

# Trip report: Saudi Arabia

April 22<sup>nd</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup>, 2022

This trip report covers an eight-day birding trip to Saudi Arabia. The trip was done independently, by renting a car and visiting the birding sites without any guides. Participants were Björn Anderson, Ulf Hanje, Markus Lagerqvist and Peter Nilsson, all from Sweden. Planning the trip was done with the help of Gregory Askew who provided us with a suggested itinerary based on our target species, detailed information about the sites and support via WhatsApp during the trip. Without his help it would not have been possible to have such a successful trip!

The report consist of a diary, notes of key species, useful contacts, including accommodation and a trip list of all the birds (and some other animals) recorded during the trip.

Text and photos in the trip report are by Markus Lagerqvist, and the trip list has been compiled by Björn Anderson and Markus Lagerqvist based on the observations entered continuously during the trip, using the iGoTerra app (igoterra.com).



*Cities we stayed in during the trip.*

## Diary

### Day 1: Friday, April 22<sup>nd</sup>

Our group arrived to Jazan with three different flights during the day. My flight from Riyadh was the first one to arrive at 06.50 in the morning, so I headed into town to check us all into the Jazan Inn hotel, and then casually birded the seaside, walking north to Jazan University. Along the stretch are several small beaches which held 19 species of shorebirds, including many **Crab-plovers**. Among ten species of tern and gulls, two **Saunders's Gull** were a highlight and **Sooty Gull** was found to be common.



*Sooty Gull and Crab-plovers, Jazan City*

When the rest of the group arrived in the afternoon, we picked up our rental car at the airport and headed to Either mangroves, just north of town. Our main target here was the very local population of **white-eyes** that is restricted to mangroves along Saudi Arabia's Red Sea coast in Jazan province. It took some searching, but after half an hour or so we bumped into a couple of birds, showing nicely. Other good species here included the mangrove *avicenniae* subspecies of **Eurasian Reed Warbler**, **Clamorous Reed Warbler** and **Saunders's Tern**. The site also held some good migrants, including a couple of hundred **Western Yellow Wagtails** of four different subspecies, and a surprise **Cyprus Wheatear**.



"Mangrove White-eye", *Either mangroves*

Having limited time until sunset, we headed south after having seen our main targets, making a couple of brief stops in central Jazan, around the Jazan Corniche. Here we easily found our main target, the **White-eyed Gull**, lots of **Pink-backed Pelicans** and a nice migrant **Red-tailed Shrike**.

A short roadside stop at the Jazan Heritage Village yielded more shorebirds, like **Tibetan** and **Greater Sand Plovers**, again many **Crab-plovers**, and a **Black-headed Heron**. Our last stop for the day, just before it got dark, was at the JWTP mangroves, just south of town, where we had large numbers of Lesser Flamingos, mixed with Greater Flamingos. The best species was a single **White-cheeked Tern**.

Back at the hotel we managed to get the adjacent restaurant to serve us a delicious Arabian meal, even though they were about to close. Our first – but not last – experience of the confusing opening hours of restaurants during Ramadan.



*White-eyed Gull, Jazan city*

## **Day 2: Saturday, April 23<sup>rd</sup>**

Our first full day – we left the hotel early and headed east to spend the day birding the hot and humid lowlands to look for species that you cannot find once you reach higher altitudes. Our main target for the first part of the day was Arabian Golden Sparrow, not an endemic, but a nomadic species that is difficult to see through much of its restricted range.

Just east of Jazan we spotted a small group of **Helmeted Guinea fowl**, probably of the *somaliensis* subspecies. We spent the morning and mid-day birding several sites East and Northeast of Jazan, around Az Zuhur, Abu Arish and Sabya, but did not find any golden sparrows. This came as no surprise though since other birders visiting the region during the previous months also had failed to find it and the movements of the species in Saudi Arabia during different seasons is still poorly known.

We did see many other good species. Our first stop was at the village of Az Zuhur, where we enjoyed a lavish breakfast in the field, compliments of our hotel. Here we saw our first **Black Scrub Robin**, a species which was delightfully common in the region. We also added **White-throated Bee-eater**, **Arabian Green Bee-eater**, **Graceful Prinia**, **Arabian Babbler**, **Rufous-tailed Scrub Robin**, **Isabelline** and **Pied Wheatear**, **Nile Valley Sunbird** and **African Silverbill** to our growing list.

A short stop at the cemetery in Abu Arish – a known site for the sparrow – yielded nothing, so we continued to the farmlands around Sabya, where the species had been seen during the winter months. Around the village of Alhajariah we saw more of the same species as in Az Zuhur, but also added brief views of a **Chestnut-bellied Sandgrouse**, and migrants like **Masked Shrike**, **Upcher's Warbler** and **White-throated Robin**. During the early afternoon it got unpleasantly hot and sunny, with little bird activity, so we decided to give up our search and headed further east to Lake Al-Saad.



*Graceful Prinia, Az Zuhur*

Our first stop was an abandoned building on the north side of the artificial lake where **Arabian Eagle-Owl** had been seen. Walking through the building we quickly found the owl on the second floor, but unfortunately it did not stick around and flew off as soon as it saw us. Around the building we also found **Desert Lark** and **Cinnamon-breasted Bunting**. In the area we also saw **African Grey Hornbill** and the only **Great Grey Shrike** of the trip, the subspecies here is *aucheri*.

We then stopped at a couple of sites on the eastern shore. Here you get a view of the lake and access to good habitat along the shore. Birding here is more about African species and good birding in general, rather than Arabian endemics. Species seen on the lake included **Red-knobbed Coot**, **Spur-winged Lapwing** and **Hamerkop** and in the surroundings, we saw **Dusky Turtle Dove**, **Red-eyed Dove**, **Bruce's Green Pigeon** and **Abyssinian Roller**.

Just before dusk we drove to the inlet at the southernmost end of the lake, where large numbers of the otherwise very tricky **Arabian Waxbill** come in to roost. We had around 300 birds, mixed with good numbers of **African Silverbills**. As it got dark **Lichtenstein's Sandgrouse** came in to drink at a small pool in the track.

After dark we drove back to the eastern shore, where we ended the day with great views of three **Nubian Nightjars**, before heading to our hotel in Abu Arish.



*Nubian Nightjar, Lake Al-Saad.*

**Day 3: Sunday, April 24<sup>th</sup>**

We made an early start from Abu Arish and left the lowlands, driving up into the mountains to Al Habala, 247 km to the north. Our first stop was by a small playground, weirdly built out in nowhere on the plateau. Our target here was **Rufous-capped Lark**, a recent split from Blanford's Lark. We knew that a pair had been seen by the playground, and we found the birds within seconds after arriving.



*Rufous-capped Lark, Al Habala.*

Having seen the main target, we spent another hour or so exploring the surroundings getting amazing views of a very tame **Arabian Warbler**, brief views of a *buryi* **Levant Scrub Warbler**. Other species here included **Pale Crag Martin**, **Arabian Wheatear** and **Long-billed Pipit**.

Next, we drove a small woodland area at the nearby North Habala Park, which held some good species like **Buff-breasted Wheatear**, **Gambaga Flycatcher**, **Abyssinian White-eye**, **Palestine Sunbird** and **Arabian Serin**. Many migrants were also present, not least about ten **White-throated Robins**.

Our last stop at Al Habala was at the very scenic viewpoint. Our main target here was Yemen Serin, which can usually be seen along the edge of the plateau, but despite a couple of hours searching we did not find any. The best species here was a couple of **Levant Sparrowhawks** circling overhead. Other species included great views of **Tristram's Starling**, **Rock Dove**, and **Alpine Swift**.

From Al Habala we drove to Abha to check in at our hotel, during the hottest hours in the afternoon. We then headed to the nearby Al Soudah creek, a beautiful, lush gorge with great birding.

Birding from the road it did not take us long to find our two main targets, an obliging **Yemen Thrush** and a smart looking **Yemen Warbler**. Here we also saw **Brown Woodland Warbler** and had amazing views of **Little Rock Thrush**.



*Yemen Warbler, Al Soudah*

Walking up the creek we added **Yemen Linnet** and a pair of *felix* **African Stonechat**. We ended the day with some night birding along the road just outside the entrance to Raidah Nature Reserve. We heard both **Montane** and **Plain Nightjar** and got great views of **Arabian Scops Owl**.



*Arabian Scops Owl, Raidah Nature Reserve*

#### **Day 4: Monday, April 25<sup>th</sup>**

The next morning found us back at the entrance to Raidah Nature Reserve before sunrise. A couple of us got brief views of a **Montane Nightjar**, but they were not very responsive.

After clearing our permits at the entrance, we headed down the steep road that winds down through the reserve, making stops along the way. A couple of groups of **Arabian Partridges** were soon found on the roadside – a species that is best to look for early morning. At our first stop by the old farm, we saw a lone **African Olive Pigeon** and a handsome male *harterti* **African Paradise Flycatcher** with long white tail streamers.

