

Uzbekistan's Wildlife & Culture

Naturetrek Tour Report

16th – 25th May 2026



Shakhi Zindak Necropolis



Blyth's Roachfinch



Lavender Mountain Lily



Black-veined White

Tour report by Martin Pitt



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Za'amin National Park

Summary

Naturetrek's wildlife and cultural trip to Uzbekistan was a successful introduction to this diverse and ancient land, with its mix of mountains, deserts and the icons of the Great Silk Road. Expertly assisted by Timur as wildlife guide, together with local cultural guides and our faithful driver Jahangir, we visited the cities of Tashkent, Samarkand and Bukhara, with their blue-tiled mosques, madrasas and mausoleums, and the natural wonders around them. We headed high into the 'Switzerland of Uzbekistan' at 2500m in Za'amin, and the low plains of red sand in the Kyzylkum desert. We also experienced the hospitality of the Uzbek people and their unique cuisine, a tasty blend of Persian, Turkish, Indian and Chinese food.

Despite mixed weather, including some exceptionally unseasonal rain in the Kyzylkum, we recorded 125 species of birds, five species of mammals, twelve species of butterflies, ten species of reptiles, ten species of dragonflies, and some interesting plants. Although it was hot in Tashkent, the other cities were cool for the time of year, and we noted how green it was after a wet spring. Za'amin was strange, with spring late at the high elevations, where the snow had only recently cleared, to really advanced at low elevations, where flowers had already set seed and birds with young were commonplace.

Many of the species we found are localised to this region, while others are familiar from further east, south or west, creating a 'melting pot' of a region. Highlights included Turkestan Ground Jay, Blyth's Rosefinch, Rufous-naped Tit, Caspian Desert Monitor, Lichtenstein's Toadhead Agama, Rapid Racerunner, Turkmen (Goitered) Gazelle, and Kulan (Transcaspian Wild Ass). Butterfly diversity was low, but Black-veined Whites and Eastern Pale Clouded Yellows were seen in good numbers. Mention must also be made of Painted Ladies: a major emergence made Kyzylkum alive with fresh specimens. Dragonflies were active, and many of the species were little-known ones, including Turkestan Goldenring, Turkestan Winter Damselfly, Samarkand Demoiselle and Forked Bluetail.

In all, this was a stunning introduction to this double-landlocked, historic country in central Asia. We travelled the Silk Road, admiring the historic buildings, and delighted at the mix of culture and wildlife in this exotic land. The hotels and transport were all very new, making this a comfortable country to visit, and the locals were hospitable

and welcoming, proud to show off their country and keen to make sure everyone was well-fed. We left with a wealth of experiences of this unique land.

Day 1

Saturday 16th May

Flight to Tashkent via Istanbul

Nine clients and Martin departed from Heathrow on an evening flight to Istanbul. The transfer was straightforward, if convoluted. We departed for Tashkent on time. All flights were comfortable and made good time.

Day 2

Sunday 17th May

Tashkent – Za'amin

We arrived at Tashkent on time, and quickly cleared passport control. Baggage reclaim took longer, but we were soon on our way meeting up with Timur, our local guide, and the remaining two clients who had arrived early after a few days in Istanbul. We then travelled the short distance to Hotel Shamsan for breakfast, spying flocks of Swifts and numerous Common Mynas on the way. We had a welcome chance to have a bit of breakfast and to freshen up.

We then headed through the Tashkent Sunday traffic with our local cultural guide. Our focus was the Hazrati-Imam complex of historical buildings. We briefly stopped at the memorial to the 1966 earthquake which destroyed so much of the city, and started our explorations at the Hazrati Imam Jome Mosque, before heading to the Uthman Qur'an museum, the Mui Mubarak Madrassi, and finally the Hazrati Imam mausoleum. The sites themselves were wonderful, and the setting was peaceful. The Centre for Islamic Civilisation Islamic institute had finally opened the month before; the world's oldest Qur'an is more difficult to see as it is now housed in the centre. Overhead we spied our first Shikras and other city birds including Laughing Dove, and the Indian form of House Sparrow. After a couple of hours and the temperature rising to the mid-thirties, we were ready to embark on our journey south-west to Za'amin, having picked up packed lunches.

The transfer to Za'amin is long, and initially we crossed agricultural plains. We stopped at a White Stork colony, where it seemed that every power pylon held five or six nests. Other species were limited to a party of five Glossy Ibises flying over and three Marsh Harriers. However, the canal here held our first dragonflies: Common Bluetail, Blue Emperor, White tailed Skimmer and Broad Scarlet. We tracked the Tajikistan border, and then in Za'amin town we started to climb from the lowland plain into the mountains. The roadside wires had plenty of European Bee-eaters and European Rollers, which breed here in the sandy cliffs by the road. Once in the park itself, we stopped to stretch our legs and do a little birding by the stream, finding the expected seven-hundred-year-old Walnut tree, but the numerous picnicking locals meant few birds were seen. We completed the last kilometres to our hotel at an elevation 2200m just after 5.30pm. We all checked in, had our dinner before the jet lag kicked in, and headed to bed.

