

Oman - Arabia's Finest Birding

Naturetrek Tour Report

12th – 24th February 2026



Crab-plover



Blue-cheeked Bee-eater



Grey Hypocolius



African Wildcat

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Summary

This was a simply outstanding tour of the beautiful country of Oman. We travelled from the capital Muscat to the far southern city of Salalah, taking in mountains, deserts, desolate coastlines, unexpected estuaries, oases and several notable cultural sites. We saw almost two hundred bird species (including all the available Arabian endemics), plus mammals such as African Wildcat, Rock Hyrax and dolphins, and reptiles such as Arabian Cobra, plus several exciting dragonflies and butterflies, and Frankincense and Arabian Dragon Trees.

We were blessed with several rare migrants from Asia, such as White-breasted Waterhen, Asian Koel, Bay-backed Shrike, Brahminy Starling and Medium Egret, plus African Sacred Ibis from the other direction. We even found a Blyth's Pipit, provisionally the ninth for Oman! Special birds like Crab-plover, Grey Hypocolius, Nile Valley Sunbird, Yemen Serin, Arabian Eagle-Owl, Arabian Golden-winged Grosbeak, Bruce's Green Pigeon, Greater Hoopoe-Lark and many others kept us entertained throughout. We ate well, both in local restaurants and under the shade of trees when the advent of Ramadan meant we had to switch to picnics! Oman really does have it all, and this tour, enjoyed by a wonderful group of enthusiastic clients, really did the business.

Day 1

Thursday 12th February

Travel to Muscat

Four clients and the leader gathered at Heathrow Terminal 4 and caught the 8.05pm Oman Air flight to Muscat; six other clients had flown out the day before.

Day 2

Friday 13th February

Muscat – Barka fields – Ras As Sawadi

We landed at about 7.30am local time, collected our bags and met up with Hisham, our local fixer. We swiftly transferred to the Best Western Hotel in central Muscat, had a quick breakfast, and were soon all ready for the field!

We headed first for the rather unprepossessing Muscat river mouth, a wet and muddy little estuary either side of the main dual carriageway. There was a lot of diversity to enjoy: we found eighteen species of waders, including Terek Sandpiper and Greater Sand Plover, Slender-billed, Sooty and a few fly-by Pallas's Gulls, Greater Flamingoes and a Citrine Wagtail, among others. A Black-winged Kite was a nice bonus, and we saw Desert Wheatear, Indian Roller, Arabian Green Bee-eaters, a Grey Francolin, a brief Purple Sunbird and had good views of Delicate Prinia too.

We then drove west, failing at our first planned restaurant stop, but passing vast flocks of gulls on the foreshore. We soon found another eatery in Barka, and fed well. From there, we headed into an agricultural area and spent

some time exploring. Highlights included two Isabelline Shrikes, lots of Purple Sunbirds, rollers and Arabian Green Bee-eaters, another Black-winged Kite, Marsh Harrier and our first eagle, a sub-adult Eastern Imperial.

Next, we drove further west to Ras As Sawadi, a low sandy promontory overlooking rocky offshore islands. Here, we got to grips with Steppe, Heuglin's and Caspian Gulls, and saw some more Pallas's Gulls, including a couple of superb adults in breeding plumage. The tide was a bit too high, and the site a bit too busy with civilians for there to be much else, bar Little and Greater Crested Terns, and a distant Great Egret, so we had an ice cream/Omani tea and headed back for a relatively early finish, passing the spectacularly-illuminate Sultan Qaboos Mosque on the way home. We ate, and for many of us, it was a blissfully early night!

Day 3

Saturday 14th February

Al Ghubrah bowl – Nakhal – Qurm estuary

We set off at 7.40am and drove for over an hour, west to Barka once more, the south to Nakhal, then out onto the desert plains. An excellent hour here turned up the desired Red-tailed Wheatear, plus initially elusive and then showy Arabian Babbler, a Great Grey Shrike, Desert Wheatear, Brown-necked Ravens and several Desert Larks. We drove up the twisty road through magnificent scenery and into the "Al Ghubrah Bowl", a vast natural amphitheatre of scrubby acacia woodland surrounded by towering mountains.

An eastern form Black Redstart was an early highlight but played hard to get for some, and we soon added lots of Purple Sunbirds, a good few *halimodendri* Lesser Whitethroats, more Desert Larks and the icing on the cake, an understated but diagnostically calling Plain Leaf Warbler, a lifer for everyone, including the leader!

It was hot by now, but we braved the canyon on the way down for another half hour session, and scored heavily with a Hume's Wheatear, plus our first White-spectacled Bulbuls. We were getting ahead of schedule on the bird front!

We enjoyed a leisurely lunch in the hottest part of the day back down in Nakhal, and then took a short tour of the restored eighteenth-century fort, which afforded magnificent views of the new town, and the old village among extensive date plantations. Next, we dropped in at the hot spring, where an exceedingly showy Indian Roller entertained us, along with an absurdly tame juvenile Black-crowned Night Heron (along with two other flyovers) and both Grey and White Wagtails. Yellow-winged Darter, Broad Scarlet, Violet Dropwing and Slender Skimmer provided some dragonfly fun too.

It was time to head back to Muscat, and we enjoyed the last hour of the day along the seafront at Qurm mangroves, blissfully free from traffic on account of an Ironman event being dismantled! We enjoyed our first Tibetan Sand Plovers, and also added Red-vented Bulbul, Rose-ringed Parakeet, Little Heron, Western Reef Heron, Grey Heron, Grey Plover, Spotted Redshanks and Common Kingfisher. Turnstones, Curlews and Whimbrels, a few terns and gulls and Pallid Swifts completed a delightful dusk scene. What a great day!

Day 4**Sunday 15th February****Al Ansab – inshore pelagic – Yiti wadis**

We set off at the relaxed hour of 8.00am, and after a little hassle/negotiation, gained access to Al Ansab water treatment works. While we waited for a few minutes outside, we saw Ruffs, Little Stints, Kentish Plovers and a Citrine Wagtail on the irrigated football pitch, and a magnificent juvenile Greater Spotted Eagle on the perimeter fence; we saw another of a similar age in flight later. Inside, the first lagoon produced several new species, such as Grey Heron, Shoveler, Gadwall, Avocet and Purple Swamphen, and we saw Grey Francolins and an eastern Black Redstart on the walk to the second lagoon. There, we found a noisy and briefly showy Clamorous Reed Warbler, Western Reef and Indian Pond Herons, Eurasian Coot and Tufted Duck. The highlight was the weir by the hide where, in addition to a Little Ringed Plover, we enjoyed Little and Temminck's Stints side by side.