We kept our ears and eyes open for **Arabian Woodpecker**, but it took some time before I found our first bird at the aloe tree forest, but unfortunately it disappeared before the others got on to it. Here **Arabian Sunbird** was also seen briefly by Björn, but it also disappeared quickly, not to be seen again. Splitting up Björn found a second Arabian Woodpecker higher up, which all of us finally got our eyes on. Birding was made a bit more complicated by the large troops of Hamadryas Baboons that hung out along the road, and at one point even stole some food from our trunk.

At the old fort we heard a **Black-crowned Tchagra** and finally all of us got to see the scarce **Arabian Sunbird**. Heading back towards the entrance we could not manage to get our car up the steep road and had to call for help from the reserve staff. They were apparently more used to driving up steep roads and manage to get us back up.

Since we missed **Yemen Serin** at Al Habala the day before – at the best site for it – we decided to head back to the viewpoint at Al Habala for another go. It was not much easier this time around, but finally Peter found a single bird which stayed long enough for all of us to get on to it. It was a good call heading back, since it turned out to be equally scarce for the rest of the trip.



*Arabian Partridge, Raidah Nature Reserve*

#### **Day 5 :Tuesday, April 26<sup>th</sup>**

After another early check out we drove north towards Tanomah, arriving at dawn at Wadi Dahna – perhaps the best site for our most wanted bird – the very local and threatened Asir Magpie.

After parking our car, we began scanning the hillsides for our other main target here – **Philby's Partridge**, and it did not take long before we found a group of about ten birds, our only sighting of the species.

After that we soon heard an **Asir Magpie** calling and got distant views of a bird perched in a treetop. Walking closer we got great views of four birds and we were surprised by how different they looked compared to the magpies in Europe!

With our two main targets in the bag, we enjoyed some relaxed birding walking around the beautiful site. Birding was excellent and we got much better views of **Arabian Woodpecker**, heard a **Diederik Cuckoo** calling, and added **Ménétries's Warbler** to our growing trip list.

Other species here included a handful of **Masked Shrikes**, **Yemen Warbler**, **Gambaga Flycatcher**, **Arabian Serin**, **Yemen Linnet**, **Cinnamon-breasted Bunting** and an *arabica* Red Fox. Leaving Wadi Dahna we saw another Asir Jay from the car, close to Dahna falls.



*Air Magpie, Wadi Dahna*

After a lunch in the field – as every other day with all restaurants closed due to Ramadan – we drove to the nearby Wadi Ghathal. We did not have any targets left here, but birding was really good and we got our best views so far of two **Arabian Woodpeckers** and **African Paradise Flycatcher** and added **European Roller** and *grisea* **Levant Scrub Warbler** to the trip list.



*Arabian Woodpecker, Wadi Ghathal*

Other species recorded included **Yemen Linnet** and **Cinnamon-breasted Bunting**, and Björn had a single **Arabian Waxbill** flying over. Peter and Ulf who decided to stay behind and bird from the road saw **Griffon Vulture**.

In the late afternoon we headed north to Mahvar tourist park. We searched for the local subspecies of African Pipit, but only found **Long-billed Pipits** and got more views of **Yemen Thrush**. The best bird was a migrant **Ortolan Bunting**. The main reason to visit the site was that it is supposed to be an easy spot for Arabian Eagle Owl, that normally can be seen perching on the light post around the parking area. Cold and windy conditions were not good for night birds though, and we did not find the owl and headed back to our hotel after waiting for an hour or so.

#### **Day 6: Wednesday, April 27<sup>th</sup>**

We decided to make another try for the Arabian Eagle Owl and headed to Mahvar tourist park before dawn. But it was still quite windy and it refused to show itself. Björn did manage to get good views of **Montane Nightjar** in the wood while the rest of searched for the eagle owl.

After dawn we spent some more time birding the agricultural lands next to park and finally managed to find a single *eximius* **African Pipit**. We also found a weird looking shrike, which we identified as an **Isabelline x Red-backed Shrike** hybrid. Other species recorded included **Arabian Woodpecker**, **Gambaga Flycatcher**, several **Red-throated Pipits** and **Ortolan Buntings**, and a couple of **Yemen Serins** for Ulf.



*Arabian Wheatear, Mahvar tourist park*

After the morning birding we headed back south, around Bihan we saw an **African Stonechat** and another **Buff-breasted Wheatear**. At Bihan we headed east descending an extremely steep serpentine road, which was very scenic but had us worried about overheating our brakes. We took it very easy and made several stops along the road to cool off the brakes. At Jabal Thirban a beautiful wadi looked like potentially good habitat for Arabian Golden-winged Grosbeak. We did not have the time to explore it properly but did see three **African Hornbills** and **Bruce's Green Pigeon**. In the area we also saw **Arabian Partridge**.

Our next stop was Wadi Hali, a spot where the grosbeak had been recorded, but years ago, and the site was quite heavily exploited, so probably not a good spot anymore. Being mid-day, it was seriously hot, but we did manage to see some good species including a pair of **Blackstarts** in the village – our only record for the trip – and an overflying **Crested Honey Buzzard**.

Our next stop was not a birding site, but the amazing village of Rijal Almaa. The village is more than 900 years old and was a regional centre along the trade route between Yemen and the Levant through the Holy City of Makkah and Medina. It contains around 60 multi-story buildings made of stone, clay and wood. If you are in the area it should not be missed!



*The historical village of Rijal Almaa.*

With plenty of time for our drive to our hotel at Abha airport, we decided to check out a wadi, just north of Muhayil that looked interesting on satellite images. Access was a bit tricky, so we never got down into the wadi but birded the slopes above it. The scenery was spectacular with beautiful flowering desert roses and troops of Hamadryas Baboon roaming the wadi. The best bird was our best views so far of **Arabian Sunbird**, apart from here only seen briefly at Raidah.

Before checking in we made a brief stop at Wadi Atoud reservoir, but did not find Little Owl, which occurs at the site. At the hotel ground by Abha Airport we added **Little Swift** to the trip list, before returning our rental car.



*Arabian Sunbird, Wadi Zahra*



*Arabian Green Bee-eater, Wadi Atoud reservoir*

### Day 7: Thursday, April 28<sup>th</sup>

After an early morning flight, with a stop in Jeddah, we arrived at the very stylish airport in Al-‘Ula at 11.40 where we picked up a new rental car and headed into town. After dropping our bags at our apartment and buying some food we headed east to an area of spectacular desert and canyons. A first stop by a small farm with a watering hole yielded a group of **Sinai Rosefinches** – our first target species – and also **White-crowned Wheatear** and **Striolated Bunting**.

Other birds seen during the afternoon, which was spent exploring the area by driving the sand tracks and making stops where habitat looked good, included *inquieta* **Levant Scrub Warbler**, **Hooded Wheatear** and **Eastern Black-eared Wheatear**.



*Levant Scrub Warbler, Al-‘Ula.*

At dusk we heard two **Pharaoh Eagle-Owls** calling from either side of a canyon. It took some searching, but we finally got views of one of them at the top of the cliff.

Walking the area and listening we soon also heard two different **Desert Owls** and one of them gave fantastic, walk-away views. We ended the amazing night with a good dinner at a nearby desert lodge on the way back to town.



*Desert Owl, Al-'Ula.*

#### **Day 8: Friday, April 29<sup>th</sup>**

This morning we headed out to the deserts north of town, birding along a road just north of the Saarah Nature Reserve, where Arabian Lark is known to occur. We concentrated on birding on areas with compacted sandy soils with low, sparse vegetation, which is favoured by the species.

The areas in the reserve south of the road looked perfect, but was sadly fenced off, so we concentrated on the north side. Birding was rather slow and despite covering large areas with seemingly good habitat, larks were few and far in between, with low numbers of **Desert Lark**, **Bar-tailed Lark** and **Greater Hoopoe-Lark** recorded, but no sign of Arabian Lark.

Other birds included large numbers of migrating **European Bee-eaters**, **Brown-necked Raven** and **Montagu's Harrier**. Running out of options we decided to walk the perimeter of fence and our assessment of the habitat turned out correct, when we heard an **Arabian Lark** from within the fenced off area. Sadly we were not able to get any views of it.

Mid-day we drove back to Al-'Ula, to the Winter Park, the starting point for a tour of the ancient city of Hegra, which was supposed to depart at 14.00. Arriving at the spot we found out the tour had been postponed until 16.00, so we decided to drive up to the nearby Harrat viewpoint. The desolate landscape here could as well have been on Mars, and the views of the city were spectacular. Birds here included great views of **Desert Lark**, as well as **Isabelline Wheatear** and **Fan-tailed Raven**.



*Desert lark, Harrat viewpoint*

At 16.00 we boarded our tour bus and headed to Hegra – one of the main tourist attractions in Saudi Arabia. The remains at Hegra date from around the 1st century AD and constitutes the Nabataean kingdom's second largest city after Petra in Jordan. The 131 monumental rock-cut tombs, with their elaborately ornamented façades, are a UNESCO World Heritage Site and not to be missed on a visit to Saudi Arabia! A bonus at Hegra were our only observations of **Eurasian Collared Dove** and **Rose-ringed Parakeet**.



