though, when a little warbler appeared in a low bush next to us and perched out in full view: an Asian Desert Warbler. We all watched this beautiful little warbler skulk through the small bushes, looking for a snack or two, before we moved off to the salt pans.

Almost immediately, three Egyptian Vultures were found on the ground on the opposite side of the pans. A scan of the lake revealed a small party of grebes at the far end, which were quickly identified as Black-necked Grebes; then two more grebes were found at the other end. They were slightly bigger and had longish yellow bills: they were Red-necked Grebes, and unknown to us at the time a first record for Oman! But with little else in evidence on the salt pans, we decided to continue on our journey and headed to Sur, where we would take our lunch in a beachside restaurant.

While we sat waiting for our food to arrive, we scanned the sea for any movement, and were rewarded with Caspian, Gull-billed and Greater Crested Terns, Sooty Gulls, and a superb Pomarine Skua!

After enjoying lunch, we continued on our way east, stopping at Khawr Jirama, a large tidal lake near the north-east tip of Oman. We made our way across the sand onto a little sand bar overlooking the mudflats, and started



scanning through all the waders. As usual, there were plenty of both Tibetan and Greater Sand Plovers, Little Stint, Redshank and Greenshank, with the odd Dunlin and Whimbrel, and both Curlew and Terek Sandpipers busily searching for titbits on the mud. A rather fine Broad-billed Sandpiper was also found, which was enjoyed by all through the telescopes. We took a short walk along the shoreline looking for Crab-plovers, but, unfortunately, we drew a blank. So, we headed back to the vehicles to continue to our hotel for a slightly earlier finish to the afternoon, as we would be heading back out after dinner for a guided night walk on the beach at Ras Al-Jinz Turtle Reserve, in the hope of seeing Green Turtles coming ashore to lay their eggs. This proved to be a great success, with two large females on the beach, one making its way back to the sea after laying, and another actually laying eggs. It was quite an experience watching these wonderful animals with the aid of red light, used to minimise disturbance.

## Day 6

## Saturday 1st November

### Ras al-Kabbah – Ras ar Ru'ays Khawr – Shannah – Ghadhin Beach – Filim

A few of the group met pre-breakfast for a walk around the hotel grounds, which ended up being quite productive, with Isabelline and Desert Wheatears, Namaqua Dove, Tawny Pipit and Black-crowned Sparrow-Lark showing very well. After much needed caffeine and breakfast, we continued south, stopping only a short distance away at Ras ar Ru'ays Khawr, also known as The Pink Lakes, where for a few days a year, the algae blooms to make the water an almost luminous pink. It wasn't the case when we were there, but the lakes were, however, covered in waders and Greater Flamingoes. The usual suspects were all present in good numbers, and a lone Avocet, another Broad-billed Sandpiper and some particularly showy Little Stints provided particular interest. As we left, a couple of shrikes were seen by the last car, which proved to be a Great Grey and a Red-backed.

We made our way to Shannah, on the northern edge of the Barr al Hikmann intertidal mudflats, one of the most important sites for migratory waterbirds along not only the West Asian-East African flyway, but also in the world as a whole. This 900km<sup>2</sup> area has the longest sand bar in the Middle East, and is a critical resource for more than half a million birds each year, which overwinter on the mudflats. Although the birds were distant, we could start to see the immense numbers of shorebirds, herons, egrets, gulls and terns swarming on the mudflats, but just too distant to see exactly what was out there. But there were plenty of waders on the mudflats near to us too: Curlew and Terek Sandpipers aplenty, many Little Stints, and our first Grey Plovers. Some harsh calls in the undergrowth gave away some hidden Clamorous Reed Warblers, but apart from an occasional flight view and flicks deep within the bushes, they stayed firmly out of sight. A brief plain-looking warbler could have been an Eastern Bonelli's but, much like the Clamorous Reeds, kept itself hidden among the thick vegetation. A Red-backed Shrike perched obligingly was much more accommodating, and the group enjoyed it through the scopes before it dropped down behind the bushes.

We decided to move on and headed to Mahout for our lunch break. Afterwards, we went to a different beach along the southern edge of Barr al Hikmann at Ghadhin. As we walked to the edge of the mudflats, waders were everywhere, but this time we found our main target: Crab-plover. We watched a couple of these exquisite waders searching for crabs on the shoreline for a while, scanning through the rest of the hundreds of waders for anything different. But a small passerine with a rusty tail took our attention away from the mudflats. It scurried into the bottom of a bush, and although it was initially called as a redstart, the tail pattern revealed its true identity as a

Persian (or Red-tailed) Wheatear. Unfortunately, the views were frustratingly brief, as a particularly grimy male Desert Wheatear chased the Persian around until it scarpered for good.

We carried on further to our final stop along the Barr al Hikmann coastline: Filim. As we got out of the vehicles and looked at the bay, we were blown away by the sheer mass of birdlife present. It was impossible to count the actual numbers of birds, but it was certainly in the thousands, if not the tens of thousands. Hundreds of Greater Flamingoes stretched across the bay, and smaller waders absolutely littered the ground. It was an incredible sight to behold.

We wandered towards the mangroves to try to look for Collared Kingfisher, when a small robin-like bird hopped out of the rocks on the beach: a Bluethroat. We watched for a good five minutes as it bounced in and out of the rocks, showing exceptionally well alongside what turned out to be an Eastern Yellow Wagtail (after a review of photographs later). We spent a bit of time trying to encourage a Collared Kingfisher to appear, with no luck, but with a superb view of the entire bay, it gave us ample opportunity to count the number of Crab-plovers that we could easily see: 219! Without doubt that was just a tiny proportion of the actual number out there; indeed, several days later another birder posted on the Oman Birding WhatsApp group that they had counted just over 1100 here!

After a few more minutes spent watching the Bluethroat, which was still in its little rocky patch on the beach, we boarded our 4x4s and made our way to Duqm, where we were staying for the night.

