

*+ descriptions of 20 new
birdwatching sites in Jordan*

Trip report: Jordan, 19th March to 2nd April 2011

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Introduction & Summary

This is a report from a birding trip to Jordan. In the first week all three participated, but PW went back home on 25th March. PW was birding on his own in the morning of that day and TP & KM birded on their own during the second week.

The main purpose of the trip was, as already mentioned, bird watching with the aim to see as many of Jordan's breeding bird species as well as regular passage migrants. On top of the 'wish list' was Nubian Nightjar.

As we had understood prior the trip and was to be confirmed during the trip, was that preceding winter had been noticeable dry. Very few wetlands were found and desert areas were much drier and meagre than expected. The only areas with grassy vegetation, except in the lush north of the country, were agriculture areas that were irrigated (pivot fields), sewage works, etc.

In total 181 species was recorded. Some of them were unexpectedly scarce, e.g. larks, and we even missed some species that we had counted on, or at least hoped for, e.g. Hume's Tawny Owl and Calandra Lark. One of the highlights of the trip, however, was the evening of 21st March at Feifa where about five **Nubian Nightjars** were in song. We also encountered some birds that are considered rare in Jordan. Above all we recorded a **Blyth's Pipit** at Al Mudawwara, which is the first for Jordan if accepted. Other rarities seen were **Ruddy Shelduck**, **Heuglin's (Siberian) Gull**, **Armenian Gull**, **Richard's Pipit** and **Olive-backed Pipit**.



Fig. 1. Map of Jordan.

Anyway, Jordan is an easy country to travel and bird watch. Infrastructure (roads) is generally of high standard and traffic is bearable (except when you approach Amman). Accommodation is easy to find, although some hotels at higher altitudes had already switched off the heating, including hot water, which meant some less comfortable nights and early mornings. People in general are very friendly, polite and proud, but of course curious sometimes about us (no wonder!). At only one site, a fenced agriculture area, we were refused entry, probably most due to linguistic problems (in combination with the odd sight of three unshaved and resolute Europeans with tripods - ☺). Most agricultural areas are

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fenced, but we had no problems at all getting access to them; we just showed our binoculars and bird guide, received a smile and were waved in.



Peder (left) and Krister (right) with manager of Dana Hotel.
© Thomas Pettersson.

Petrol stations are to be found in larger villages and cities, but are not always obvious. Once in Ma'an (a town with only two petrol stations) we were cheated (by a guest worker from another country), but the situation was solved with the help from an English speaking local. Good restaurants with excellent food are easy to find, even in smaller villages, as well as food shops, fruit markets etc.

Prices in general are moderate compared with European standards.

Flight

Direct charter by SAS via [Apollo](#) from Stockholm-Arlanda to Aqaba International Airport. Prices per person, including flight, unspecified hotel for two weeks (turned out to be Classic Hotel in downtown Aqaba) and meals on flight, was 6 758 SEK (€ 760).

Car hire

We prebooked a Toyota Landcruiser at Thrifty via the agent [Izzirent](#). This turned out to be a Mitsubishi Pajero 4x4, which we accepted. The price was 11 090 SEK (€ 1248) for 14 days. Of that € 147 had to be paid in advance. Extra driver costs 5 JOD (€ 5)/day. Already on day one somebody bumped in to our

parked car with some damage caused on the left side, but luckily no vital parts were damaged. As our parking left a great deal to be desired and the perpetrator was out of sight, we went on. On day two we backed in to a concrete thing, causing a dent also in the rear end of the car. That's it, but bad enough. Much to our surprise the gentlemen at Thrifty did not say anything about it! Just normal wear, we presume. Lucky we, since the deposit was 500 JOD (€ 500), which accordingly was refunded.

Accommodation

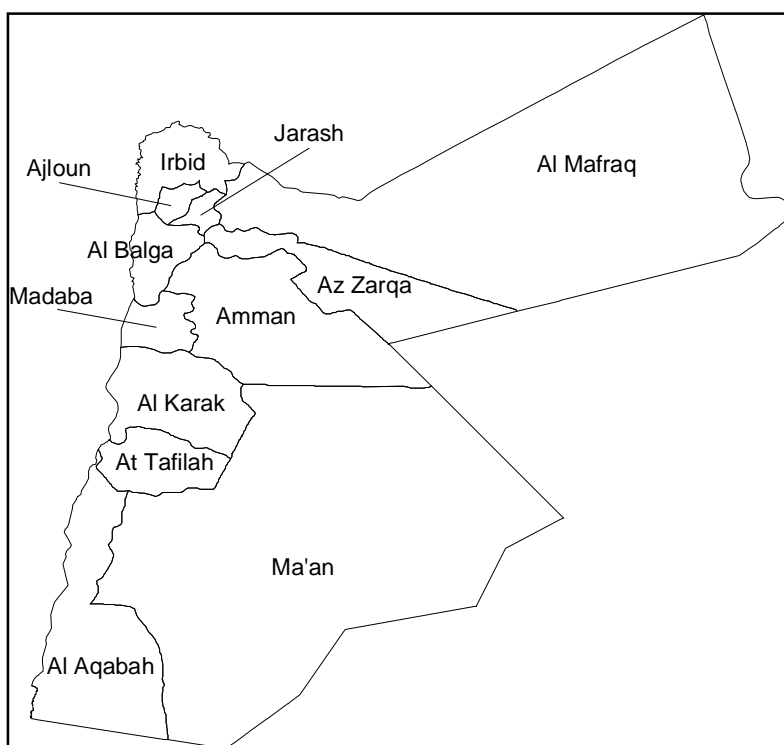
With the exception of the hotel room in Aqaba, which we used for three nights in total, we did not book any accommodation in advance and we never experienced any problems to get rooms. Prices are reasonable, but standard often low with no heating and often low standard facilities. Three nights were spent in tent and car.

Itinerary

See table and map below with a summary of our itinerary. Information about some of the sites is given further down. The following sites are mentioned in the annotated species list (province in parenthesis) and showed in the map below:

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Gulf of Aqaba (Al Aqabah) | 20. Wadi Selma (Al Mafraq) |
| 2. Aqaba Sewage Works (Al Aqabah) | 21. Al Samra Wastewater Stabilisation Ponds (Al Mafraq) |
| 3. Wadi Araba (Al Aqabah) | 22. Azraq Wetland Reserve (Az Zarqa) |
| 4. Abu Burqa (Al Aqabah) | 23. Wadi Hazim (Az Zarqa) |
| 5. Tassan Springs (Al Aqabah) | 24. Ramtha Sewage Works (Irbid) |
| 6. Wadi Rum (Al Aqabah) | 25. Umm Qays (Irbid) |
| 7. Wadi Feinan (At Tafilah) | |
| 8. Wadi Dana (At Tafilah) | |
| 9. Feifa (Al Karak) | |
| 10. Ma'an Wastewater Treatment Plant (Ma'an) | |
| 11. Al Mudawwara (Ma'an) | |
| 12. Sahl As Suwwan (Ma'an) | |
| 13. Al Ghal (Ma'an) | |
| 14. Petra (Ma'an) | |
| 15. Disi (Ma'an) | |
| 16. Birds Resort and Reserve of Al Ghal (Ma'an) | |
| 17. Shaumari Wildlife Reserve (Amman) | |
| 18. Basalt desert E of Azraq (Al Mafraq) | |
| 19. As Safawi (Al Mafraq) | |

Fig. 2. Jordan's provinces (muhafazat).



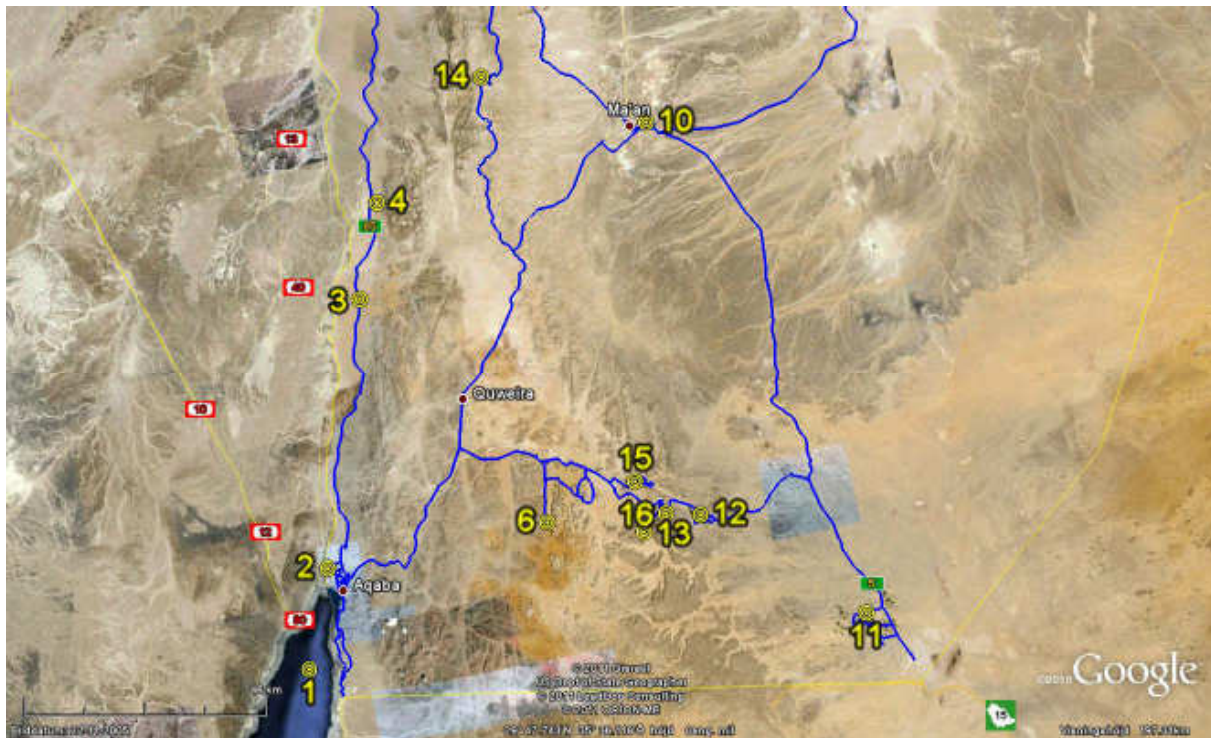


Fig. 3. Southern part of Jordan with our route (in blue) and visited sites (see table above).



Fig. 4. West central part of Jordan with our route (in blue) and visited sites (see table above).

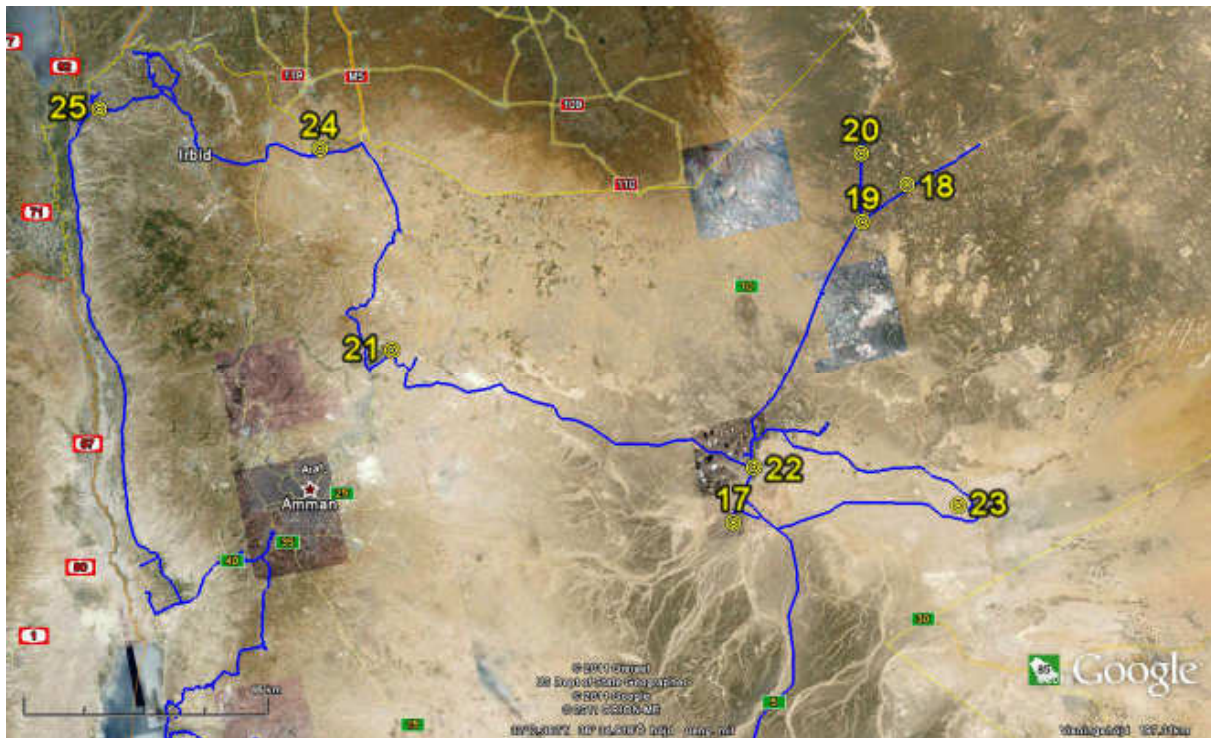


Fig. 5. Northern part of Jordan with our route (in blue) and visited sites (see table above).

Landscapes of Jordan

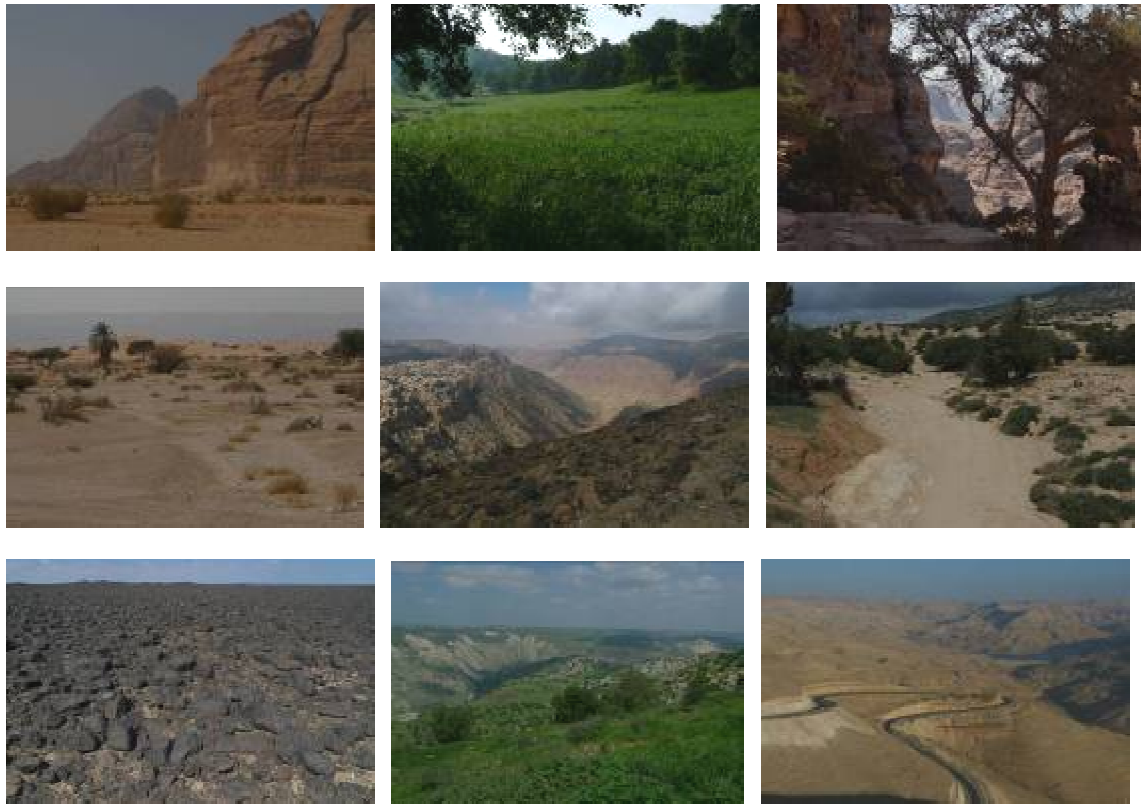
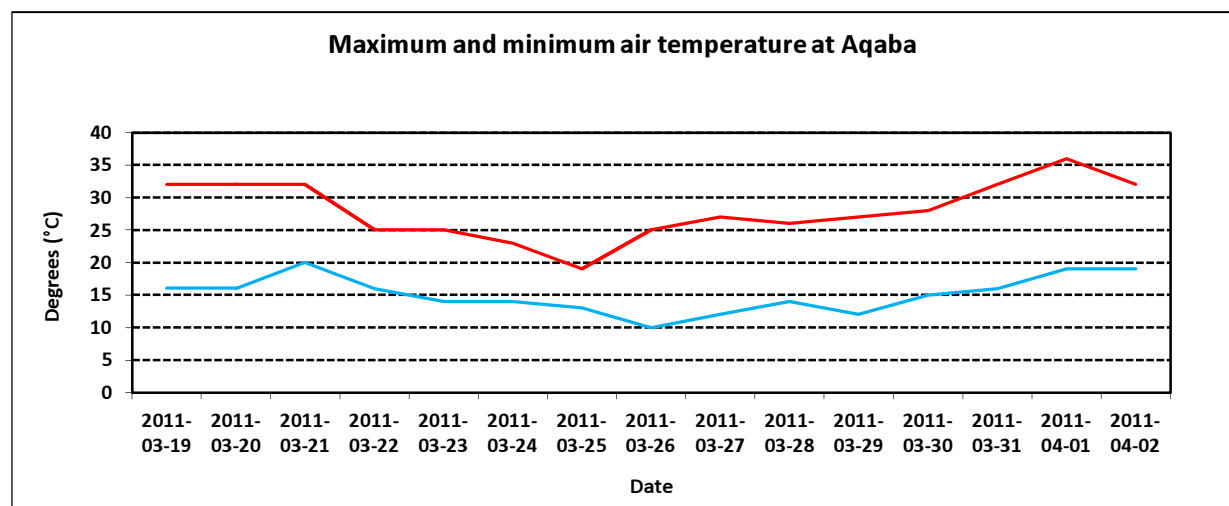


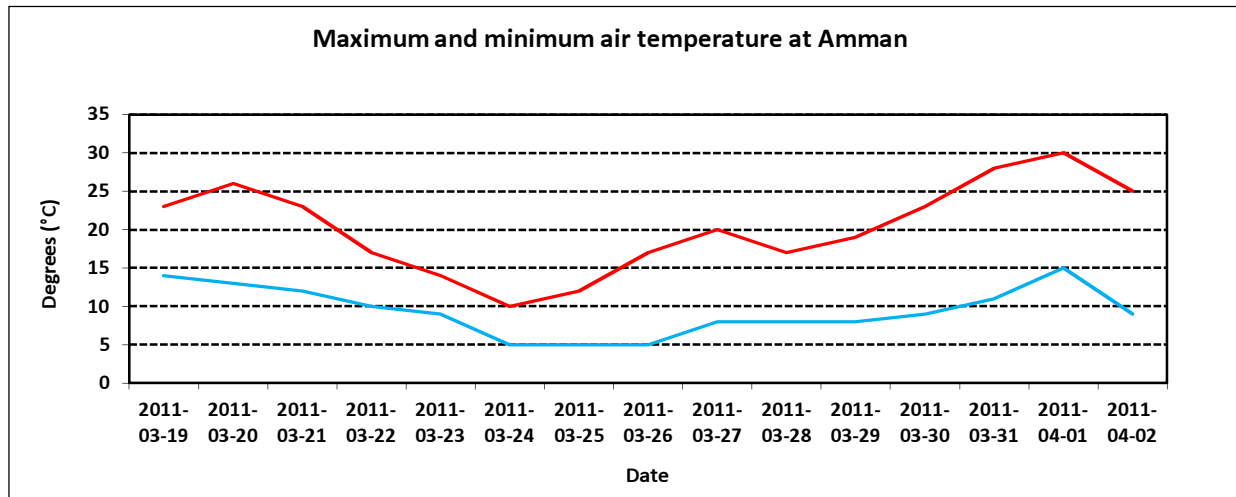
Fig. 6 a-i. A few examples of the landscapes of Jordan. From top left to bottom right: Wadi Rum; Wooded valley near Yarmuk River; Petra; sand dunes in southernmost Wadi Araba; Dana Nature Reserve; wooded valley Dana Nature reserve; the basalt desert east of Azraq; Dead Sea Rift Margins SE of Madaba; and Wadi Mujib at S part of Dead Sea Rift Margins. © Krister Mild.