It was getting hot, and at about 11.00am we headed for our boat trip from Bandar Al Rowdah, a marina just over the hills to the east of new Muscat. The excitement started right in the harbour with a point-blank juvenile Green Turtle, and we were soon looking at Sooty Gulls and Greater Crested Terns too. Along the rocky shore, we saw Whimbrels and a single Osprey, and very quickly found the first of over twenty Red-necked Phalaropes. The birding was, frankly, slow at sea today, with nothing significant to add to the many Steppe Gulls and a few Sooty Gulls around fishing boats. But we found some pods of dolphins: we were lucky enough to locate several large groups of travelling and hunting Common Dolphins, and found smaller numbers of Bottlenose Dolphins, some very close to the boat and bow-riding. Whatever we saw, everyone enjoyed the cool breeze and the speed of the boat!



Green Turtle



Pallas's Gull



Sooty Gull



Red-necked Phalarope

We were running a little late, so we grabbed lunch on the go at a petrol station, and headed east to the area just south of Yiti, to visit some deserts canyons. We passed several feral Wild Donkeys on the way, and made an emergency stop for an Egyptian Vulture; we saw at least four in total over the afternoon session, and maybe more. The wadis were generally quiet in the heat, but we found some shady spots and located three more Hume's Wheatears, Brown-necked Ravens and an Asian Desert Warbler, which gave us the runaround and thoroughly confused us (until we saw it well and photographed it) by spending all its time in acacia trees, rather than on or near the ground, as is more usual for this species.

We headed for home a little earlier than usual, to leave time to get packed for our departure on our epic trek south, which starts tomorrow!

Day 5

Monday 16th February

Qurayat – Sur – Khawr Jirama – Ras Al Kabba

We set off at 8.00am in our three Landcruisers for the short drive to the Sultan Qaboos Grand Mosque, and very much enjoyed our tour, featuring the world's largest chandelier, and the world's largest carpet! The whole building was astonishing to behold. And a client had the bonus experience of finding a Death's Head Hawk-moth in one of the shoe racks!

And then we were off properly, heading over the mountains and east, with our first proper stop at Qurayat estuary. Highlights included eight Pacific Golden Plovers, our first Bar-tailed Godwits, hundreds of gulls including numerous Pallas's Gulls, and Greater Crested and Sandwich Terns. After a stop at the Toilet at the End of the Universe on the coast, we checked the salt pans, seeing a few Greater Flamingoes and five Black-necked Grebes, one in almost full breeding plumage.

We powered on to Sur, where we successfully negotiated entrance to the water treatment works. Birds were a little limited, but we added Wood Sandpiper and saw two Citrine Wagtails, among others. A Long-legged Buzzard was an unexpected new species overhead. We had an absolutely delicious seafood lunch on the seafront (with various gulls, and waders including another Pacific Golden Plover, plus a flyby Lesser Crested Tern), and then visited the dhow factory, where we spent time seeing how these amazing traditional Arabian wooden ships are made.



Birding in the desert

The next stop was the famous Khawr Jirama, a massive tidal inlet on the north-eastern tip of Oman. The tide was very low, which meant the birds were distant, but we did quickly pick up two Crab-plovers, our major target for the day! Also present were plenty of Terek Sandpipers and sand plovers, plus a good variety of other shorebirds, gulls and terns, including Sandwich and Little. An Osprey and a Marsh Harrier added some spice. A little judicious repositioning got us much closer to one of the Crab-plovers, and shutters clicked spectacularly!

We made a nice little detour to 'The Mother Of All The Outcrops', a stunning little exposure of Carboniferous radiolarian chert, which delighted a geologist client! Bird-wise, we scored a Desert Wheatear and ten Namaqua Doves nearby. We had just half an hour to go to our hotel at Ras Al Kabba, where we checked in for the night and had dinner.

Some clients opted to go out for some turtle watching later on; our hopes were not so high, as this is the off-season for laying females, and the recent windy weather worked against us. However, we were in luck, and we enjoyed not just a lengthy encounter with a forty-year-old female on the beach, but also two hatchlings trying make their way to the ocean. We saw one of the succeed, and wished him/her 'good luck'!

Day 6

Tuesday 17th February

Birr Al Hikman – Duqm

We departed at 8.00am and started the big burn south. A brief stop at the dhow-filled Al Ashkharah harbour produced lots of gulls and a new species, Common Tern. We then put in a lengthy leg, stopping for a showy threesome of Greater Hoopoe-larks at the roadside, and reached Birr Al Hikman late morning. The tide was falling, but there were plenty of birds on the close mudflats, many more in the middle distance, and teeming hordes on the sandbars in the far distance. Ten Crab-plovers were the highlight, but we saw fifteen other wader species too, including Curlew and Terek Sandpipers and many Bar-tailed Godwits.

After lunch in Mahout, we dropped down to Filim, to enjoy more wader shenanigans (plus Marsh Harrier and some flamingoes), and then took an exciting cross-desert drive through dunes and white sand-covered outcrops (adding Kestrel and seeing an Osprey and some Tawny Pipits) to the fishing village of Al Khaluf, where vast numbers of gulls thronged the place; interestingly, most were Heuglin's, whereas further north Steppe Gull had dominated. We also located at least two smart adult Caspian Gulls.

We crossed more spectacular desert and rejoined the main highway, then stopped at the traditional "Wadi With No Name" (that's now its name, creating a paradox), which as usual turned up trumps with a pair of Arabian Wheatears, plus a smart *ancheri* Great Grey Shrike.

Then, we powered on for the last hour, arriving in Duqm just before sunset; we had covered almost 500km on- and off-road, but had enjoyed a scenery and bird-filled day (with a top lunch in the middle).

Day 7

Wednesday 18th February

Duqm – Khawr Durf – Haima

We started with some light birding in the “garden” of the Duqm City Hotel, which had something to live up to after last year’s Asian Brown Flycatcher (a fifth for Oman)! Lightning almost struck twice with a Red-breasted Flycatcher, and there were several Chiffchaffs and a Black Redstart about, but we were frustrated by a “chacking”, cold-toned *Acrocephalus* warbler showing the correct supercilium pattern and “banana posture” for Blyth’s Reed Warbler, another significant national rarity. In all good conscience, it won’t be submittable on the fragmentary views we managed, but the leader is 90% confident it was one.