## Day 7

## Sunday 2nd November

### Duqm – Khawr Dhurf – Al Wusta – Haim – Al Ghaftayn rest house

As dawn broke, a couple of us decided to check the bushes and trees around the hotel, to see if anything had dropped in overnight. This proved very fruitful, with an 'eastern' Nightingale of the subspecies *golzii*, two Green Warblers and a Spotted Flycatcher being found. After breakfast, the rest of the group got great views of the Nightingale and a Green Warbler, as well as a Shikra which circled near the hotel, but it was soon time to board the cars and continue through the desert on our journey towards Salalah.

Before we headed inland, we made our way south to Khawr Dhurf, a small estuary with a few trees. Any green areas in these desolate areas can be a magnet for birds, and this was a great example. During our exploration of the khawr, we found eastern Black Redstart, a gorgeous Red-tailed (Turkestan) Shrike, another Green Warbler and, as we reached the marshy area, Whiskered Terns, Purple, Grey and Black-crowned Night Herons, and a lone juvenile Greater Flamingo which had obviously stopped off for a break on its way somewhere. With the heat of the day building, we headed back to the vehicles parked under the shade of an acacia tree, and took a quick refreshment break with some teas and coffees prepared by Hisham and the boys, then hit the road again to make it Haima for lunch.

We cruised along the main road, an occasional Brown-necked Raven the only hint of life, taking in the extraordinary barren landscapes of the Empty Quarter, until we reached Haima. After a long break to keep out the sun, and having sated our appetites, we retraced our steps a little to visit Al Wusta, a small settlement where, a few-days earlier, an Asian Koel had been reported. Try as we might, we couldn't find it, but around the small garden palmeries several other birds were found: Desert and Northern Wheatears, a fine Steppe Grey Shrike, a few Lesser Whitethroats and a lovely male Common Redstart were good to see. We travelled the remaining miles to get to



our overnight stop, Al Ghaftayn guesthouse, where we were welcomed by a Common Rock Thrush perched on a tree outside the entrance. A quick wander around the trees behind the guesthouse was fairly quiet, but a lovely Bluethroat performed well as it fed busily in the few minutes of daylight available, before it headed off to roost.

## Day 8

## Monday 3rd November

Al Ghaftayn resthouse – Mashquin Oasis – Muntasar Oasis - Qatbit Motel - Al Beed Farms - Thumrayt Dump

At first light, we spent a bit of time checking the trees and bushes behind the hotel for migrants. After a quiet start, a lovely Red Fox sauntered very close, and birds started appearing. After an hour it was time to get breakfast, but with a couple of Red-breasted Flycatchers, a Siberian Stonechat and a Menetrie's Warbler among other commoner migrants, we were happy with our haul.

After breakfast and coffee, we travelled the short distance to Mashquin Oasis. Another Red-breasted Flycatcher briefly welcomed us before flitting away. A short walk along the stream revealed another Bluethroat and an Asian Desert Warbler, but it was otherwise very quiet, so we made our way back to the cars to try Muntasar Oasis instead. A Hoopoe darted past as we walked, giving promise that there were migrants around, despite immediate appearances.

We got back underway and it wasn't all that long before we made it to Muntasar. A small marshy patch held a Kentish and a Ringed Plover and a couple of Blue-cheeked Bee-eaters perched up in the bushes, occasionally darting out to grab an unsuspecting insect. We started to walk around the small marsh, and a movement caught Chris' eye in the sedge on the other side. Whatever it was had disappeared into a small stand of sedge, but a few patient minutes and a bit of exploration from Chris resulted in a White-breasted Waterhen exploding from the vegetation in front of the group, and flying across to a taller stand of vegetation. Further around the marsh, we found a trio of Pied Wheatears, another Red-breasted Flycatcher, and an *aucheri* Great (Arabian) Grey Shrike, which suddenly jetted off in pursuit of a small lark with a short tail: a Singing Bushlark. Unfortunately for the lark, it seemed it had sung its last song, as the shrike, hot on its heels, dived into where its quarry had gone, and neither bird reappeared. It had presumably been a successful day for the shrike!

A very showy Purple Heron wandered along the marsh as we neared the end of our walk, and a Wood Sandpiper picked its way among the short vegetation nearby. As we neared the cars, a snipe flushed from among the sedge, first called as Pin-tailed due to what seemed like very dark upper wings and heavy barring, but after a review of photos on the cameras, a very thin white trailing edge to the wing was seen to be present, therefore identifying it as a Common Snipe.

With that, we called our time at Muntasar and continued on the road south. Our next stop was Qatbit Motel, the gardens of which have become known as a phenomenal migrant hotspot over the years. But with a lot of building work going on there, we could only manage a Common Redstart and more Laughing and Collared Doves than we could throw several sticks at, so we got back to the vehicles and headed off for a look around at Al Beed farms before lunch. Al Beed is well known for being a good place to find larks, pipits and other wintering specialities like harriers and coursers, and it wasn't long before we had fantastic views of a Greater Hoopoe-Lark close to the vehicles. Further exploration didn't reveal too much other than Crested Larks, so we again decided to cut our losses and head for lunch, but a quick look at a green crop field proved to be a great call. Although they were

slightly distant, we found five Cream-coloured Coursers, several Northern Wheatears, and far more Greater Hoopoe-Larks scurrying over the land. As we stood watching, a stunning male Pallid Harrier circled and drifted over the back of the field.

Flushed with success, we made our way back to the main road, and found a restaurant a few miles along, where we took a break for a well-earned lunch. After escaping the worst heat of the day in the restaurant, we continued our journey south, heading for our last hotel of the trip in Salalah, but it was still a few hours' drive away. We did take a short break at the Thumrayt Waste Management Centre, where a truly awesome spectacle awaited us. As we cut through the barren hills, we were suddenly surrounded by the vast circling shapes of eagles, and hundreds of them. The tip holds a fantastic wintering population of Steppe Eagles, and although numbers had been dwindling over the years, recently there has been a resurgence, and we were treated to spectacular views as they perched on pylons next to us and circled overhead. It gave us an excellent opportunity to compare all the different age classes too. We spent a good half an hour watching the eagles, also encountering our first Tristram's Starlings of the trip, but soon it was time to make tracks for Salalah.