Date	Birding areas and sites	Night spent
19 th March	Arrived at dusk. No birding.	Classic Hotel, Aqaba.
20 th March	Aqaba, Wadi Araba, Abu Burqa and Tassan Springs.	Tent/car at Tassan Springs.
21 st March	Tassan Springs, Wadi Feinan, Feifa.	Dana Hotel in Dana Village.
22 nd March	Wadi Dana.	Dana Hotel in Dana Village.
23 rd March	Wadi Dana, Ma'an, Al Mudawwara.	Hotel (name?) in the eastern outskirts of Ma'an (N30° 11.248', E35° 45.450').
24 th March	Al Mudawwara, Sahl As Suwwan, Al Ghal.	Classic Hotel, Aqaba.
25 th March	Aqaba Sewage Works, Shaumari WR.	Classic Hotel, Aqaba (PW). Azraq Hotel & Resthouse, in Azraq (KM&TP).
26 th March	Basalt desert east of Azraq, As Safawi, Wadi Selma, Azraq Wetland Reserve, Shaumari WR.	Azraq Hotel & Resthouse, in Azraq.
27 th March	Shaumari WR, Wadi Hazim, Al Samra, Ramtha.	Um Qais Hotel in Umm Qays.
28 th March	Umm Qays area, south along Jordan Valley to Dead Sea.	Black Iris Hotel in Madaba.
29 th March	Rift Margins east of Dead Sea.	Al Anbat Hotel II in Wadi Musa.
30 th March	Petra, Wadi Rum, Al Ghal.	Tent/car at Al Ghal.
31 st March	Wadi Rum, Disi, Al Ghal.	Tent/car in Rum Desert.
1 st April	Wadi Rum, Aqaba Sewage Works.	Classic Hotel, Aqaba.
2 nd April	Aqaba Sewage Works.	–

Weather

The weather was rather unsettled in the middle period of our stay, but with almost no precipitation. Air temperature was hot in coastal areas, but cool at higher altitudes, especially during nights and mornings.





Thomas and Black Iris *Iris nigricans*, Jordan's national flower.
© Krister Mild.

Some additional birdwatching sites in Jordan

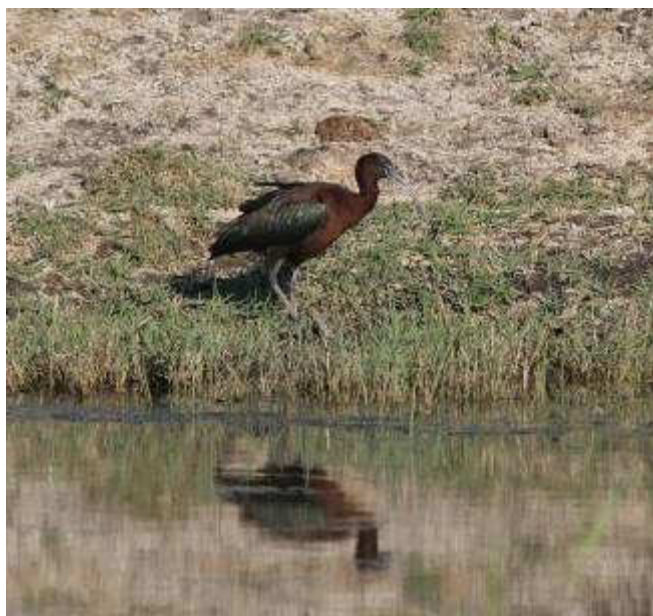
We here describe some new birdwatching sites in Jordan, mainly sites not included in Andrews (1995)². See **Appendix 2**.

² Andrews, I. J. 1995. *The Birds of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan*. Privately published. ISBN 0 9524978 0 8.

Annotated species list

We follow the systematic adopted by del Hoyo et al. (1992-2010)³. Site names spelled in accordance with Andrews (1995)⁴. See also a summary of sightings in Appendix 1.

1. **Little Grebe** *Tachybaptus r. ruficollis* (PALLAS 1764). Four sightings: 2 at a small pond near Abu Burqa on 20th March. C. 10 at Aqaba Sewage Works on 25th March, 1st April and 2nd April.
2. **Great Cormorant** *Phalacrocorax carbo sinensis* (BLUMENBACH 1798). Two sightings: 6 at Aqaba Sewage Works on 1st April and 4 there on 2nd April.
3. **Grey Heron** *Ardea c. cinerea* LINNAEUS 1758. Only four sightings: 1 at Al Samra Wastewater Stabilisation Ponds on 27th March. 1 at Ramtha Sewage Works on 27th March. 1 at Aqaba Sewage Works on 1st April. 2 at Aqaba Sewage Works on 2nd April.
4. **Little Egret** *Egretta g. garzetta* (LINNAEUS 1766). Three sightings: 1 at Aqaba Sewage Works on 25th March. 3 at Al Samra Wastewater Stabilisation Ponds on 27th March. 1 at Aqaba Sewage Works on 1st April.
5. **Cattle Egret** *Bubulcus i. ibis* (LINNAEUS 1758). Seven sightings: 1 at Ma'an Wastewater Treatment Plant on 23rd March. 1 at Al Mudawwara on 24th March. 2 at pivot fields E of Azraq on 26th March. 1 at Al Samra Wastewater Stabilisation Ponds on 27th March. 35 at Ramtha Sewage Works on 27th March. 5 at pivot fields at Disi on 31st March. 3 at Aqaba Sewage Works on 2nd April.
6. **Squacco Heron** *Ardeola ralloides* (SCOPOLI 1769). Two sightings: 1 at Feifa on 21st March. 2 at Azraq Wetland Reserve on 26th March.
7. **Black-crowned Night-heron** *Nycticorax n. nycticorax* (LINNAEUS 1758). One sighting: heard at dusk at Feifa on 21st March.
8. **European White Stork** *Ciconia c. ciconia* (LINNAEUS 1758). Only one sighting: 1 at Aqaba Sewage Works on 2nd April.
9. **Glossy Ibis** *Plegadis falcinellus* (LINNAEUS 1766). Three sightings: 1 at Azraq Wetland Reserve on 26th March. 7+2 at Aqaba Sewage Works on 1st April. 1 at Aqaba Sewage Works on 2nd April.



Glossy Ibis *Plegadis falcinellus* at Azraq Wetland Reserve on 26th March.
© Thomas Pettersson.

³ del Hoyo, J. et al. 1992-2010. *Handbook of the Birds of the World*. Vol. I – XV. Lynx Ediciones. Barcelona.

⁴ Andrews, I. J. 1995. *The Birds of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan*. Privately published. ISBN 0 9524978 0 8.

10. **Eurasian Spoonbill** *Platalea l. leucorodia* LINNAEUS 1758. One sighting: 6 at Aqaba Sewage Works on 1st April.
11. **Greater Flamingo** *Phoenicopterus ruber roseus* PALLAS 1811. One sighting: 2 immatures at Aqaba Sewage Works on 2nd April.
12. **Ruddy Shelduck** *Tadorna ferruginea* (PALLAS 1764). One sighting: 1 at Aqaba Sewage Works on 2nd April.
13. **Eurasian Wigeon** *Anas penelope* LINNAEUS 1758. Two sightings: c. 20 at Gulf of Aqaba on 20th March. C. 10 at Aqaba Sewage Works on 25th March.
14. **Common Teal** *Anas c. crecca* LINNAEUS 1758. Two sightings: 1 ♀ at Al Mudawwara on 24th March. C. 10 at Aqaba Sewage Works on 25th March.
15. **Mallard** *Anas p. platyrhynchos* LINNAEUS 1758. Four sightings: 2 (♂♀) at Aqaba Sewage Works on 25th March. 3 at Birds Resort and Reserve of Al Ghal on 30th March. 2 at Aqaba Sewage Works on both 1st and 2nd April.
16. **Northern Pintail** *Anas a. acuta* LINNAEUS 1758. One sighting: 2 ♀♀ at Aqaba Sewage Works on 25th March.
17. **Garganey** *Anas querquedula* LINNAEUS 1758. Three sightings: c. 200 + c. 100 at Gulf of Aqaba on 20th March. 3 (♂♂♀) at Aqaba Sewage Works on 25th March. 2 (♂♀) at Aqaba Sewage Works on 2nd April.
18. **Northern Shoveler** *Anas clypeata* LINNAEUS 1758. Five sightings: 12 at Gulf of Aqaba on 20th March. 1 ♂ at Al Mudawwara on 24th March. C. 50 heading N at Aqaba Sewage Works on 25th March. 10 at Al Samra Wastewater Stabilisation Ponds on 27th March. 1 ♂ at Aqaba Sewage Works on both 1st and 2nd April.
19. **Ferruginous Duck** *Aythya nyroca* (GÜLDENSTÄDT 1770). Two sightings, both at Aqaba Sewage Works: 1 ♀ on 25th March and 2 (♂♀) on 2nd April.
- ? **Western Honey-buzzard or Oriental Honey-buzzard**. *Pernis apivorus/ptilorhyncus*. One sighting: One 2nd cy (juvenile plumage) at Aqaba Sewage Works on 2nd April. A mere glimpse of a bird in flight, crossing the road between two dense tree plantations. The date might be indicative for Oriental.
20. **Black Kite** *Milvus m. migrans* (BODDAERT 1783). Commonly seen usually in low numbers, except in the north where we had no sightings at all. Some of the sightings: c. 20 en route in Wadi Araba on 20th March. 1 at Tassan Springs on 21st March. 8 at Ma'an Wastewater Treatment Plant on 23rd March. C. 10 at Al Mudawwara on 23rd March. 1 at Al Mudawwara on 24th March. 2 in basalt desert 9 km E of As Safawi on 26th March.
21. **Egyptian Vulture** *Neophron p. percnopterus* (LINNAEUS 1758). One sighting: 1 adult at Tassan Springs on 20th March.
22. **Eurasian Griffon** *Gyps f. fulvus* (HABLIZL 1783). One sighting: 1 at Wadi Feinan on 21st March.
23. **Short-toed Snake-eagle** *Circaetus gallicus* (GMELIN 1788). Three sightings: 1 at Abu Burqa on 20th March. 2 (pair in display) at Wadi Dana on 22nd March. 2 near Umm Qays on 28th March.
24. **Western Marsh-harrier** *Circus ae. aeruginosus* (LINNAEUS 1758). 13 sightings: 1 adult ♀ at Tassan Springs on 20th March. 3 at Tassan Springs on 21st March. 2 (♂♀) at Ma'an Wastewater Treatment Plant on 23rd March. C. 10 at Al Mudawwara on 23rd March. 1 adult ♂ at Al Mudawwara on 24th March. 1 adult ♂ at Sahl As Suwwan on 24th March. 1 at Shaumari Wildlife Reserve on 25th March. 2 (♂♀) at pivot fields E of Azraq on 26th March. 1 ♂ at Azraq Wetland Reserve on 26th March. 1 ♂ at Shaumari Wildlife Reserve on 27th March. 1 at Birds Resort and Reserve of Al Ghal on 30th March. 1 ♀ at Aqaba Sewage Works on both 1st April and 2nd April.
25. **Hen Harrier** *Circus c. cyaneus* (LINNAEUS 1766). Six sightings: 1 ♀-type heading N at Gulf of Aqaba on 20th March. 2 ♀♀ at Al Mudawwara on 23rd March. 1 2nd cy ♂ at Sahl As Suwwan on 24th March. 1 ♀ at Shaumari Wildlife Reserve on 25th March. 2 ♀♀ at Shaumari Wildlife Reserve on 26th March. 1 ♀ at Shaumari Wildlife Reserve on 27th March.

26. **Pallid Harrier** *Circus macrourus* (S. G. GMELIN 1770). Two sightings: 1 2nd cy at Al Mudawwara on 24th March. 2 ♂♂ at Shaumari Wildlife Reserve on 25th March.
27. **Montagu's Harrier** *Circus pygargus* (LINNAEUS 1758). Two sightings: 1 2nd cy at Al Mudawwara on 23rd March. 1 3rd cy ♂ at Sahl As Suwwan on 24th March.
28. **Eurasian Sparrowhawk** *Accipiter n. nisus* (LINNAEUS 1758). Four sightings: 1 at Aqaba Sewage Works on 25th March. 1 at Shaumari Wildlife Reserve on 26th March. 1 at Umm Qays on 28th March. 1 at Al Ghal on 30th March.
29. **Eurasian Buzzard** *Buteo buteo vulpinus* GLOGER 1833. Seen daily throughout the fortnight, sometimes in large numbers heading N. Noteworthy sightings: c. 500 heading N en route in Wadi Araba on 20th March. C. 5 at Ma'an Wastewater Treatment Plant on 23rd March. C. 20 at Al Mudawwara on both 23rd and 24th March. 1 in basalt desert 9 km E of As Safawi on 26th March. 2 at Shaumari Wildlife Reserve on 26th March.
30. **Long-legged Buzzard** *Buteo r. rufinus* (CRETZSCHMAR 1827). Three sightings: 1 at Tassan Springs on 21st March. 2 at Ma'an Wastewater Treatment Plant on 23rd March. 1 at Umm Qays on 28th March.
31. **Greater Spotted Eagle** *Aquila clanga* PALLAS 1811. One sighting: 1 2nd cy at Aqaba Sewage Works on 25th March.
32. **Steppe Eagle** *Aquila nipalensis orientalis* CABANIS 1854. Six sightings: 8 heading N en route in Wadi Araba on 20th March. 1 at Wadi Feinan on 21st March. 1 at Wadi Dana on 22nd March. 2 at Al Mudawwara on 24th March. 1 en route Al Mudawwara-Wadi Rum on 25th March. 1 at Wadi Rum on 30th March.



Steppe Eagle *Aquila nipalensis orientalis* at Wadi Araba on 20th March 2011.
© Peder Wærn.

33. **Bonelli's Eagle** *Hieraetus f. fasciatus* (VIEILLOT 1822). One sighting: 1 adult at Birds Resort and Reserve of Al Ghal on 31st March.
34. **Booted Eagle** *Hieraetus pennatus* (GMELIN 1788). One sighting: 1 (dark morph) near Quwayrah on 1st April.

35. **Common Kestrel** *Falco t. tinnunculus* LINNAEUS 1758. Seen almost daily in low numbers throughout. A few noteworthy sightings: 1 at Al Mudawwara on 24th March. 1 at Sahl As Suwwan on 24th March. 1 in basalt desert 9 km E of As Safawi on 26th March. 2 E of Azraq on 26th March. 1 at Al Ghal on 30th March.
36. **Chukar** *Alectoris chukar sinaica* (BONAPARTE 1858). A few sightings at Wadi Dana on 22nd and 23rd March only.
37. **Sand Partridge** *Ammoperdix h. heyi* (TEMMINCK 1825). Six sightings: 2 in song at Tassan Springs on 21st March. 1 near Dead Sea on 28th March. 1 near Madaba on 29th March. 5 at Petra on 30th March. 2 in song at Wadi Rum on both 31st March and 1st April.
38. **Common Quail** *Coturnix c. coturnix* (LINNAEUS 1758). Six sightings: 1 at Al Mudawwara on 24th March. 1 E of Azraq on 26th March. 1 at Wadi Hazim on 27th March. In total 8 (3 in song) at Umm Qays on 28th March. 1 near Madaba 29th March. 5 at Disi on 31st March.
39. **Spotted Crane** *Porzana porzana* (LINNAEUS 1766). One sighting: 1 at Al Mudawwara on 24th March.
40. **Common Moorhen** *Gallinula ch. chloropus* (LINNAEUS 1758). About ten sightings, e.g. 1 at Abu Burqa on 20th March. 1 at Ma'an Wastewater Treatment Plant on 23rd March. C. 5 at Aqaba Sewage Works on 25th March. 10 at Azraq Wetland Reserve on 26th March. 1 at Al Samra Wastewater Stabilisation Ponds on 27th March. C. 5 at Aqaba Sewage Works on both 1st and 2nd April.
41. **Common Coot** *Fulica a. atra* LINNAEUS 1758. Five sightings: 1 at Abu Burqa on 20th March. 1 at Al Mudawwara on 24th March. A few at Aqaba Sewage Works on 25th March and 1st and 2nd April.
42. **Black-winged Stilt** *Himantopus h. himantopus* (LINNAEUS 1758). Six sightings: 1 at Al Mudawwara on 23rd March. 3 at Al Mudawwara on 24th March. C. 40 at Al Samra Wastewater Stabilisation Ponds on 27th March. Also seen at Aqaba Sewage Works on 25th March and 1st and 2nd April.
43. **Stone-curlew** *Burhinus oedipnemus saharae* (REICHENOW 1894). One sighting: Heard calling at dusk at Feifa on 21st March. Of course we cannot rule out migrating bird of the nominate subspecies *B. o. oedipnemus* (LINNAEUS 1758).
44. **Collared Pratincole** *Glareola p. pratincola* (LINNAEUS 1766). One sighting: 3 at Aqaba Sewage Works on 1st April.
45. **Spur-winged Lapwing** *Vanellus spinosus* (LINNAEUS 1758). Eight sightings at six sites: 2 at Abu Burqa on 20th March. 4 at Ma'an Wastewater Treatment Plant on 23rd March. 20 at Al Mudawwara on 23rd March. C. 30 at Al Mudawwara on 24th March. C. 40 at Aqaba Sewage Works on 25th March. 2 at Azraq Wetland Reserve on 26th March. C. 75 at Al Samra Wastewater Stabilisation Ponds on 27th March. 4 at Ramtha Sewage Works on 27th March. Seen at Aqaba Sewage Works also on 1st and 2nd April.
46. **Common Ringed Plover** *Charadrius hiaticula tundrae* (Lowe 1915). Four sightings: 1 at Aqaba Sewage Works on 25th March. 2 at Al Samra Wastewater Stabilisation Ponds on 27th March. 1 at Aqaba Sewage Works on both 1st and 2nd April.
47. **Little Ringed Plover** *Charadrius dubius curonicus* GMELIN 1789. Eleven sightings at six sites: 1 at Tassan Springs on 20th March. 1 in song at Tassan Springs on 21st March. 1 at Ma'an Wastewater Treatment Plant on 23rd March. 1 at Al Mudawwara on 23rd March. 5 at Al Mudawwara on 24th March. 2 at As Safawi Pump Station on 26th March. C. 20 at Al Samra Wastewater Stabilisation Ponds on 27th March. Also seen in low numbers at Aqaba Sewage Works on 25th March and 1st and 2nd April.
48. **Kentish Plover** *Charadrius a. alexandrinus* LINNAEUS 1758. Two sightings: c. 5 at Al Samra Wastewater Stabilisation Ponds on 27th March. 2 at Aqaba Sewage Works on 2nd April.
49. **Greater Sandplover** *Charadrius leschenaulti columbinus* WAGLER 1829. One sighting: 1 at Aqaba Sewage Works on 2nd April.



Greater Sandplover *Charadrius leschenaulti columbinus* at Aqaba Sewage Works on 2nd April 2011. Digiscoping images (through 10x binoculars).
© Krister Mild.