*Tomb at Hegra.*

## Day 9: Saturday, April 30<sup>th</sup>

Our last day and we made an early start, heading back to the deserts north of town. Having heard Arabian Lark from the fenced off area, we decided to have another go, hoping to see the bird by scanning the grounds through the fence. Unfortunately, the bird was not calling or singing, and after just a short while two guards in a patrol car arrived and told us we had to leave, unless we had permits to visit the reserve (even though we were outside the fence). Instead, we spent a couple of hours covering suitable habitats north of the road, but the only new bird found, was **Mourning Wheatear**.

Giving up on the lark, we continued north toward Tabuk, from where we were flying home late in the evening. We were hoping to do some birding in new habitats in the afternoon, but closing in on Tabuk, it was 40 degrees hot and strong sandy winds made birding impossible, so instead we got a room in town for the afternoon to relax and get a shower. At the hotel grounds we added our last new bird for the trip in the form of three **Pallid Swifts**.

## Sites

The following pages contain a brief description of the sites visited, plus a few other sites of interest that we did not visit. For each most sites GPS coordinates to the site, and practical notes including key species are described.

### Jazan

The sea front in Jazan city provides easy access to excellent birding with many species of gulls, terns and shorebirds possible. The key species here is White-eyed Gull, which is best looked for around the **North Corniche Park** (16.917039, 42.547359), south to the **Corniche Park** (16.874029, 42.548974) in central Jazan. We did not see this species at any other sites. Sooty Gull on the other hand was easily seen all along the shore, including the beaches north of North Corniche Park up to Jazan University, which were also good for shorebirds and Saunders's Tern.

At the southern edge of the city, it is worth scanning the wetlands and mangroves between King Abdulla Road and **Jazan Heritage Village** (16.829011, 42.618293), for species like Saunders's Tern, Black Heron, Black-headed Heron, Intermediate Egret, Goliath Heron and "Mangrove Reed Warbler".

### **JWTP mangroves**

Just south of Jazan, the mangroves by the Jazan wastewater treatment plant, park by the road (16.917039, 42.547359) and scan the area. This is the site for Lesser and Greater Flamingo, but is also good for species like Saunders's Tern, Crab-Plover, Goliath Heron and Mangrove Reed Warbler. We saw our only White-cheeked Tern here.



*Lesser and Greater Flamingos at JWTP mangroves.*

### **Either mangroves**

Just north of Jazan city the Either mangroves (17.140485, 42.419521) is the key site for "Mangrove White-eye". "Mangrove Reed Warbler" and Clamorous Reed Warbler are also readily found here. Other possibilities include a selection of shorebirds, gulls and terns, including Saunders's Tern. Goliath Heron can also be seen, although we did not record it.



*Either mangroves.*

## **Sabya area**

The farm bush and agricultural lands around Sabya, north-east of Jazan is a key area to visit for several species that are not present once you leave the coastal plain. Many of these are shared with the African continent. Helmeted Guineafowl, Black Scrub Robin, Nile Valley Sunbird and African Silverbill are easily found here, as are regional endemics like Arabian Green Bee-eater, Graceful Prinia and Arabian Babbler. We also found the area good for migrants, such as Upcher's Warbler and Masked Shrike.

The most sought-after species however is the range restricted Arabian Golden Sparrow, found in the south-western parts of the Arabian Peninsula, Djibouti and Somaliland. The species is nomadic and seems to be present at several sites in the area, at least parts of the year, such as Sabya Farms (17.140485, 42.419521), Sabya pivot fields (17.160068, 42.694215) and the grove with beehives in the village of Alhajariah (17.071802, 42.385003). Look for them in flocks of House Sparrows and Rüppell's Weavers.

At the Sabya pivot fields – which we did not visit – Harlequin Quail, Small Buttonquail, Nubian Nightjar, Zitting Cisticola and Singing Bushlark can be found.



*Farm bush close to Sabya.*

## **Abu Arish cemetery**

An alternative site for Arabian Golden Sparrow. Park by the cemetery (16.965644, 42.826094) and look through the acacia trees. At our visit there was little activity at the site.

## **Jazan Dam Lake**

The Jazan Dam Lake and surrounding areas provide good general birding and is a key site if you are searching for Afrotropical species like African Openbill, Intermediate Egret, Helmeted Guineafowl, Abyssinian Roller, Red-eyed Dove, Gabar Goshawk and Dark Chanting Goshawk, as well as ducks, grebes and coots.

A good spot to start where you can drive right down to the shore is at the Ain Al Harra Park (17.051478, 42.974371) on the east side. In the evening this is also good spot for Nubian Nightjar.

Driving a bit further south along the shore another viewpoint is found at 17.030829, 42.991049. At dusk, visit the southern inlet (17.014157, 43.001579) for Arabian Waxbills and African Silverbills coming into roost and Lichtenstein's Sandgrouse coming into drink in pools on the track. Check out the abandoned two-story house skeleton on the northern shore (17.089927, 42.953837) for roosting Arabian Eagle Owl.

At the nearby Abu Arish STP (16.997735, 42.943335) Plain Nightjar, Nubian Nightjar and Lichtenstein's Sandgrouse are all possible, but we did not visit the site.

### **Habala area**

In the Habala area you bird three different sites with distinct habitats – the sparsely vegetated flat, open plateau, the steep cliff edges and finally woodland, each holding different targets species.

At the plateau the key species is Rufous-capped Lark. Begin searching the area around the playground (18.050712, 42.844518) and the watering hole (18.048478, 42.851629), the species is often found in the company of Crested Larks. Other species here include *buryi* Levant Scrub Warbler, Arabian Warbler, Long-billed Pipit and *eximius* African Pipit.



*The plateau at Al Habala.*

The cliff edge at the Al Habala viewpoint (18.027599, 42.874928) is the most reliable site for Yemen Serin, and also a good site for great views of Tristram's Starling.



*Al Habala viewpoint.*

The Al Habala North Park (18.0736656, 42.8544807) is a small woodland with a different set of species. Here you can find Buff-breasted Wheatear, Arabian Warbler, Abyssinian White-eye Gambaga Flycatcher, Violet-backed Starling, Palestine Sunbird and Arabian Serin. It is also good for migrants like Red-tailed Shrike, White-throated Robin and Common Nightingale.

### **Al Soudah creek**

Al Soudah creek (18.225432, 42.425112) provides some easily accessible and very enjoyable birding, with several target species easily found. Parking by the road, begin birding the open areas to the east – we had Yemen Thrush, Arabian Wheatear, Little Rock Thrush, Yemen Warbler and Yemen Linnet here, as well as Brown Woodland Warbler. Arabian Woodpecker is possible, but we did not see it here.

Then explore the path along the wadi. Both Arabian Partridge and Arabian Waxbill are possible, but not recorded by us. At the end of the short path, you can walk up to a small wetland, here we had both *felix* African Stonechat as well as more Yemen Linnets.



*The path up Al Soudah creek.*

### **Raidah Nature Reserve**

The Raidah Nature Reserve is not to be missed, as it holds a large share of the regional target species and offers accessible birding in a variety of habitats. There is good birding from the area before the entrance, all the way down to the bottom of the valley. Be aware that the road at places is very steep, so a car with a weak engine might struggle to get back up (as we did).

Along the road leading up to the entrance (18.206749, 42.41026) there is good night birding – we found Arabian Scops Owl to be easy here. We also heard Plain Nightjar calling, but rather distant. Right by the parking before the gate, look for Montane Nightjar.

Entering the reserve (you need to arrange a permit), watch for Arabian Partridge on the cliff sides and on the road. Be sure to be here early morning for best chances at partridges.

At the remains of an old farm (18.198392, 42.408947) we had our only Olive Pigeons, as well as *harterti* African Paradise Flycatcher. Arabian Waxbill is possible here. By an old mosque (18.197480, 42.408392) there is a small pool across the road, that can attract birds coming in to drink – possibilities include Arabian Waxbill and Yemen Linnet. Arabian Woodpecker, Yemen Warbler, Yemen Thrush are possible at both sites, and Arabian Wheatear is easily seen.

Further down the wooded habitats transforms into aloe forest (18.194606, 42.393643). This is a good spot for Arabian Sunbird, which can be a tricky species to encounter – a key species in the reserve. Here we also had Arabian Woodpecker. Arabian Waxbill is also possible here.

Arabian Sunbird is also possible further down, by the old fort (18.195835, 42.389019). This is also a good spot for Black-crowned Tchagra and Cinnamon-breasted Bunting.

More afrotropicals are possible to see at the village at the bottom of the valley (18.193784, 42.368146). We did not visit this site, but White-browed coucal, African Gray Hornbill, White-throated bee-eater, Grey-headed kingfisher, Black-crowned Tchagra and Cinnamon-breasted bunting can be found here.