We were to have one last surprise though, as we peaked the ridge that runs just north of the city. It is part of the Dhofar mountains, and creates a barrier between the barren, sandy expanse of the Empty Quarter, and the green, fertile lands to the south. As we came over the tops, we were met with a glorious sight of green wooded valleys wending their way down to the sea, and after days of travelling through the vast dry areas of the Empty Quarter, it was a beautiful sight to behold. We made our way down the valleys and into Salalah, checking into the hotel which would be our base for the remaining nights of the trip.

## Day 9

**Tuesday 4th November**

### Wadi Darbat – East Khawr – Ayn Razat

The next morning the group awoke to the sound of waves lapping against the shore, and after a hearty buffet breakfast we were on our way to the north-east to explore Wadi Darbat, hoping to catch up with an important Omani species: Arabian Golden-winged Grosbeak. On the road up towards our first main stop, we made a few brief pauses for new species along the way, including the first of what would be many Cinnamon-breasted Buntings, a dapper male Arabian Wheatear, and our first Rüppell's Weavers of the trip.

As we emerged from the trees into the wadi, a Hoopoe appeared, taking flight, and as we drove down the wadi itself towards our parking spot, several White Storks fed on the banks. We made a short walk, looking for a particular cave, where the dripping water had formed stalactites, and where many birds visit to take advantage of the fresh water. As we looked for the cave, we found a few Forbes-Watson's Swifts overhead, mingling with the Pale Crag Martins. It wasn't long before we located the cave we were looking for, set up scopes, and started the waiting game for the grosbeaks. Fortunately, while we waited there was plenty of action around the cave mouth: more Cinnamon-breasted Buntings, both Arabian and Palestine Sunbirds, African Silverbills, Rüppell's Weavers, and a pair of delightful African Paradise Flycatchers coming in to drink. Pale Crag Martins darted past us at very close quarters, and a Black-crowned Tchagra called frequently from the trees near us, only showing very briefly. But it wasn't long before Chris let out a whoop of excitement: he had found a pair of grosbeaks on the stalactites. They did not stay for long, but thankfully long enough for everyone to get onto them before they disappeared into the trees. We waited a little longer in the hope they would return, but they didn't, and we made our way back towards Hisham and the boys who had prepared coffee for us in a cave back up the valley.

While we enjoyed the break, the birds continued to come, with another male Arabian Wheatear and a trio of Abyssinian White-eyes appearing right in front of us, and a small group of brown birds photographed by one client were quickly identified as Yemen Serins. With time ticking on, we made our way in the vehicles down the east side of the valley, to the south end of Wadi Darbat, making a quick roadside stop for Blackstart, eventually making our next stop at two little picnic areas. Here we found an Eastern Imperial Eagle, more Blackstarts, and a superb Arabian Chameleon. Further along the road we stopped next to a lake where Whiskered Tern, Common Sandpipers and a few egrets were observed, before we took a walk along the road, looking for anything in the trees. There were plenty of birds, and although the vast majority were Cinnamon-breasted Buntings, we were rewarded with super views of African Paradise Flycatcher as well.

We got picked up and headed back to Salalah and the hotel for lunch, and a short break to avoid the worst of the heat. We met up at 3.00pm and made our way the short distance across town to East Khawr, a blind estuary particularly known for waders, gulls and terns. As we arrived on the beach, two Sooty Gulls flew through, and a large flock of Glossy Ibis showed well in the shallows. White-winged Terns skirted the edges, and a Marsh Harrier also drifted by. We spent a while scanning the edges, looking for waders and were rewarded, with Little Stint, Ruff, Greenshank and Black-winged Stilt, and a couple of Caspian Terns drifted in and out to the sea. We decided to head off to Ayn Razat (which has an enclosed botanical garden) for dusk, to see if we could see the Arabian Eagle Owls known to roost within the enclosure coming out to hunt. But despite giving them time, they didn't appear, although a Nightjar species flashed through a couple of times in the lights of the car park, which was most likely Egyptian. Vowing to come back another day to try for the owls in daylight, we headed back to the hotel for a lovely buffet dinner on the beach, before retiring for the night.

## Day 10

## Wednesday 5th November

### Mirbat pelagic – Jebel Samhain – Tawi Atair – Taqah view point – Taqah crane pool

We were on the road before dawn, heading east towards Mirbat, where we would be boarding a small boat with Captain Hatem for a morning pelagic. Just before meeting at the dock, we stopped on the beach for a field breakfast, where Sooty and Slender-billed Gulls and Greater Crested Terns floated offshore, and a lovely Isabelline Wheatear showed close on the verge. A pair of Tristram's Starlings also came by, looking for scraps, but they were to be disappointed. Sated by food and coffee, we carried on round to the harbour, seeing our first Abdim's Storks en route, and met with Hatem. After a quick loo stop, we boarded the boat and made our way out onto the Arabian Sea.

As we rounded the breakwater we were accompanied by a large flock of Sooty Gulls, enticed by the odd fish thrown overboard by Hatem, a tactic of his for encouraging seabirds to come and investigate around the boat, and one that only a few minutes out of the harbour worked a treat, when our first Persian Shearwater of the day skimmed over the waves of our wake and circled the boat a few times, giving excellent views. It even landed on the surface for a few minutes, right next to us. Further out, we could see darker birds gliding over the sea, and it wasn't long before Hatem had us right in with them: Jouanin's Petrels. Oman is the best place to find this highly sought-after species. Bird after bird went past us, providing plenty of opportunity for great views and photographs. As we carried on through the lines of Jouanin's Petrels, we happened across small flocks of Red-necked Phalaropes, and a Masked Booby also flew past.