Next, we zipped to the swanky Crowne Plaza hotel at the coast, and got permission to bird the gardens for twenty minutes. It was productive! We saw two Black Redstarts, several Cattle Egrets, two Yellow Wagtails (one of them a black-headed *feldegg*), an Isabelline Shrike, and best of all not one but two male Asian Koels, a very scarce bird indeed in Oman!

We headed on for an hour through super-arid landscapes to Khawr Dhurf, where we connected with some forty Chestnut-bellied Sandgrouse on arrival. There were few landbird migrants about: just a Sparrowhawk and some marginally dubious-sounding Chiffchaffs. But we saw Desert Wheatear, Greater Flamingoes, five Pacific Golden Plovers, various other waders and a new bird for the trip in the form of nine Garganeys.

We stopped in a nameless shallow wadi on the drive back to Duqm, seeing another two Greater Hoopoe-larks, a very juvenile Carter’s Rock Gecko, and a skink. Then we returned to town for a tasty lunch, our last before Ramadan.



Greater Hoopoe-Lark



Red-breasted Flycatcher

The afternoon involved a 200km+ drive to Haima. En route, we screeched to a halt for some flighty Black-crowned Sparrow-Larks; unfortunately, not everyone saw them. The same was true of two Cream-coloured Coursers seen in flight only by just one vehicle. However, a detour into the desert, while birdless bar a few Desert Wheatears and a Brown-necked Raven, turned up the sighting of the day: an African (Arabian) Wildcat! It emerged from the shade of a tiny acacia, accidentally disturbed by the lead van, and slunk across the desert in full view for all. What a great sighting! Not only are these animals very rare and threatened, but they are almost exclusively nocturnal and hardly ever seen by day.

Buoyed up, we cracked on to Haima, and visited the park (actually twelve kilometres out of town), which was bird-free, bar House Sparrows. We reached our hotel just before dusk, ready for an “early to bed, early to rise” strategy.

Day 8

Thursday 19th February

Muntassar oasis – Qatbit – Al Beed/Ubar farms – Ain Razat

Before the dawn of Ramadan, we set off at 5.00am (ugh) and drove two hours west, first on the fast highway and then for 25km on a sandy track, to the remote Muntassar oasis, where warm, sulphurous water bubbles out of the ground, producing a small wetland and supporting some sensible vegetation in the patched expanse of desert. As soon as it was light, we started seeing birds: an incongruous House Martin, a Lesser Whitethroat, three Bluethroats, a weird jumpy flock of fifteen Mallards bouncing around the desert scrub, two Water Pipits, a stunning Blue-cheeked Bee-eater, a Coot (!) and best of all a White-breasted Waterhen, a very rare migrant from Asia (there might actually have been two). Numerous Desert Wheatears had Asian Desert Warblers in tow; some five of the latter were estimated. We saw Desert Bluetail damselflies, and Broad Scarlet and Black Percher dragonflies, too. We had heard but not seen Spotted Sandgrouse, but at about 9.15am a flock of about 15 appeared, followed by about twenty more; they gave good flight views before settling at some distance on the desert. We decided to leave them to it and let them approach the water and drink.

Having rejoined the main road, we were soon at Qatbit service station for loo, snacks and a spot of unproductive bush-bashing, and then moved on to the usually very productive Al Beed farms. This year, there was little about, bar a Great Grey Shrike and a Northern Wheatear, so we cut our losses and went to Ubar farms instead. This was much better. Everyone got good views of Black-crowned Sparrow-Lark at last, and we added Greater Short-toed Lark too, plus masses of Collared Doves (including a striking leucistic bird), more Great Grey Shrikes and Northern Wheatears, some Chestnut-bellied Sandgrouse, Namaqua Dove and others.

After a lunch break at the garage just down the road, we made the final push and ate up the kilometres, past Thumrayt, and finally reached the crest of the Dhofar escarpment, where the landscape changed drastically in just a few hundred metres: suddenly it was all grasslands (albeit dried up) and scattered trees, rather than sand and bare rock. As the road dropped precipitately from 800m towards sea-level, large, broad-leaved trees and monsoon forest took over: welcome to Salalah!

We dropped in at Ain Razat, and were soon scoring heavily with the local specialities. In an action-packed hour we saw Abyssinian White-eye, Striolated and Cinnamon-breasted Buntings, Arabian Sunbird, White-spectacled Bulbul, African Paradise Flycatcher, African Silverbill, Rüppell's Weaver, Blackstart, Little Egret, Black-crowned Night Heron, Sparrowhawk, and an Eastern Imperial and three Greater Spotted Eagles. The icing on the cake came with exceptional views of a wide-awake Arabian Eagle-Owl glowering down at us from the trees in the public park: fantastic.

We drove the short distance to our beachfront hotel and checked in at about 6.15pm, exhausted but proud to have completed the full traverse of Oman, from Muscat to Salalah, and not by the direct route!

Day 9

Friday 20th February

East Khawr – Ain Hamran – Khawr Taqah – Raysut – Mughsayl

We left the hotel at 8.00am and headed straight to East Khawr, just along the coast. En route, a gripping photo one client had taken before breakfast was ‘unblocked’ for the rest of the group: a smart juvenile Crested Honey Buzzard. Birds at the khawr were plentiful and varied: new ones were Medium Egret, Graceful Prinia and Tufted Duck, but we also saw Glossy Ibis, Citrine Wagtails, Garganey, Whiskered Tern, two Greater Spotted Eagles, and plenty of waders and gulls.

We next headed towards Ain Hamran, but took it slowly across the dusty plains between the highway and the mountains. Sure enough, we found some birds, and a stop for Isabelline Wheatear (a new bird) soon turned up Black-crowned Sparrow-Larks, Tawny Pipits, two Chestnut-bellied Sandgrouse, two Cream-coloured Coursers and another new species in the form of a Pale Rockfinch. Outstanding!

Buoyed up, we headed to the spring, and slowly “shade-hopped” our way up the valley. There was plenty to see: a Hoopoe, Abyssinian White-eyes, Arabian Sunbirds, Cinnamon-breasted and Striolated Buntings, Isabelline Shrike, Sparrowhawk, Tristram’s Starlings and an Eastern Imperial Eagle. Best of all were two new species, an unexpected Masked Shrike and a much more expected Arabian Warbler.