Day 3

Monday 18th May

Za'amin National Park

At 6.00am, we were greeted by low cloud and the threat of rain. The hotel grounds, which had a waterfall and a watercourse, provided habitat for Blue Whistling Thrush and two species of wagtails, namely Grey and the Masked subspecies of White Wagtail. We loaded the bus and headed up to the sub-alpine zone at 2500m. We walked through juniper groves, where apparently the winter's snow had only cleared about ten days previously, and it was evident that the flowering plants were only just coming into bloom, with Olivier's Gentian and Mountain Avens starting to show a little colour in places. The dull conditions didn't help with the bird life either. It was slow going: a few Yellow-breasted Tits showed well enough, but the Rufous-naped Tits that we could hear gave only the briefest of views. Mistle Thrush, Rock Bunting and Hume's Lesser Whitethroat were more confiding, and a couple of Tolai Hares scampered away in front of us. With the rain showers returning, we decided to head back to the hotel for a slightly earlier breakfast.

At 9.00am, suitably refreshed, we went out again, but this time headed downhill. Our first stop was at a small grove of poplars, and we soon found our target, a White-capped Bunting singing high above us. The area was alive with Spotted Flycatchers, a feature we noted throughout the day. We went further downhill and briefly stopped again at the old Walnut tree. With only a few people around, we could search more thoroughly, but still only turned up a Greenish Warbler and a family party of Grey-crowned Goldfinches. Lastly, we headed beyond the park entrance barriers and took a side road by a stream. The temperature was building, and the dull start to the day gave way to a hot and sunny morning. Butterflies responded, with many whites on the wing; Eastern Pale Clouded Yellow, Brown Argus and Queen of Spain Fritillary were also found. A few donatan were also on the stream edges: Samarkand Demoiselles seemed common, and we soon added Southern Skimmer and Forked Bluetail to the list. The stream edges were attractive nesting sites, and we were soon being serenaded by Nightingales, Eastern Olivaceous Warblers, Indian Paradise Flycatchers and Indian Golden Orioles. Overhead, a Hobby dashed through and, as the temperature rose, Griffon and Egyptian Vultures soared on the thermals. We walked through an abandoned Soviet-era chalet camp, where the wilderness was slowly reclaiming the human order. Here, a Painted Lady, some giant alliums and a couple of oddly low-elevation Hume's Leaf Warblers were our additions before we headed back to the bus and its welcoming A/C for the journey back to our hotel, for lunch and then a siesta.

The plan was to meet up at 4.00pm for another attempt at the high-elevation specials. We were, however, treated to thunder, lightning and then a downpour which concluded with a hail storm. It soon abated and, only a little late, we headed back up towards the same area we had tried in the morning. Our first stop was at an overlook of 'tit-warbler tree' and a view of 'bear hill', so named in honour of exciting sightings in earlier years; however, these events were not repeated. We did get stunning views of a male White-winged Grosbeak and a fly-over Bearded Vulture, though. We continued up the hill to the juniper meadows. Again, we found the area to be quiet, and the cloud cover progressively increased. Distant views of Blyth's Rosefinch and Blue-capped Redstart showed that there was potential, but with the weather closing in, we headed back down to the hotel for supper.

Day 4

Tuesday 19th May

Za'amin National Park and Samarkand

We met at 6.00am and drove back up to the track into the juniper forest, around water tanks for the high-level hotel complex. The first bird seen was a stunning male Siberian Stonechat, and we quickly followed this up with better views of Blue-capped Redstart and then a close-range Blyth's Rosefinch. Two Bearded Vultures flew over, and the morning brightened to give stunning views of the snow-capped Mount Za'amin. We found Tolai Hares to be plentiful in the subalpine meadows, but again the flowers were yet to put on a display. By the water tanks, we found a couple of male Pied Wheatears vying for territory, but soon enough it was time to head back for breakfast.

The rest of the morning was spent on a search for the tit-warbler. We returned to the overlook, but only succeeded in finding another White-winged Grosbeak and a Bearded Vulture, so we headed further into the park beyond the famous glass-floored 'footbridge to nowhere', to a picturesque valley. Unfortunately, we failed to find much new, beyond Jackdaws and Corn Buntings. However, at this slightly lower elevation, the Olivier's Gentians and Lavender Mountain Lilies were in full flower. With time pushing on, we headed closer to the hotel for one final stop. As with the middle area of the Park, it was impossible to escape the roadside to explore deeper here; however, we soon added Hobby, Booted Eagle, Bearded Vulture and another Blyth's Rosefinch. Rufous-naped Tits were nesting in the bank and gave great views as they serviced the growing nestlings. We then headed down the short distance to the hotel to pack and have lunch.