We carried on further out to see what else we could find, when Hatem received a call from a fisherman friend saying that he had just come across some whales, only a couple of kilometres away, so we decided to head that way to see if we could intercept them, thinking that they were likely Bryde's Whales, the commonest in the region. It took a little while to get towards the area Hatem thought they might be, but all the while we watched more Jouanin's Petrels, Persian Shearwaters, gulls and terns passing the boat. Eventually, Hatem picked up a blow in the distance, and we started making a beeline towards it. After another fifteen minutes, a large blow appeared in front of the boat, and the large back of a whale logging on the surface could be seen. But this wasn't a Bryde's: with the blow at a forward angle and a long flat back, this was a Sperm Whale! Amazingly, a second individual surfaced right next to the first, and it wasn't long before Hatem, with some excellent driving skills, had us alongside, watching these impressive leviathans resting on the surface. But as we watched them, we suddenly realised there were more blows, in every direction, and that we were in the middle of a loose pod, with eight Sperm Whales logging in pairs on the surface! We spent a spellbinding twenty minutes with them, delighting in watching them tail fluke on occasion and drift in the calm ocean waters.

We decided to leave them be and make our way back towards the harbour, birding as we went. It wasn't long before we were pausing again, this time for a Flesh-footed Shearwater which circled the boat for a good ten minutes, giving tremendous views and excellent photo opportunities. A few more Masked Boobies and Greater Crested Terns passed by as we made our way towards Mirbat, and a small flock of Bridled Terns delighted us, just in front of the boat. Our last highlight came just behind the Bridled Terns, when a Brown Noddy came to investigate the boat, sometimes almost within touching distance! It made a superb end to a phenomenal pelagic trip.



Flesh-footed Shearwater



Bridled Tern



Sperm Whale



Jouanin's Petrel

At the harbour, we said our goodbyes to Hatem, quickly took a look at the Abdim's Storks perched on the buildings of the town, and then set off back for Salalah and the hotel for lunch and a break. Heading back out in the

afternoon, we made our way into the Dhofar Mountains, to the Jebel Samhan viewpoint. As we made our way up, a couple of Fan-tailed Ravens flew over the cars. We walked out to the edge of the cliff to be greeted by a spectacular sight, the sheer cliff ridge impressively looming over wooded valleys all the way down to the coast. Two lovely Eurasian Griffon Vultures drifted over, but we were there for a different raptor: Verreaux's Eagle. The area holds a breeding pair, but they could be anywhere along the ridge for miles in both directions, so we sat, getting ready for a bit of a wait. Luckily, we only needed a few minutes, and the pair drifted into view, heading straight for us. The female turned back and dropped behind the ridge, but the male flew directly underneath us, looking to land on the cliff below. We all had the opportunity to see the white 'hourglass' on its back, a feature not always seen well. We hung on for a little while, hoping for another view, and were rewarded when the male perched further along the ridge, as well as flying out to 'escort' another Griffon Vulture away from his patch.

With everyone happy with the views, we made our way down to Tawi Awair, one of the world's largest natural sinkholes, at nearly 100m across and 211m deep. It is also known as the 'Well of Birds', as many species use the steep sides to breed and to roost overnight. Just before we arrived, we stopped for a roadside Short-toed Snake Eagle perched on a tree, which looked great through the scopes, and was accompanied by several Steppe Eagles flying in the vicinity. At the sinkhole, we walked down the path to the viewpoint, hoping to find Yemen Serin, but unfortunately we were out of luck, with only a few Tristram's Starlings, Pale Crag Martins, Abyssinian White-eyes and a lone Forbes-Watson's Swift being found. We made our way back up to the car, where a flock of birds were found on the wires above the cafe, comprising a few Meadow Pipits, one Tawny Pipit...and a single Yemen Serin!

As we were about to leave, we were delayed for a couple of minutes for a pair of Bonelli's Eagles circling above the sinkhole, but we soon made our way to Taqah headland, a breeding site for Forbes-Watson's Swift. Although the view was beautiful, it was quiet in terms of bird life. Only a single swift and a couple of Tristram's Starlings appeared for us, so we made our way to the Taqah pools to see if any cranes were making use of the exposed mud. It wasn't to be, but a nice haul of birds flew around the edges, including our first African Collared Doves, Streaked Weavers and a lovely Graceful Prinia in front of us. A Marsh Harrier drifted over the reeds at the back, and Wood Sandpiper, Greenshank and Garganey were found on the pools themselves. With dark fast approaching, we made the call to end the day there and headed back to Salalah.

## Day 11

## Thursday 6th November

Mudday – Thumrayt drinking pools – West Khawr – Mughsayl Khawr beach – Wadi Mughsayl.

Another pre-dawn start saw us make our way to the Mudday area, the prime spot for Grey Hypocolius. We were right in the cusp of them arriving in Oman (they usually at the end of the first week of November), but we hoped that an individual or two had arrived slightly earlier. We took another field breakfast, this time accompanied by delicious fried eggs courtesy of Hisham, as we watched the sun rise over the ridges around us, and we enjoyed lovely views of a Blackstart in the bushes next to us. A short walk after breakfast revealed little other than Lesser Whitethroats and more Blackstarts, so we made our way to the Mudday mosque, the prime hypocolius spot. Unfortunately, despite a thorough search, it was evident that they hadn't arrived, but as we waited for the cars to pick us up, good views of a Pied Wheatear and a young male Nile Valley Sunbird made up for our miss somewhat. We decided to make our way over to Mudday Oasis to try our luck there, and straightaway a Striolated Bunting was singing on the cliffs next to the car. It showed only briefly, but we would see it better later when we returned



to the vehicles. We wandered through the palms, all the while keeping eyes and ears peeled for hypocliuses, but again only Lesser Whitethroats presented themselves. As we neared the end of the trees, flocks of Chestnut-bellied Sandgrouse appeared over the far ridge, totalling a good couple of hundred, but they dropped over the ridges out of sight. A couple of Blackstarts showed well and a very pale lark with a chunky pink bill was most likely an Arabian Lark, but it continued its journey south leaving us wondering.