*The winding road through Raidah Nature Reserve.*

### **Wadi Dahna**

Wadi Dahna (18.902589, 42.206073) is an excellent site for several sought-after endemics. The two key species here are Philby's Partridge and Asir Magpie. Be sure to arrive at sunrise to maximize your chances for Philby's Partridge, which will be calling and more active early morning. Scanning the cliffs from where we parked the car at the edge of the village was a good strategy.

Once Philby's Partridge has been seen, bird the valley below the village, for Asir Magpie. We heard our first from the car and had four birds within 15 minutes. We also found Arabian Woodpecker easier here than at Raidah.

Other species that occurs here are Arabian Green Bee-eater, Yemen Warbler, Yemen Thrush, Gambaga Flycatcher, Arabian Serin, and Yemen Linnet. Arabian Waxbill is possible. The site is also good for migrants – we had our only Ménétérié's Warbler here.



*Wadi Dahna – in this valley we had several Asir Magpies.*

We did not visit nearby Dahna Waterfalls (18.910717, 42.207745) since birding tend to be less productive here, but if you miss Asir Magpie at other sites this is a back-up site for the species. Other possibilities here include Philby's Partridge, Arabian Scops-Owl, Arabian Woodpecker, Yemen Warbler, Arabian Warbler, Yemen Thrush, Arabian Sunbird, Arabian Waxbill, Arabian Serin and Yemen Linnet.

### **Wadi Ghathal**

Another good site with a similar composition of species as Wadi Dahna, is nearby Wadi Ghathal (18.897349, 42.184390). Park by the road and follow the track down into the valley. We easily found Arabian Woodpecker here, as well as *buryi* Levant Warbler (in the rocky area close to the road), African Paradise Flycatcher, Yemen Warbler, Arabian Babbler, Long-billed Pipit and Yemen Linnet. The site also holds further chances for Philby's Partridge, Asir Magpie, Arabian Sunbird and African Pipit even though we did not see these.



*Wadi Ghathal – back-up site for Asir Magpie.*

### **Al Wahdah woods**

A site we did not visit (18.958224, 42.145834), close to Tanomah. Possibilities include Arabian Partridge, Philby's Partridge, Arabian Green Bee-eater, Arabian Woodpecker, Yemen Warbler, Yemen Thrush, Arabian Wheatear, Arabian Serin, Yemen Serin, Yemen Linnet, Barbary Falcon and Long-billed Pipit.

### **Mahfar Tourist Park**

Mahfar Tourist Park (18.963352, 42.131302) is supposedly a reliable spot for Arabian Eagle Owl, which can usually be seen perching on lamp posts around the parking area at dusk or dawn.

Apart from the eagle owl, several good species can be seen here. Both Arabian Scops-Owl and Montane Nightjar can be seen in the wooded areas south-east of the parking area. The more open agricultural areas north-west of the parking area is the only place where we saw *eximius* African Pipit. This part is also good for migrants, we saw Ortolan Bunting and Red-throated Pipit here. Other possibilities include Philby's Partridge, Arabian Green Bee-eater, Arabian Woodpecker, *buryi* Levant Scrub Warbler, Yemen Warbler, Yemen Thrush, Buff-breasted Wheatear, Arabian Wheatear, Arabian Serin, Yemen Serin and Yemen Linnet.



*Open area just north of Mahfar Tourist Park.*

### **Wadi Talea**

A site we did not visit (18.352470, 42.384745). Possibilities include Arabian Woodpecker, Rufous-capped Lark, *buryi* Levant Scrub Warbler, Arabian Warbler, Buff-breasted Wheatear, Arabian Waxbill, *eximius* African Pipit, Arabian Serin and Yemen Linnet.

## **Quraysh**

A back-up site (18.866835, 42.179173) for Asir Magpie, Buff-breasted Wheatear and Yemen Serin, which we did not visit.

## **Bihan**

Another back-up site (18.666395, 42.231231) for Asir Magpie and *felix* African Stonechat we did not visit. Other possibilities include Arabian Partridge, Yemen Warbler, Yemen Thrush, Buff-breasted Wheatear and Yemen Linnet.

## **Wadi Hali**

Wadi Hali (18.525045, 41.997802) is a historical site for Arabian Golden-winged Grosbeak, but it is fairly degraded and the chances are probably slim today. The village just up the hill after crossing the wadi is the only spot we saw Blackstart. Gabar Goshawk is possible here, although we did not see it during our short visit. Other possibilities include African Collared Dove, Black Scrub-Robin, Nile Valley Sunbird and White-browed Coucal.

## **Wadi Atoud reservoir**

Wadi Atour reservoir (18.246466, 42.708636) is a site for Little Owl. Arabian Waxbill and Arabian Serin are also possible here. We only had time to spend half an hour here and did not see either, but it is conveniently located close to Abha and Abha airport if Little Owl is on your target list.

## **Wadi Zahra**

Scenic wadi (18.588029, 42.059680) just north of Muhayil. Back-up site for Arabian Sunbird, but worth exploring for other species. We did not walk the wadi itself, since you have to drive in from the west for that.

## **Wadi Shabraqah**

This wadi (20.083019, 41.386435) near Al Baha is the best known site for Arabian Golden-winged Grosbeak. We did not visit the site since it is a long drive from the other sites normally visited (234 km from Tanomah) and the grosbeak is still a difficult bird to see. Listen for the call and check stands of juniper trees. If you do not find the bird close to where you park, it might be worth walking up the wadi to an area with standing water (20.107870, 41.389731).

## **Al-'Ula Canyons**

East of Al-'Ula is a large area of spectacular desert canyons which is good for several regional specialties Sand Partridge; Desert Owl, Pharaoh Eagle Owl, Hooded Wheatear, *inquieta* Levant Scrub Warbler and Sinai Rosefinch. To reach the area you drive road 375 north from Al-'Ula and then turn east on to road 70. After about 13 km you turn south onto a sandy track (26.687474, 38.007786) leading into the canyons. Check out wells and other sources of water along the way for Hooded Wheatear, Sinai Rosefinch and Striolated Bunting and areas of shrubby vegetation for Levant Scrub Warbler. To find Desert Owl and Pharaoh Eagle Owl listed for the calling at dusk from the cliff walls. We did not see Sand Partridge, but only spent one afternoon and evening in the area, and they are probably easier to track down early morning.



*The canyons close to Al-'Ula.*

### **Desert north of Hegra**

The deserts north of Al-'Ula is a key area for several species of larks, especially the Arabian Lark, a nomadic species that is found in several countries, but can be tricky to track down. Other lark species here include Greater Hoopoe Lark, Desert Lark and Bar-tailed Lark. Mourning Wheatear can also be seen here. To find Arabian Lark the strategy is to cover as much good habitat as possible, until you bump into them. The numbers in the area seem to vary seasonally, and at the time we visited we only had low numbers of all lark species. Several spots where the species has been seen are scattered along the turning east from road 375 at 26.981430, 37.847274. Unfortunately, some very good-looking areas – from where we heard the bird – are found on the fenced off southern side of the same road, so unless you are lucky to see it through the fence you need to concentrate the efforts to sites to the north (e.g. 26.986749, 37.970443). Good numbers have been recorded at the waypoints.

During our visit to Hegra, we noted that there was good looking habitat around the archaeological sites as well, but not possible to wander around freely.



*Arabian Lark habitat north of Al-'Ula.*

## **Tabuk**

On our last afternoon we had planned to do some birding in the farms and desert east of Tabuk, while waiting for our evening flight, but a sandstorm made it impossible to do any birding. But if you need Desert Finch, it has been recorded in the farmland close to the city (28.438083, 36.758361). It could also be interesting check out the desert further east, which is not well known – a potential species here could be Thick-billed Lark.

## **Rawdat Nurah**

This site close to Riyadh is an alternative site for Arabian Lark. Just like around Al-'Ula, the species can be hard to track down here as well, but if it is an important target species, it could be a good idea to plan a stop-over in Riyadh to maximize your chances. This site also holds Thick-billed Lark.



*White-throated Robin, Al Habala*

## Key species

Key species includes notes on where to best find species endemic to Saudi Arabia and Yemen (in red) or with a restricted distribution centred around the Arabian Peninsula. Apart from these some other species with a wider distribution in the Middle East or the Horn of Africa are also easily found in Saudi Arabia – these include White-spectacled Bulbul, Black Scrub Robin, Levant Scrub Warbler, Graceful Prinia, Little Rock Thrush, Blackstart, Nile Valley Sunbird and Rüppell's Weaver.

For birders that keep a [Greater] Western Palearctic or Asia list, south-western Saudi Arabia is also a key area for many species otherwise only found in Africa, like Montane Nightjar, Plain Nightjar, African Palm Swift, White-browed Coucal, Diederik Cuckoo, African Olive Pigeon, African Collared Dove, Red-eyed Dove, Bruce's Green Pigeon, Lesser Flamingo, Black-headed Heron, Hamerkop African Grey Hornbill, Abyssinian Roller and Black-crowned Tchagra.