50. **Common Snipe** *Gallinago g. gallinago* (LINNAEUS 1758). Three sightings: 2 at Al Mudawwara on 24th March. 1 at Azraq Wetland Reserve on 26th March. 4 at Al Samra Wastewater Stabilisation Ponds on 27th March.
51. **Common Redshank** *Tringa t. totanus* (LINNAEUS 1758) or *T. t. ussuriensis* BUTURLIN 1934. Two sightings: 2 at Al Samra Wastewater Stabilisation Ponds on 27th March. 1 at Aqaba Sewage Works on 2nd April.
52. **Marsh Sandpiper** *Tringa stagnatilis* (BECHSTEIN 1803). Two sightings: 1 at Al Mudawwara on 24th March. 5 at Aqaba Sewage Works on 1st April.
53. **Common Greenshank** *Tringa nebularia* (GUNNERUS 1767). Three sightings: 2 at Ma'an Wastewater Treatment Plant on 23rd March. 1 at Al Samra Wastewater Stabilisation Ponds on 27th March. 1 at Aqaba Sewage Works on 2nd April.
54. **Green Sandpiper** *Tringa ochropus* LINNAEUS 1758. Ten sightings: 1 at Abu Burqa on 20th March. 1 at Tassan Springs on 20th March. 1 at Ma'an Wastewater Treatment Plant on 23rd March. 1 at Al Mudawwara on 23rd March. 1 at Sahl As Suwwan on 24th March. 2 at Aqaba Sewage Works on 25th March. 1 at Shaumari Wildlife Reserve on 26th March. C. 15 at Al Samra Wastewater Stabilisation Ponds on 27th March. 1 at Ramtha Sewage Works on 27th March. 2 at Disi on 31st March.
55. **Wood Sandpiper** *Tringa glareola* LINNAEUS 1758. Five sightings: 1 at Al Mudawwara on 24th March. 1 at Aqaba Sewage Works on 25th March. C. 10 at Al Samra Wastewater Stabilisation Ponds on 27th March. Also a few at Aqaba Sewage Works on both 1st and 2nd April.
56. **Common Sandpiper** *Actitis hypoleucos* (LINNAEUS 1758). Four sightings: 1 at Aqaba Sewage Works on 25th March. C. 5 at Al Samra Wastewater Stabilisation Ponds on 27th March. Also singletons at Aqaba Sewage Works on both 1st and 2nd April.
57. **Little Stint** *Calidris minuta* (LEISLER 1812). Three sightings: c. 20 at Al Samra Wastewater Stabilisation Ponds on 27th March. A few at Aqaba Sewage Works on both 1st and 2nd April.

58. **Ruff** *Philomachus pugnax* (LINNAEUS 1758). Five sightings: 6 at Ma'an Wastewater Treatment Plant on 23rd March. 1 at Aqaba Sewage Works on 25th March. C. 100 at Al Samra Wastewater Stabilisation Ponds on 27th March. 1 at Aqaba Sewage Works on both 1st and 2nd April.
59. **White-eyed Gull** *Larus leucophthalmus* TEMMINCK 1825. Two sightings: 5 adults at Gulf of Aqaba on 20th March and 2 adults there on 25th March.
60. **Yellow-legged Gull** *Larus cachinnans michahellis* J. F. NAUMANN 1840. Only one singleton immature identified with certainty at Gulf of Aqaba on 20th March.
Yellow-legged Gull *Larus c. cachinnans* PALLAS 1811. Immatures identified at Gulf of Aqaba on 25th March and at Aqaba Sewage Works on 1st and 2nd April.
61. **Armenian Gull** *Larus armenicus* BUTURLIN 1934. One sighting: 2 2nd cy at Aqaba Sewage Works



A 2nd cy Armenian Gull *Larus armenicus* – flanked by a *fuscus* Lesser Black-backed Gull (background) and 3 Common Black-headed Gulls (foreground) at Aqaba Sewage Works on 2nd April 2011. Digiscoping through 60x spotting scope.
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Same 2nd cy Armenian Gull *Larus armenicus* (lower right) as above at Aqaba Sewage Works on 2nd April 2011. Lesser Black-backed Gull (*Larus f. fuscus*) behind and two Heuglin's (Lesser Black-backed) Gulls *Larus (fuscus?) heuglini* (adult and 2nd cy) to the left. Digiscoping through 60x spotting scope.
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62. **Lesser Black-backed Gull** *Larus f. fuscus* LINNAEUS 1758. Three sightings: 1 adult at Gulf of Aqaba on 20th March. A few at Aqaba Sewage Works on both 1st and 2nd April.

Lesser Black-backed (Heuglin's/Siberian) Gull *Larus fuscus heuglini* BREE 1876. One sighting: 3 adults and probably also 1 2nd cy at Aqaba Sewage Works on 2nd April.



Adult Heuglin's (Lesser Black-backed) Gull *Larus (fuscus?) heuglini* – flanked by a *fuscus* Lesser Black-backed Gull at Aqaba Sewage Works on 2nd April 2011. Digiscoping through 60x spotting scope.
© Krister Mild.

63. **Great Black-headed Gull** *Larus ichtyaetus* PALLAS 1773. One sighting: 1 2nd cy at Aqaba Sewage Works on 2nd April.



A 2nd cy Great Black-headed Gull *Larus ichtyaetus* – flanked by a near adult Heuglin's (Lesser Black-backed) Gull *Larus (fuscus?) heuglini* (right), Black-headed Gulls (foreground), and two immature gulls (left), probably either *heuglini*, *cachinnans* or *barabensis* at Aqaba Sewage Works on 2nd April 2011. Digiscoping through 60x spotting scope.
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64. **Common Black-headed Gull** *Larus ridibundus* LINNAEUS 1766. Four sightings: a few at Gulf of Aqaba on 20th March. C. 100 at Aqaba Sewage Works on 25th March. Also seen at Aqaba Sewage Works on both 1st and 2nd April.

65. **Slender-billed Gull** *Larus genei* BRÈME 1839. Three sightings, all of them at Aqaba Sewage Works: c. 40 on 25th March, 1 on 1st April and c. 10 on 2nd April.
66. **Caspian Tern** *Hydroprogne caspia* (PALLAS 1770). One sighting: 1 adult at Aqaba Sewage Works on 2nd April.
67. **Rock Dove** *Columba livia palaestinae* ZEDLITZ 1912. Feral doves often seen, but rather few seemed pure wild form. C. 200 at Disi on 31st March, all of them seemingly pure subsp. *palaestinae*.
68. **Eurasian Collared-dove** *Streptopelia d. decaocto* (FRIVALDSZKY 1838). Ubiquitous. Seen daily throughout.
69. **Laughing Dove** *Streptopelia s. senegalensis* (LINNAEUS 1766). Ubiquitous. Seen daily throughout.
70. **Namaqua Dove** *Oena c. capensis* (LINNAEUS 1766). Two sightings, both at Al Mudawwara: 1 ♂ on 23rd March and 2 ♂♂ on 24th March.
71. **Rose-ringed Parakeet** *Psittacula krameri subsp.* (SCOPOLI 1769). Three sightings. 1 in Aqaba on 20th March. 1 at Aqaba Sewage Works on 25th March. 1 at Aqaba Sewage Works on 1st April.
72. **Common Cuckoo** *Cuculus c. canorus* LINNAEUS 1758. Two sightings: 2 ♂♂ in song and 1 ♀ (rufous morph) seen at Wadi Dana on 22nd March. 1 ♂ in song near Madaba on 29th March.
73. **Common Barn-owl** *Tyto alba erlangeri* W. L. SCLATER 1921. One sighting: Heard calling at dusk at Feifa on 21st March.
74. **Eurasian Scops-owl** *Otus scops cycladum* HARTERT 1913. Sightings only at Dana Village, where 2-3 in song on 21st, 22nd and 29th March.
75. **Little Owl** *Athene noctua lilith* (KLEINSCHMIDT 1909). Only two sightings: 1 seen near Madaba on 29th March. 1 in song near Al Ghal on 30th March.
76. **Nubian Nightjar** *Caprimulgus nubicus tamaricis* TRISTRAM 1864. Two sightings: 1 in song at Tassan Springs on 20th March, display heard from 2017 hours. C. 5 in song near Feifa on 21st March, display started at 1815 hours. See Appendix 2 (Some additional birdwatching sites in Jordan) for details on how to find these birds in Jordan.
77. **Alpine Swift** *Tachymarptis melba tuneti* (TSCHUSI 1904). Only one sighting: 1 migrating N at Aqaba on 20th March.
78. **Common Swift** *Apus a. apus* (LINNAEUS 1758). Occasional sightings of few individuals on five days, with the first sighting on 24th March. A few at Al Mudawwara on 24th March.
79. **Pallid Swift** *Apus p. pallidus* (SHELLEY 1870). Seen on seven days from 21st March, seemingly more numerous than Common Swift. E.g. c. 50 at Petra on 30th March.
80. **White-throated Kingfisher** *Halcyon s. smyrnensis* (LINNAEUS 1758). Four sightings: 1 at Tassan Springs on 21st March. 1 at Aqaba Sewage Works on 25th March. 1 near Baptist Site at Jordan River on 28th March. 1 at Dead Sea on 29th March.
81. **Little Green Bee-eater** *Merops orientalis cyanophrys* (CABANIS & HEINE 1860). Four sightings: 2 en route in Wadi Araba on 20th March. 2 at Tassan Springs on 21st March. 2 at Aqaba Sewage Works on 25th March. 2 near Dead Sea on 29th March.
82. **Eurasian Hoopoe** *Upupa e. epops* LINNAEUS 1758. Seen almost daily and often in high numbers in pivot fields. Noteworthy sightings: 5 in Aqaba on 20th March. 1 at Abu Burqa on 20th March. C. 15 at Ma'an Wastewater Treatment Plant on 23rd March. C. 25 at Al Mudawwara on 23rd March. C. 50 at Al Mudawwara on 24th March. 1 in basalt desert 9 km E of As Safawi on 26th March. C. 30 at E of Azraq on 26th March. 5 at Azraq Wetland Reserve on 26th March. 1 at Petra on 30th March. 2 at Disi on 31st March.
83. **Eurasian Wryneck** *Jynx t. torquilla* LINNAEUS 1758. Two sightings: 1 at Al Mudawwara on 24th March. Feeding in the open on grass field with no bushes etc. to hide in! 1 at Aqaba on 26th March.
84. **Syrian Woodpecker** *Dendrocopos syriacus* (EHRENBERG 1833). Only recorded in oak woodland near Umm Qays, where several seen and heard (including drumming) on 28th March.

85. **Greater Hoopoe-lark** *Alaemon a. alaudipes* (DESFONTAINES 1789). Only two sightings: 1 at Al Mudawwara on 23rd March. 2 in song E of Azraq on 27th March.
86. **Bar-tailed Lark** *Ammomanes cinctura arenicolor* (SUNDEVALL 1850). Three sightings: 1 in basalt desert 9 km E of As Safawi on 26th March. 2 in basalt desert N of As Safawi on 26th March. 1 at Wadi Hazim on 27th March.
87. **Desert Lark** *Ammomanes d. deserti* (M. H. K. LICHTENSTEIN 1823). Recorded on nine days. Noteworthy sightings: 1 at Abu Burqa on 20th March. 1 in basalt desert (!) 9 km E of As Safawi on 26th March. Several in Rift Margin E of Dead Sea on 29th March. 2 at Petra on 30th March. Several at Wadi Rum on 30th March, 31st March and 1st April. Some of them were showing characters of *A. d. isabellina* (TEMMINCK 1823), or at least more *isabellina*-like *A. d. deserti*, see photo below, perhaps transient forms, e.g. at Wadi Rum. At least in some areas of North Africa and the Middle East, *A. d. isabellina* is perhaps better treated as a morph of nominate *A. d. deserti* – a lot of individuals (as e.g. in southern Jordan) are very difficult to name subspecifically. They appear to grade back and forth from greyish *deserti*-types to more pinkish-sandy *isabellina*-types – often corresponding to local soil-colours (e.g. *deserti*-types in the Jordanian mountains and *isabellina*-types in the sandier areas; e.g. Wadi Rum and Araba Valley) – hence appearing more like morphs rather than true taxa (KM).



Desert Lark *Ammomanes deserti* at Wadi Rum on 1st April 2011. This individual shows some characters of *A. d. isabellina*, and is perhaps a transient form between *A. d. isabellina* and *A. d. deserti*, rather than a pure *A. d. isabellina*.

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Desert Lark *Ammomanes deserti annae* MEINERTZHAGEN 1923. Two sightings: 2 in basalt desert 9 km E of As Safawi on 26th March. 5 (1+1+1+2) in basalt desert at Wadi Selma on 26th March.



Desert Lark *Ammomanes deserti annae* at Wadi Selma on 26th March 2011.
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88. **Bimaculated Lark** *Melanocorypha bimaculata* (MÉNÉTRIÉS 1832). Three sightings: 5 at Al Mudawwara on 24th March. 27 in basalt desert 9 km E of As Safawi on 26th March. Almost a single flock of c. 350 resting migrants at pivot fields at Wadi Hazim on 27th March.
89. **Greater Short-toed Lark** *Calandrella brachydactyla hermonensis* TRISTRAM 1865. Seven sightings: 35 at Abu Burqa on 20th March. 40 at Wadi Feinan on 21st March. 30 at Ma'an Wastewater Treatment Plant on 23rd March. C. 30 at Al Mudawwara on 23rd March. C. 20 at Al Mudawwara on 24th March. C. 30 in basalt desert 9 km E of As Safawi on 26th March. C. 40 at Wadi Hazim on 27th March.
90. **Lesser Short-toed Lark** *Calandrella rufescens minor* (CABANIS 1851). Only one sighting: 1+2 at Wadi Hazim on 27th March.
91. **Temminck's Lark** *Eremophila bilopha* (TEMMINCK 1823). Five sightings: 1 at Ma'an Wastewater Treatment Plant on 23rd March. 3 in song at Al Mudawwara on 23rd March. 2 at Al Mudawwara on 24th March. 5 in basalt desert 9 km E of As Safawi on 26th March. C. 10 in basalt desert N of As Safawi on 26th March.
92. **Crested Lark** *Galerida cristata brachyura* TRISTRAM 1865. Ubiquitous and seen daily throughout, except at Wadi Dana on 22nd March.
93. **Eurasian Skylark** *Alauda arvensis subsp.* LINNAEUS 1758. One sighting: 2 at pivot fields E of Azraq on 26th March.
94. **Collared Sand Martin** *Riparia riparia subsp.* (LINNAEUS 1758). A few sightings on seven days, e.g. 2 at Abu Burqa on 20th March and 1 at Ma'an Wastewater Treatment Plant on 23rd March.
95. **Barn Swallow** *Hirundo r. rustica* LINNAEUS 1758. Seen daily. Noteworthy: 100 at Ma'an Wastewater Treatment Plant on 23rd March.
Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica transitiva* (HARTERT 1910). Several seen in the area of Umm Qays on 28th March.

96. **Eurasian Crag Martin** *Ptyonoprogne rupestris* (SCOPOLI 1769). One sighting: 1 near Madaba on 29th March.
97. **Rock Martin** *Ptyonoprogne fuligula obsoleta* (CABANIS 1850). Recorded on ten days, e.g. c. 20 at Petra on 30th March.



Rock Martin *Ptyonoprogne fuligula obsoleta* at Petra on 30th March.
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98. **Northern House Martin** *Delichon urbicum subsp.* (LINNAEUS 1758). Recorded on five days; the first sighting: a few at Al Mudawwara on 24th March. Subspecific level uncertain and birds seen could involve nominate *D. u. urbicum* as well as *D. u. meridionale* (HARTERT 1910).
99. **Red-rumped Swallow** *Cecropis daurica rufula* (TEMMINCK 1835). Recorded on five days, e.g. 3 at Tassan Springs on 21st March, c. 10 at Al Mudawwara on 24th March and c. 5 at As Safawi Pump Station on 26th March.
100. **Richard's Pipit** *Anthus r. richardi* VIEILLOT 1818. One sighting: 1 at Shaumari Wildlife Reserve on 25th March.
101. **Long-billed Pipit** *Anthus similis captus* HARTERT 1905. Only one sighting: 1 near Barzan (N 31° 34.077', E 035° 44.176') on 29th March.
102. **Blyth's Pipit** *Anthus godlewskii* (TACZANOWSKI 1876). One sighting: One 2nd cy at Al Mudawwara on 23rd and 24th March. Probably the first Blyth's Pipit for Jordan if accepted. The bird was a typical Blyth's in all respects. It was moulting into breeding plumage. A "large" pipit of "Richard's type" with dark-streaked upperparts and crown and dark-streaked breast. Clearly smaller than Richard's with clearly shorter legs and shorter tail. This individual was somewhat smaller than nearby Tawny Pipits but clearly larger than accompanying Red-throated and Tree Pipits. Bill shorter and finer than in Richard's. The hind-claws were rather short and more decurved than in Richard's. Differences in size and shape were very obvious both on ground and in flight. Also, flight action lighter and less deeply undulating than in Richard's with its typical heavy undulating flight. Called with an explosive and short *tschrup*₁ and at several instances combined by quieter and shorter *tchup*₂; often given in short series ...*tchup-chup-chu*..., or *tchup-chup-chup-chup*.... Median coverts of adult type with rather "square" blackish centre and rather broad pale buffish/off-white tips, except for two or three white-tipped retained juvenile median coverts.

The greater coverts and tertials were all newly moulted. All underparts showed a pale buffish base-colour (unlike typical Richard's white belly and contrasting buffish breast). Also behaviour differs between Blyth's and Richards: Blyth's generally (as here in Al Mudawwara) feeds on short grass on sandy soils whereas Richard's often prefers taller grass (often you merely see the head above the grass before you flush it). Blyth's is generally more tame allowing close approach down to c. 5–10 meters before flushed, they often try to run off... .. We find Richard's generally to be much shyer, often flushed at distances of 50–100 meters. When flushed, Richard's often fly rather long distances before landing again, often rather high above ground, whereas Blyth's usually fly off low over ground and lands merely 10–20 meters away.



Blyth's Pipit *Anthus godlewskii* at Al Mudawwara on 24th March 2011. Digiscoping images (through 10x binoculars). All photos are cut and enlarged! Distance to bird c. 25 m.
© Krister Mild.

103. **Tawny Pipit** *Anthus c. campestris* (LINNAEUS 1758). Seven sightings: 1 at Wadi Feinan on 21st March. 1 at Ma'an Wastewater Treatment Plant on 23rd March. 2 at Al Mudawwara on 24th

March. 1 in basalt desert 9 km E of As Safawi on 26th March. 5 E of Azraq on 26th March. 6 at Wadi Hazim on 27th March. C. 30 at Disi on 31st March.

104. **Meadow Pipit** *Anthus p. pratensis* (LINNAEUS 1758). Two sightings: 2 at Al Mudawwara on 24th March. 4 E of Azraq on 26th March.



Meadow Pipit *Anthus p. pratensis* at Azraq on 26th March 2011.
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105. **Red-throated Pipit** *Anthus cervinus* (PALLAS 1811). Eight sightings: 5 at Aqaba on 20th March. C. 10 at Al Mudawwara on 23rd March. C. 20 at Al Mudawwara on 24th March. C. 10 at Aqaba on 26th March. C. 10 at As Safawi Pump Station on 26th March. 1 E of Azraq on 26th March. 5 at Wadi Hazim on 27th March. C. 30 at Disi on 31st March.
106. **Olive-backed Pipit** *Anthus hodgsoni yunnanensis* UCHIDA & KURODA 1916. One sighting: 1 at Aqaba on 26th March.



Olive-backed Pipit *Anthus hodgsoni yunnanensis* at Aqaba on 26th March 2011.
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107. **Tree Pipit** *Anthus t. trivialis* (LINNAEUS 1758). Recorded on six days in low numbers, e.g. 5 at Al Mudawwara on 24th March and 5 E of Azraq on 26th March.
108. **Water Pipit** *Anthus spinoletta coutellii* AUDOUIN 1828. Five sightings: 1 at Wadi Feinan on 21st March. 2 at Al Mudawwara on 23rd March. 20 at Al Mudawwara on 24th March. 5 at As Safawi Pump Station on 26th March. C. 20 at Al Samra Wastewater Stabilisation Ponds on 27th March.



Water Pipit *Anthus spinoletta coutellii* at Al Samra Wastewater Stabilisation Ponds on 27th March.