African Paradise Flycatcher



Red Fox



Indian Pond Heron



Marsh Sandpiper

With the morning wearing on, we took a short drive around the old camel farm, looking for Lichtenstein's and Crowned Sandgrouse, but unfortunately with no luck. We started on our way back to Salalah, stopping en route in Thumrayt, where a leaking tap behind the petrol station is known to be a place where Crowned and Spotted Sandgrouse come in to drink, but with a truck using the tap to fill up, the sandgrouse were nowhere to be seen. A distant Bar-tailed Lark drinking in the pool was a nice find though. After obtaining refreshments from a shop next to the petrol station, we headed back to Salalah for lunch and a break, although a couple of us decided to walk from the hotel to West Khawr, to look for a long-staying Black Heron. It had unfortunately moved off, but plenty of Pacific Golden Plovers, Black-winged Stilts, Glossy Ibises and common waders were present.

After being picked up, we headed west towards Mughsayl Khawr, another excellent area for migrant shorebirds, and one which sometimes holds Pheasant-tailed Jacana. On arrival, a Black Stork flew up from the shoreline and perched on the cliffs, showing very well, and a pair of Bonelli's Eagles circled behind. The edges of the creek held several Temminck's and Little Stints, and a nice Citrine Wagtail, but the reeds held little, so we crossed the road to look at the estuary side. Straightaway, we found a good flock of Garganeys on the river, and on the estuary there were ducks, egrets, herons and waders all along the shore. A very dark heron was picked out among the flock, and after a quick look through the scope it was soon identified as the Black Heron, which had clearly moved from West Khawr! We spent some time watching this very rare African visitor (only the third for Oman), even watching it doing its 'umbrella' fishing act, where it spread its wings over its head as it waded to create shade for fish to hide

in, unaware there lurked a very hungry heron ready to snaffle any that tried to use the shade. It is a very clever technique! We then headed to a clifftop café, where we took a look out to sea in the hope of finding Socotra Cormorant or Least Noddy passing by, but the best was on the drive down; we first stopped for a Barbary Falcon perched on roadside wires, then again a few hundred metres further along the road, this time for a gorgeous European Roller. After dinner back at the hotel, we took an evening drive back to Mughsayl, but this time to drive up the valley to try for Desert Owl. On arrival, we had an instant response to the tape, but the owl refused to show, so we tried further up the valley. Unfortunately, we had no response so, as it was getting late, we decided to head back. As we drove back, a Desert Owl flushed from the side of the road, but could not be relocated, although a Eurasian Stone-curlew was found in the spotlight instead.

## Day 12

Friday 7th November

Ayn Razat – Ayn Hamran – Salalah Public Park – West Khawr.

After breakfast at the hotel, we decided to try Ayn Razat botanical park again, to see if we could enter the gardens: according to the internet, they were open today. We walked up along the side of the fence checking the bushes, which were alive with birds. They were mostly Arabian Sunbirds and Rüppell's Weavers, but a pair of Black-crowned Tchagras perched out well for decent views, and an Arabian Warbler showed occasionally. We made it to the garden entrance, but were dismayed to find it still locked. After waiting a while and seeing no-one around, we decided to change tack, and try Ayn Hamran for a bit instead. The wait did lead to us finding a nice flock of Alpine Swifts above, and gave us chance to see a fine African Paradise Flycatcher, as well as getting brief views of Clamorous Reed Warbler in the bushes next to the river.

At Ayn Hamran we took a walk, exploring the bushes for migrants, and we were duly rewarded with excellent (if backlit) views of a Wryneck perched on the top of a dead tree. An Eastern Olivaceous Warbler gave us a little run around, before Hisham arrived with an Arabian Chameleon that he had picked up off the road; he put it down so it could find shelter in one of the bushes. We saw Cinnamon-breasted Buntings and another Arabian Warbler, this one finally showing well so we could see its all-black tail, the main identification feature, and an eastern *golzii* Nightingale flicked through the bushes. We headed back to the cars, where Hisham and the boys had coffee ready for us, and watched a stunning African Paradise Flycatcher come down to drink in the pool next to us.

After replenishing our caffeine reserves, we headed back down to Ayn Razat in the hope that the gardens were open; thankfully, they were and the park warden helpfully let us know exactly which tree the owl was roosting in. Sure enough, there it was, surprising everyone with its size and how in the open it was, leaving us wondering why we hadn't found it earlier! After frame-filling views through the scope, we headed back to Salalah for lunch and a short break.

Later, we took a short ten-minute drive to Salalah Public Park. Our wander around was very fruitful, with excellent views of Red-backed Shrike, Grey-headed Kingfisher, Menetrie's Warbler and even a surprise Budgerigar! A report on the Oman WhatsApp group saw us heading quickly off to West Khawr to look for a flock of Sociable Lapwings, but unfortunately they had been flushed by a local just as we were arriving. An African Sacred Ibis was an excellent substitute. As a final stop before ending the day, we had a walk around the scrubland to the east of the hotel looking for a Spotted Thick-knees that had been reported as hanging around there. Fortunately, under the very first bush we checked, there it was! It even walked right out into the open, giving fantastic close views. As we walked back to the hotel, we found a Long-billed Pipit, which showed well in the scope, and in the final couple of



bushes we found a pair of shrikes, one a pale Isabelline (Daurian) Shrike, but the other slimmer and dark brown all over. Plenty of photos were taken, as Chris thought it could be a Brown Shrike, a very rare vagrant, but not enough could be seen of the tail confidently to identify it, so it had to be left as only a possible. Our evening was spent together sharing memories of the trip over another excellent buffet meal on the beach, until we reluctantly retired for the night, to pack ready for our morning flight back home.

## Day 13

**Saturday 8th November**

### Flights home

After breakfast we made the trip across the city to the airport safe and sound, saying goodbye to Hisham and our fabulous drivers, and catching our flights back home after a truly memorable trip.