Citrine Wagtail



Black-crowned Night Heron



Masked Shrike



Little Heron

It was getting hot, but we dropped down to work Khawr Taqah, where the regular Pacific Golden Plover flock numbered seventy-eight birds. An Osprey was perched, and another Eastern Imperial Eagle, a Purple Heron and a Blue-cheeked Bee-eater were seen in flight. Down at the damp khawr bend, a snipe frustrated us by barely showing itself and flying some two metres but only being seen in flight with the naked eye. While it looked good

for Pin-tailed, we could not confirm it. Another Medium Egret was here, and we found some small waders. Two were Temminck's Stint, but another pale-legged stint was much streakier. We had relocated the long-staying Long-toed Stint, a rare migrant from eastern Asia! More fabulous teamwork from the group had paid off.

It would have been rude not to drop in at the Hawana Salalah resort next door, where Oman's first Slaty-breasted Rail had been found two weeks ago. It had not been seen for some time, but then there are not many birders around Salalah, so we tried, but unfortunately to no avail. We returned to our hotel for lunch, only a little late.

After a brief siesta, we set out again at 3.00pm, and headed for Raysut sewage works, in the very grotty industrial zone in the west of the city. Viewing from outside the fence, we soon saw well over two hundred White Storks, together with about sixty Abdim's Storks, an African migrant. There were plenty of waders, including two Marsh and two Wood Sandpipers, and a few Garganeys, plus four female Pintails. Three Red-throated Pipits were a nice bonus as well.

From here, we drove west again to Mughsayl, stopping on the road bridge over the wadi. Birds here were rather few, but included Isabelline and Desert Wheatears, and a scattering of waders and ducks. The drive along Mughsayl beach sadly produced no Socotra Cormorants (this is the best site for them), but at the caves and blowholes we found lots of gulls and terns, Tristram's Starlings, and pairs of Arabian Wheatear and Arabian Green Bee-eater. With darkness gathering, we stopped off at the frankincense souk for some shopping, and got home quite late after an action-packed day!

Day 10

Saturday 21st February

Mirbat pelagic – Mirbat park – Wadi Hanna – Tawi Atair – Jebel Samhan

We were up earlier than a Desert Lark, and away at 5.45am for the drive east to Mirbat. We had a packed breakfast by the beach, and then (via some very close Abdim's Storks) drove to the jetty to meet Hatem for our pelagic boat trip. There were Green Turtles and Little and Black-crowned Night-herons in the harbour entrance, and we were followed by a gang of mostly Sooty Gulls as we motored out. Before long, things got serious, with Red-necked Phalaropes and very close Persian Shearwaters, and a very distant Jouanin's Petrel, not seen by all. We eventually scored with about five of the last species, with a couple coming within reasonable range. Several Masked Boobies showed up and joined us and the gulls, which included a Pallas's Gull. Flying fish entertained briefly, and a Red-billed Tropicbird zoomed high past us, but was gone all too soon.



Masked Booby



Persian Shearwater

We regained dry land, and transferred to Mirbat Park, where excellent possibilities awaited us. The lawns were covered in Yellow Wagtails, including *beema* and a very good candidate for *lutea* subspecies, and we saw several Tree Pipits too. Then someone flushed an Asian Koel, this one a young bird to contrast with the black males we had seen at Duqm, and we found an incongruous Song Thrush too. An Isabelline Shrike was encouraging, but our main quarry still eluded us. Then, there it was! The long-staying Bay-backed Shrike appeared explosively and showed well; it got chased out of a tree by the Isabelline Shrike, and landed in a bush where it was joined by a Brahminy Starling, yet another Asian vagrant! Exhilarated, we checked the pipits and wagtails one last time; one client had reported seeing a Tawny Pipit earlier. And here indeed was a big, quite pale pipit. But it wasn't a Tawny Pipit; it was a Blyth's Pipit, only the ninth for Oman! This was all getting a bit ridiculous.



Asian Koel



Abdim's Stork



Bay-backed Shrike and Brahminy Starling



Blyth's Pipit

Lunchtime approached, so we drove uphill to Wadi Hanna and its stand of lovely African Baobab trees, and ate a picnic in the shade. Two Bonelli's Eagles showed briefly and distantly for some, along with equally poor Fan-tailed Ravens. But those frustrations would be put to bed at our next destination, Tawi Atair. As soon as we arrived at this massive, impressive limestone sinkhole, we saw Fan-tailed Ravens right overhead, and first one and then two Bonelli's Eagles put on an amazing display for us. Simon left the group in the shade to go and check a spot on the hillside, and he was soon messaging them to "get up here!". Two Yemen Serins were feeding unobtrusively in the shade of a couple of trees with Cinnamon-breasted Buntings; everyone saw them well, and was left underwhelmed by their appearance but excited by their rarity. This is the only place outside Yemen and south-west Saudi Arabia where one can see this species.

We had one last place to visit, and after delicious fruit juices as a celebration, we drove towards Jebel Samhan. But we didn't make it without two emergency stops, the first for an extremely pale Short-toed Snake Eagle, and the second for a covey of Arabian Partridges, a notoriously difficult-to-find and easily-missable Arabian endemic. We

finally reached the epic lookout on the rim of the Dhofar escarpment, wowed by the views down to Mirbat almost 800m below us. We could even pick out the park, the site of our rarity-fest earlier on! Birds were few, with just Pale Crag Martins and Tristram's Starlings about, but we much enjoyed the stunning and very rare Dragon Trees. We were thinking about leaving, and Simon said his catchphrase: "we'll give it ten minutes". Within two of those minutes, a Verreaux's Eagle hove into view in the distance, swiftly followed by its mate, and they rapidly came closer, then retreated and perched, and then made another even better fly-by, allowing us to see their spectacular black and white markings and bizarre wing shape. Frankly triumphant, we headed for home, via a perched Long-legged Buzzard, and were back in our hotel well before 6.00pm. What a day!

Day 11

Sunday 22nd February

Wadi Darbat (upper and middle) – Khawr Rori – Sumhram – Ain Hamran

We set off at 8.00am for our grand journey down the length of Wadi Darbat. We first climbed high into the hills, and dropped down via exciting (strictly 4x4 only) tracks to the upper third of the canyon, which we had completely to ourselves. We stationed ourselves right next to an intimidating hundred metre tall (dry) waterfall cliff, and started watching the birds coming and going at a large cave strewn with stalactites. Numerous Cinnamon-breasted Buntings and some Arabian Sunbirds, African Silverbills and White-spectacled Bulbuls were coming in to drink tiny droplets of water dribbling from the tufa deposits. A Sparrowhawk spooked everything a couple of times, and we waited. Some Rock Hyraxes (including a very cute youngster) far below distracted us briefly. But still we waited. And then, there it was! An Arabian (Golden-winged) Grosbeak, one of peninsula's most desirable and difficult endemics, appeared briefly, then hid in a cleft in the rocks, its head poking out now and then. And it emerged and showed well on a couple of trees for us, before melting away. What a result!