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109. **White Wagtail** *Motacilla a. alba* LINNAEUS 1758. Seen daily in low numbers, except on 22nd March at Wadi Dana.
110. **Yellow Wagtail** *Motacilla flava thunbergi* BILLBERG 1828. Three sightings: 1 ♂ at Al Mudawwara on both 23rd and 24th March. 1 ♂ at Aqaba on 26th March.
- Yellow Wagtail** *Motacilla f. flava* LINNAEUS 1758. Two sightings: 1 ♂ at Al Mudawwara on 24th March. 1 at Azraq Wetland Reserve on 26th March.
- Yellow Wagtail** *Motacilla flava feldegg* MICHAELLES 1830. Seen in low numbers on seven days, e.g. 1 ♂ at Aqaba on 20th March, 10 at Abu Burqa on 20th March, 2 at Al Mudawwara on 24th March and 1 ♂ at Disi on 31st March.
- Yellow Wagtail** *Motacilla flava 'superciliaris'*. One sighting: 1 ♂ at Aqaba on 20th March.
- Yellow Wagtail** *Motacilla flava 'dombrowskii'*. One sighting: 1 ♂ at Al Mudawwara on 24th March.
- Yellow Wagtail** *Motacilla flava subsp.* Noteworthy sightings: 10 at Aqaba on 20th March. 5 at Ma'an Wastewater Treatment Plant on 23rd March. C. 200 E of Azraq on 26th March. 1 at Al Samra Wastewater Stabilisation Ponds on 27th March. 3 at Disi on 31st March.
111. **Citrine Wagtail** *Motacilla citreola subsp.* PALLAS 1776. Four sightings, regarding inseparable nominate *M. c. citreola* and/or *M. c. werae* (BUTURLIN 1907): 2 (♂♀) at Al Mudawwara on 24th

March. 1 ♂ at As Safawi Pump Station on 26th March. 1 ♀ at Azraq Wetland Reserve on 26th March. 2 (♂♀) at Al Samra Wastewater Stabilisation Ponds on 27th March.



Citrine Wagtail *Motacilla citreola* at Al Samra Wastewater Stabilisation Ponds on 27th March, either nominate *M. c. citreola* or *M. c. werae*.

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112. **White-eyed Bulbul** *Pycnonotus xanthopygos* (EHRENBERG 1833). Common and seen almost daily throughout.
113. **White-eared Bulbul** *Pycnonotus leucotis mesopotamia* TICEHURST 1918. A few seen and heard singing in Azraq on 26th March.
114. **Song Thrush** *Turdus ph. philomelos* C. L. BREHM 1831. Three sightings: 1 at Wadi Dana on 22nd March. 1 at Azraq Wetland Reserve on 26th March. 1 near Umm Qays on 28th March.
115. **Common Blackbird** *Turdus merula syriacus* HEMPRICH & EHRENBERG 1833. Seemingly common at Dana on 22nd and 29th March. 1 ♀ E of Azraq on 26th March. 1 ♀ at Shaumari Wildlife Reserve on 26th March.
116. **Common Rock-thrush** *Monticola saxatilis* (LINNAEUS 1766). One sighting: 1 ♂ at Shaumari Wildlife Reserve on 27th March.
117. **Blue Rock-thrush** *Monticola s. solitarius* (LINNAEUS 1758). Three sightings: 1 ♀ at Wadi Dana on 22nd March. 1 at Rift Margins E of Dead Sea on 29th March. 1 ♂ at Petra on 30th March.
118. **Common Nightingale** *Luscinia megarhynchos subsp.* C. L. BREHM 1831. Two sightings: 2 at Aqaba on 26th March. 1 at Al Ghal on 31st March. Subspecific level not assessed, but could be either nominate *L. m. megarhynchos*, *L. m. africana* (G. A. FISCHER & REICHENOW 1884) or *L. m. hafizi* SEVERTSOV 1873.
119. **Bluethroat** *Luscinia svecica subsp.* (LINNAEUS 1758). Twelve sightings, with males of three different types; 'all blue', 'white-spotted' and 'red-spotted'. We find it very difficult to assess subspecific level, but based on known distribution and migration pattern up to five subspecies could be involved.
Bluethroat 'all blue' type, possibly *L. s. magna* (ZARUDNY & LOUDON 1904) or *L. s. cyanecula* (MEISNER 1804). Two sightings: 1 ♂ at Tassan Springs on 21st March. 1 ♂ at Shaumari Wildlife Reserve on 26th March.
Bluethroat 'white-spotted', possibly *L. s. volgae* (O. KLEINSCHMIDT 1907) or *L. s. cyanecula* (MEISNER 1804). 1 ♂ at Al Mudawwara on 24th March. 2 ♂♂ + 1 ♀ at Aqaba on 26th March.
Bluethroat 'red-spotted', possibly nominate *L. s. svecica* or *L. s. pallidigularis* (ZARUDNY 1897). 2 ♂♂ at As Safawi Pump Station on 26th March.

Bluethroat, any type. 3 at Abu Burqa on 20th March. 10 at Tassan Springs on 21st March. 4 at Ma'an Wastewater Treatment Plant on 23rd March. 1 ♀ + 1 at Al Mudawwara on 23rd March. 2 at Al Mudawwara on 24th March. 1 at Azraq Wetland Reserve on 26th March. C. 20 at Shaumari Wildlife Reserve on 26th March.

120. **Rufous Scrub-robin** *Erythropygia galactotes* subsp. (TEMMINCK 1820). One sighting: 2 at Aqaba on 26th March. Subspecies involved could be either nominate *E. g. galactotes* or *E. g. syriaca* (HEMPRICH & EHRENBURG 1833).



Rufous Scrub-robin *Erythropygia galactotes* at Aqaba on 26th March, either nominate *E. g. galactotes* or *E. g. syriaca*.

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121. **Black Redstart** *Phoenicurus ochruros semirufus* (HEMPRICH & EHRENBURG 1833). Singles or pairs recorded on five days, e.g.: 1 ♀ at Tassan Springs on 21st March. 1 ♂ at Wadi Dana on 22nd March. 1 ♀ at Shaumari Wildlife Reserve on 26th March. 2 (♂♀) at Wadi Rum on 30th March.
122. **Common Redstart** *Phoenicurus ph. phoenicurus* (LINNAEUS 1758). One sighting: 3 ♂♂ at Al Mudawwara on 24th March.
- Common Redstart** *Phoenicurus phoenicurus samamisisicus* (HABLIZL 1783). Five sightings: 1 ♂ at Wadi Dana on 22nd and 23rd March. 2 ♂♂ at Shaumari Wildlife Reserve on 26th March. 1 ♂ near Dead Sea on 29th March. 1 ♂ at Wadi Rum on 1st April.
123. **Common Stonechat** *Saxicola torquatus rubicola* (LINNAEUS 1766). Two sightings: 1 ♀ at Aqaba on 20th March. 1 at Tassan Springs on 21st March.
- Common Stonechat** *Saxicola torquatus variegatus* (S. G. GMELIN 1774). One sighting: 1 ♂ at Al Mudawwara on 24th March.
- Common Stonechat** *Saxicola torquatus maurus* (PALLAS 1773). Seven sightings: 1 ♀ at Tassan Springs on 21st March. 1 ♀ at Al Mudawwara on 23rd March. 1 ♂ at Sahl As Suwwan on 24th March. 1 ♂ at Shaumari Wildlife Reserve on 25th March. 1 ♂ E of Azraq on 26th March. 1 at Shaumari Wildlife Reserve on 27th March. 1 ♂ at Disi on 31st March.
124. **Blackstart** *Cercomela m. melanura* (TEMMINCK 1824). Five sightings: 1 at Abu Burqa on 20th March. 3 at Tassan Springs on 21st March. 2 at farmland (!) at Umm Qays on 28th March. 1 near Dead Sea on 29th March. 2 at Petra on 30th March.

125. **White-crowned Wheatear** *Oenanthe leucopyga ernesti* MEINERTZHAGEN 1930. Four sightings: 1 en route Al Mudawwara-Wadi Rum on 24th March. 1 en route Aqaba-Ma'an on 25th March. 1 near Dead Sea on 29th March. 4 at Wadi Rum on 30th March.
126. **Hooded Wheatear** *Oenanthe monacha* (TEMMINCK 1825). One sighting: 1 ♂ at Wadi Rum on 31st March.
127. **Northern Wheatear** *Oenanthe oenanthe subsp.* (LINNAEUS 1758). Recorded on ten days, e.g.: 1 at Wadi Feinan on 21st March. 2 at Ma'an Wastewater Treatment Plant on 23rd March. C. 30 at Al Mudawwara on 23rd March. C. 100 at Al Mudawwara on 24th March. 5 in basalt desert 9 km E of As Safawi on 26th March. C. 50 at Disi on 31st March. Subspecific status not assessed, but both nominate *Oe. oe. oenanthe* and *Oe. oe. libanotica* (HEMPRICH & EHRENBURG 1833) probably involved.
128. **Mourning Wheatear** *Oenanthe l. lugens* (M. H. K. LICHTENSTEIN 1823). Recorded on four days. Several near Madaba on 29th March. 4 (2+2) at Petra on 30th March. 1 at Wadi Rum on 31st March and 1st April. N.B. *We noted no black morph 'Basalt' Mourning Wheatears despite extensive search in the basalt fields in the north-east.*
129. **Cyprus Wheatear** *Oenanthe cypriaca* (HOMEYER 1884). Four sightings, all of them in the eastern parts of the country: 1 ♀ at Al Mudawwara on 24th March. 2 (♂♀) at Shaumari Wildlife Reserve on 25th March. 2 at Azraq Wetland Reserve on 26th March. 1 at Shaumari Wildlife Reserve on 27th March. Note the eastern concentration of sightings – which is also in line with reported sightings in several of the trip-reports we have found on the Internet. The species appears to be a fairly common migrant in e.g. the Azraq – Shaumari area of the north-east in spring. Given the fact the species is much scarcer further west, e.g. in Israel (with much more birdwatching activity), one might speculate that Cyprus Wheatears have a more eastern migration route in spring than previously thought. Is this an indication that some birds might even winter further east in e.g. Iraq (otherwise considered to winter in Sudan and Ethiopia)?



Cyprus Wheatear *Oenanthe cypriaca* at Azraq Wetland Reserve on 26th March.
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130. **Black-eared Wheatear** *Oenanthe hispanica melanoleuca* (GÜLDENSTÄDT 1775). Recorded on eleven days, e.g.: 1 ♂ en route in Wadi Araba on 20th March. 2 (♂♀) at Al Mudawwara on 23rd March. C. 5 at Al Mudawwara on 24th March. 3 (2 ♂♂, 1 pale-throated ♀) at Shaumari Wildlife Reserve on 26th March. 1 ♂ at Al Ghal on 30th March. C. 5 at Disi on 31st March.

131. **Desert Wheatear** *Oenanthe d. deserti* (TEMMINCK 1825). Three sightings: 2 at Tassan Springs on 21st March. 5 in basalt desert 9 km E of As Safawi on 26th March. 1 at Wadi Hazim on 27th March.
132. **Isabelline Wheatear** *Oenanthe isabellina* (TEMMINCK 1829). Recorded on six days. 1 at Aqaba on 20th March. 1 at Abu Burqa on 20th March. 5 at Tassan Springs on 21st March. 3 at Ma'an Wastewater Treatment Plant on 23rd March. C. 50 at Al Mudawwara on 23rd March. C. 100 at Al Mudawwara on 24th March. 2 in basalt desert 9 km E of As Safawi on 26th March.
133. **Semi-collared Flycatcher** *Ficedula semitorquata* (HOMEYER 1885). One sighting: 1 ♂ at Wadi Dana on 22nd March.
134. **Graceful Prinia** *Prinia gracilis palaestinae* ZEDLITZ 1911. Seemed present in suitable habitat throughout, and recorded on eleven days. First sighting: 1 at Abu Burqa on 20th March.
135. **Streaked Scrub-warbler** *Scotocerca i. inquieta* (CRETZSCHMAR 1830). Four sightings: 1 in song at Wadi Dana on 22nd and 23rd March. 2 in song at Petra on 30th March. 1 in song at Wadi Rum on 1st April.



Streaked Scrub-warbler *Scotocerca i. inquieta* at Wadi Dana on 22nd March 2011.
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136. **Cetti's Warbler** *Cettia cetti orientalis* TRISTRAM 1867. Two sightings: 1 in song near Umm Qays on 28th March. 1 near Dead Sea on 29th March.
137. **Savi's Warbler** *Locustella luscinioides fusca* (SEVERTSOV 1873). Two sightings of singletons, both at Aqaba Sewage Works and both also in song; 25th March and 2nd April.
138. **Moustached Warbler** *Acrocephalus melanopogon mimicus* (MADARÁSZ 1903). One sighting: 1 at Aqaba Sewage Works on 25th March.
139. **Sedge Warbler** *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus* (LINNAEUS 1758). Four sightings: 1 at Aqaba Sewage Works on 25th March. 1 at Aqaba on 25th March. 1 at Azraq Wetland Reserve on 26th March. 1 at Aqaba Sewage Works on 1st April.
140. **Eurasian Reed-warbler** *Acrocephalus scirpaceus fuscus* (HEMPRICH & EHRENBURG 1833). Six sightings: 1 at Aqaba Sewage Works on 25th March and 1st and 2nd April. Several in song at Birds Resort and Reserve of Al Ghal on 30th March, 31st March and 1st April, a considerable range extension to the south compared to Andrews (1995).
141. **Olivaceous Warbler** *Hippolais pallida elaeica* (LINDERMAYER 1843). Recorded on seven days in low numbers. First sighting: 1 in song at Aqaba on 20th March.
142. **Common Chiffchaff** *Phylloscopus collybita abietinus* (NILSSON 1819). Seen daily, sometimes numerous, e.g.: 10 at Aqaba on 20th March. 10 at Ma'an Wastewater Treatment Plant on 23rd March. C. 10 at As Safawi Pump Station on 26th March. 5 at Azraq Wetland Reserve.

Keeping in mind the difficulties in judging slight plumage-differences in abraded and bleached Chiffchaffs in spring, we will still try to give our impressions of the birds we watched. The vast majority showed characters of *Ph. c. abietinus*, but appeared greyer (less greenish) above, whiter below and with whiter supercilium than the ssp. *collybita/abietinus* we see each spring in western Europe. Most of the birds we encountered had calls recalling those of *Ph. c. tristis* BLYTH 1843 ('heep' – but with a tendency of being more down-slurred at the end – but this was most evident when comparing KM:s sound-recordings of these birds with sound-recordings of *tristis* from e.g. Siberia and India – in the field the call usually appeared identical to that of *tristis*). Despite the *tristis*-like calls, and the fact that some of the birds approach *tristis* in some plumage characters, they are not *tristis/fulvescens*, since they at close distance showed some yellow on crown, supercilium and belly, usually pale lower mandible and lacked the pale sandy-brown ear-coverts shown by many *tristis*. Moreover, some of the birds calling like *tristis*, also gave sub-songs of typical 'western' *chiff-chaff-chiff-chaff*-type. A few of our birds had clear white supercilium although they at the same time showed yellow tinge on under tail-coverts, mantle and crown, i.e. very much resembling the Chiffchaffs breeding in Turkey (ssp. *brevirostris*) or Iran (ssp. *menzbieri*). Note that at least the Turkish *brevirostris* (we have no personal experience of the calls of the Chiffchaffs breeding in Iran) gives the *tristis*-like calls described above. Furthermore, we have observed birds with similar calls and plumage (despite being in fresh plumage) in N and S Kazakhstan in autumn – birds that for sure are Siberian migrants! We are aware of the trend nowadays in judging Chiffchaffs from Siberia as two separate and fairly distinct groups; *abietinus* or *fulvescens/tristis*. Our personal experience support the view that Siberian birds with a call like *tristis*, song like *abietinus/collybita* and a plumage somewhat intermediate between *abietinus* and *fulvescens/tristis* (but closest to *abietinus*) are common breeders in western/central Siberia and are common migrants in e.g. Kazakhstan in autumn. We can not separate such Siberian birds from the Turkish and Iranian populations of Chiffchaff *in the field*.

Hence, we believe that the vast majority of birds wintering and migrating through Jordan in spring are either *brevirostris*, *menzbieri* or the above described birds from western Siberia. Moreover, we believe that a more cautious approach is needed when judging the reported regular occurrence of *tristis* in the Middle East and eastern Arabian peninsula. Bleached and abraded birds (perhaps typical *abietinus* in fresh autumn-plumage!) with *heep* calls may easily be mistaken for true *tristis* in the field by the unwary observer.

A lower number (<5 %) called like *Ph. c. abietinus/collybita* and about the same number called more clearly down-curved *chelu* (somewhat reminiscent of Hume's Warbler *Ph. humei*), and very similar to the calls given by the much debated Chiffchaffs observed in western Europe (with an unknown geographical origin). The *chelu*-callers are plumagewise inseparable from *collybita/abietinus* in the field.

143. **Eastern Bonelli's Warbler** *Phylloscopus orientalis* (C. L. BREHM 1855). Three sightings: 1 at Aqaba Sewage Works on 25th March. 5, some of them in song, at Umm Qays on 28th March. 1 at Aqaba Sewage Works on 1st April.
144. **Blackcap** *Sylvia a. atricapilla* (LINNAEUS 1758). One sighting only: 2 ♂♂ at Aqaba Sewage Works on 25th March.
145. **Lesser Whitethroat** *Sylvia c. curruca* (LINNAEUS 1758). Seen daily and sometimes the most numerous passerine staying, e.g. 5 at Tassan Springs on 20th March, 10 at Tassan Springs on 21st March and also 1 at Al Mudawwara on 24th March. Many of the birds seen well showed a browner tinge to mantle and darker ear-coverts and also seemed somewhat larger than

nominate. These birds are possibly of the form '*caucasica*', recently included in nominate *S. c. curruca*. These Jordanian migrants mostly give the *tet*-call typical of nominate ssp., but now and then give the churring *tscherrrr*-call (which is the dominating call of the Lesser Whitethroats wintering on e.g. the eastern and southern part of the Arabian Peninsula).

146. **Orphean Warbler** *Sylvia hortensis crassirostris* CRETZSCHMAR 1830. Five sightings: 1 in song at Wadi Dana on 22nd March. 1 at Shaumari Wildlife Reserve on 26th March. 1 near Dead Sea on 29th March. 1 at Petra on 30th March. 1 at Wadi Rum on 1st April.
147. **Arabian Warbler** *Sylvia leucomelaena negevensis* SHIRIHAI 1988. One sighting: 2 at Wadi Feinan on 21st March.
148. **Desert Warbler** *Sylvia n. nana* (HEMPRICH & EHRENBERG 1833). One sighting: 1 in desert E of Azraq (N 31° 40.510', E 037° 11.937') on 27th March.
149. **Common Whitethroat** *Sylvia communis icterops* MÉNÉTRIES 1832. Three sightings: 2 at Aqaba on 20th March. 2 at Umm Qays on 28th March. 1 near Dead Sea on 29th March.
150. **Subalpine Warbler** *Sylvia cantillans albistriata* (C. L. BREHM 1855). One sighting: 1 ♂ at Aqaba on 25th March.
151. **Sardinian Warbler** *Sylvia melanocephala momus* (HEMPRICH & EHRENBERG 1833). Three sightings: 1 ♂ at Wadi Dana on both 22nd and 29th March. 1 near Umm Qays on 28th March.
152. **Arabian Babbler** *Turdoides s. squamiceps* (CRETZSCHMAR 1827). Three sightings: 3 at Tassan Springs on 20th March. 2 at Tassan Springs on 21st March. 1 at Al Mudawwara on 24th March.
153. **Great Tit** *Parus major terraesanctae* E. J. O. HARTERT 1910. Several seen and heard at Wadi Dana on 22nd and 23rd March. Several also in oak woodland near Umm Qays on 28th March.
154. **Eurasian Penduline-tit** *Remiz pendulinus menzbieri* (ZARUDNY 1913). Two sightings, both at Aqaba Sewage Works: 25th March and 2nd April. Subspecific level assessed on distribution only.
155. **Palestine Sunbird** *Cinnyris o. osea* BONAPARTE 1856. Recorded on six days, e.g.: 1 ♂ at Aqaba on 20th March. 10 at Tassan Springs on 21st March.