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## Species lists

Birds (H = Heard only)

I=Introduced		October-November 2025										
Common name	Scientific name	28	29	30	31	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Garganey	<i>Spatula querquedula</i>	✓					✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Northern Shoveler	<i>Spatula clypeata</i>	✓		✓		✓	✓				✓	✓
Gadwall	<i>Mareca strepera</i>										✓	
Eurasian Wigeon	<i>Mareca penelope</i>	✓										
Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	✓		✓		✓						
Northern Pintail	<i>Anas acuta</i>			✓							✓	
Eurasian Teal	<i>Anas crecca</i>	✓		✓			✓	✓			✓	✓
Grey Francolin	<i>Ortygornis pondicerianus</i>			✓								
European Nightjar	<i>Caprimulgus europaeus</i>			✓								
Alpine Swift	<i>Tachymarpis melba</i>											✓
Pallid Swift	<i>Apus pallidus</i>			✓		✓						
Forbes-Watson's Swift	<i>Apus berliozi</i>								✓	✓	✓	✓
Diederik Cuckoo	<i>Chrysococcyx caprius</i>	✓										
Chestnut-bellied Sandgrouse	<i>Pterocles exustus</i>			✓							✓	
Rock Dove	<i>Columba livia</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Eurasian Collared Dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
African Collared Dove	<i>Streptopelia roseogrisea</i>									✓		
Laughing Dove	<i>Spilopelia senegalensis</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Namaqua Dove	<i>Oena capensis</i>				✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓
Common Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>	✓		✓					✓	✓	✓	
Eurasian Coot	<i>Fulica atra</i>										✓	
Red-knobbed Coot	<i>Fulica cristata</i>										✓	
White-breasted Waterhen	<i>Amauromis phoenicurus</i>							✓				
Little Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>	✓		✓	✓				✓	✓		
Red-necked Grebe	<i>Podiceps grisegena</i>				✓							
Black-necked Grebe	<i>Podiceps nigricollis</i>				✓							
Greater Flamingo	<i>Phoenicopterus roseus</i>	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓

I=Introduced		October-November 2025										
Common name	Scientific name	28	29	30	31	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Spotted Thick-knee	<i>Burhinus capensis</i>											✓
Eurasian Stone-Curlew	<i>Burhinus oedicephalus</i>										✓	
Eurasian Oystercatcher	<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>		✓	✓		✓			✓		✓	
Black-winged Stilt	<i>Himantopus himantopus</i>	✓		✓	✓	✓			✓		✓	✓
Pied Avocet	<i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>					✓						
Grey Plover	<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>				✓	✓			✓		✓	✓
Pacific Golden Plover	<i>Pluvialis fulva</i>			✓	✓	✓	✓					✓
Common Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>	✓		✓				✓				
Little Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius dubius</i>	✓				✓					✓	
Red-wattled Lapwing	<i>Vanellus indicus</i>	✓		✓								
White-tailed Lapwing	<i>Vanellus leucurus</i>	✓										
Tibetan Sand Plover	<i>Anarhynchus atrifrons</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓			✓		✓	
Greater Sand Plover	<i>Anarhynchus leschenaultii</i>			✓	✓	✓						
Kentish Plover	<i>Anarhynchus alexandrinus</i>	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓				
Eurasian Whimbrel	<i>Numenius phaeopus</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓						
Eurasian Curlew	<i>Numenius arquata</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓
Bar-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa lapponica</i>			✓	✓	✓						
Black-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa limosa</i>	✓		✓	✓				✓		✓	✓
Pin-tailed Snipe	<i>Gallinago stenura</i>			✓								
Common Snipe	<i>Gallinago gallinago</i>	✓		✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Red-necked Phalarope	<i>Phalaropus lobatus</i>			✓	✓					✓		
Terek Sandpiper	<i>Xenus cinereus</i>			✓	✓	✓					✓	
Common Sandpiper	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Green Sandpiper	<i>Tringa ochropus</i>			✓					✓			✓
Marsh Sandpiper	<i>Tringa stagnatilis</i>	✓				✓						
Wood Sandpiper	<i>Tringa glareola</i>							✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Common Redshank	<i>Tringa totanus</i>	✓		✓	✓	✓			✓		✓	✓
Common Greenshank	<i>Tringa nebularia</i>			✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓
Ruddy Turnstone	<i>Arenaria interpres</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓						
Ruff	<i>Calidris pugnax</i>	✓		✓		✓			✓		✓	✓
Broad-billed Sandpiper	<i>Calidris falcinellus</i>				✓	✓						

I=Introduced		October-November 2025										
Common name	Scientific name	28	29	30	31	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Curlew Sandpiper	<i>Calidris ferruginea</i>			✓		✓						
Temminck's Stint	<i>Calidris temminckii</i>	✓		✓			✓		✓		✓	
Sanderling	<i>Calidris alba</i>					✓			✓		✓	
Dunlin	<i>Calidris alpina</i>			✓	✓	✓			✓			
Little Stint	<i>Calidris minuta</i>	✓		✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	
Crab-plover	<i>Dromas ardeola</i>					✓						
Cream-colored Courser	<i>Cursorius cursor</i>							✓				
Brown Noddy	<i>Anous stolidus</i>									✓		
Bridled Tern	<i>Onychoprion anaethetus</i>		✓	✓	✓					✓		
Little Tern	<i>Sternula albifrons</i>			✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓
Saunders's Tern	<i>Sternula saundersi</i>									✓		
Gull-billed Tern	<i>Gelochelidon nilotica</i>		✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓	
Caspian Tern	<i>Hydroprogne caspia</i>				✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓
Whiskered Tern	<i>Chlidonias hybrida</i>	✓			✓		✓		✓		✓	✓
White-winged Tern	<i>Chlidonias leucopterus</i>			✓					✓		✓	
Common Tern	<i>Sterna hirundo</i>			✓	✓				✓	✓		
White-cheeked Tern	<i>Sterna repressa</i>			✓								
Sandwich Tern	<i>Thalasseus sandvicensis</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓						
Lesser Crested Tern	<i>Thalasseus bengalensis</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓						
Greater Crested Tern	<i>Thalasseus bergii</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓
Slender-billed Gull	<i>Chroicocephalus genei</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓
Black-headed Gull	<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>			✓	✓							
Sooty Gull	<i>Ichthyiaetus hemprichii</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓
Caspian Gull	<i>Larus cachinnans</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓
Lesser Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus fuscus</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓
Pomarine Jaeger	<i>Stercorarius pomarinus</i>				✓							
Red-billed Tropicbird	<i>Phaethon aethereus</i>			✓								
Flesh-footed Shearwater	<i>Ardenna carneipes</i>									✓		
Persian Shearwater	<i>Puffinus persicus</i>									✓	✓	
Jouanin's Petrel	<i>Bulweria fallax</i>									✓		
Abdim's Stork	<i>Ciconia abdimii</i>									✓		✓