Elated, we had coffee and dates under a shady rock overhang, then headed back over the ridge and down to the middle section of the wadi. It was drier than usual in the lower section, so we quickly moved up to where there was water, and found Squacco Heron, Teal, Common Sandpiper, Greenshank and Little Grebe incongruously present. A row of dense trees turned up African Paradise Flycatchers, Tree Pipits, a couple of Bluethroats and common local passerines, and then we focused on a particular fruiting fig. Hey presto! First one and then two Bruce's Green Pigeons broke cover and then posed beautifully for us in the telescopes. We enjoyed a delicious picnic lunch in the shade, accompanied by an Oriental Garden Lizard, feeling rather proud of ourselves.



Isabelline Shrike



Arabian Cobra

We descended back to the plain and went to Khawr Rori, which is really just the tidal section of Wadi Darbat; we were able to look back and see the mighty hundred metre (dry) waterfall on top of which we had had our lunch. We went right down to the estuary and scanned the tidal zone, finding Osprey, Greater Spotted Eagle, Terek Sandpiper, Western Reef Heron and many distant terns and gulls, including Lesser Crested Tern. A large, black and copper snake was exciting, slithering along in the water and then emerging to disappear under a bush, and we saw many tiny fiddler crabs too. Consultation with Dan Lay back at Naturetrek HQ later revealed it had been the rarely seen and very dangerous Arabian Cobra!

Next up was a bit of culture at Sumhuram, an ancient (third to fifth century CE) fortified settlement which was once the centre of the frankincense trade. We enjoyed the small, air-conditioned museum (with a rather good short video presentation), then explored the ruins themselves, perched high on a bluff overlooking the estuary. Almost eighty Curlews were on the mud far below.

After a cold drinks/ice cream break, we drove back towards Salalah, diverting to Ain Hamran once again to try and mop up two target species we had missed there last time: Long-billed Pipit and Black-crowned Tchagra. There was absolutely zero response to the tapes of the latter, so we moved out onto the rocky, gentle slope, finding an Isabelline double (Wheatear and Shrike) before a client locked onto a large pipit: bingo! Long-billed Pipit was in the bag. We had almost given up in the tchagra, but Simon gave the now traditional “ten more minutes” call and we headed into an area of scrub and bushes we hadn’t covered before. A tiny movement in a dense bush caught Simon’s eye, and gradually everyone got views of a Black-crowned Tchagra. We move closer and closer, increasingly convinced that the bird had done a bunk, unseen, but found it was still in there, allowing us views too close for binoculars, if only of a part of the bird at a time! Delighted with our success, we headed home for sunset, to get ready for a final, action-packed day enjoying Arabia’s finest birding.

Day 12

Monday 23rd February

Mudayy – Thumrayt dump – khwars west and east of Salalah

We set off at 5.30am for the drive back up the escarpment to the village of Mudayy, arriving as dawn broke. A quick check of a sandgrouse drinking site produced nothing, so we relocated to the oasis and explored on foot, quickly finding a female Palestine Sunbird, Asian Desert Warbler, Blue Rock Thrush, Lesser Whitethroat, Bluethroat and a very smart Menetries’s Warbler, and hearing Sand Partridge; one of the latter showed very briefly on the skyline for some. A small party of Crowned Sandgrouse raced distantly past. Then Simon spotted a bird flying and landing in a distant tree, and calmly announced “I have a Grey Hypocolius in the scope”. Only about three people got onto it before it flew off once more.

We took a tactical breakfast near where it had landed, to no avail, but some managed to get onto a brief Yellow-browed Warbler by the oasis pool. Nerves were fraying, and we decided to repeat our loop. Very quickly, we found a stunning male Nile Valley Sunbird, which was a massive crowd-pleaser, and certainly raised our spirits! And then Simon very uncalmly screamed “GREY HYPOCOLIUS!”, as a pair flew overhead and circled, giving everyone decent views. We followed them up and got excellent perched views of the female, and very good flight views of the male. Mission accomplished!

There was still no sandgrouse action at the leaky pipe (we reflected that you can't be everywhere at the same time), so we cut our losses (such as they were) and headed back east towards Thumrayt. We had good views of nine Chestnut-bellied Sandgrouse on a roundabout as we approached the main road. We turned south and visited the famed Thumrayt dump, seeing about thirty Steppe Eagles wheeling about, in addition to a pair of Arabian Wheatears.

We dropped back off the plateau and down to Salalah, took a right turn past the airport, and went to the coast at Khawr Al Qurm As Saghir, near the Hilton Resort. We quickly located two new species (Wigeon and African Sacred Ibis, the latter yet another very rare bird in Oman) in addition to Medium Egret, Greater Flamingoes, Garganeys and lots of other common water and shorebirds. There was, alas, no sign of the long-staying Black Heron.

We tried again at Khawr Aqwad a bit further east, in search of the also long-staying Caspian Plover, but without luck. We did add what would *surely* be our final wader (our thirty-fourth!) in the shape of Sanderlings on the shoreline, and saw a Booted Eagle as we were leaving. It was time for a well-deserved lunch at the hotel and a siesta.

At 3.30pm, some of us went out again and bluffed our way through a neighbouring luxury exclusive resort to gain beach access, saving a long slog on the sand. We quickly found Khawr Al Balid, and as hoped, there were Pintailed Snipes feeding in the beach vegetation! And that made it thirty-five waders for the tour. Remarkably, there were at least thirty of them, an exceptional count for anywhere in Arabia. We got great views of them in flight, noting the crucial field marks and call.

At 4.30pm, we headed east out of town and then dropped down to the coast, to check a series of underwatched khawrs, heading back west. There were multiple Ospreys and a few waders, plus numerous Isabelline and Great Grey Shrikes, but nothing new. We ended up at a busy East Khawr to enjoy our now familiar friends: hundreds of gulls, a good few waders, terns and ducks (including Tufted Ducks, now up to fifteen), the Medium Egret again, and both Common and Clamorous Reed Warblers. And thus closed the 'official' birding section of the tour!

Day 13

Tuesday 24th February

Flights home

We left at 8.00am, and had a sneaky fifteen minutes at As Saadah Park, looking for the wintering Grey-headed Kingfisher; sadly, we couldn't find it. Ah well. From here, we drove directly to the airport, and said goodbye to Hisham, Hood, Mishal and Safwan, who had looked after us so brilliantly. We had travelled over 3,000km through this amazing country of fabulous contrasts, seeing almost two hundred bird species (plus scoring with mega-rare African Wildcat and Arabian Cobra sightings), and enjoying great feeding and each other's company under the unbroken tropical sun. What a trip it had been.