With the bus loaded, we left for the drive to Samarkand. We had a final stop outside the National Park at the reservoir, having already paused for Little Owl, Hoopoe, Roller and Bee-eater. The reservoir seemed mainly to be a collection point for plastic waste, but we did find three Shovelers, our first Crested Larks, and watched as wave after wave of Rosy Starlings flew over. The roadside cliffs also had a pair of nesting Rollers. Soon enough, we had to push on, and with rain imminent we continued to Samarkand through rain and lightning, but otherwise without incident. We checked in to our hotel, conveniently placed near the main sights, and then went to dinner at the Oasis Garden Restaurant. After dinner, we headed to Registan Square to see this iconic heritage madrasa lit up, although this year there was not a full son-et-lumière show.



Registan Square, Samarkand

Day 5

Wednesday 20th May

Samarkand and Takhta-Karacha Pass

It was a bright dawn, and at 5.00am, we joined a fleet of taxis for the seventy-kilometre journey to the mountains south of Samarkand. We headed to the top of the Takhta-Karacha Pass at 1700m, before turning off at a café. We had a quick breakfast, and then started to explore, finding singing Grey-crowned Goldfinch, Eastern Olivaceous Warbler and Indian Golden Oriole before we had even left the car park. The track climbed steadily into a landscape of rounded granite outcrops, set in a verdant hillside of grass and patchy scrub. The whole area was alive with Red-headed Buntings, and we found a European Glass Lizard basking in the first sun rays of the day.

As we climbed, one-by-one we encountered our targets for the day. Eastern Orphean Warblers seemed plentiful, an Upcher's Warbler showed well and Eastern Rock Nuthatches were seemingly feeding young. Red-tailed Shrikes perched sentinel on the tops of the junipers, and flocks of Rosy Starlings streamed northwards. The meadows were dotted with Giant Fennel and Viper's-bugloss, and although plentiful, nearly every butterfly turned out to be a Black-veined White. As the day warmed, Turkistan Rock Agamas appeared to sun themselves on the boulders, and on the thermals Griffon and Egyptian Vultures joined a Long-legged Buzzard, the latter having already found a lizard for its lunch. Reaching the high-level stream, we found lots of Kotschy's Marsh Orchids and watched as a recently-emerged Turkistan Goldenring dragonfly prepared itself for its first flight. We then headed back downhill, pausing for Rollers and Shikras.

Our next stop was along the ridge of the pass itself, finding Hume's Lark (as expected) in the sandy, exposed areas, together with Pied Wheatear and the local form of Pheasant-eye. Eastern Pale Clouded Yellows were the commonest butterflies here, and we also found a few Painted Ladies. We moved on to try and find White-throated Robin, but as the birds were nesting, they were inconspicuous, and it took a while to get even the briefest of glimpses. Conversely, Eastern Orphean Warblers and Red-tailed Shrikes were rather showy. We had our picnic

lunch at the overlook, with views to Tajikistan and beyond (although Afghanistan, less than three hundred kilometres to the south-east, was invisible in the mist). We drove back towards Samarkand and stopped at a wooded side valley. Our target of White-winged Woodpecker took a while to appear, but finally a pair was seen chasing each other through the canopy and nearby trees.

Our last stop was near Shlem D'Yavola, where granite outcrops form a local landmark of a heart-shaped rock. Here we took a brief stroll in hotter conditions; we were nearly back on the plain. The local wheatears didn't appear to mind, and we soon found a male Finsch's Wheatear as hoped for. After this stop, we drove back to the city, arriving around 4.30pm, enabling a relaxing break to do the checklist on the roof terrace under wheeling Alpine Swifts, and to prepare for dinner at the Samarqand restaurant, where we were entertained by locals having their elaborate birthday parties in the same section of the restaurant.

Day 6

Thursday 21st May

Samarkand

Today we had a more relaxed start and left the hotel at 9.00am, for a cultural day. We headed directly to the Guri Amir complex, which includes the Amir Timur mausoleum, the tomb of the founding ruler of Uzbekistan, whose fourteenth- and fifteenth-century empire stretched from Delhi to Istanbul. It was relatively quiet at the site, and we could enjoy the splendour of the decoration. We then moved on to the Registan and, unlike the previous evening, entered the complex, touring the three madrasas before taking a golf cart down to the Bibi Khanym Mosque, which was once the largest mosque in Samarkand. The rain that had threatened finally started, but was thankfully light as we explored the main Samarkand market, just next door to the mosque. The rows of spices, dried fruit and nuts and the fresh vegetables made for an impressive and colourful display.

We headed off to lunch, experiencing the traditional Samarkand *plov* (beef pilaf) at the best restaurant for the dish. Suitably refreshed, we headed to the Olug Bek observatory with its museum and ancient astronomical building, followed by Shakh Zindak Necropolis, with its blue-tiled mausoleums of Timur the Great's family.