**Philby's Partridge** (*Alectoris philbyi*). Endemic to SW Saudi Arabia and Yemen. Occurs at higher altitudes than Arabian Partridges and seems much scarcer. Only recorded at Wadi Dahna – you should make sure to be at the site at dawn, scanning the hillsides and listening for calling males. Also possible at Dahna waterfall, Wadi Ghathal, Al Wahdah woods and Mahfar Tourist Park.

**Arabian Partridge** (*Alectoris melanocephala*). Endemic to Saudi Arabia, Yemen and Oman. Easily found at Raidah Nature Reserve scanning the roadsides and cliffs from the car during the early morning hours. Present at several other sites like Al Soudah creek and Al Wahdah woods.

**White-eyed Gull** (*Ichthyaelus leucophthalmus*). Endemic breeder to islands in the Red Sea. Look for it in central Jazan, around the Corniche park.

**Arabian Scops Owl** (*Otus pamela*). Endemic to SW Saudi Arabia, Yemen and western Oman. Not uncommon, found at several sites, we found it easily along the road before the entrance to Raidah Nature Reserve, which gives you easy access to good habitat. Also possible at Wadi Dahna, Dahna waterfall and Mahfar Tourist Park.

**Arabian Eagle-Owl** (*Bubo miles*). Found in SW Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Oman and eastern United Arab Emirates. Supposed to be easy at Mahfar Tourist Park, but we did not find it, probably due to bad weather. We saw one bird at a day roost in an abandoned building at Lake Al-Saad.

**Desert Owl** (*Strix hadorami*). Patchy distribution centred around the Arabian Peninsula, also possible to see in Israel, Egypt or Jordan, but worth looking for in suitable habitat In Saudi Arabia, such as the desert canyons E of Al-'Ula.

**Arabian Green Bee-eater** (*Merops cyanophrys*). This recent split from Green Bee-eater is widespread across the Arabian Peninsula. We found it to be common and recorded at many sites.

**Arabian Woodpecker** (*Dendrocoptes dora*). Endemic to SW Saudi Arabia and Yemen. Possible at several sites, we had good views with little effort at Wadi Dahna and Wadi Ghathal. We also saw it at Raidah Nature Reserve and Mahfar Tourist Park, but found it more difficult to see there. Also possible at Dahna waterfall, Al Wahdah woods and Al Soudah Creek.

**Asir Magpie** (*Pica asirensis*). The key species – endemic to a small area in SW Saudi Arabia and classified as endangered. It is present at a few key sites and we found it easily at Wadi Dahna. It can also be found at Dahna waterfalls, Quraysh, Wadi Ghathal and Bihan.

**Rufous-capped Lark** (*Calandrella eremica*). Not strictly endemic, but outside SW Saudi Arabia and Yemen (ssp. *emerica*) only found in Somaliland, just crossing over the border into Ethiopia (ssp. *daaroodensis*), so a good bird to look for. Best found at the plateau at Al Habala, also possible at Wadi Talea.

**Arabian Lark** (*Eremalauda eremodites*). Outside the Arabian Peninsula, also possible in Syria, Jordan and Israel, but nomadic behaviour can make it tricky to find. The desert north of Al-'Ula is a good spot, where good numbers have been recorded, but during our visit only a single bird was heard. Also possible at Rawdat Nurah close to Riyadh.

**"Mangrove Reed Warbler"** (*Acrocephalus scirpaceus avicenniae*). A subspecies of Eurasian Reed Warbler, that is sometimes split. Mainly found in mangroves around the Red Sea and Horn of Africa. Either mangroves north of Jazan is a good spot for it.

**Arabian Babbler** (*Argya squamiceps*). Distribution centred around the Arabian Peninsula, common and easy to find at many sites.

**Arabian Warbler** (*Sylvia leucomelaena*). Distributed on both sides of the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden. We found the sites around Al Habala to be the best spot for it, but also had it at Wadi Dahna. Also possible at other sites, e.g. Wadi Ghathal.

**Yemen Warbler** (*Curruca buryi*). Endemic to SW Saudi Arabia and Yemen. Easily found at Al Soudah creek, but possible at Raidah Nature Reserve, Wadi Dahna, Dahna waterfall, Mahfar Tourist Park, Al Whadah woods and Bihan.

**Abyssinian White-eye** (*Zosterops abyssinicus arabs*). Also found in Ethiopia and neighbouring countries, but the *arabs* subspecies is endemic to the southern parts of the Arabian Peninsula, and easily seen at several sites, e.g. Al Habala, Al Soudah creek and Mahvar tourist park.

**"Mangrove White-eye"** (*Zosterops abyssinicus*). Recently diverged and distinctive mangrove specialist endemic to mangroves in SW Saudi Arabia, worth a detour to the Either mangroves north of Jazan.

**Tristram's Starling** (*Onychognathus tristramii*). Found from Israel south through the western parts of the Arabian Peninsula to eastern Oman. A common species – Al Habala and Mahvar tourist park are good sites for it.

**Yemen Thrush** (*Turdus menachensis*). Endemic to SW Saudi Arabia and Yemen. Easily found Al Soudah creek and Raidah Nature Reserve. Also possible at Wadi Dahna, Al Wahdah woods, Wadi Ghathal, Mahvar tourist park and Bihan.

**Buff-breasted Wheatear** (*Oenanthe bottae*). If split endemic to SW Saudi Arabia and Yemen. Possible at many sites but seems to be rather thin on the ground. North Habala Park was a good site for it, we also saw one bird at Bihan. Also possible at Wadi Ghathal, Mahfar Tourist Park, Wadi Talea and Quraysh.

**Arabian Wheatear** (*Oenanthe lugentoides*). Endemic to the Arabian Peninsula, common and easily seen at many sites once you leave the lowlands.

**Palestine Sunbird** (*Cinnyris osea*). The nominate subspecies is found from Lebanon south through the western parts of the Arabian Peninsula to E Oman. Another subspecies occurs in central Africa but is possibly best regarded as a distinct species (Decorse's Sunbird). A very common species, seen at many sites.

**Arabian Sunbird** (*Cinnyris hellmayri*). A recent split from Shining Sunbird, endemic to the Arabian Peninsula. Quite scarce and easily missed, best looked for around the aloe forest and old fort at Raidah Nature Reserve, or if you miss it there at Wadi Zahra.

**Arabian Golden Sparrow** (*Passer euchlorus*). Distributed through SW Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Djibouti and Somaliland, this nomadic species can be tricky to find anywhere. We visited several sites in the lowlands east of Jazan where it is known to occur, but it was not present at any. All other birders visiting the area during February through April also failed to record the species, so possibly not there during spring, but its local movements are poorly understood at the moment.

**Arabian Waxbill** (*Estrilda rufibarba*). Endemic to SW Saudi Arabia and Yemen. Can be a tricky species to pin down. We were lucky to get information from Thierry Quelennec who found that large numbers come into roost at dusk at Lake Al-Saad just days before our visit. We also had two overflying at Wadi Ghathal and the species can be found at several other sites, like Raidah Nature Reserve, Wadi Dahna, Dahna waterfall, Wadi Atoud reservoir etc.

**Sinai Rosefinch** (*Carpodacus synoicus*). Endemic to southern Israel, Sinai, Jordan and NW Saudi Arabia. We had no trouble finding the species in the canyons E of Al-'Ula.

**Arabian Golden-winged Grosbeak** (*Rhynchostruthus percivali*). Endemic to SW Saudi Arabia, Yemen and western Oman. A difficult and poorly known species in Saudi Arabia, easier to see in Oman. It can be seen at Al Baha, but we did not try for it since it is a long drive north from Tanomah and by no means guaranteed at the site. With more birders visiting there is potential for new sites to be discovered, e.g. some of the wadis close to Bihan (18°66'34.59", 42°21'13.2") and Muhayil (18°35'16.9"; 42°03'34.9") looked worth exploring.

**Arabian Serin** (*Crithagra rothschildi*). Endemic to western Saudi Arabia and Yemen. We found North Habala Park and Wadi Dahna to be good spot for it, but it is possible at many spots in the south-west.

**Yemen Serin** (*Crithagra menachensis*). Endemic to SW Saudi Arabia, Yemen and W Oman. A scarce species, the most reliable site for it is along the escarpment at Al Habala viewpoint. Possible at several other sites, but easily missed, like Mahfar Tourist Park, Quraysh and Al Wahdah woods.

**Yemen Linnet** (*Linaria yemenensis*). Endemic to W Saudi Arabia and Yemen. A common species, found at many sites, e.g. Al Soudah creek, Raidah Nature Reserve, Wadi Dahna and Mahvar tourist park.

## **Accommodation**

Accommodation at most sites can be booked in advance through [hotels.com](https://www.hotels.com) or [bookig.com](https://www.bookig.com). Rates varied from around 30 to 65 USD per person per night. We were happy with the standard at all the following hotels or apartments.

### **Jazan**

Park Jizan Hotel

Corniche Road, Jizan 45142, tel +966 17 340 5111

Standard hotel close to the sea, just north of the city centre. Good restaurant in the building.

### **Abu Arish:**

Rental apartments, Abu Arish 84522, tel: 966 53 111 6211.