Palestine Sunbird *Cinnyris o. osea* at Wadi Dana on 22nd March 2011.
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156. **Southern Grey Shrike** *Lanius meridionalis aucheri* BONAPARTE 1853. Three sightings: 2 at Wadi Feinan on 21st March, one of them feeding on a Cretzschmar's Bunting corpse! 1 at Al Mudawwara on 23rd March. 1 near Dead Sea on 29th March.
157. **Woodchat Shrike** *Lanius senator niloticus* (BONAPARTE 1853). Recorded on eight days, e.g.: 1 en route in Wadi Araba on 20th March. 2 at Al Mudawwara on 24th March. 1 at As Safawi Pump Station on 26th March. 3 at Umm Qays on 28th March. 1 at Disi on 31st March.

158. **Masked Shrike** *Lanius nubicus* M. H. C. LICHTENSTEIN 1823. Six sightings: 1 at Abu Burqa on 20th March. 1 at Wadi Feinan on 21st March. 1 en route Dana-Ma'an on 22nd March. 2 at Aqaba on 26th March. 1 at Umm Qays on 28th March. 1 near Dead Sea on 29th March.
159. **Eurasian Jay** *Garrulus glandarius atricapillus* I. GEOFFROY SAINT-HILAIRE 1832. One sighting: 5+ in oak wood near Umm Qays on 28th March.
160. **House Crow** *Corvus splendens subsp.* VIEILLOT 1817. Only recorded in and near Aqaba.
161. **Hooded Crow** *Corvus cornix pallescens* (MADARÁSZ 1904). Four sightings: 2 at Aqaba Sewage Works on 25th March. 5+ near Ramtha on 27th March. Singletons at Aqaba Sewage Works on both 1st and 2nd April.
162. **Brown-necked Raven** *Corvus ruficollis* LESSON 1831. Recorded on seven days, e.g.: 1 at nest (N 30° 00.939, E 035° 55.275) in pylon SE of Ma'an on 23rd March. 12 at Al Mudawwara on 24th March.
163. **Common Raven** *Corvus corax laurencei* HUME 1873. One sighting: 1 at Wadi Dana on 22nd March.
164. **Fan-tailed Raven** *Corvus rhipidurus stanleyi* ROSELAAR 1993. Recorded on three days: A few seen in Rift margins on 20th and 29th March. C. 5 at Petra on 30th March.
165. **Tristram's Starling** *Onychognathus tristramii* (P. L. SCLATER 1858). Recorded on eight days, e.g.: 3 at Aqaba on 20th March. 5 en route in Wadi Araba on 20th March. C. 20 at Petra on 30th March.



Tristram's Starling *Onychognathus tristramii* at Wadi Rum on 1st April 2011.
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166. **House Sparrow** *Passer domesticus biblicus* E. J. O. HARTERT 1904. Ubiquitous. Seen daily throughout.
167. **Spanish Sparrow** *Passer hispaniolensis transcaspicus* TSCHUSI 1902. Recorded on ten days, e.g.: C. 50 at Sahl As Suwwan on 24th March.
168. **Common Rock-sparrow** *Petronia petronia puteicola* FESTA 1894. One sighting: a small colony (5+) near Dana Village on 22nd March.
169. **Common Chaffinch** *Fringilla coelebs syriaca* HARRISON 1945. Two sightings: 1 ♀ at Wadi Dana on 22nd March. Several near Umm Qays on 28th March.
170. **European Serin** *Serinus serinus* (LINNAEUS 1766). Only one sighting: 1 over-flying near Madaba on 29th March.

171. **Syrian Serin** *Serinus syriacus* BONAPARTE 1850. Three sightings: 1 ♂ at Feinan Lodge on 21st March. Several sightings of pairs at Wadi Dana on both 22nd and 23rd March.
172. **European Greenfinch** *Carduelis chloris chlorotica* (BONAPARTE 1850). Recorded on four days, e.g.: 1 at Tassan Springs on 21st March.
173. **European Goldfinch** *Carduelis carduelis niediecki* REICHENOW 1907. Only one sighting: 5+ at Wadi Dana on 22nd March.
174. **Common Linnet** *Carduelis cannabina bella* (C. L. BREHM 1845). Recorded on eight days, e.g.: 1 at Wadi Feinan on 21st March.
175. **Trumpeter Finch** *Bucanetes githagineus crassirostris* (BLYTH 1847). Three sightings: 2 at Abu Burqa on 20th March. 5 at basalt desert 9 km E of As Safawi on 26th March. 2 ♂♂ at Wadi Rum on 1st April.
176. **Desert Finch** *Rhodospiza obsoleta* (M. H. C. LICHTENSTEIN 1823). Four sightings: C. 20 at Al Mudawwara on 23rd March. C. 10 at Al Mudawwara on 24th March. C. 50 E of Azraq on 26th March. 3 at Disi on 31st March.
177. **Pale Rosefinch** *Carpodacus s. synoicus* (TEMMINCK 1825). Three sightings: 30 (15 ♂♂, 15 ♀♀) at Petra (most birds around the Monastery) on 30th March. 8 at Wadi Rum on 31st March. More than 20 at Wadi Rum on 1st April.
178. **House Bunting** *Emberiza s. striolata* (LICHTENSTEIN 1823). One sighting: 1 near Dead Sea on 29th March.
179. **Ortolan Bunting** *Emberiza hortulana* LINNAEUS 1758. Two sightings: 1 at Umm Qays on 28th March. 1 at Disi on 31st March.
180. **Cretzschmar's Bunting** *Emberiza caesia* CRETZSCHMAR 1826. Four sightings: 1 ♂ at Abu Burqa on 20th March. 5 at Ma'an Wastewater Treatment Plant on 23rd March. 10 at Umm Qays on 28th March. 1 near Dead Sea on 29th March.
181. **Corn Bunting** *Miliaria c. calandra* (LINNAEUS 1758). Recorded on six days, e.g.: 1 at Wadi Dana on 22nd March. C. 10 at Al Mudawwara on 24th March. 10 E of Azraq on 26th March.

Appendix 1

Species (subspecies)	March												April		Σ
	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	1	2	
Little Grebe <i>Tachybaptus r. ruficollis</i>	2					10							10	10	32
Great Cormorant <i>Phalacrocorax carbo sinensis</i>													6	4	10
Grey Heron <i>Ardea c. cinerea</i>								2					1	2	5
Little Egret <i>Egretta g. garzetta</i>						1		3					1		5
Cattle Egret <i>Bubulcus i. ibis</i>				1	1		2	36				5		3	48
Squacco Heron <i>Ardeola ralloides</i>		1					1								2
Black-crowned Night-heron <i>Nycticorax n. nycticorax</i>		1													1
European White Stork <i>Ciconia c. ciconia</i>														1	1
Glossy Ibis <i>Plegadis falcinellus</i>							1						9	1	11
Eurasian Spoonbill <i>Platalea l. leucorodia</i>													6		6

Jordan, 19 March to 2 April 2011

Species (subspecies)	March												April		Σ
	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	1	2	
Greater Flamingo <i>Phoenicopterus ruber roseus</i>														2	2
Ruddy Shelduck <i>Tadorna ferruginea</i>														1	1
Eurasian Wigeon <i>Anas penelope</i>	20					10									30
Common Teal <i>Anas c. crecca</i>					1	10									11
Mallard <i>Anas p. platyrhynchos</i>						2					3		2	2	9
Northern Pintail <i>Anas a. acuta</i>						2									2
Garganey <i>Anas querquedula</i>	300					3								2	305
Northern Shoveler <i>Anas clypeata</i>	12				1	50		10					1	1	75
Ferruginous Duck <i>Aythya nyroca</i>						1								2	3
Black Kite <i>Milvus m. migrans</i>	20+	x		18+	1	x	2	x					x		50+
Egyptian Vulture <i>Neophron p. percnopterus</i>	1														1
Eurasian Griffon <i>Gyps f. fulvus</i>		1													1
Short-toed Snake-eagle <i>Circaetus gallicus</i>	1		2						2						5
Western Marsh-harrier <i>Circus ae. aeruginosus</i>	1	3		13	2	1	3	1			1		1	1	27
Hen Harrier <i>Circus c. cyaneus</i>	1			2	1	1	2	1							8
Pallid Harrier <i>Circus macrourus</i>					1	2									3
Montagu's Harrier <i>Circus pygargus</i>				1	1										2
Eurasian Sparrowhawk <i>Accipiter n. nisus</i>						1	1		1		1				4
Eurasian Buzzard <i>Buteo buteo vulpinus</i>	500	x	x	25	20	x	3	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	750+
Long-legged Buzzard <i>Buteo r. rufinus</i>		1		2					1						4
Greater Spotted Eagle <i>Aquila clanga</i>						1									1
Steppe Eagle <i>Aquila nipalensis orientalis</i>	8	1	1		2	1					1				14
Bonelli's Eagle <i>Hieraetus f. fasciatus</i>												1			1
Booted Eagle <i>Hieraetus pennatus</i>													1		1
Common Kestrel <i>Falco t. tinnunculus</i>	x		x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x			15+
Chukar <i>Alectoris chukar sinaica</i>			5	5											10
Sand Partridge <i>Ammoperdix h. heyi</i>		2							1	1	5	2	2		13
Common Quail <i>Coturnix c. coturnix</i>					1		1	1	8	1		5			17
Spotted Crane <i>Porzana porzana</i>					1										1

Jordan, 19 March to 2 April 2011

Species (subspecies)	March												April		Σ
	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	1	2	
Common Moorhen <i>Gallinula ch. chloropus</i>	1			1		5	10	1		1	1	1	5	5	31
Common Coot <i>Fulica a. atra</i>	1				1	5							5	5	17+
Black-winged Stilt <i>Himantopus h. himantopus</i>				1	3	x		40					x	x	60+
Stone-curlew <i>Burhinus oedicnemus subsp.</i>		1													1
Collared Pratincole <i>Glareola p. pratincola</i>													3		3
Spur-winged Lapwing <i>Vanellus spinosus</i>	2			24	30	40	2	79					x	x	250+
Common Ringed Plover <i>Charadrius hiaticula tundrae</i>						1		2					1	1	5
Little Ringed Plover <i>Charadrius dubius curonicus</i>	1	1		2	5	5	2	20					5	5	46
Kentish Plover <i>Charadrius a. alexandrinus</i>								5						2	7
Greater Sandplover <i>Ch. leschenaulti columbinus</i>														1	1
Common Snipe <i>Gallinago g. gallinago</i>					2		1	4							7
Common Redshank <i>Tringa totanus subsp.</i>								2						1	3
Marsh Sandpiper <i>Tringa stagnatilis</i>					1								5		6
Common Greenshank <i>Tringa nebularia</i>				2				1						1	4
Green Sandpiper <i>Tringa ochropus</i>	2			2	1	2	1	16				2			26
Wood Sandpiper <i>Tringa glareola</i>					1	1		10					5	5	22
Common Sandpiper <i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>						1		5					1	1	8
Little Stint <i>Calidris minuta</i>								20					5	5	30
Ruff <i>Philomachus pugnax</i>				6		1		100					1	1	109
White-eyed Gull <i>Larus leucophthalmus</i>	5					2									7
Yellow-legged Gull <i>Larus cachinnans michahellis</i>	1														1
Yellow-legged Gull <i>Larus c. cachinnans</i>						5							5	5	15
Armenian Gull <i>Larus armenicus</i>														2	2
Lesser Black-backed Gull <i>Larus f. fuscus</i>	1												5	5	11
Lesser Black-backed Gull <i>Larus fuscus heuglini</i>														3+	3
Great Black-headed Gull <i>Larus ichtyaetus</i>														1	1
Common Black-headed Gull <i>Larus ridibundus</i>	10					100							50	50	210
Slender-billed Gull <i>Larus genei</i>						40							1	10	51
Caspian Tern <i>Hydroprogne caspia</i>														1	1

Jordan, 19 March to 2 April 2011

Species (subspecies)	March												April		Σ
	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	1	2	
Rock Dove <i>Columba livia palaestinae</i>					x	x						200	x		200+
Eurasian Collared-dove <i>Streptopelia d. decaocto</i>	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	500+
Laughing Dove <i>Streptopelia s. senegalensis</i>	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	300+
Namaqua Dove <i>Oena c. capensis</i>				1	2										3
Rose-ringed Parakeet <i>Psittacula krameri subsp.</i>	1					1							1		3
Common Cuckoo <i>Cuculus c. canorus</i>			3							1					4
Common Barn-owl <i>Tyto alba erlangeri</i>		1													1
Eurasian Scops-owl <i>Otus scops cycladum</i>		2	2							3					7
Little Owl <i>Athene noctua lilith</i>										1	1				2
Nubian Nightjar <i>Caprimulgus nubicus tamaricis</i>	1	5													6
Alpine Swift <i>Tachymarptis melba tuneti</i>	1														1
Common Swift <i>Apus a. apus</i>					5	5	5		5				5		25
Pallid Swift <i>Apus p. pallidus</i>		10			10	10				10	30		10	10	90
White-throated Kingfisher <i>Halcyon s. smyrnensis</i>		1				1			1	1					4
Little Green Bee-eater <i>Merops orientalis cyanophrys</i>	2	2				2				2					8
Eurasian Hoopoe <i>Upupa e. epops</i>	6+	1+		40+	50+	1+	36+	1+	1+	1+	1+	2+	1+	1+	150+
Eurasian Wryneck <i>Jynx t. torquilla</i>					1		1								2
Syrian Woodpecker <i>Dendrocopos syriacus</i>									5						5
Greater Hoopoe-lark <i>Alaemon a. alaudipes</i>				1				2							3
Bar-tailed Lark <i>Ammomanes cinctura arenicolor</i>							3	1							4
Desert Lark <i>Ammomanes deserti deserti/isabellina</i>	1	4+	1+	1+			1			5	7+	5+	5+		30+
Desert Lark <i>Ammomanes deserti annae</i>							7								7
Bimaculated Lark <i>Melanocorypha bimaculata</i>					5		27	350							382
Greater Short-toed Lark <i>Calandrella brachydactyla hermonensis</i>	35	40		60	20		30	40				10+			225
Lesser Short-toed Lark <i>Calandrella rufescens minor</i>								3							3
Temminck's Lark <i>Eremophila bilopha</i>				4	2		15								21
Crested Lark <i>Galerida cristata brachyura</i>	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	200+

Jordan, 19 March to 2 April 2011

Species (subspecies)	March												April		Σ
	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	1	2	
Eurasian Skylark <i>Alauda arvensis subsp.</i>							2								2
Collared Sand Martin <i>Riparia riparia subsp.</i>	2	1+		1	1+	1+	1+	1+							8+
Barn Swallow <i>Hirundo r. rustica</i>	x	x	x	100	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	500+
Barn Swallow <i>Hirundo rustica transitiva</i>									10+						10+
Eurasian Crag Martin <i>Ptyonoprogne rupestris</i>										1					1
Rock Martin <i>Ptyonoprogne fuligula obsoleta</i>	x	x	x		x	x	x			x	20	x	x		100+
Northern House Martin <i>Delichon urbicum subsp.</i>					5+		x	x		x	x				20+
Red-rumped Swallow <i>Cecropis daurica rufula</i>		3		10			5	x		x					20+
Richard's Pipit <i>Anthus r. richardi</i>						1									1
Long-billed Pipit <i>Anthus similis captus</i>										1					1
Blyth's Pipit <i>Anthus godlewskii</i>				1	1										1
Tawny Pipit <i>Anthus c. campestris</i>		1		1	2		6	6			30				46
Meadow Pipit <i>Anthus p. pratensis</i>					2		4								6
Red-throated Pipit <i>Anthus cervinus</i>	5			10	20		21	5				30			91
Olive-backed Pipit <i>Anthus hodgsoni yunnanensis</i>							1								1
Tree Pipit <i>Anthus t. trivialis</i>					5		5		1+	1+					12+
Water Pipit <i>Anthus spinoletta coutellii</i>		1		2	20		5	20							48
White Wagtail <i>Motacilla a. alba</i>	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	150+
Yellow Wagtail <i>Motacilla flava thunbergi</i>				1	1		1								3
Yellow Wagtail <i>Motacilla f. flava</i>					1		1								2
Yellow Wagtail <i>Motacilla flava feldegg</i>	11			x	2	x	x					1	x		20+
Yellow Wagtail <i>Motacilla flava 'superciliaris'</i>	1														1
Yellow Wagtail <i>Motacilla flava 'dombrowskii'</i>					1										1
Yellow Wagtail <i>Motacilla flava subsp.</i>	10			5			200	1				3			219
Citrine Wagtail <i>Motacilla citreola citreola/werae</i>					2		2	2							6
White-eyed Bulbul <i>Pycnonotus xanthopygos</i>	x	x	x	x		x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	100+
White-eared Bulbul <i>Pyc. leucotis mesopotamia</i>							3+								3+
Song Thrush <i>Turdus ph. philomelos</i>			1				1		1						3

Jordan, 19 March to 2 April 2011

Species (subspecies)	March												April		Σ
	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	1	2	
Common Blackbird <i>Turdus merula syriacus</i>			10+			2				5+					17+
Common Rock-thrush <i>Monticola saxatilis</i>								1							1
Blue Rock-thrush <i>Monticola s. solitarius</i>			1							1	1				3
Common Nightingale <i>Luscinia megarhynchos subsp.</i>							2					1			3
Bluethroat <i>Luscinia svecica subsp.</i>	3	11		6	2		24			1					47
Rufous Scrub-robin <i>Erythropygia galactotes subsp.</i>							2								2
Black Redstart <i>Phoenicurus ochruros semirufus</i>		1	1				1			1	2				6
Common Redstart <i>Phoenicurus ph. phoenicurus</i>					3										3
Common Redstart <i>Phoenicurus phoenicurus samamisisicus</i>			1	1			2			1			1		6
Common Stonechat <i>Saxicola torquatus rubicola</i>	1	1													2
Common Stonechat <i>Saxicola torquatus variegatus</i>					1										1
Common Stonechat <i>Saxicola torquatus maurus</i>		1		1	1	1	1	1				1			7
Blackstart <i>Cercomela m. melanura</i>	1	3							2		2				8
White-crowned Wheatear <i>Oenanthe leucopyga ernesti</i>					1	1				1	4				7
Hooded Wheatear <i>Oenanthe monacha</i>												1			1
Northern Wheatear <i>Oenanthe oenanthe subsp.</i>		5	x	32	100		5	x		x	x	50	x		200+
Mourning Wheatear <i>Oenanthe l. lugens</i>										5+	4	1	1		11+
Cyprus Wheatear <i>Oenanthe cyprica</i>					1	2	2	1							6
Black-eared Wheatear <i>Oenanthe hispanica melanoleuca</i>	1		1	2	5	1	3	1	1	1	1	5			22
Desert Wheatear <i>Oenanthe d. deserti</i>		2					5	1							8
Isabelline Wheatear <i>Oenanthe isabellina</i>	2	5		53	100		2				1				163
Semi-collared Flycatcher <i>Ficedula semitorquata</i>			1												1
Graceful Prinia <i>Prinia gracilis palaestinae</i>	x	x			x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	15+
Streaked Scrub-warbler <i>Scotocerca i. inquieta</i>			1	1							2		1		5
Cetti's Warbler <i>Cettia cetti orientalis</i>									1	1					2
Savi's Warbler <i>Locustella luscinioides fusca</i>						1								1	2