Before heading back to the hotel, we walked along the Siab Aryk River towards the Khoja Dardiyor Mausoleum. This was a wildlife-focused end to the day, and the river attracted life to this otherwise dry area. Common Terns, a Kingfisher, Tree Sparrows, and Moorhens were all familiar species from home; however, the male Pheasant was a wild bird of the scarce *zerafschanicus* subspecies. A noisy group of three fully-fledged Little Owl chicks showed how advanced the season was. The stream held a mix of species: a Muskrat gave great views, as did the Marsh Frogs, but a Dice Snake only appeared briefly, complete with the small fish it had caught. The aquatic vegetation was attractive to damselflies, and both Small (Scarce) Bluetail and Ivory Featherlegs were ovipositing in good numbers. Overhead, Alpine Swifts and European Red-rumped Swallows hawked on the hatching flies.

We headed out for evening meal at the New Arbat restaurant, where in addition to good food, we were treated with traditional dancing, and then a classic disco, including the Village People's YMCA! The theme continued in the coach back with some eighties Europop, and then a sing-along 'Sweet Caroline', before we returned to prepare for our transfer day the following morning.

Day 7

Friday 22nd May

Bukhara

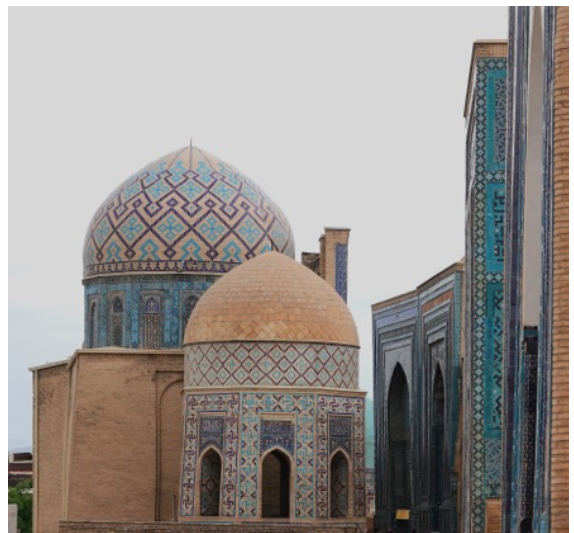
After breakfast, we left at 8.30am prompt for the long drive to Bukhara. A Striped Hawk-moth was found on the path to the hotel entrance, apparently not enjoying the cool morning. The journey passed uneventfully: we stopped briefly at Navoi for comfort/coffee, and then at the site of the eleventh century Rabat-i-Malik caravanserai, where only the portal remains, together with a preserved *sardoba*, one of the ancient covered wells that used to be located every thirty kilometres along the Silk Roads. Today, only four of them remain. We drove on, making good time.

We arrived for a late lunch at Bella Italia, before confusion over our booking delayed us checking into Oasis Garden Hotel. At 4.45pm we headed into the old town. Here, unlike in the previous cities, the historic centre was tightly-packed and mostly contained within a pedestrianised area, allowing not only a walking tour to many cultural sites, but also a wander through bazaars and streets. Furthermore, being clear of the earthquake zone, more of the buildings had escaped the ravages of natural disaster, even if most earlier buildings had not survived the 'scorched earth' policy of Genghis Khan. We started by the later madrassas from the seventeenth century, with their Persian style decoration and the statue of Khodja Nasreddin, a folkloric character and alleged native of Bukhara. We walked through Lyabi Hovuz, past the pool at the centre of the city, the oldest city mosque, the four trading domes, and the fifteenth-century Olug Bek madrasa, and its 'twin'.

We ended at the Mir-i-Arab Madrasa and the Kalon Mosque, the latter of which has a twelfth-century minaret: one of the few structures to have survived Genghis Khan's ravages. We only had a short way to go for dinner at the Zargaron restaurant, with views of the Kalon Minaret. After the meal, we returned to our hotel to prepare for the expedition to the desert the following day, our trip back enlivened by finding Turkestan Thin-figured Geckos hunting on the walls of the historic buildings.



Olivier's Gentian



Shakhi Zindak Necropolis



Red-headed Bunting



Turkestan Rock Agama

Day 8

Saturday 23rd May

Kyzylkum Desert and Bukhara

We needed to brave a 4.00am start to be in the desert when activity would be at its peak. The day dawned overcast, cool and threatening rain, which were very strange conditions for late May. This was our only chance for one of the most special birds of Central Asia: Turkestan (formerly Pander's) Ground Jay, a bird endemic to these deserts. Our plan was to stop at various kilometre posts and hope to find the birds, acknowledging that the breeding season had ended early this year. Our first birds were fly-over Ruddy Shelducks and Pygmy Cormorants, seeming somewhat incongruous in this arid area. We positioned ourselves on a low hill and scanned the surrounding area. Rufous-tailed Scrub-robins gave us some false alarms, and Sykes's Warblers sang in the tamarisks. Scanning, Timur found a single Ground Jay perched up, and although it was distant, at least we could relax. We tried to get closer, and although we were partially successful, it soon dropped down and melted into the landscape. We walked back to the bus for breakfast, finding Blue-cheeked Bee-eaters and a small flock of Desert Finches on the way. The final excitement was provided by Long-clawed Ground Squirrel and Lichtenstein's Toadhead Agama, the latter giving close-up views of this, the smallest of its kind in the world.