Not available through booking sites, must be booked at arrival.

### **Abha**

Alnarjes Suites

Al Bahrain, As Sadd, Abha 62521, tel: +966 17 229 9979

Abha Airport Hotel

Abha Regional Airport, Abha 62439

Convenient if you have an early morning flight.

### **Tanomah**

Tanuma Aram Hotel Apartments

King Faisal Road, Tanomah 62713, tel: +966 53 505 0212

Standard hotel, conveniently situated for easy access to the birding sites.

### **Al-'Ula**

سما العلا للشقق المفروشة ("Samaa Al Ula")

Coordinates: 26.598149147483, 37.942133574699

Private apartment, excellent value for money. No sign on the street, call landlord for instructions.

## **Rental cars**

### **Jazan**

Enterprise rent-a-car, [rentalcars.com](https://www.rentalcars.com), tel: +966920000028

Office and pick-up at the airport, possible to return at the car the airport in Abha.

### **Al-'Ula**

Lumi Car Rental, [lumirental.com](https://www.lumirental.com), tel: +966 9200 28428

Only car rental at Al-'Ula airport. Other rental companies are in town, and it can be difficult to find transport from the airport.

## Contacts

For assistance in planning your visit to Saudi Arabia, the best resource is to contact **Gregory Askew** at Saudi Birding, who helped us plan this trip, and also provided valuable support with any questions during the trip through WhatsApp. His contact details are [saudibirding.com](http://saudibirding.com), e-mail: [gregory.askew\(at\)gmail.com](mailto:gregory.askew(at)gmail.com)

If you have any questions regarding this trip report, you're welcome to e-mail me at [markus.lagerqvist\(at\)usa.net](mailto:markus.lagerqvist(at)usa.net).



*Tristram's Starling, Al Habala.*

## Species list

### Ducks, Geese, Swans

#### Eurasian Wigeon *Mareca penelope*

2 Lake Al-Saad (23/4)

#### Northern Pintail *Anas acuta*

1 Lake Al-Saad (23/4)

### Guineafowl

#### Helmeted Guineafowl *Numida meleagris somaliensis*

3 E of Jazan (23/4), 10 Lake Al-Saad (23/4)

*Note: Natural population likely ssp. somaliensis but introduced birds possibly multiply-sourced.*

### Pheasants & Allies

#### Arabian Partridge *Alectoris m. melanocephala*

50 Raidah NR (25/4), 1 Habala viewpoint (25/4), 10 Jabal Thirban (27/4)

#### Philby's Partridge *Alectoris philbyi*

10 Wadi Dahna (26/4)



*Philby's Partridge, Wadi Dahna*

### Nightjars

#### Nubian Nightjar *Caprimulgus nubicus tamaricis*

3 Lake Al-Saad (23/4)

**Montane Nightjar** *Caprimulgus p. poliocephalus*

2 heard Raidah NR (24/4), 1 Raidah NR (25/4), 1 Mahvar tourist park (27/4)

*Note: Subspecies guttifer, koesteri and ruwenzorii sometimes treated as a separate species, but plumage characters appear to be clinal and vocal differences minor.*

**Plain Nightjar** *Caprimulgus inornatus*

1 heard Raidah NR (24/4), 1 heard Raidah NR (25/4)

**Swifts**

**African Palm Swift** *Cypsiurus p. parvus*

2 Jazan city (22/4), 5 JWTP mangroves (22/4), 10 Jazan city (23/4), 10 Sabya (23/4), 20 Lake Al-Saad (23/4), 5 Habala plateau (24/4)

**Alpine Swift** *Tachymarptis melba*

1 Sabya (23/4), 30 Habala viewpoint (24/4)

**Pallid Swift** *Apus pallidus*

3 Tabuk (30/4)

**Little Swift** *Apus affinis galilejensis*

1 Abha airport (27/4)

**Cuckoos**

**White-browed Coucal** *Centropus s. superciliosus*

3 Sabya (23/4), 2 Lake Al-Saad (23/4), 1 Wadi Hali (27/4)

**Diederik Cuckoo** *Chrysococcyx caprius*

1 heard Wadi Dahna (26/4)

**Sandgrouse**

**Chestnut-bellied Sandgrouse** *Pterocles exustus erlangeri*

1 E of Jazan (22/4), 1 Sabya (23/4)

**Lichtenstein's Sandgrouse** *Pterocles lichtensteinii arabicus*

6 Lake Al-Saad (23/4)

*Note: Subspecies arabicus ("Close-barred") occurs from southern Arabian Peninsula east to southern Pakistan.*

**Pigeons, Doves**

**Rock Dove** *Columba livia*

*domestica*: Widespread in inhabited areas

*palaestinae*: 1 Az Zuhur (23/4), 2 Habala viewpoint (24/4)

**African Olive Pigeon** *Columba arquatrix*

2 Raidah NR (25/4)

**Dusky Turtle Dove** *Streptopelia lugens*

50 Lake Al-Saad (23/4), 30 Al Soudah creek (24/4), 3 Wadi Dahna (26/4), 1 Mahvar tourist park (27/4)

**Eurasian Collared Dove** *Streptopelia decaocto*

10 Hegra (29/4)

**African Collared Dove** *Streptopelia roseogrisea arabica*

20 Either mangroves (22/4), 20 Jazan city (22/4), 50 Jazan city (23/4), 100 Sabya (23/4), 100 Lake Al-Saad (23/4), 10 Habala plateau (24/4), 30 Wadi Hali (27/4)

**Red-eyed Dove** *Streptopelia semitorquata*

3 Lake Al-Saad (23/4)

**Laughing Dove** *Spilopelia s. senegalensis*

100 Jazan city (22/4), 50 Either mangroves (22/4), 50 Jazan city (23/4), 100 Sabya (23/4), 100 Lake Al-Saad (23/4), 10 North Habala Park (24/4), 3 Al Soudah creek (24/4), 10 Habala viewpoint (25/4), 10 Wadi Dahna (26/4), 10 Mahvar tourist park (27/4), 10 Canyons E of Al-'Ula (28/4)

**Namaqua Dove** *Oena c. capensis*

10 Jazan city (23/4), 10 Sabya (23/4), 30 Lake Al-Saad (23/4), 6 Wadi Atudh (27/4)

**Bruce's Green Pigeon** *Treron waalia*

2 Lake Al-Saad (23/4), 1 Jabal Thirban (27/4)

**Rails, Crakes & Coots**

**Common Moorhen** *Gallinula ch. chloropus*

30 JWTP mangroves (22/4)

**Red-knobbed Coot** *Fulica cristata*

6 Lake Al-Saad (23/4)

**Grebes**

**Little Grebe** *Tachybaptus r. ruficollis*

100 Lake Al-Saad (23/4)

**Flamingos**

**Greater Flamingo** *Phoenicopterus roseus*

100 JWTP mangroves (22/4)

**Lesser Flamingo** *Phoeniconaias minor*  
500 JWTP mangroves (22/4)

## **Stilts, Avocets**

**Black-winged Stilt** *Himantopus himantopus*  
30 Jazan Heritage Village (22/4), 30 JWTP mangroves (22/4), 10 Lake Al-Saad (23/4)

## **Plovers**

**Spur-winged Lapwing** *Vanellus spinosus*  
10 Lake Al-Saad (23/4), Tabuk (30/4)

**Grey Plover** *Pluvialis s. squatarola*  
1 Jazan city (22/4), 1 Either mangroves (22/4), 2 Jazan Heritage Village (22/4)

**Common Ringed Plover** *Charadrius hiaticula tundrae*  
3 Jazan city (22/4), 30 Either mangroves (22/4), 30 Jazan Heritage Village (22/4)

**Kentish Plover** *Charadrius a. alexandrinus*  
1 Jazan city (22/4), 10 Either mangroves (22/4)

**Tibetan Sand Plover** *Charadrius atrifrons pamirensis*  
10 Jazan city (22/4), 5 Either mangroves (22/4), 20 Jazan Heritage Village (22/4)

**Greater Sand Plover** *Charadrius leschenaultii columbinus*  
1 Jazan Heritage Village (22/4)

## **Sandpipers, Snipes**

**Eurasian Whimbrel** *Numenius ph. phaeopus*  
1 Jazan city (22/4), 10 Either mangroves (22/4), 10 Jazan Heritage Village (22/4)

**Bar-tailed Godwit** *Limosa l. lapponica*  
1 Jazan city (22/4), 1 JWTP mangroves (22/4)

**Black-tailed Godwit** *Limosa l. limosa*  
6 Jazan city (22/4), 1 Lake Al-Saad (23/4)

**Ruddy Turnstone** *Arenaria i. interpres*  
7 Jazan city (22/4), 2 Either mangroves (22/4), 30 JWTP mangroves (22/4)

**Curlew Sandpiper** *Calidris ferruginea*  
7 Jazan city (22/4), 200 Jazan Heritage Village (22/4)

**Temminck's Stint** *Calidris temminckii*  
3 Jazan city (22/4), 1 Jazan Corniche (22/4), 1 JWTP mangroves (22/4), 10 Lake Al-Saad (23/4)