Jordan, 19 March to 2 April 2011

Species (subspecies)	March												April		Σ
	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	1	2	
Moustached Warbler <i>Acrocephalus melanopogon mimicus</i>						1									1
Sedge Warbler <i>Acrocephalus schoenobaenus</i>						2	1						1		4
Eurasian Reed-warbler <i>Acrocephalus scirpaceus fuscus</i>						1					5+	5+	5+	1	17+
Olivaceous Warbler <i>Hippolais pallida elaeica</i>	x		x			x	x		x	x				x	10+
Common Chiffchaff <i>Phylloscopus collybita abietinus</i>	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	150+
Eastern Bonelli's Warbler <i>Phylloscopus orientalis</i>						1			5				1		7
Blackcap <i>Sylvia a. atricapilla</i>						2									2
Lesser Whitethroat <i>Sylvia c. curruca</i>	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	200+
Orphean Warbler <i>Sylvia hortensis crassirostris</i>			1				1			1	1		1		5
Arabian Warbler <i>Sylvia leucomelaena negevensis</i>		2													2
Desert Warbler <i>Sylvia n. nana</i>								1							1
Common Whitethroat <i>Sylvia communis icterops</i>	2								2	1					5
Subalpine Warbler <i>Sylvia cantillans albistriata</i>						1									1
Sardinian Warbler <i>Sylvia melanocephala momus</i>			1						1	1					3
Arabian Babbler <i>Turdoides s. squamiceps</i>	3	2		1											6
Great Tit <i>Parus major terraesanctae</i>			5+	5+					5+						15+
Eurasian Penduline-tit <i>Remiz pendulinus menzbieri</i>						1								1	2
Palestine Sunbird <i>Cinnyris o. osea</i>	x	x	x	x					x		x				20+
Southern Grey Shrike <i>Lanius meridionalis aucheri</i>		2		1						1					4
Woodchat Shrike <i>Lanius senator niloticus</i>	1				2		1	1	3	1		1	1		11
Masked Shrike <i>Lanius nubicus</i>	1	1	1				2		1	1					7
Eurasian Jay <i>Garrulus glandarius atricapillus</i>									5+						5+
House Crow <i>Corvus splendens subsp.</i>	x					x							x	x	50+
Hooded Crow <i>Corvus cornix pallescens</i>						2		5					1	1	9
Brown-necked Raven <i>Corvus ruficollis</i>				x	x	x	x	x				x	x		10+
Common Raven <i>Corvus corax laurencei</i>			1												1

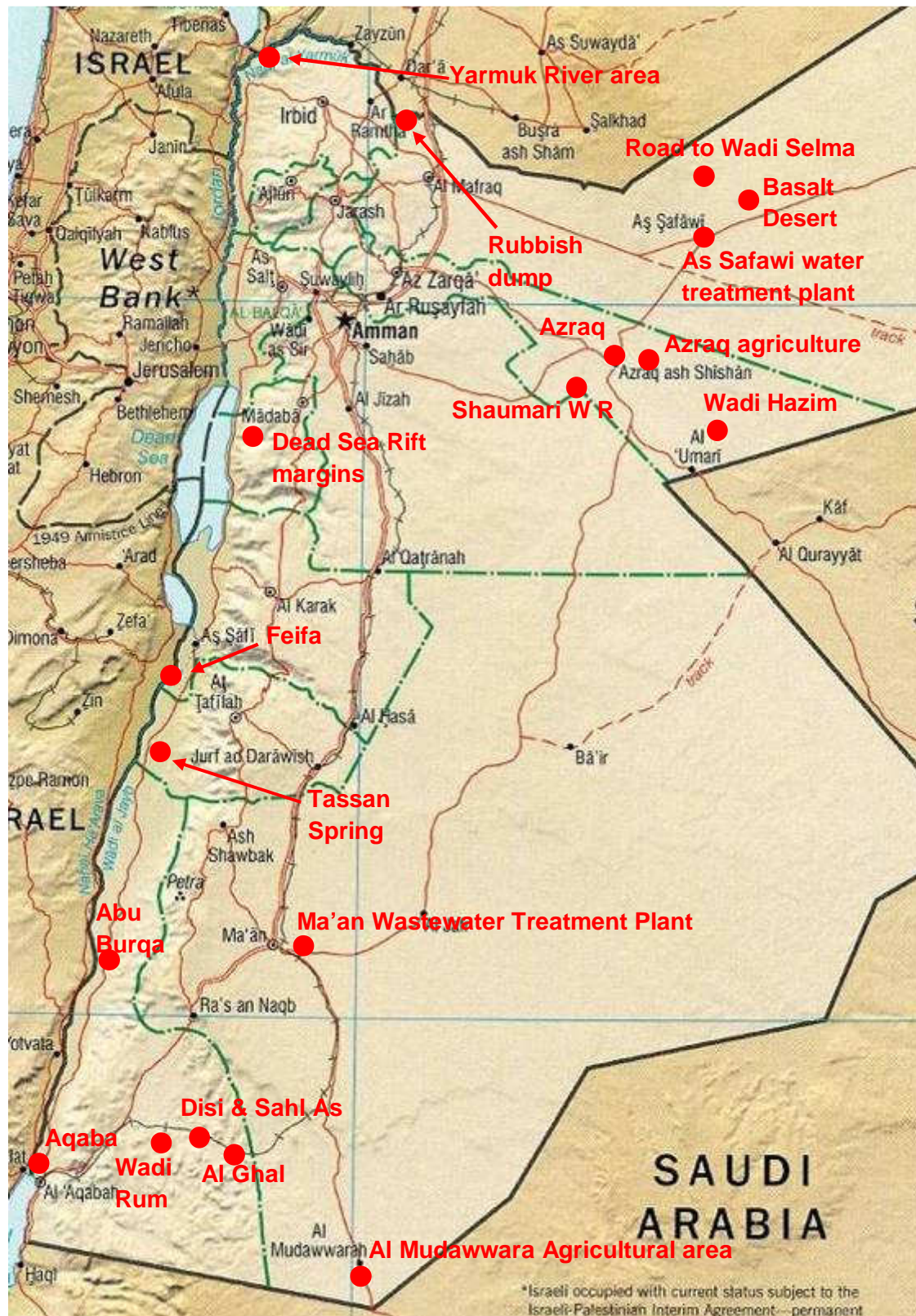
Jordan, 19 March to 2 April 2011

Species (subspecies)	March												April		Σ
	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	1	2	
Fan-tailed Raven <i>Corvus rhipidurus stanleyi</i>	5+									5+	5				15+
Tristram's Starling <i>Onychognathus tristramii</i>	x	x	x	x						x	20	x	x		75+
House Sparrow <i>Passer domesticus biblicus</i>	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	500+
Spanish Sparrow <i>Passer hispaniolensis transcaspicus</i>	x	x		x	50	x	x	x		x		x		x	200+
Common Rock-sparrow <i>Petronia petronia puteicola</i>			5+												5+
Common Chaffinch <i>Fringilla coelebs syriaca</i>			1						1						2
European Serin <i>Serinus serinus</i>										1					1
Syrian Serin <i>Serinus syriacus</i>		1	4+	4+											9+
European Greenfinch <i>Carduelis chloris chlorotica</i>		x	x						x	x					10+
European Goldfinch <i>Carduelis carduelis niediecki</i>			5+												5+
Common Linnet <i>Carduelis cannabina bella</i>		x	x	x				x	x	x	x	x			10+
Trumpeter Finch <i>Bucanetes githagineus crassirostris</i>	2						5						2		9
Desert Finch <i>Rhodospiza obsoleta</i>				20	10		50					3			83
Pale Rosefinch <i>Carpodacus s. synoicus</i>											30	8	20+		58+
House Bunting <i>Emberiza s. striolata</i>										1					1
Ortolan Bunting <i>Emberiza hortulana</i>									1			1			2
Cretzschmar's Bunting <i>Emberiza caesia</i>	1			5					10	1					17
Corn Bunting <i>Miliaria c. calandra</i>			1		10		10		x	x		x			25+

Acknowledgements

Many thanks to Dr. Fares Khoury, Lajos Nemeth, Tomas Haraldsson and Ian Harrison for invaluable information prior our trip! Thanks also to Feras Rahaleh for good company at our first visit to Aqaba Sewage Works, Hans Larsson for valuable help in identifying gulls on photos and Mats Wærn for discussion on Bluethroat subspecies.

Appendix 2 - some additional birdwatching sites in Jordan



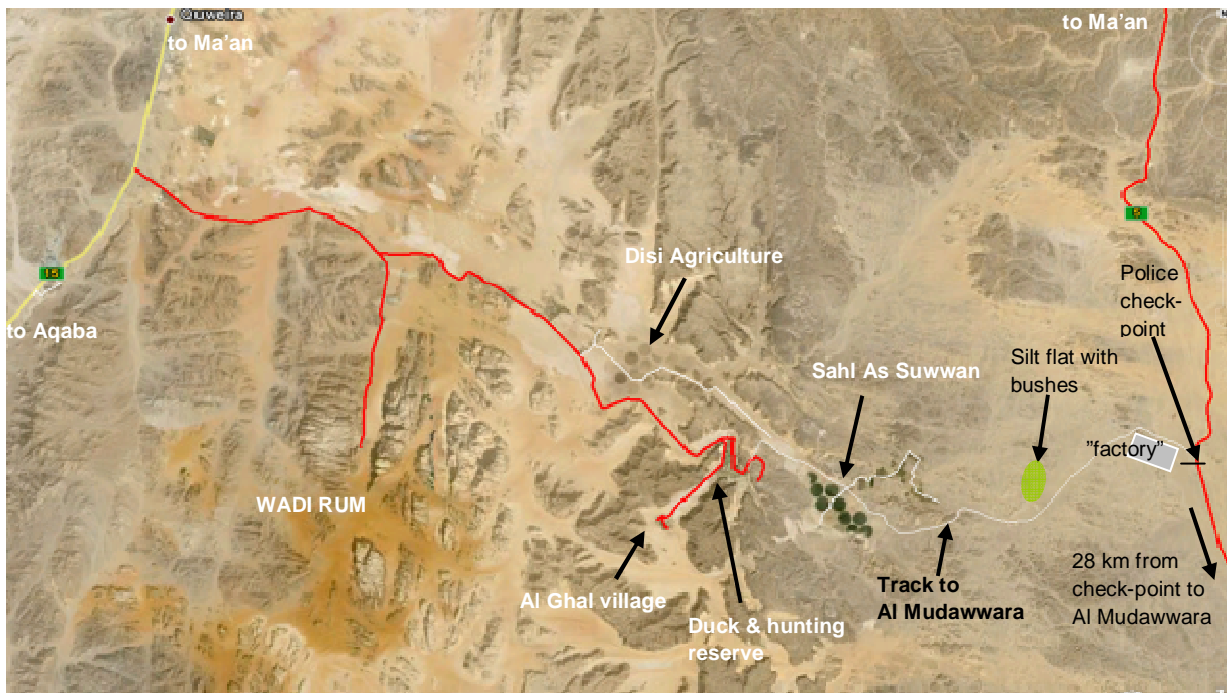
We did actively search for new sites by using the satellite images in Google Maps/Google Earth.

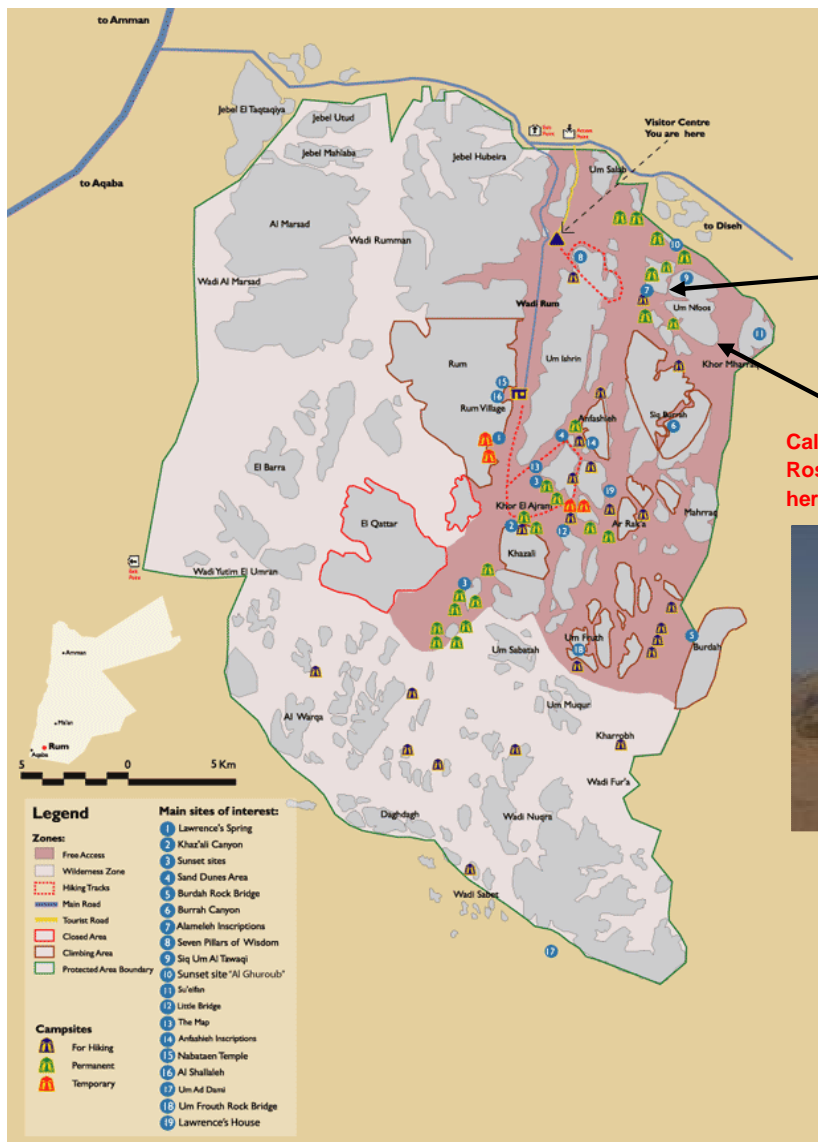
Interesting agricultural areas, wetlands, sewage ponds, rubbish dumps and forests are easily found that way. The following sites were visited by us and supplement those already published in Andrews (1995)⁵.

⁵ <<http://www.andrewsi.freemove.co.uk/jordan-reading.htm>>

Wadi Rum

See Andrews for basic details. News are that the entrance fee is now 5 JD/pers/day, 35 JD/day for a 4WD (free for saloons cars, but you can only go on the tarmac road from the visitors centre to Wadi Rum village). That means that camping in Wadi Rum for two birders with a rented 4WD for two days /nights is a rather expensive 90 JD! Note that the Sinai Rosefinch is common in the whole area, but concentrated to areas with human activity close to steep mountain-sides – typically either a tourist camp or a Bedouin camp. We are here offering two good spots that require 4WD – but there are many such places scattered around the entire area. With a saloon car the village of Wadi Rum is an alternative (but boring) option for the rosefinches. We have no stake-outs for Hume's Tawny Owl or Desert Eagle Owl but both occur in the area, and many birders have reported HTO from the tourist camps they have used. The Verreaux's Eagle is apparently no longer breeding here but there are some scattered observations of this species from various places in Wadi Rum, the latest to our knowledge when writing this was from October 2010. Finding Hooded Wheatear requires luck since they have very large territories and are constantly on the move. A good strategy (but it requires persistence) is to scan a suitable large sandy flat and bushy area, with a telescope during the first few hours of the morning.





Tourist camp with plenty of Sinai Rosefinches & tourists

Calm and quiet Bedouin camp with Sinai Rosefinch. We had Hooded Wheatear here too.



Both these sites require 4WD and a driver with experience of driving in sand.

With a saloon car your best option is the Rum village south of the visitors centre

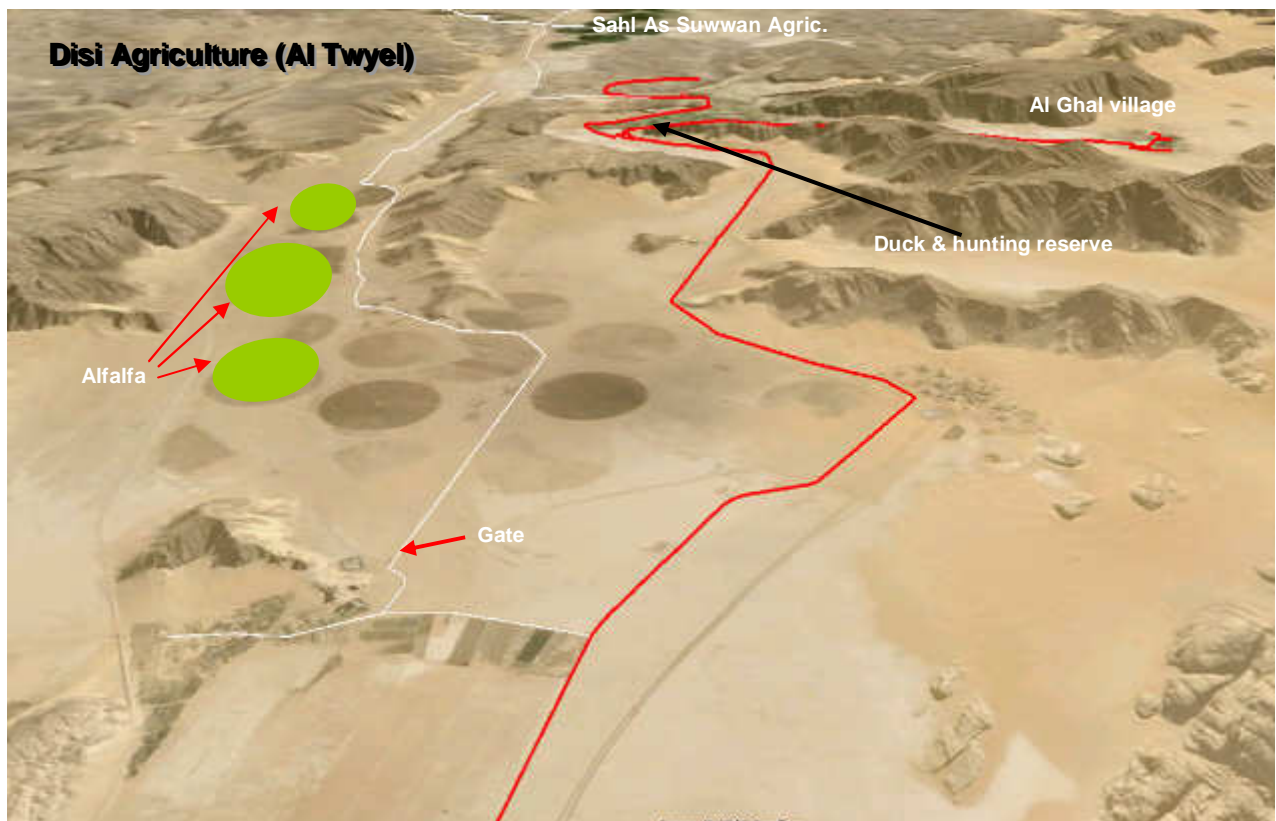
Agricultural areas of Disi (Al Twyel) & Sahl As Suwwan

Large agricultural areas c. 2 and c. 12 km SE of Disa Village. Both farms consist of pivot (circle) fields with tomatoes (generally few or no birds) and lucernes/alfalfa. The alfalfa fields generally hold good numbers of larks, pipits, wagtails, swallows, wheatears, hoopoes, also a few quails and harriers – and have a great potential for rarities! Ask at the gate of respective farm for permission to enter. You are generally just waved through with a smile! The farms are best worked the following way. Use your car to check out the area – skip the fields with tomatoes and go for the pivot fields with alfalfa or grass. Conditions are best when these fields



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are newly cut or directly after being ploughed. The taller and denser vegetation the fewer birds – as a rule of thumb. Sahl As Suwwan looks dry and abandoned on the Google maps satellite images but were largely green and cultivated at our visit.