After our al fresco breakfast we moved on to another stop sixteen kilometres further west, and added another distant Ground Jay and a family party of Streaked Scrub Warblers. A number of bright and fresh Painted Ladies suggested that an emergence was underway in the desert. We then stopped at the first café/oasis, but it was soon clear that there were few birds present; a swarm of Band-winged Sand Grasshoppers covered most of the posts and building fronts. We started back towards Bukhara; the second tea house was even quieter, and the rain falling quite heavily now.

Despite the rain, we tried some pools near Gazli, and added more species to the list, including Ruff, White-tailed Lapwing and a singing Clamorous Reed Warbler. Many toadlets were around the pools, the young of another form of Green Toad, the Perrin's Green Toad. While we scanned for what else we could find, a pale-coloured sparrow was spotted in among the many Indian House Sparrows. This one had only a small bib, and a rufous patch behind the eye, and was obviously a Saxaul Sparrow, a species very rarely seen in this part of Uzbekistan. It rapidly disappeared, and a quick check in the rain yielded no more sightings. Oddly, the area was being used by browsing

camels; it was interesting to see that these were hybrids between Dromedaries and Bactrians, and retained characteristics of both, but had only one hump!

Our final stop was at some more pools, almost back at Bukhara. Viewing from the roadside was tricky, but brought more waders, including Wood Sandpipers, and a couple of Great Crested Grebes. In the reedy edges we also found our first Pied Bushchat, a characteristic species in the agricultural areas around Bukhara. We arrived back to the hotel just before 3.30pm, and after a pause, we headed out again at 4.15pm. Today, we tackled the remaining cultural sites just outside the pedestrianised centre, heading first to the Samanid Mausoleum, which dates from the tenth century, and another of the few buildings to have survived the wrath of Genghis Khan. We called into the Khiva-styled Chasma Ayub ('Job's Well') allegedly the site where the prophet struck the ground with his staff to bring water to the area, and then the Bolo-Hauz Mosque, with twenty wooden columns on its facade. The rain was falling hard by now, but fortunately it was only a short walk to our final stop at the Fort, with its winter palace known as the Ark. This was the final palace of the last Emir of Bukhara, eighty percent of which had been destroyed in a fire initiated, so it is said, by the Soviets. The remaining areas gave a glimpse of the final days of independent-rule in the 1920s; the ramparts normally offer wonderful views over the city, and a few hardy souls dodged the rain to experience them. We then walked through the trading domes to the Old Bukhara restaurant for our dinner.

Day 9

Sunday 24th May

Jeyran Ecocentre, Bukhara and Tashkent

Our last full day in Uzbekistan started early, with another 5.00am departure from the hotel, but this time we headed south-east under low cloud, but without the rain of the previous day. Short of the Ecocentre, we stopped on a small hill to the side of the road and scanned the reserve, finding lots of Turkman (Goitered) Gazelles and a party of six Kulans (Transcaspians Wild Asses). We searched for Asian Houbara, but there was no sign, so we moved on and took the track opposite the entrance to the Jeyran Ecocentre. We drove a short distance to the east, away from the reserve and along the Bukhara canal.

The overnight rain had made the ground soft, and we found the tracks of nocturnal mammals, namely Asian Wildcat, Golden Jackal and Badger. The tamarisk held warblers, including Menetries's and more Syke's. Marsh Harriers and Shikras were plentiful, and Bee-eaters of both species were active. Around the small agricultural fields, we found Oriental Skylarks displaying; however, the cool weather was holding back the invertebrates and reptiles. We walked as far as the pools, and there we found a mix of ducks and waders. Common Shelducks had their young with them, but the Garganeys, Teals, Shovelers and Gadwalls were likely to be migrants. A couple of Marbled Ducks flew over, suggesting that they were perhaps staying to breed. On the water, Red-necked Phalaropes were numerous, and careful scanning added Little Stint and Kentish Plover to our list of migrant waders. The noisy White-tailed Lapwings and Black-winged Stilts were obviously territorial and likely breeding here. The only gull present was a single Slender-billed Gull, but Little, Common and Gull-billed Terns were all busy holding territory.

Finally, in a little warmth, we walked back to the bus for another picnic breakfast. We found our first odonata of the day, including Turkestan Winter Damsels and Lesser Emperors. Butterflies also started to appear, with a mix of blues, including Amanda's, Small Jewel and Eastern Baton.

After breakfast we headed along the canal side road, hoping for some more species. However, the road disintegrated as we headed along, so we decided to head back. with only Rapid Racerunners and Bee-eaters. However, on the return journey a Caspian Desert Monitor, over a metre long, crossed the road in front of us: it was a much-wanted reptile for the trip.