**Sanderling** *Calidris alba*

1 Jazan city (22/4)

**Dunlin** *Calidris alpina*

1 Jazan city (22/4)

**Little Stint** *Calidris minuta*

2 Jazan city (22/4), 100 JWTP mangroves (22/4)

**Common Snipe** *Gallinago g. gallinago*

5 Lake Al-Saad (23/4)

**Terek Sandpiper** *Xenus cinereus*

1 Jazan city (22/4), 5 Jazan Heritage Village (22/4), 1 Lake Al-Saad (23/4)

**Common Sandpiper** *Actitis hypoleucos*

1 Jazan Corniche (22/4), 1 JWTP mangroves (22/4), 5 Lake Al-Saad (23/4)

**Green Sandpiper** *Tringa ochropus*

1 Sabya (23/4)

**Common Redshank** *Tringa totanus*

1 Jazan Corniche (22/4)

**Marsh Sandpiper** *Tringa stagnatilis*

1 JWTP mangroves (22/4)

**Wood Sandpiper** *Tringa glareola*

7 Jazan city (22/4), 1 Jazan Corniche (22/4), 5 Lake Al-Saad (23/4)

**Common Greenshank** *Tringa nebularia*

1 Jazan city (22/4), 5 Jazan Heritage Village (22/4)

**Crab-plover**

**Crab-plover** *Dromas ardeola*

80 Jazan city (22/4), 5 Either mangroves (22/4), 100 Jazan Heritage Village (22/4)

**Gulls, Terns, Skimmers**

**Slender-billed Gull** *Chroicocephalus genei*

3 Jazan city (22/4), 1 Lake Al-Saad (23/4)

**Black-headed Gull** *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

1 Jazan Heritage Village (22/4)

**White-eyed Gull** *Ichthyiaetus leucophthalmus*

50 Jazan city (22/4), 5 Jazan Corniche (22/4)

**Sooty Gull** *Ichthyaetus hemprichii*

30 Jazan city (22/4), 20 Either mangroves (22/4), 20 Jazan Corniche (22/4)



Sooty Gull, Jazan city

**Caspian Gull** *Larus cachinnans*

1 Jazan city (22/4)

**Lesser Black-backed Gull** *Larus f. fuscus*

1 Jazan city (22/4), 2 Jazan Corniche (22/4)

**Gull-billed Tern** *Gelochelidon n. nilotica*

1 Jazan city (22/4), 2 Either mangroves (22/4), 2 Jazan Heritage Village (22/4), 10 Lake Al-Saad (23/4)

**Caspian Tern** *Hydroprogne caspia*

1 Jazan city (22/4), 5 Jazan Heritage Village (22/4), 1 Lake Al-Saad (23/4)

**Greater Crested Tern** *Thalasseus bergii velox*

3 Jazan city (22/4), 1 Lake Al-Saad (23/4)

**Lesser Crested Tern** *Thalasseus b. bengalensis*

2 Jazan city (22/4)

**Saunders's Tern** *Sternula saundersi*

2 Jazan city (22/4), 2 Either mangroves (22/4)

**White-cheeked Tern** *Sterna repressa*

1 JWTP mangroves (22/4)

**Whiskered Tern** *Chlidonias h. hybrida*

20 Lake Al-Saad (23/4)

**White-winged Tern** *Chlidonias leucopterus*

5 Either mangroves (22/4), 30 Lake Al-Saad (23/4)

**Storks**

**White Stork** *Ciconia c. ciconia*

1 Deserts N of Al-‘Ula (29/4)

**Ibises, Spoonbills**

**Glossy Ibis** *Plegadis falcinellus*

30 JWTP mangroves (22/4)

**Eurasian Spoonbill** *Platalea leucorodia archeri*

2 Jazan city (22/4), 100 JWTP mangroves (22/4), 20 Lake Al-Saad (23/4)

**Hérons, Bitterns**

**Squacco Heron** *Ardeola ralloides*

1 Jazan Heritage Village (22/4), 30 Lake Al-Saad (23/4)

**Western Cattle Egret** *Bubulcus ibis*

3 Jazan city (22/4), 100 Sabya (23/4), 200 Lake Al-Saad (23/4)

**Grey Heron** *Ardea c. cinerea*

1 Jazan city (22/4), 10 JWTP mangroves (22/4), 5 Jazan Heritage Village (22/4), 10 Lake Al-Saad (23/4)

**Black-headed Heron** *Ardea melanocephala*

2 Jazan Heritage Village (22/4), 2 Lake Al-Saad (23/4)

**Purple Heron** *Ardea p. purpurea*

1 Lake Al-Saad (23/4)

**Intermediate Egret** *Ardea intermedia brachyrhyncha*

1 JWTP mangroves (22/4)

**Little Egret** *Egretta g. garzetta*

1 Jazan Heritage Village (22/4), 2 Lake Al-Saad (23/4)

**Western Reef Heron** *Egretta gularis schistacea*

1 Jazan city (22/4), 1 Either mangroves (22/4), 4 Jazan Heritage Village (22/4)



*Western Reef Heron, Jazan city*

## **Hamerkop**

**Hamerkop** *Scopus u. umbretta*  
10 Lake Al-Saad (23/4)

## **Pelicans**

**Pink-backed Pelican** *Pelecanus rufescens*  
100 Jazan city (22/4), 100 JWTP mangroves (22/4), 20 Lake Al-Saad (23/4)

## **Ospreys**

**Western Osprey** *Pandion h. haliaetus*  
2 Jazan city (22/4), 2 JWTP mangroves (22/4), 1 Either mangroves (22/4), 2 Lake Al-Saad (23/4)

## **Kites, Hawks, Eagles**

**Griffon Vulture** *Gyps f. fulvus*  
1 Wadi Hali (27/4), 10 Wadi Ghathal (26/4)

**European Honey Buzzard** *Pernis apivorus*  
3 Sabya (23/4), 1 Lake Al-Saad (23/4)

**Crested Honey Buzzard** *Pernis ptilorhynchus orientalis*  
1 Wadi Hali (27/4)

**Levant Sparrowhawk** *Accipiter brevipes*

2 Habala viewpoint (24/4)

**Western Marsh Harrier** *Circus a. aeruginosus*

3 Lake Al-Saad (23/4), 1 Deserts N of Al-'Ula (29/4)

**Montagu's Harrier** *Circus pygargus*

2 Deserts N of Al-'Ula (29/4)

**Black Kite** *Milvus m. migrans*

30 Lake Al-Saad (23/4), 1 Deserts N of Al-'Ula (29/4)

**Common Buzzard** *Buteo vulpinus*

1 Raidah NR (25/4)

## Owls

**Arabian Scops Owl** *Otus pamela*

3 Raidah NR (24/4), 1 heard Mahvar tourist park (27/4)

**Pharaoh Eagle-Owl** *Bubo ascalaphus*

2 Canyons E of Al-'Ula (28/4)

**Arabian Eagle-Owl** *Bubo milesi*

1 Lake Al-Saad (23/4)

**Desert Owl** *Strix hadorami*

2 Canyons E of Al-'Ula (28/4)

## Hoopoes

**Eurasian Hoopoe** *Upupa e. epops*

2 Raidah NR (25/4), 10 Wadi Dahna (26/4), 2 Wadi Ghathal (26/4), 1 Mahvar tourist park (27/4), 2 Deserts N of Al-'Ula (29/4), Deserts N of Al-'Ula (30/4)

## Hornbills

**African Grey Hornbill** *Lophoceros n. nasutus*

1 Lake Al-Saad (23/4), 1 Raidah NR (25/4), 1 Rijal Almaa (27/4), 3 Jabal Thirban (27/4)

## Rollers

**Abyssinian Roller** *Coracias abyssinicus*

1 Lake Al-Saad (23/4)

**European Roller** *Coracias garrulus*

1 Wadi Ghathal (26/4)

## Bee-eaters

### White-throated Bee-eater *Merops albicollis*

1 Az Zuhur (23/4), 5 Wadi Hali (27/4)

### Arabian Green Bee-eater *Merops c. cyanophrys*

5 Az Zuhur (23/4), 5 Sabya (23/4), 5 Lake Al-Saad (23/4), 1 Raidah NR (25/4), 2 Wadi Ghathal (26/4), 1 Wadi Atudh (27/4), 5 Canyons E of Al-'Ula (28/4)

### European Bee-eater *Merops apiaster*

10 Az Zuhur (23/4), 20 Wadi Dahna (26/4), 2 Wadi Hali (27/4), 20 Wadi Atudh (27/4), 200 Deserts N of Al-'Ula (29/4), Deserts N of Al-'Ula (30/4)

## Woodpeckers

### Arabian Woodpecker *Dendrocoptes dora*

2 Raidah NR (25/4), 2 Wadi Dahna (26/4), 2 Wadi Ghathal (26/4), 1 Mahvar tourist park (27/4)

## Caracaras, Falcons

### Common Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus rupicolaeformis*

1 Abu Arish (23/4), 1 Habala viewpoint (24/4), 1 Wadi Ghathal (26/4), 1 Mahvar tourist park (27/4), 2 Canyons E of Al-'Ula (28/4)