Our flight to Muscat left promptly, and we connected successfully with onward legs to Heathrow and Manchester, concluding the tour.



Arabian Eagle-Owl



Indian Roller



Crested Honey Buzzard



Sunset over Muscat

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Species lists

Birds (H=heard only)

I = introduced, AE = Arabian endemic, ANE = Arabian near-endemic		February 2026											
Common name	Scientific name	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
Garganey	<i>Spatula querquedula</i>						9		11			8	
Northern Shoveler	<i>Spatula clypeata</i>			30					4			25	
Gadwall	<i>Mareca strepera</i>			1								2	
Eurasian Wigeon	<i>Mareca penelope</i>											10	
Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>							15	15			2	
Northern Pintail	<i>Anas acuta</i>								4			6	
Eurasian Teal	<i>Anas crecca</i>	40		10	3				10		1+	2	
Tufted Duck	<i>Aythya fuligula</i>			1					1			15	
Grey Francolin	<i>Ortygornis pondicerianus</i>	1		9+									
Sand Partridge - ANE	<i>Ammoperdix heyi</i>											1	
Arabian Partridge - AE	<i>Alectoris melanocephala</i>									15			
Pallid Swift	<i>Apus pallidus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓		4						
Asian Koel	<i>Eudynamys scolopaceus</i>						2			1			
Chestnut-bellied Sandgrouse	<i>Pterocles exustus</i>						40	15	2			9	
Spotted Sandgrouse	<i>Pterocles senegallus</i>							35					
Crowned Sandgrouse	<i>Pterocles coronatus</i>											15	
Rock Dove	<i>Columba livia</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Eurasian Collared Dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Laughing Dove	<i>Spilopelia senegalensis</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Namaqua Dove	<i>Oena capensis</i>				10			2	2		1		
Bruce's Green Pigeon	<i>Treron waalia</i>										2 (+H)		
Common Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>		1	4	2			1	5		2	10	
Eurasian Coot	<i>Fulica atra</i>			2				1	7				
Grey-headed Swamphen	<i>Porphyrio poliocephalus</i>			1									
White-breasted Waterhen	<i>Amaurornis phoenicurus</i>							1+					
Little Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>			5	1				15		2	6	
Black-necked Grebe	<i>Podiceps nigricollis</i>				5								
Greater Flamingo	<i>Phoenicopterus roseus</i>	7			7	9	33		20		13	6	
Eurasian Oystercatcher	<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>	13			2	✓							1

I = introduced, AE = Arabian endemic, ANE = Arabian near-endemic		February 2026											
Common name	Scientific name	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
Black-winged Stilt	<i>Himantopus himantopus</i>			7	8				25		1	20	
Pied Avocet	<i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>			7									
Grey Plover	<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>		1		4	✓			4			20	
Pacific Golden Plover	<i>Pluvialis fulva</i>				9		5		78				
Common Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>	5		4					5				
Little Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius dubius</i>			1					2				
Red-wattled Lapwing	<i>Vanellus indicus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓				10				
Tibetan Sand Plover	<i>Anarhynchus atrifrons</i>		10		5	✓						1	
Greater Sand Plover	<i>Anarhynchus leschenaultii</i>	10	5		15	✓							
Kentish Plover	<i>Anarhynchus alexandrinus</i>	15	40	15	25	✓	2	1	10			120	
Eurasian Whimbrel	<i>Numenius phaeopus</i>	1	9	5	8	✓			1		2		
Eurasian Curlew	<i>Numenius arquata</i>	2	2		3	✓	1		1		77	4	
Bar-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa lapponica</i>				4	✓							
Black-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa limosa</i>	10		1					3			10	
Pin-tailed Snipe	<i>Gallinago stenura</i>											30+	
Common Snipe	<i>Gallinago gallinago</i>	10		6	1							1	
Snipe sp.	<i>Gallinago sp.</i>		1						1				
Red-necked Phalarope	<i>Phalaropus lobatus</i>			20						25			
Terek Sandpiper	<i>Xenus cinereus</i>	1			12	✓			3		1		
Common Sandpiper	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>			3	2		3	4	25		10	20	2
Green Sandpiper	<i>Tringa ochropus</i>			1	4				1				
Marsh Sandpiper	<i>Tringa stagnatilis</i>	2							2				
Wood Sandpiper	<i>Tringa glareola</i>				3				2			30	
Common Redshank	<i>Tringa totanus</i>	6	4	2	3	✓			10			10	
Spotted Redshank	<i>Tringa erythropus</i>		7		1								
Common Greenshank	<i>Tringa nebularia</i>	5	2		3	✓	2		5		5	20	
Ruddy Turnstone	<i>Arenaria interpres</i>	2	12			✓				10			
Ruff	<i>Calidris pugnax</i>	3		25+								1	
Curlew Sandpiper	<i>Calidris ferruginea</i>	2				10							
Temminck's Stint	<i>Calidris temminckii</i>			2			1		3				
Long-toed Stint	<i>Calidris subminuta</i>								1				
Sanderling	<i>Calidris alba</i>											8	