We arrived back in Bukhara by 11.00am, leaving a bit of time to clear our rooms and complete the trip check list before checking out of our rooms, and having lunch at our hotel. We took the opportunity to say thank you to Timur and our driver Jahangir, who had supported us throughout the trip. We then headed to the nearby station, catching the 4.16pm service to Tashkent. The high speed Talgo train arrived just before 8.30pm, and we had a short transfer to our hotel. We had our final meal together in the hotel restaurant, during which we reflected on the trip, and the wonders of Uzbekistan.

Day 10

Monday 25th May

Departure

Our travel day started with an early breakfast; we left the hotel at 6.50am for the airport. The flight left on time and was smooth and trouble-free, via a transfer at Istanbul where we said goodbye to those staying on in Türkiye for a few days, and ensured that those going on the earlier Manchester connection made their flight. Our onward flight to Heathrow was on time, and we said our final farewells there, before heading home.



White-winged Grosbeak

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Species lists

Birds (H=heard only)

N=Near-endemic, I=Introduced		May 2026							
Common name	Scientific name	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
Common Shelduck	<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>								✓
Ruddy Shelduck	<i>Tadorna ferruginea</i>							✓	✓
Marbled Duck	<i>Marmaronetta angustirostris</i>								✓
Garganey	<i>Spatula querquedula</i>								✓
Northern Shoveler	<i>Spatula clypeata</i>			✓					✓
Gadwall	<i>Mareca strepera</i>								✓
Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>								✓
Eurasian Teal	<i>Anas crecca</i>								✓
Common Pheasant	<i>Phasianus colchicus</i>					✓			✓
Chukar Partridge	<i>Alectoris chukar</i>	✓	✓	✓					
Little Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>								H
Great Crested Grebe	<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>							✓	
Laughing Dove	<i>Spilopelia senegalensis</i>	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Oriental Turtle Dove	<i>Streptopelia orientalis meena</i>	✓		✓		✓			✓
Eurasian Collared Dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Common Woodpigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓			
Rock Dove	<i>Columba livia</i>		✓	✓					
Feral Rock Dove - I	<i>Columba livia var. domestica</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Common Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>					✓			
Black-winged Stilt	<i>Himantopus himantopus</i>							✓	✓
Little Ringed Plover	<i>Thinornis dubius</i>							✓	✓
White-tailed Lapwing	<i>Vanellus leucurus</i>							✓	✓
Kentish Plover	<i>Anarhynchus alexandrinus</i>								✓
Common Sandpiper	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>		✓					✓	✓
Red-necked Phalarope	<i>Phalaropus lobatus</i>								✓
Wood Sandpiper	<i>Tringa glareola</i>							✓	✓
Common Redshank	<i>Tringa totanus</i>								✓
Ruff	<i>Calidris pugnax</i>							✓	✓
Little Stint	<i>Calidris minuta</i>								✓
Little Tern	<i>Sternula albifrons</i>							✓	✓
Gull-billed Tern	<i>Gelochelidon nilotica</i>							✓	✓
Common Tern	<i>Sterna hirundo</i>				✓			✓	✓
Slender-billed Gull	<i>Chroicocephalus genei</i>								✓
White Stork	<i>Ciconia ciconia</i>	✓		✓			✓		
Pygmy Cormorant	<i>Microcarbo pygmaeus</i>							✓	
Glossy Ibis	<i>Plegadis falcinellus</i>	✓							
Great Egret	<i>Ardea alba</i>								✓
Purple Heron	<i>Ardea purpurea</i>	✓						✓	✓
Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>							✓	✓
Alpine Swift	<i>Tachymartus melba</i>				✓	✓			
Common Swift	<i>Apus apus</i>	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Little Owl	<i>Athene noctua</i>	✓		✓		✓			✓
Bearded Vulture	<i>Gypaetus barbatus</i>		✓	✓					
Egyptian Vulture	<i>Neophron percnopterus</i>		✓	✓	✓				
European Honey Buzzard	<i>Pernis apivorus</i>		✓						
Griffon Vulture	<i>Gyps fulvus</i>		✓	✓	✓				