Duck & hunting reserve S of Disi (alt. Birds Resort and Reserve of Al Ghal)

A large fenced area (with no access), owned by one of the worlds richest persons; H.H. Sheikh Mohammad bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the

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United Arab Emirates Armed Forces. In the centre is a very large (10.000 Acres) artificial wetland with small lakes connected by channels and partly flooded areas. The main purpose was to attract ducks for hunting, but no one apparently thought of reed, and the entire wetland is now covered by dense 4 m tall reed. Hence, now there are no suitable habitats for ducks, waders or other birds of open wetlands. The fenced area is also a reintroduction site for Arabian Oryx, Nubian Ibex and other mammals. From the tarmac road that passes through the area you merely see the top of the tall reed behind the fence of military "border-type". Due to the dense reed the area is rather quiet birdwise except for loads of singing Eurasian Reed-warblers – a new breeding area since Azraq is now gone? Note that the enclosed Google satellite images show the wetland when it was still under construction – and still looks marvelous – completely different from the dense reedbeds that now cover the entire place



Al Ghal village & agriculture

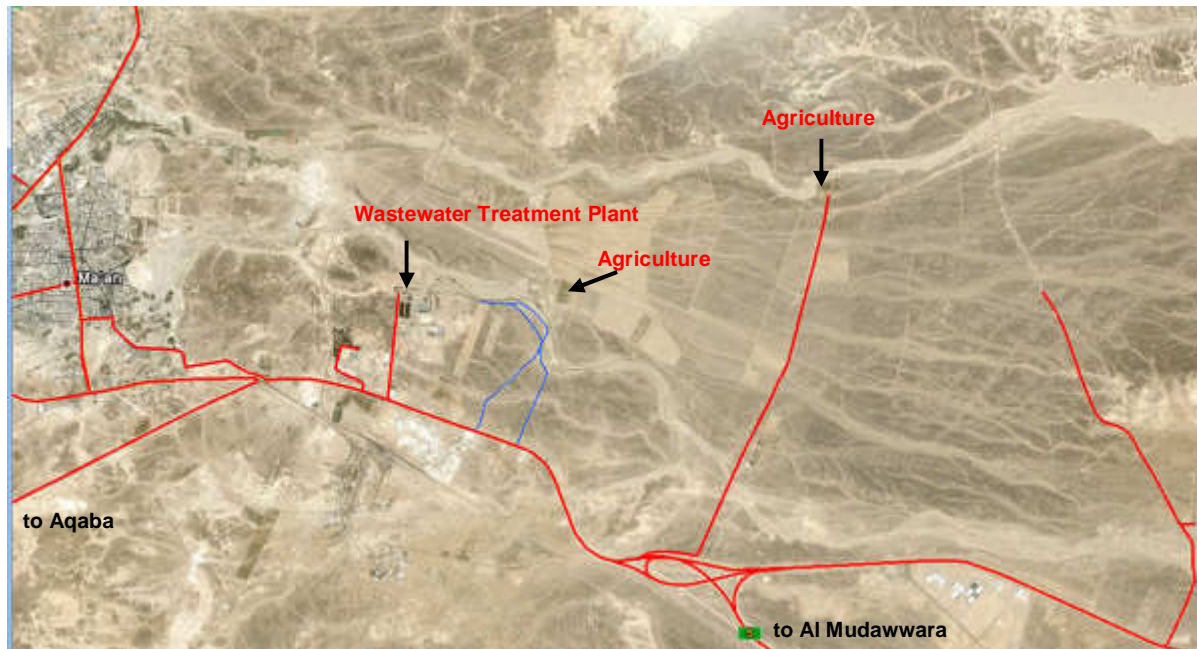
A small isolated oasis surrounded by sand and stone desert, and holds green groves of olives and pomegranate. It appears to have a great potential for migrants under the right conditions. An easily climbed hill in SE overlooks the plantations and trees and gives superb views over the surrounding landscape.



View from the hill

Ma'an Wastewater Treatment Plant and outlet

Worth an hour or two if you pass this way. The site has a great potential for being a migrant trap during the right weather conditions and time of year. The concrete sewage ponds themselves hold few birds, but the outlet of (semi-?)treated sewage water runs several kilometres to the SE in a shallow wadi – creating a narrow strip of lush green grass, bushes and a pool with reeds.



The blue lines are some of the **many** tracks criss-crossing the area



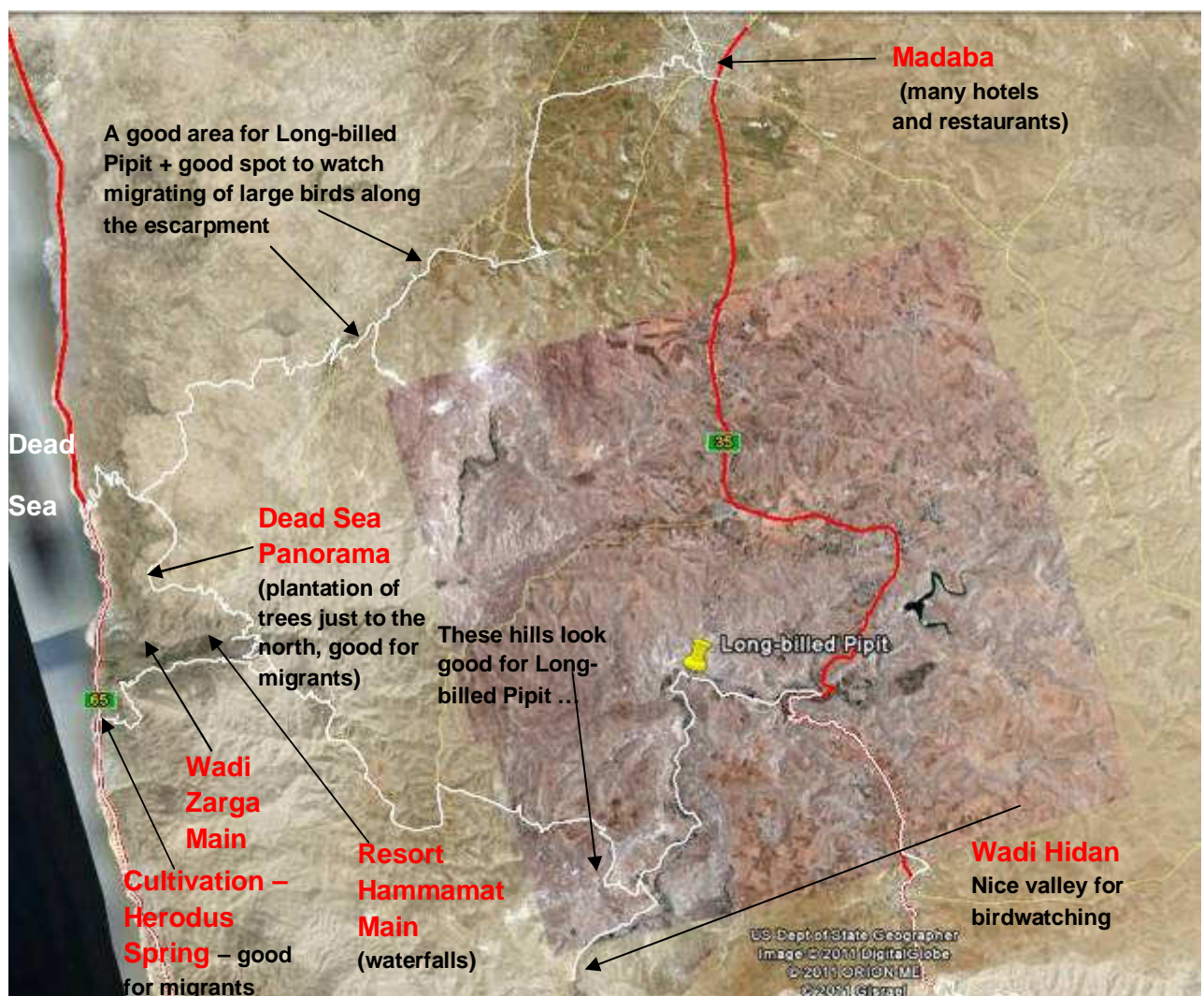
RIFT VALLEY MOUNTAINS

Petra

The number one tourist attraction in Jordan, and birdwise a good spot for e.g. Sinai Rosefinch. In our view the entrance fee was ridiculously high (50 JD = approx. 60 Euro). If you want to enjoy Petra's birds and cultural richness in relative peace, be there at 6 a.m. (opening time). Already at 8 a.m. the place is swarming with thousands of tourists (a bizarre experience in its own way though). We saw a few Rosefinches in the Sic but highest numbers were seen around the monastery and during the climb there. Note that the Sinai Rosefinch is even easier to find in Wadi Rum. Petra is difficult to access during night (due to new fences, guards, and tourist activities with music – "Petra by Night") so Hume's Tawny Owl appears to be more difficult to find here nowadays. Wadi Rum (e.g. around the tourist camps) may be a better alternative but we don't have any stake-outs.

Dead Sea Rift Margins (from Madaba to Wadi Mujib)

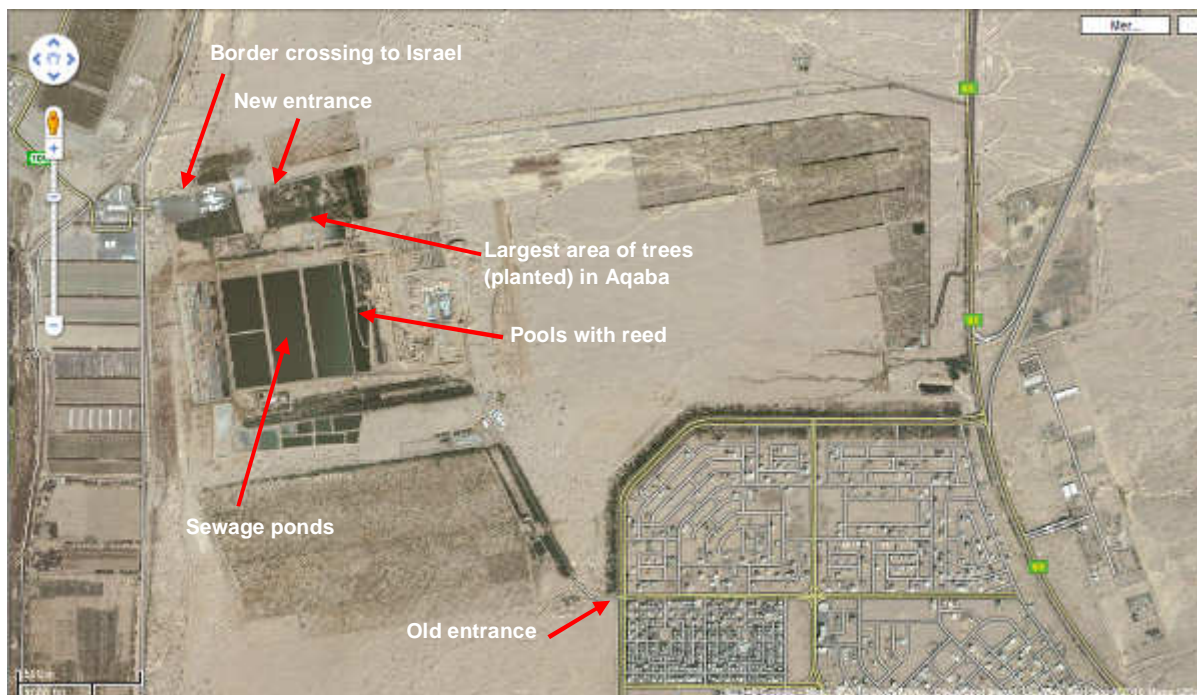
Many new roads are constructed since Andrews described the area back in 1995. A good road now runs all the way along the shores of the Dead Sea, and several roads wind their way from the Dead Sea all the way up to the rift margin 1200 m above. See Andrews for details, and our new map that marks some new roads and a few suggestions for new places where to look for Long-billed Pipit.



RIFT VALLEY

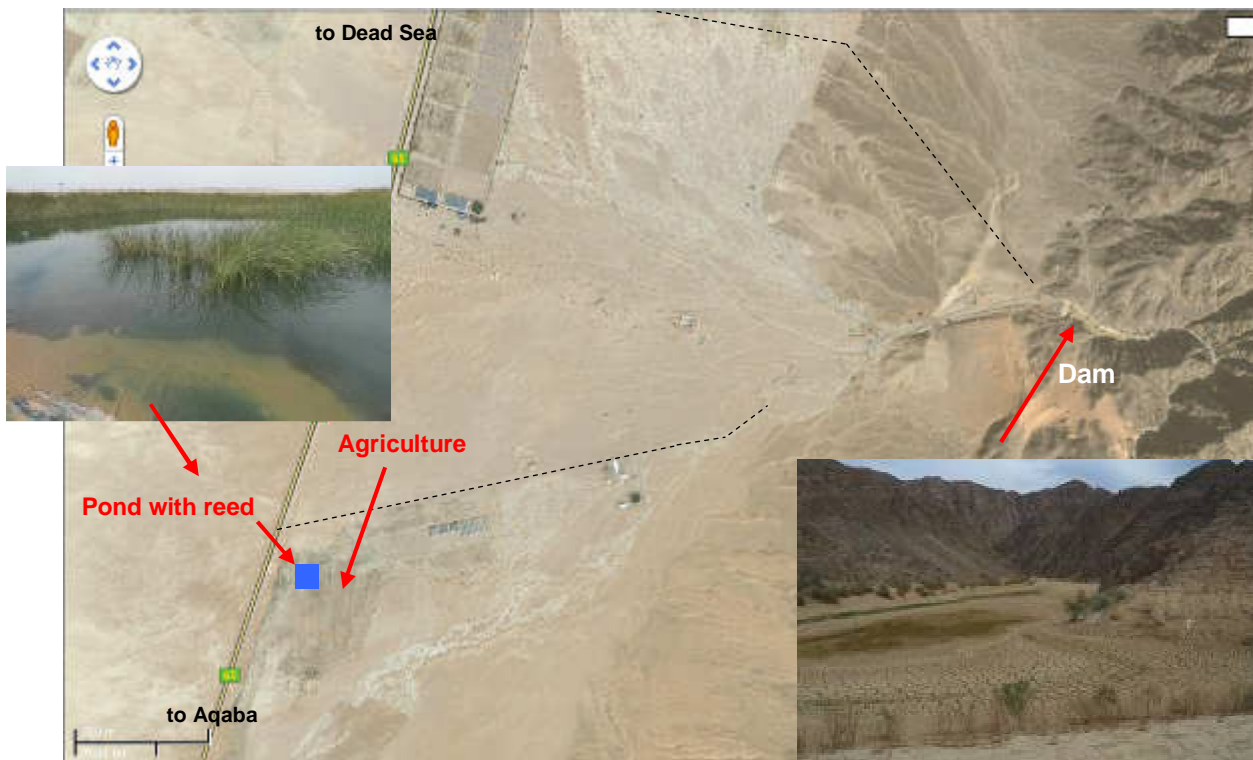
Aqaba Sewage Ponds (Aqaba Bird Observatory)

Compared to the description in Andrews (1995), there is a new entrance (the old one is closed and guarded by the military), near the border crossing to Israel (see Google images below). Regarding access to the site, there are several different opinions circulating. According to the homepage of Aqaba Bird Observatory <http://www.aqababird.com/Home.aspx>, plus in various tourist brochures, permission from aqaba@jssd-jo.org is needed. However, there are no signs at the entrance stating this – the place was completely desolate of people at our visits. Hence, we just went there, parked the car at the administration building inside the wooded area, birded one evening and returned the next morning without any problems. We also visited the area one morning in company with the local Aqaba birder Feras Rahahleh, who is involved in the conservation of the site and the development of the site for birdwatching and tourism. This is an ideal location for a ringing station – the place has a huge potential for catching large numbers of migrants and rarities...



Pond + dam at Abu Burqa

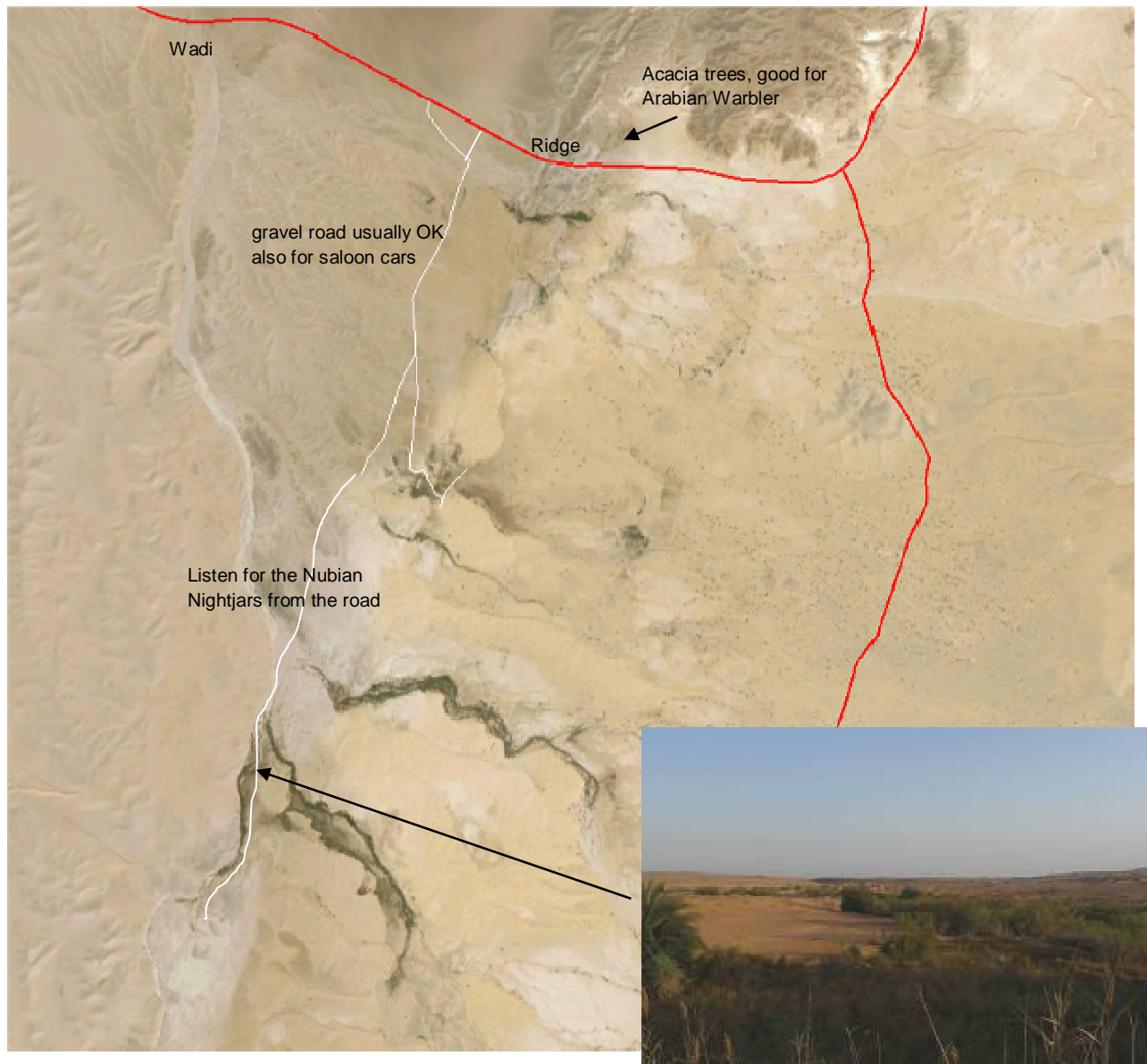
Small pond with reed close to the main road and another dam further up along a wadi in the nearby mountains. Worth a short stop since the Araba (Rift) Valley is otherwise largely inaccessible for security reasons as it is very close to the border with Israel. The dam were dry at our visit.



Tassan Springs at Wadi Fifan

Not mentioned in Andrews (1995), but located slightly south of the described birding area of Wadi Fifan. A number of springs among a series of sand dunes. Creating water outlets with reeds and Tamarisks – a habitat quickly disappearing as a result of a rapidly developing agriculture. This is an area for Nubian Nightjar! We had one displaying bird but there could possibly be a few more in the area. The salty marshy areas of tamarisk (the preferred habitat of Nubian Nightjar – see Perlman 2008) are now found merely at the two southernmost springs. We guess this habitat will be completely gone in a few years time as tamarisks were cleared for new fields, ditches were created and the water is pumped to the tomato-fields during our visit. Swift conservation measures must immediately be taken; otherwise this habitat for the Nubian Nightjar will be gone in a near future.





Tamarisk salt marsh W of Feifa

!!! Note that entry to this area is at your own risk – and is not recommended by us !!!

In this border zone, a large area of tamarisk salt-marsh has survived along the heavily landmined border with Israel. This is THE place for **Nubian Nightjar** (NN) in Jordan and the Western Palaearctic! It is located directly adjacent to the small area in Israel where 21 NN were counted by Perlman (2008; *Sandgrouse* 30: 117–124). NN is officially recorded less than ten times in Jordan up to date, but is apparently a localised breeder south of the Dead Sea. In Israel, merely small patches of this habitat have survived, but according to Google satellite images (which was how we found this spot), on the Jordanian side this habitat occurs by a magnitude of x100! Note that this area is perhaps a prohibited, off-limit area for non-Jordanians/non-military personnel. Although, there are no signs of “No Entry” – the whole Araba Rift valley south of the Dead Sea and west of the Dead Sea Highway is generally said to

Green line marks 200 m distance from nearest asphalt road – about the maximum distance you may hear a displaying bird under normal conditions.