I=Introduced		October-November 2025										
Common name	Scientific name	28	29	30	31	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Black Stork	<i>Ciconia nigra</i>										✓	
White Stork	<i>Ciconia ciconia</i>							✓	✓			
Masked Booby	<i>Sula dactylatra</i>			✓						✓		
Great Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓			
African Sacred Ibis	<i>Threskiornis aethiopicus</i>											✓
Glossy Ibis	<i>Plegadis falcinellus</i>	✓		✓					✓	✓	✓	✓
Eurasian Spoonbill	<i>Platalea leucorodia</i>					✓	✓		✓		✓	
Black-crowned Night Heron	<i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>	✓							✓			
Black Heron	<i>Egretta ardesiaca</i>											✓
Steppe Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo vulpinus</i>								✓	✓		
Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓
Western Reef Heron	<i>Egretta gularis</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Striated Heron	<i>Butorides striata</i>			✓	✓		✓			✓		
Squacco Heron	<i>Ardeola ralloides</i>								✓		✓	✓
Indian Pond Heron	<i>Ardeola grayii</i>	✓		✓			✓				✓	✓
Great Egret	<i>Ardea alba</i>	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓
Western Cattle Egret	<i>Ardea ibis</i>			✓								✓
Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Purple Heron	<i>Ardea purpurea</i>	✓					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Osprey	<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Egyptian Vulture	<i>Neophron percnopterus</i>	✓			✓							
Crested Honey Buzzard	<i>Pernis ptilorhynchus</i>								✓	✓		
Griffon Vulture	<i>Gyps fulvus</i>									✓		
Short-toed Snake Eagle	<i>Circaetus gallicus</i>								✓	✓		✓
Greater Spotted Eagle	<i>Clanga clanga</i>	✓										
Booted Eagle	<i>Hieraaetus pennatus</i>										✓	
Steppe Eagle	<i>Aquila nipalensis</i>							✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Eastern Imperial Eagle	<i>Aquila heliaca</i>								✓	✓		✓
Bonelli's Eagle	<i>Aquila fasciata</i>			✓					✓	✓	✓	
Verreaux's Eagle	<i>Aquila verreauxii</i>									✓		
Shikra	<i>Tachyspiza badia</i>		✓				✓		✓			

I=Introduced		October-November 2025										
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Pallid Harrier	<i>Circus macrourus</i>							✓				
Montagu's Harrier	<i>Circus pygargus</i>						✓	✓		✓		
Western Marsh Harrier	<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Arabian Scops Owl	<i>Otus pamelae</i>								H			
Arabian Eagle-Owl	<i>Bubo milesi</i>											✓
Desert Owl	<i>Strix hadorami</i>										✓	
Eurasian Hoopoe	<i>Upupa epops</i>							✓	✓		✓	✓
Indian Roller	<i>Coracias benghalensis</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓						
European Roller	<i>Coracias garrulus</i>										✓	
Grey-headed Kingfisher	<i>Halcyon leucocephala</i>											✓
Common Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>			✓	✓	H						
Arabian Green Bee-eater	<i>Merops cyanophrys</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓		✓	✓
Blue-cheeked Bee-eater	<i>Merops persicus</i>			✓			✓	✓		H	✓	✓
Eurasian Wryneck	<i>Jynx torquilla</i>	✓										✓
Common Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Sooty Falcon	<i>Falco concolor</i>			✓								
Eurasian Hobby	<i>Falco subbuteo</i>						✓					
Peregrine Falcon	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>								✓		✓	✓
Rose-ringed Parakeet	<i>Psittacula krameri</i>			✓								✓
Black-crowned Tchagra	<i>Tchagra senegalus</i>								✓			✓
African Paradise Flycatcher	<i>Terpsiphone viridis</i>								✓			✓
Great Grey Shrike	<i>Lanius excubitor</i>					✓	✓	✓			✓	
Isabelline Shrike	<i>Lanius isabellinus</i>							✓	✓			✓
Red-backed Shrike	<i>Lanius collurio</i>					✓						
Red-tailed Shrike	<i>Lanius phoenicuroides</i>	✓			✓		✓			✓	✓	✓
House Crow - I	<i>Corvus splendens</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Brown-necked Raven	<i>Corvus ruficollis</i>		✓			✓	✓	✓				
Fan-tailed Raven	<i>Corvus rhipidurus</i>								✓	✓		
Greater Hoopoe-Lark	<i>Alaemon alaudipes</i>					✓		✓				
Bar-tailed Lark	<i>Ammomanes cinctura</i>										✓	
Black-crowned Sparrow-Lark	<i>Eremopterix nigriceps</i>					✓		✓				

I=Introduced		October-November 2025										
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Crested Lark	<i>Galerida cristata</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	
Greater Short-toed Lark	<i>Calandrella brachydactyla</i>					✓					✓	
Red-vented Bulbul - I	<i>Pycnonotus cafer</i>		✓	✓								
White-eared Bulbul - I	<i>Pycnonotus leucotis</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓						
White-spectacled Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus xanthopygos</i>								✓	✓	✓	✓
Sand Martin	<i>Riparia riparia</i>			✓		✓		✓				✓
Eurasian Crag Martin	<i>Ptyonoprogne rupestris</i>	✓	✓									
Pale Crag Martin	<i>Ptyonoprogne obsoleta</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Western House Martin	<i>Delichon urbicum</i>					✓						
Streaked Scrub Warbler	<i>Scotocerca inquieta</i>		✓									
Plain Leaf Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus neglectus</i>		✓			✓	✓	✓				
Willow Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus trochilus</i>	✓										
Common Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>	✓					✓	✓			✓	✓
Green Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus nitidus</i>						✓					
Clamorous Reed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus stentoreus</i>					✓		✓		✓		✓
Eastern Olivaceous Warbler	<i>Iduna pallida</i>											✓
Graceful Prinia	<i>Prinia gracilis</i>									✓	✓	✓
Delicate Prinia	<i>Prinia lepida</i>	✓	✓	✓								
Lesser Whitethroat	<i>Curruca curruca</i>		✓	✓			✓	✓			✓	✓
Arabian Warbler	<i>Curruca leucomelaena</i>											✓
Asian Desert Warbler	<i>Curruca nana</i>				✓			✓			✓	
Menetries's Warbler	<i>Curruca mystacea</i>		✓					✓				✓
Abyssinian White-eye	<i>Zosterops abyssinicus</i>								✓	✓	✓	✓
Common Myna - I	<i>Acridotheres tristis</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓		
Tristram's Starling	<i>Onychognathus tristramii</i>							✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Spotted Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa striata</i>			✓			✓	✓			✓	
Common Nightingale	<i>Luscinia megarhynchos</i>						✓					H
Bluethroat	<i>Luscinia svecica</i>					✓	✓	✓				
Red-breasted Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula parva</i>							✓				
Black Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus ochruros</i>		✓	✓			✓	✓				