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Dunlin	<i>Calidris alpina</i>	15			1	✓	40		3			3	
Little Stint	<i>Calidris minuta</i>	10		15		✓	2		40			15	
Crab-plover	<i>Dromas ardeola</i>				3	10							
Cream-colored Courser	<i>Cursorius cursor</i>						1		2				
Little Tern	<i>Sternula albifrons</i>	6			3	6					2		
Gull-billed Tern	<i>Gelochelidon nilotica</i>				4		1		3		1	2	
Caspian Tern	<i>Hydroprogne caspia</i>				5	20	5		2		4	6	
Whiskered Tern	<i>Chlidonias hybrida</i>	12		1	1				4		6	5	
Common Tern	<i>Sterna hirundo</i>					2				1	20		
Sandwich Tern	<i>Thalasseus sandvicensis</i>	4			5	10					15		
Lesser Crested Tern	<i>Thalasseus bengalensis</i>				1						2		
Greater Crested Tern	<i>Thalasseus bergii</i>	✓	5	20	20	10			✓	2	10	1	1
Slender-billed Gull	<i>Chroicocephalus genei</i>	20		1	20	✓			✓	1	✓	✓	
Black-headed Gull	<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>	10		3					1			25	
Pallas's Gull	<i>Ichthyaetus ichthyaetus</i>	10			50	20	1			1			
Sooty Gull	<i>Ichthyaetus hemprichii</i>	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Caspian Gull	<i>Larus cachinnans</i>	1+				2+							
Lesser Black-backed Gull (<i>sensu lato</i>)	<i>Larus fuscus</i>		✓				✓	✓					✓
Steppe Gull	<i>Larus fuscus barabensis</i>	✓		✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	
Heuglin's Gull	<i>Larus fuscus heuglini</i>	✓			✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	
Red-billed Tropicbird	<i>Phaethon aethereus</i>									1			
Persian Shearwater - ANE	<i>Puffinus persicus</i>									10			
Jouanin's Petrel	<i>Bulweria fallax</i>									5			
Abdim's Stork	<i>Ciconia abdimii</i>								50	10			
White Stork	<i>Ciconia ciconia</i>								200	1			
Masked Booby	<i>Sula dactylatra</i>									5+			
Great Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>	25	1	90	20	✓			2		4	1	1
African Sacred Ibis	<i>Threskiornis aethiopicus</i>											1	
Glossy Ibis	<i>Plegadis falcinellus</i>	1			1			25	20	200	100	50	
Eurasian Spoonbill	<i>Platalea leucorodia</i>										1		
Black-crowned Night Heron	<i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>		3				4	1		2			
Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>							2	2		3	2	

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Common name	Scientific name	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
Western Reef Heron	<i>Egretta gularis</i>		2	1	3	✓	2		5	4	2	10	
Little Heron	<i>Butorides atricapilla</i>		2						1	2	1		
Squacco Heron	<i>Ardeola ralloides</i>								1		3	1	
Indian Pond Heron	<i>Ardeola grayii</i>	1	1	4		2	1	1	2	1		10	
Great Egret	<i>Ardea alba</i>	1	1	1	5	10	2		1		1	3	
Medium Egret	<i>Ardea intermedia</i>								2			2	
Western Cattle Egret	<i>Ardea ibis</i>			5			4	25	20			10	
Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>		3	10	40	✓	4	1	5	1	2	10	
Purple Heron	<i>Ardea purpurea</i>								1				
Osprey	<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>			1	1	1			2		1	3	
Black-winged Kite	<i>Elanus caeruleus</i>	2											
Egyptian Vulture	<i>Neophron percnopterus</i>			4+	2								
Crested Honey Buzzard	<i>Pernis ptilorhynchus</i>								1			1	
Short-toed Snake Eagle	<i>Circaetus gallicus</i>									1	3		
Greater Spotted Eagle	<i>Clanga clanga</i>			2				3	3		1	3	
Booted Eagle	<i>Hieraaetus pennatus</i>											1	
Steppe Eagle	<i>Aquila nipalensis</i>											40	
Eastern Imperial Eagle	<i>Aquila heliaca</i>	1						1	1	3	3	4	
Bonelli's Eagle	<i>Aquila fasciata</i>									4			
Verreaux's Eagle	<i>Aquila verreauxii</i>									2			
Eurasian Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>						2	1	1		1		
Western Marsh Harrier	<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>	2			1	1		1	2	1		2	
Long-legged Buzzard	<i>Buteo rufinus</i>				1					2			
Arabian Eagle-Owl - AE	<i>Bubo milesi</i>							1					
Eurasian Hoopoe	<i>Upupa epops</i>	2	1						1	1	1		
Indian Roller	<i>Coracias benghalensis</i>	30	15	6	3	2							
Common Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>		1		1								
Arabian Green Bee-eater - ANE	<i>Merops cyanophrys</i>	30		10	1				2			1	
Blue-cheeked Bee-eater	<i>Merops persicus</i>							1	1				
Common Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>					1	1	3	5	8	4	5	1
Rose-ringed Parakeet	<i>Psittacula krameri</i>		1				H		1			1	2
Black-crowned Tchagra	<i>Tchagra senegalus</i>										1		

I = introduced, AE = Arabian endemic, ANE = Arabian near-endemic		February 2026											
Common name	Scientific name	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
African Paradise Flycatcher	<i>Terpsiphone viridis</i>							2	3	2	15		
Great Grey Shrike	<i>Lanius excubitor</i>		1			1		10	1			5	
Masked Shrike	<i>Lanius nubicus</i>								1				
Bay-backed Shrike	<i>Lanius vittatus</i>									1			
Isabelline Shrike	<i>Lanius isabellinus</i>	2	1				1		2	1	1	12	
House Crow - I	<i>Corvus splendens</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	1	1	4	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Brown-necked Raven	<i>Corvus ruficollis</i>		2	8		3	3	1				4	
Fan-tailed Raven	<i>Corvus rhipidurus</i>							6		20	10	2	
Grey Hypocolius	<i>Hypocolius ampelinus</i>											3+	
Greater Hoopoe-Lark	<i>Alaemon alaudipes</i>					5	4	1					
Desert Lark	<i>Ammomanes deserti</i>		8	2	2							2	
Black-crowned Sparrow-Lark	<i>Eremopterix nigriceps</i>						2	15	10				
Crested Lark	<i>Galerida cristata</i>	20		2	6	10	8	20+	20			10	
Greater Short-toed Lark	<i>Calandrella brachydactyla</i>							100+					
Red-vented Bulbul - I	<i>Pycnonotus cafer</i>		3										
White-eared Bulbul - I	<i>Pycnonotus leucotis</i>	6	4	5	1								
White-spectacled Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus xanthopygos</i>		10	2				✓	25	✓	✓	✓	2
Sand Martin	<i>Riparia riparia</i>	5										30	3
Pale Crag Martin	<i>Ptyonoprogne obsoleta</i>	3	10	4	6	1		3	2	4	10	15	2
Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	20			1							20	
Western House Martin	<i>Delichon urbicum</i>							1					
Yellow-browed Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus inornatus</i>											1	
Plain Leaf Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus neglectus</i>		1										
Common Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>			2+			11	4				2	
Clamorous Reed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus stentoreus</i>			1	H	H					H	1	
Common Reed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus scirpaceus</i>								1			1	
Graceful Prinia	<i>Prinia gracilis</i>								4	H	2	2	
Delicate Prinia	<i>Prinia lepida</i>	15		10	H								
Lesser Whitethroat	<i>Curruca curruca</i>		7					1				1	
Arabian Warbler - ANE	<i>Curruca leucomelaena</i>								2	1	1		
Asian Desert Warbler	<i>Curruca nana</i>			1				5				1	
Menetries's Warbler	<i>Curruca mystacea</i>											1	