N=Near-endemic, I=Introduced		May 2026							
Common name	Scientific name	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
Booted Eagle	<i>Hieraaetus pennatus</i>			✓	✓				
Golden Eagle	<i>Aquila chrysaetos</i>	✓							
Shikra	<i>Tachyspiza badia</i>	✓		✓	✓			✓	✓
Western Marsh Harrier	<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>	✓						✓	✓
Steppe Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo vulpinus</i>								✓
Long-legged Buzzard	<i>Buteo rufinus</i>				✓				
Eurasian Hoopoe	<i>Upupa epops</i>			✓	H			✓	
European Roller	<i>Coracias garrulus</i>	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Blue-cheeked Bee-eater	<i>Merops persicus</i>							✓	✓
European Bee-eater	<i>Merops apiaster</i>	✓		✓	H				✓
Common Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>					✓			
White-winged Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos leucopterus</i>				✓				
Common Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>		✓	✓	✓				
Eurasian Hobby	<i>Falco subbuteo</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓			
Barbary Falcon	<i>Falco peregrinus babylonicus</i>			✓					
Indian Golden Oriole	<i>Oriolus kundoo</i>	✓	✓		✓				
Indian Paradise Flycatcher	<i>Terpsiphone paradisi</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓				
Red-tailed Shrike	<i>Lanius phoenicuroides</i>				✓			✓	
Eurasian Magpie	<i>Pica pica</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Turkestan Ground Jay - N	<i>Podoces panderi</i>							✓	
Western Jackdaw	<i>Coloeus monedula soemmerringii</i>	✓		✓	✓				✓
Rook	<i>Corvus frugilegus</i>	✓		✓	✓				
Northern Raven	<i>Corvus corax tibetanus</i>			✓	✓				
Carrion Crow	<i>Corvus corone orientalis</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		
Azure (Yellow-breasted) Tit	<i>Cyanistes cyanus flavipectus</i>		✓	✓	✓				
Great (Turkestan) Tit	<i>Parus major bokharensis</i>		✓	✓	✓			✓	
Rufous-naped Tit	<i>Periparus rufonuchalis</i>		✓	✓					
Oriental Sklylark	<i>Alauda gulgula</i>								✓
Crested Lark	<i>Galerida cristata</i>			✓	✓			✓	✓
Hume's Short-toed Lark	<i>Calandrella acutirostris</i>				✓				
Upcher's Warbler	<i>Hippolais languida</i>				✓				
Sykes's Warbler	<i>Iduna rama</i>							✓	✓
Eastern Olivaceous Warbler	<i>Iduna pallida</i>		✓		✓				✓
Blyth's Reed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus dumetorum</i>			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Clamorous Reed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus stentoreus</i>							✓	
Sand Martin	<i>Riparia diluta</i>								✓
Pale Martin	<i>Riparia diluta</i>								✓
Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Western House Martin	<i>Delichon urbicum</i>			✓					
European Red-rumped Swallow	<i>Cecropis rufula</i>					✓			
Streaked Scrub Warbler	<i>Scotocerca inquieta</i>							✓	
Cetti's Warbler	<i>Cettia cetti</i>	H	H	H	H				H
Hume's Leaf Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus humei</i>		✓	✓					
Greenish Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus trochiloides viridanus</i>		✓	✓	✓				
Lesser Whitethroat	<i>Curruca curruca halimodendri</i>					✓	✓		
(Hume's) Lesser Whitethroat	<i>Curruca curruca althaea</i>		✓	✓	✓				
Eastern Orphean Warbler	<i>Curruca crassirostris</i>				✓				
Menetries's Warbler	<i>Curruca mystacea turcmenica</i>								✓
Eastern Rock Nuthatch	<i>Sitta tephronota</i>				✓				

N=Near-endemic, I=Introduced		May 2026							
Common name	Scientific name	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
Common Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>		✓		✓				
Rosy Starling	<i>Pastor roseus</i>			✓	✓				
Common Myna	<i>Acridotheres tristis</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Mistle Thrush	<i>Turdus viscivorus</i>		✓		✓				
Common Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Rufous-tailed Scrub Robin	<i>Cercotrichas galactotes</i>							✓	✓
Spotted Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa striata</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓				
White-throated Robin	<i>Irania gutturalis</i>				✓				
Common Nightingale	<i>Luscinia megarhynchos</i>		✓	✓	✓				✓
Blue Whistling Thrush	<i>Myophonus caeruleus</i>		✓	✓					
Blue-capped Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus coeruleocephala</i>		✓	✓					
Blue Rock Thrush	<i>Monticola solitarius</i>				✓				
Siberian Stonechat	<i>Saxicola maurus</i>			✓					
Pied Bush Chat	<i>Saxicola caprata</i>							✓	✓
Pied Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe pleschanka</i>			✓	✓				
Finsch's Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe finschii</i>				✓				
Eurasian Tree Sparrow	<i>Passer montanus</i>					✓		✓	
Saxaul Sparrow	<i>Passer ammodendri</i>							✓	
Indian House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus bactrianus</i>	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Grey Wagtail	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Black-headed Wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava feldegg</i>								✓
White (Masked) Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba personata</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓
Tawny Pipit	<i>Anthus campestris</i>				H				
White-winged Grosbeak	<i>Mycerobas carnipes</i>		✓	✓					
Blyth's Rosefinch	<i>Carpodacus grandis</i>		✓	✓					
Desert Finch	<i>Rhodospiza obsoleta</i>							✓	
Grey-crowned Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis caniceps paropanisi</i>		✓		✓				
Red-fronted Serin	<i>Serinus pusillus</i>			H					
Red-headed Bunting	<i>Emberiza bruniceps</i>				✓				
Corn Bunting	<i>Emberiza calandra</i>			✓	✓				
Rock Bunting	<i>Emberiza cia par</i>		✓	✓					
White-capped Bunting	<i>Emberiza stewarti</i>		✓						