I=Introduced		October-November 2025										
Common name	Scientific name	28	29	30	31	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Common Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus phoenicurus</i>						✓	✓				
Common Rock Thrush	<i>Monticola saxatilis</i>						✓					
Northern Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe oenanthe</i>						✓	✓	✓		✓	
Isabelline Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe isabellina</i>					✓			✓	✓	✓	✓
Desert Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe deserti</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Pied Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe pleschanka</i>						✓	✓			✓	
Blackstart	<i>Oenanthe melanura</i>								✓		✓	✓
Red-tailed Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe chrysopygia</i>					✓						
Hume's Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe albonigra</i>		✓									
Arabian Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe lugentoides</i>								✓	✓		
Nile Valley Sunbird	<i>Hedydipna metallica</i>										✓	
Palestine Sunbird	<i>Cinnyris osea</i>								✓			✓
Arabian Sunbird	<i>Cinnyris hellmayri</i>								✓	✓		✓
Purple Sunbird	<i>Cinnyris asiaticus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓						
House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Rüppell's Weaver	<i>Ploceus galbula</i>								✓	✓	✓	✓
Streaked Weaver	<i>Ploceus manyar</i>									✓		
African Silverbill	<i>Euodice cantans</i>								✓	✓	✓	✓
Indian Silverbill	<i>Euodice malabarica</i>		✓	✓			✓					
Scaly-breasted Munia	<i>Lonchura punctulata</i>								✓			
Western Yellow Wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava</i>			✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Eastern Yellow Wagtail	<i>Motacilla tschutschensis</i>						✓					
Citrine Wagtail	<i>Motacilla citreola</i>	✓				✓			✓		✓	✓
Grey Wagtail	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>								✓			✓
White Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Tawny Pipit	<i>Anthus campestris</i>					✓	✓	✓				
Long-billed Pipit	<i>Anthus similis</i>									✓	✓	✓
Tree Pipit	<i>Anthus trivialis</i>					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Red-throated Pipit	<i>Anthus cervinus</i>					✓						
Arabian Golden-winged Grosbeak	<i>Rhynchostruthus percivali</i>								✓			
Yemen Serin	<i>Crithagra menachensis</i>								✓	✓		

I=Introduced		October-November 2025										
Common name	Scientific name	28	29	30	31	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Striolated Bunting	<i>Emberiza striolata</i>										✓	
Cinnamon-breasted Bunting	<i>Emberiza tahapisi</i>								✓	✓	✓	✓

## Mammals

		October-November 2025										
Common name	Scientific name	28	29	30	31	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Spinner Dolphin	<i>Stenella longirostris</i>										✓	
Red Fox	<i>Vulpes vulpes</i>							✓				
Wild Donkey	<i>Equus africanus asinus</i>				✓			✓	✓			
Sperm Whale	<i>Physeter macrocephalus</i>								✓			

## Reptiles

		October-November 2025										
Common name	Scientific name	28	29	30	31	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Green Turtle	<i>Chelonia mydas</i>		✓	✓	✓				✓			
Olive Ridley Turtle	<i>Lepidochelys olivacea</i>								✓			
Hawksbill Turtle	<i>Eretmochelys imbricata</i>								✓			
Arabian Chameleon	<i>Chamaeleo arabicus</i>								✓			✓

## Fishes

		October-November 2025										
Common name	Scientific name	28	29	30	31	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Manta Ray	<i>Mobula sp.</i>								✓			

## Butterflies

		October-November 2025										
Common name	Scientific name	28	29	30	31	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Citrus Swallowtail	<i>Papilio demoleus</i>								✓			✓
Common Swallowtail	<i>Papilio machaon</i>				✓							
African Monarch	<i>Danaus chrysippus</i>			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓
Zebra White	<i>Protographium marcellus</i>											✓
African Caper White	<i>Belenois aurota</i>											✓
Blue Pansy	<i>Precis orithya</i>								✓			✓
Yellow Pansy	<i>Junonia hierta</i>							✓	✓			✓
One-pip Policeman	<i>Coeliades anchises</i>		✓									

## Moths

		October-November 2025										
Common name	Scientific name	28	29	30	31	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Crimson Speckled	<i>Utetheisa pulchella</i>						✓					
Silver-striped Hawk-moth	<i>Hippotion celerio</i>							✓				

## Bees &amp; wasps

		October-November 2025										
Common name	Scientific name	28	29	30	31	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Asian Hornet	<i>Vespa velutina</i>	✓	✓		✓						✓	
Yellow Carpenter Bee	<i>Xylocopa</i> sp.					✓						
a carpenter bee	<i>Xylocopa</i> sp.				✓							

## Spiders

		October-November 2025										
Common name	Scientific name	28	29	30	31	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Red-legged Golden Orb-web Spider	<i>Nephila sumptuosa</i>											✓

Crustaceans

		October-November 2025										
Common name	Scientific name	28	29	30	31	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Shore Crab	<i>Ocypodinae</i> sp.			✓		✓						
Fiddler Crab	<i>Uca</i> sp.			✓	✓							