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Common name	Scientific name	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
Abyssinian White-eye	<i>Zosterops abyssinicus</i>							12	10	20	✓	10	
Arabian Babbler - ANE	<i>Argya squamiceps</i>		6										
Common Myna - I	<i>Acridotheres tristis</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓							1	
Brahminy Starling	<i>Sturnia pagodarum</i>									1			
Tristram's Starling - ANE	<i>Onychognathus tristramii</i>							2	20	✓	✓	✓	4
Song Thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>									1			
Bluethroat	<i>Luscinia svecica</i>							3			2	1	
Red-breasted Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula parva</i>						1						
Black Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus ochruros</i>		1	1			3	1					
Blue Rock Thrush	<i>Monticola solitarius</i>											2	
Northern Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe oenanthe</i>							3					
Isabelline Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe isabellina</i>								6		1	2	
Desert Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe deserti</i>	1	1		1	4	10	✓	10		2	10	
Blackstart	<i>Oenanthe melanura</i>							5	2	5	10	2	
Red-tailed Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe chrysopygia</i>		5										
Hume's Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe albonigra</i>		1	3									
Arabian Wheatear - AE	<i>Oenanthe lugentoides</i>					2			2	1	1	2	
Nile Valley Sunbird	<i>Hedydipna metallica</i>											1	
Palestine Sunbird	<i>Cinnyris osea</i>										1	1	
Arabian Sunbird - AE	<i>Cinnyris hellmayri</i>							10	10	10	✓	2	1
Purple Sunbird	<i>Cinnyris asiaticus</i>	25	15	✓	✓								
Pale Rockfinch	<i>Carpospiza brachydactyla</i>								1				
House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Rüppell's Weaver	<i>Ploceus galbula</i>							15	15	4	10	1	1
African Silverbill	<i>Euodice cantans</i>						2 (intr.)	2	5	H	20	15	
Indian Silverbill - I	<i>Euodice malabarica</i>	12	3	6									
Scaly-breasted Munia - I	<i>Lonchura punctulata</i>											5	
Western Yellow Wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava</i>						2		11	20		10	5
Citrine Wagtail	<i>Motacilla citreola</i>	1		1	2				3		1		
Grey Wagtail	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>		1					1			1		1
White Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>	1	1	2			6	10	10	10	5	5	2
Blyth's Pipit	<i>Anthus godlewskii</i>									1			

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Common name	Scientific name	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
Tawny Pipit	<i>Anthus campestris</i>		2			4		2	2			10	
Long-billed Pipit	<i>Anthus similis</i>										1		
Tree Pipit	<i>Anthus trivialis</i>						1			12	4		
Red-throated Pipit	<i>Anthus cervinus</i>								3				
Water Pipit	<i>Anthus spinoletta</i>							2					
Arabian Golden-winged Grosbeak - AE	<i>Rhynchostruthus percivali</i>										1		
Yemen Serin - AE	<i>Crithagra menachensis</i>									2			
Striolated Bunting	<i>Emberiza striolata</i>							2	2				
Cinnamon-breasted Bunting	<i>Emberiza tahapisi</i>							20	20	10	✓		

Mammals

		February 2026											
Common name	Scientific name	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
a rat	<i>Murinae sp.</i>		1										
Common Dolphin	<i>Delphinus delphis</i>			100+									
Common Bottlenose Dolphin	<i>Tursiops truncatus</i>			50+									
Wild Donkey - I	<i>Equus africanus asinus</i>			✓	✓								
African Wild Cat	<i>Felis lybica</i>						1						
Rock Hyrax	<i>Procavia capensis jayakari</i>									4			

Reptiles

AE = Arabian endemic, I = introduced, D = dead		February 2026											
Common name	Scientific name	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
Green Turtle	<i>Chelonia mydas</i>			1	3	D							
Carter's Rock Gecko - AE	<i>Pristurus carteri</i>						1					1	
Oriental Garden Lizard - I	<i>Calotes versicolor</i>										1		
Bosc's Fringe-toed Lizard	<i>Acanthodactylus boskianus</i>						1						
Arabian Cobra - AE	<i>Naja arabica</i>										1		

Butterflies

		February 2026											
Common name	Scientific name	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
One-pip Policeman (Giant Skipper)	<i>Coeliades anchises</i>		✓										
Lime Swallowtail	<i>Papilio demoleus</i>		✓		✓				✓	✓			
African Monarch	<i>Danaus chrysippus</i>	✓	✓				✓			✓			
Pearl Charaxes	<i>Charaxes varanes</i>								✓	✓	✓		
Yellow Pansy	<i>Junonia hierta</i>								✓				
Blue Pansy	<i>Junonia orithya</i>									✓			
an (African) grass blue	<i>Zizeeria</i> sp.			✓						✓	✓		

Moths

		February 2026											
Common name	Scientific name	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
Death's Head Hawk-moth	<i>Acherontia atropos</i>				1								
Crimson Speckled	<i>Utetheisa pulchella</i>				2								

Damselflies & dragonflies

		February 2026											
Common name	Scientific name	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
Desert Bluetail	<i>Ischnura evansi</i>		✓										
Blue Emperor	<i>Anax parthenope</i>			✓								✓	
Slender Skimmer	<i>Orthetrum sabina</i>		✓				✓						
Black Percher	<i>Diplacodes lefebvrii</i>							✓					
Broad Scarlet	<i>Crocothemis erythraea</i>		✓					✓					
Violet Dropwing	<i>Trithemis annulata</i>		✓					✓					
Ferruginous Glider	<i>Tramea limbata</i>										✓		
Red-veined Darter	<i>Sympetrum fonscolombii</i>		✓										

Other insects

		February 2026											
Common name	Scientific name	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
Grasshoppers													
a giant slant-faced grasshopper	<i>Truxalis longicornis</i>										1		
Beetles													
a darkling beetle	<i>Tenebrionidae</i> sp.					1						1	
a dung beetle	<i>Scarabaeoidea</i> sp.										1		
Bees													
a carpenter bee	<i>Xylocopa</i> sp.	✓	✓				✓			✓			

Crustaceans

		February 2026											
Common name	Scientific name	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
a fiddler crab	<i>Uca</i> sp.										✓		

Selected plants

AE = Arabian endemic	
Common name	Scientific name
Arabian Dragon Tree - AE	<i>Dracaena serrulata</i>
African Baobab Tree	<i>Adansonia digitata</i>
Desert Rose	<i>Adenium obesum</i>
Frankincense Tree	<i>Boswellia sacra</i>
Apple of Sodom	<i>Calotropis procera</i>