Mammals

I=Introduced		May 2026							
Common name	Scientific name	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
Transcasian Wild Ass (Kulan)	<i>Equus hemionus kulan</i>								✓
Turkman (Goitered) Gazelle	<i>Gazella (subgutturosa) gracilicornis</i>								✓
Tolai Hare	<i>Lepus tolai</i>		✓	✓					✓
Long-clawed Ground Squirrel	<i>Spermophilopsis leptodactylus</i>							✓	
Muskat - I	<i>Ondatra zibethicus</i>					✓			

Amphibians & reptiles

		May 2026							
Common name	Scientific name	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
Xinjiang Green Toad	<i>Bufo peszewi</i>				✓				
Perrin's Green Toad	<i>Bufo perrini</i>							✓	
Marsh Frog	<i>Pelophylax ridibundus</i>	H				✓			

Common name	Scientific name	May 2026							
		17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
Caspian Desert Monitor	<i>Veranus caspius</i>								✓
Turkestan Thin-toed Gecko	<i>Tenuidactylus fedtschenkoi</i>						✓		
Lichtenstein's Toadhead Agama	<i>Phrynocephalus interscapularis</i>							✓	
Turkestan Rock Agama	<i>Paralaukadia lehmanni</i>				✓				
Rapid Racerunner	<i>Eremias velox</i>								✓
European Glass Lizard	<i>Pseudopus apodus</i>				✓				
Dice Snake	<i>Natrix tessellata</i>					✓			

Butterflies

Common name	Scientific name	May 2026							
		17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
Eastern Pale Clouded Yellow	<i>Colias erate</i>		✓		✓			✓	✓
Clouded Yellow	<i>Colias croceus</i>				✓				✓
Black-veined White	<i>Aporia crataegi</i>				✓	✓			
Large White	<i>Pieris brassicae</i>	✓	✓						
Small White	<i>Pieris rapae</i>	✓	✓		✓				✓
Common Orange-tip	<i>Anthocharis cardamines</i>	✓							
Amanda's Blue	<i>Polyommatus amandus</i>								✓
Eastern Baton Blue	<i>Pseudophilotes vicrama</i>								✓
Small Jewel Blue	<i>Plebejus christophi</i>								✓
Brown Argus	<i>Aricia agestis</i>		✓		✓				
Queen of Spain Fritillary	<i>Issoria lathonia</i>		✓		✓				
Painted Lady	<i>Vanessa cardui</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	
Striped Hawk-moth	<i>Hyles livornica</i>						✓		

Damselflies & dragonflies

Common name	Scientific name	May 2026							
		17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
Samarkand Demoiselle	<i>Calopteryx samarcandica</i>		✓						
Forked Bluetail	<i>Ishnura forcipata</i>		✓						
Common Bluetail	<i>Ishnura elegans</i>	✓							
Small (Scarce) Bluetail	<i>Ischnura pumilio</i>					✓			
Ivory Featherleg	<i>Platycnemis dealbata</i>					✓			
Turkestan Winter Damsel	<i>Sympecma gobica</i>								✓
Lesser Emperor	<i>Anax partenope</i>	✓						✓	✓
Turkestan Goldenring	<i>Thecagaster coronata</i>				✓				
Southern Skimmer	<i>Orthetrum brunneum</i>		✓						
Broad Scarlet	<i>Crocothemis erythracea</i>				✓			✓	✓

Other invertebrates

Common name	Scientific name	May 2026							
		17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
a sand grasshopper	<i>Sphingonotus</i> sp.							✓	

Selected plants

Common name	Scientific name	May 2026							
		17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
Kotschy's Early Marsh Orchid	<i>Dactylorhiza incarnata kotschyi</i>				✓				
Lavender Mountain Lily	<i>Ixiolirion tataricum</i>			✓					
Foxtail Lily	<i>Eremurus regelii</i>		✓	✓	✓				
a giant allium	<i>Allium</i> sp.		✓		✓				
Uzbek Fringed Carnation	<i>Dianthus</i> sp.				✓				
Sieversia Milkvetch	<i>Astragalus sieversianus</i>				✓				
a spirea	<i>Spiraea</i> sp.		✓	✓					
a mountain avens	<i>Dryas</i> sp.		✓	✓					
Wild Almond	<i>Prunus bucharica</i>		✓	✓					
a mountain cherry	<i>Prunus</i> sp.		✓	✓					
Olivier's Gentian	<i>Gentiana olivieri</i>			✓	✓				
Nodding Broomrape	<i>Orobanche cernua</i>								✓
Azure Sea-holly	<i>Eryngium caeruleum</i>				✓				
a hemlock	<i>Conium</i> sp.					✓			
a giant fennel	<i>Ferula</i> sp.				✓				
Giant Hogweed	<i>Heracleum mantegazzianum</i>	✓	✓	✓					