Red dot marks our listening spot from which we heard five birds

Blue dot marks a military watch-tower

At this spot a short stretch of sandy track only driveable with 4WD

ISRAEL

border

Feifa Village

to Aqaba

to Dead Sea

Feifa

Google

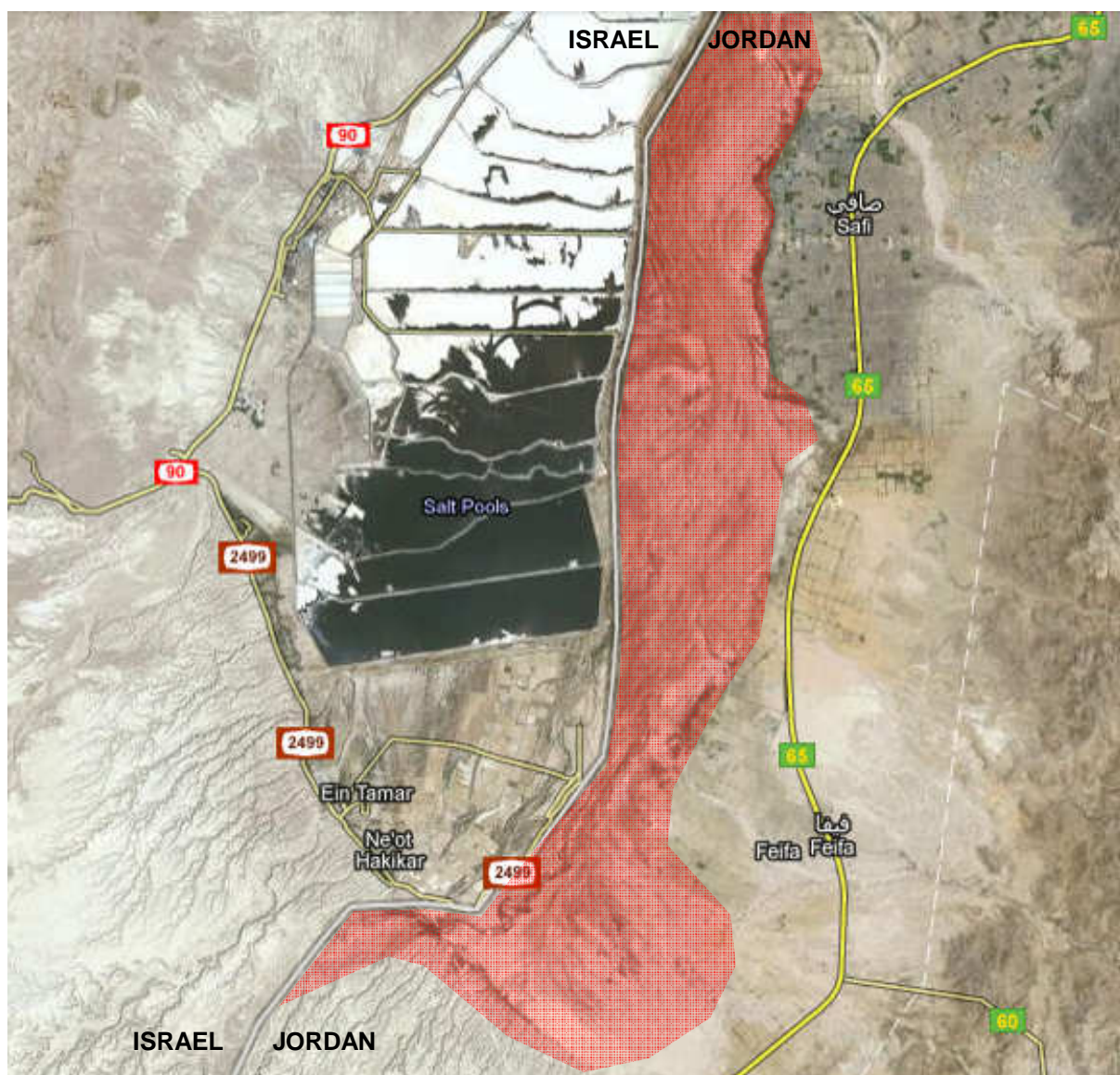
We chose the following strategy: We arrived in full daylight and parked on the tarmac track close to the border and at the same time out-of-sight of the military watch-tower. We waited at this site until dusk when the NN started calling. We used no flash-light in order not to draw any military attention. After about an hour we left the area the same way we arrived (a GPS is useful)!

As suggested by the size of the area covered the tamarisk salt-marsh and tamarisk on sandy soils west of Feifa, as judged by the Google satellite images available on the net, and keeping in mind the number of birds heard by us in a very small part of the entire area – the Jordanian population of NN in the Feifa area has to be much larger than the 21 birds documented in Israel. Also note that the area west of the

- 49 -

hundred birds! The entire area should A.S.A.P. be covered by a special NN census in order to establish the exact number of birds in the area.

Anyhow, we dare to say that the area west of Feifa and west of As Safi is the most important site for this species in Jordan and the Western Palaearctic – and is hence of international importance for the conservation of this northernmost and isolated population of this otherwise African species. The area is under heavy pressure of an expanding agriculture and during our visit it was obvious that fairly large areas recently have been cleared of tamarisks in order to create new agricultural fields. It is obvious that the entire area west of Feifa all the way up to about As Safi should be protected by the Jordanian authorities as a nature reserve. We think it is important that this area is included by Birdlife as an IBA as well. Due to the apparently never ending demand for more agricultural land in Jordan – the area is under serious pressure and without legal protection may be largely gone in a fairly near future. In just a few decades, Israel has already lost all of this habitat in the Rift Valley except for a few small remaining spots directly adjacent to the Jordanian area of tamarisk salt-marsh. We hereby make an appeal to RSCN Jordan and BirdLife International for acting in order to protect this important habitat and the Nubian Nightjars!



The red area on the satellite image to the right indicates the area west of As Safi and Feifa with more or less suitable habitats for the Nubian Nightjars.

NORTHERN JORDAN

Al Samra Wastewater Stabilisation Ponds (Al Khirbas Samra Sewage Works in Andrews)

Not as productive bird-wise during our visit as described by Andrews but adds a few species to your Jordan trip list. Also the only option of anything similar to wetland habitat in a land now completely devoid of natural wetlands. We suggest merely an hour or two here on your way to or from other birding sites (unless you have this odd addiction to sewage works – some birders do!).



Sewage Ponds + Rubbish Dump SE of Ar Ramtha

Much less productive than Al Samra Sewage Works but is worth a short stop if you pass this way.





Yarmuk River area (Y R Nature Reserve)

A scenic and nice area with a mixture of open grazed hills/valleys and stands of mature Holm Oak and planted pine trees. This is a good alternative to Aljoun Nature Reserve or Dibbin Forest NP for north Jordanian forest species. Access to some parts of the area is difficult due to proximity to the border with Israel and Syria. We birded one morning in a secluded and very scenic valley with mature Holm Oaks – a fresh break from the barren deserts areas! Note that you probably need to park your saloon car in the nearby village, but with a 4WD you may continue further into the valley. The open grassy hills surrounding the Yarmuk River at several places look very promising for Long-billed Pipit, but our attempts to locate it were severely hampered by the many (and in some cases impassable) military check- points. According to the Google satellite images there are many alternative valleys with mature oak forests so you may easily find your own “local spot”



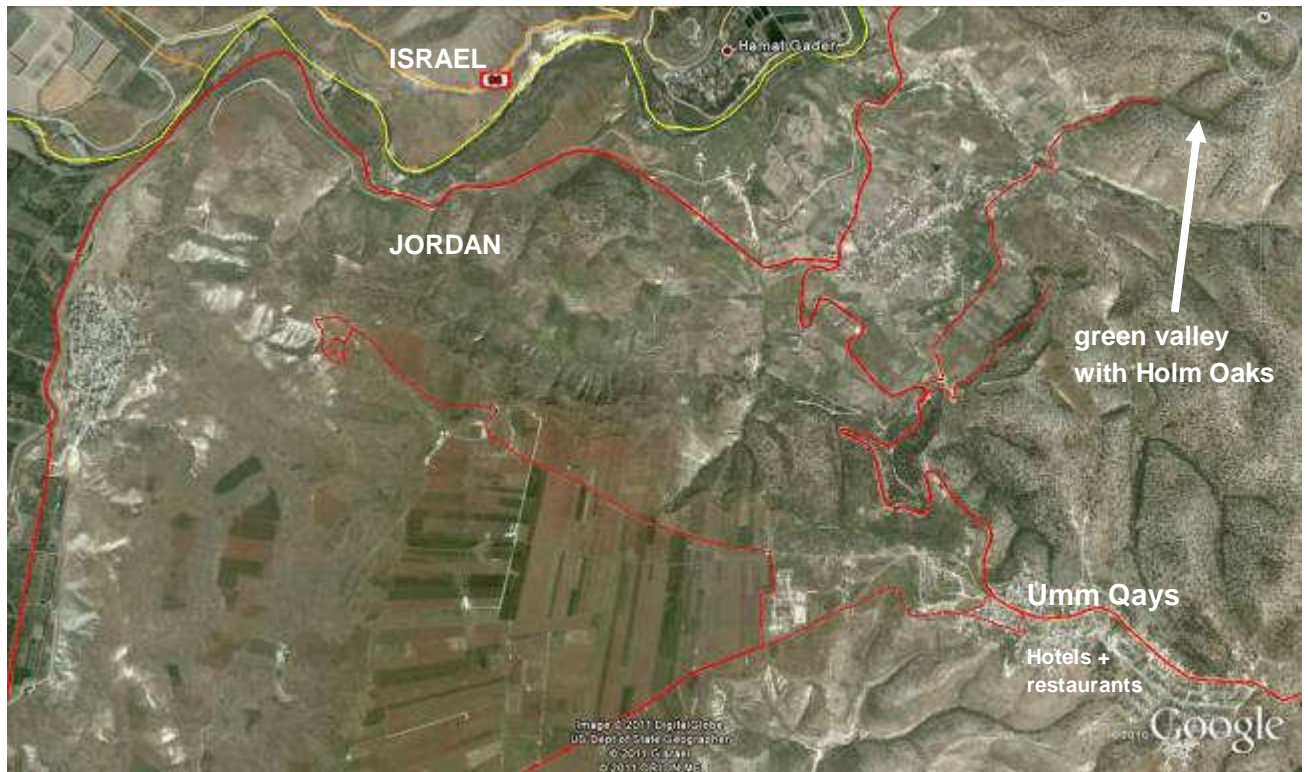
Above – view from valley bottom with mature Holm Oaks

Right – view from hilltop to the north, with Syria on the northern side of the Yarmuk River Valley.



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NORTH-EASTERN DESERT

Shaumari Wildlife Reserve

Still closed for “renovation and development”, as it apparently has been during almost the last 10 years! It is frustratingly difficult to access this bird-rich area. We birded along the decrepit fence surrounding the reserve, but were rather aggressively sent away by the keeper as soon as we approached the entrance. With a 4WD it is possible to circle the reserve, and hence sample a good selection of the heavily grazed bushy wadis surrounding the reserve and the contrasting dense untouched vegetation inside the reserve.

Azraq “Wetlands”

The collapse of a total wetland ecosystem (due to overuse of water) is of course a tragic loss and a shame for this arid country, but the sad attempts to replace part of this habitat with a series of small artificial ponds surrounded by boardwalks isn't any compensation for that! According to the staff of the reserve, not even this fragment of wetland is guaranteed in the future, due to the acute shortage of drinking water and water for the expanding agriculture.

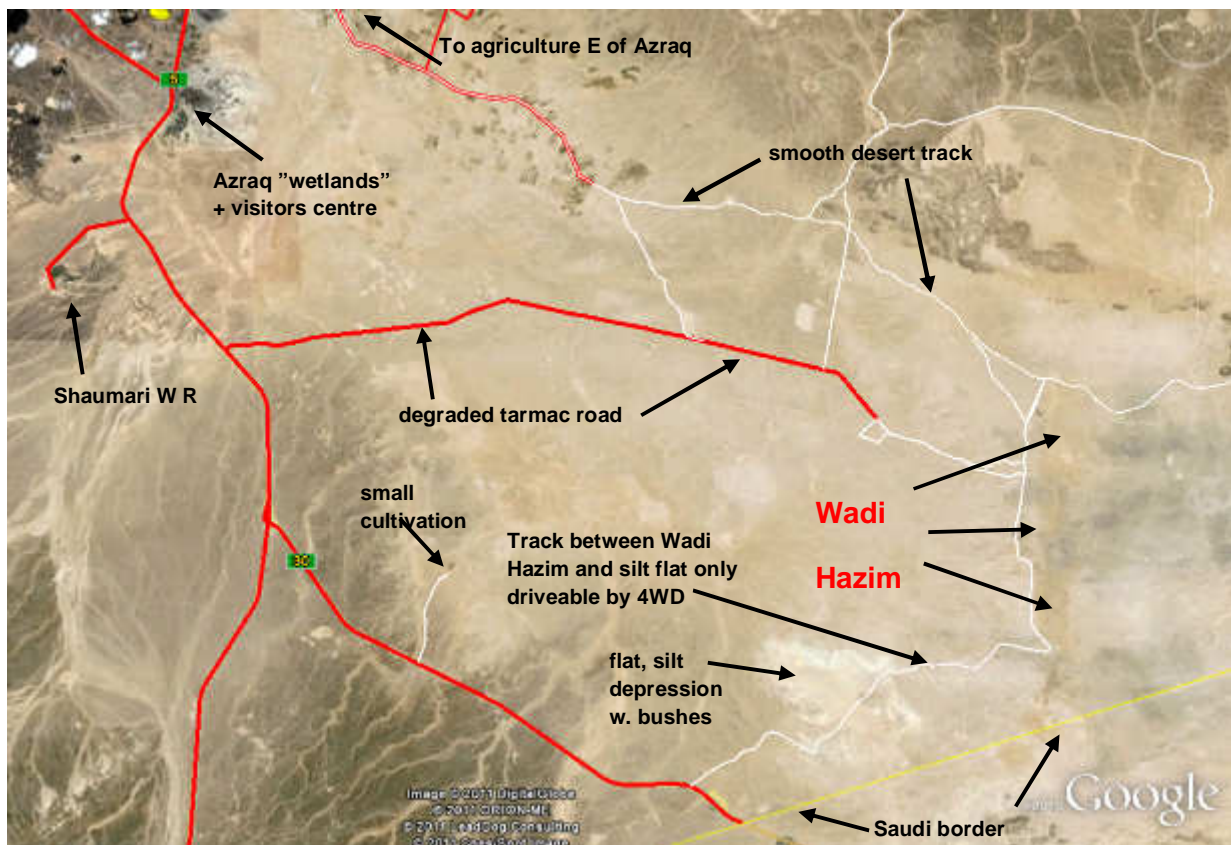
Agricultural areas E of Azraq

A huge area with trees, gardens, orchards and fields with various crops. Most parts are private land, fenced off and difficult to access. A few fields with grass or some pivot circle fields with lucernes/alfalfa or grass are accessible and good for migrant birds, incl. larks, pipits, wagtails, wheatears, hoopoes, harriers, Desert Finch and various buntings. Note that these fields are private land and you have to ask at the gate for permission to enter – but you are generally waved through with a smile! We have marked a good area with several pivot fields on the satellite image below.



Wadi Hazim

An extensive sandy wadi-plain with some scattered seasonal agriculture, large areas of sandy bushy areas, a single pivot field with grass and alfalfa and two houses surrounded by some planted trees. The sandy and bushy areas should be lark haven during normal (and wetter) years – this is definitely the place where to look for breeding Dunn's Lark in the future! This area is directly adjacent to an area in Saudi Arabia which is generally described to be THE place for Dunn's Lark in the Middle East. However, 2011 was a very dry year with no winter rain and hence few breeding larks. We saw a few Hoopoe Larks, but not the expected Bar-tailed Lark, nor the hoped for Dunn's Lark. Although, c. 350 Bimaculated Larks at the Pivot field gave some consolation. The area is reached by either a c. 30 km bumpy ride from the main road south of Shaumari Wildlife Reserve on a degraded pothole tarmac road or on a smoother 20 km desert track from the south-easternmost part of the agricultural area east of Azraq.



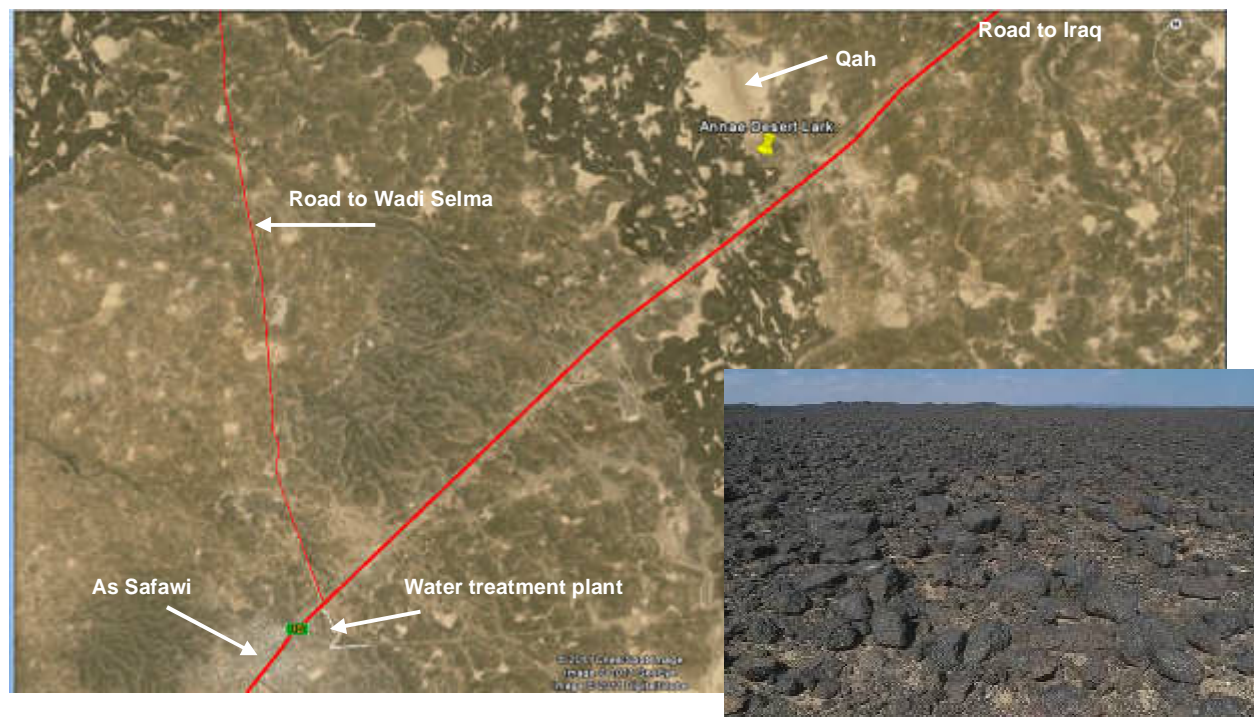
As Safawi Water Treatment Plant

The water outlet from the plant creates a c. 500 meter long stripe of green grass and puddles of water – and attracts the usual variety of migrants, including larks, pipits, wagtails, wheatears, shrikes, warblers and buntings. Located just outside the NE part of As Safawi on the road towards the basalt desert.



Basalt Desert c. 9 km E of As Safi

An easily accessible site of the basalt desert, and a good spot for the dark *annae* subspecies of Desert Lark, and previously also for the black morph of Mourning Wheatear (but not seen by us – and according to Khoury et al 2010; *Sandgrouse* 32: 113-119, apparently decreasing and disappearing from many previously known sites in the basalt desert!). At this point, the basalt fields borders a Qah (a silt flat) good for migrating larks and also breeding Bar-tailed Lark.



Basalt desert along road to Wadi Selma

A pot-hole hell of road from As Safawi to Wadi Selma (the latter is a partly cultivated flat valley – not visited by us but looks promising on the satellite images) through the black basalt desert. We had a few *annae* subspecies of Desert Lark along the road but not much else. We searched in vain for the black morph Mourning Wheatear.