### Peregrine Falcon *Falco pegerinus pelegrinoides*

1 Habala viewpoint (25/4)

## Old World Parrots

### Rose-ringed Parakeet *Psittacula krameri parvirostris*

1 Hegra (29/4)

## Bushshrikes

### Black-crowned Tchagra *Tchagra senegalus percivali*

1 heard Raidah NR (25/4)

## Shrikes

### Red-backed Shrike *Lanius collurio*

1 Either mangroves (22/4), 2 Jazan Corniche (22/4), 1 Sabya (23/4), 3 Lake Al-Saad (23/4), 2 Habala plateau (24/4)

### Isabelline x Red-backed Shrike *Lanius isabellinus x collurio*

1 Mahvar tourist park (27/4)

*Note: Plumage matching hybrids of Isabelline x Red-backed Shrike found in Altai and NW Mongolia.*

**Red-tailed Shrike** *Lanius phoenicuroides*

3 Jazan Corniche (22/4), 2 North Habala Park (24/4), 1 Habala plateau (24/4), 1 Wadi Dahna (26/4)

**Lesser Grey Shrike** *Lanius minor*

1 Az Zuhur (23/4)

**Great Grey Shrike** *Lanius excubitor aucheri*

1 Lake Al-Saad (23/4)

*Note: Forms a genetic clade ("Arabian Grey Shrike") together with closely related subspecies buryi which is endemic to Yemen.*

**Masked Shrike** *Lanius nubicus*

2 Sabya (23/4), 1 Lake Al-Saad (23/4), 5 Wadi Dahna (26/4), 2 Wadi Ghathal (26/4), 1 Deserts N of Al-ʿUla (29/4), 1 Deserts N of Al-ʿUla (30/4)

**Figbirds, Orioles, Turnagra**

**Eurasian Golden Oriole** *Oriolus oriolus*

1 Sabya (23/4)

**Monarchs**

**African Paradise Flycatcher** *Terpsiphone viridis harterti*

3 Raidah NR (25/4), 1 Wadi Dahna (26/4)



*African Paradise Flycatcher, Wadi Ghathal*

## Crows, Jays

### **Asir Magpie** *Pica asirensis*

4 Wadi Dahna (26/4), 1 Tanomah (26/4)

### **House Crow** *Corvus splendens zugmayeri*

200 Jazan city (22/4), 50 Either mangroves (22/4), 20 Az Zuhur (23/4)

### **Brown-necked Raven** *Corvus ruficollis*

2 Wadi Talea (27/4), 10 Deserts N of Al-'Ula (29/4), Deserts N of Al-'Ula (30/4)

### **Fan-tailed Raven** *Corvus rhipidurus stanleyi*

1 North Habala Park (24/4), 1 Habala viewpoint (24/4), 2 Al Soudah creek (24/4), 1 Raidah NR (24/4), 1 Habala viewpoint (25/4), 1 Wadi Dahna (26/4), 5 Wadi Ghathal (26/4), 3 Mahvar tourist park (27/4), 4 Canyons E of Al-'Ula (28/4), 10 Harrat viewpoint (29/4)

## Larks

### **Greater Hoopoe-Lark** *Alaemon a. alaudipes*

3 Deserts N of Al-'Ula (29/4), Deserts N of Al-'Ula (30/4)

*Note: Genetic results (Stervander et.al. 2020) indicate that the species could be split into two polytypic species (alaudipes and desertorum).*

### **Desert Lark** *Ammomanes deserti*

*isabellina*: 2 Deserts N of Al-'Ula (29/4), 1 Harrat viewpoint (29/4), Deserts N of Al-'Ula (30/4)  
*samharensis*: 20 Lake Al-Saad (23/4)

*Note: Genetic results (Stervander et.al. 2020) indicate that the species could be split into three different species, but more research is needed to understand the distributional limits between these.*

### **Bar-tailed Lark** *Ammomanes cinctura arenicolor*

4 Deserts N of Al-'Ula (29/4), Deserts N of Al-'Ula (30/4)

*Note: Genetic results (Stervander et.al. 2020) indicate that the species could be split into two polytypic species (cinctura and arenicolor).*

### **Black-crowned Sparrow-Lark** *Eremopterix nigriceps melanauchen*

5 Jazan city (22/4), 10 Sabya (23/4)

*Note: Genetic results (Stervander et.al. 2020) indicate that the species could be split into two a western and eastern species.*



*Black-crowned Sparrow-Lark, Jazan city*

**Crested Lark** *Galerida cristata brachyura*

30 Lake Al-Saad (23/4), 10 Sabya (23/4), 10 Az Zuhur (23/4), 10 Abu Arish (23/4), 5 Habala plateau (24/4), 10 Habala viewpoint (25/4), 3 Wadi Ghathal (26/4), 1 Deserts N of Al-'Ula (30/4)

**Rufous-capped Lark** *Calandrella e. eremica*

2 Habala plateau (24/4)

**Arabian Lark** *Eremalauda eremodites*

1 heard Saarah NR (29/4)

## Bulbuls

**White-spectacled Bulbul** *Pycnonotus xanthopygos*

5 Az Zuhur (23/4), 20 Sabya (23/4), 20 Lake Al-Saad (23/4), 20 Abu Arish (23/4), 5 Habala plateau (24/4), 30 Raidah NR (25/4), 10 Habala viewpoint (25/4), 30 Wadi Dahna (26/4), 10 Wadi Ghathal (26/4)

## Swallows, Martins

**Pale Crag Martin** *Ptyonoprogne obsoleta*

*obsoleta*: 10 Canyons E of Al-'Ula (28/4), 10 Deserts N of Al-'Ula (29/4)

*arabica*: 2 North Habala Park (24/4), 3 North Habala Park (24/4), 10 Al Soudah creek (24/4), 5 Habala plateau (24/4), 20 Wadi Dahna (26/4)

**Barn Swallow** *Hirundo r. rustica*

5 Jazan city (22/4), 20 Either mangroves (22/4), 10 Jazan Corniche (22/4), 10 Lake Al-Saad (23/4), 2 Habala viewpoint (24/4), 100 Wadi Hali (27/4)

**Common House Martin** *Delichon urbicum*

1 Az Zuhur (23/4)

**Red-rumped Swallow** *Cecropis daurica rufula*

10 Al Soudah creek (24/4), 10 Habala viewpoint (25/4), 10 Wadi Dahna (26/4)

**Scrub Warblers**

**Levant Scrub Warbler** *Scotocerca inquieta*

*inquieta*: 1 Canyons E of Al-'Ula (28/4)

*buryi*: 2 Habala plateau (24/4), 1 Wadi Ghathal (26/4)

*Note: Recent split (Shirihai & Svensson, 2018) from Saharan Scrub Warbler (S. saharae), based on morphology, vocal differences and genetics.*

**Leaf Warblers & Allies**

**Willow Warbler** *Phylloscopus trochilus*

3 Az Zuhur (23/4), 1 North Habala Park (24/4), 3 Al Soudah creek (24/4), 1 Habala viewpoint (25/4)

**Common Chiffchaff** *Phylloscopus collybita abietinus*

1 Az Zuhur (23/4)

**Brown Woodland Warbler** *Phylloscopus umbrovirens yemenensis*

2 Al Soudah creek (24/4), 1 Mahvar tourist park (27/4)

**Reed Warblers & Allies**

**Clamorous Reed Warbler** *Acrocephalus stentoreus brunescens*

1 Either mangroves (22/4)

**Eurasian Reed Warbler** *Acrocephalus scirpaceus avicenniae*

2 Either mangroves (22/4)

*Note: Resident in mangroves on the Red Sea coast, and Djibouti and N Somalia, sometimes split as "Mangrove Reed Warbler" but genetic differences minor.*

**Upcher's Warbler** *Hippolais languida*

2 Sabya (23/4)

**Cisticolas & Allies**

**Graceful Prinia** *Prinia gracilis yemenensis*

5 Az Zuhur (23/4), 5 Sabya (23/4), 5 Lake Al-Saad (23/4), 3 North Habala Park (24/4), 2 Habala viewpoint (24/4), 4 Al Soudah creek (24/4), 2 Habala plateau (24/4), 1 Wadi Dahna (26/4), 1 Wadi Ghathal (26/4), 3 Wadi Hali (27/4)

*Note: Does not include the recently split Delicate Prinia (P. gracilis), which occurs to the north and east of this species, including easternmost Saudi Arabia.*

## Sylviid Babblers

### **Eurasian Blackcap** *Sylvia atricapilla*

1 Sabya (23/4), 5 Lake Al-Saad (23/4), 1 Habala viewpoint (24/4), 2 Habala viewpoint (25/4)

### **Barred Warbler** *Curruca nisoria*

2 Sabya (23/4), 1 Lake Al-Saad (23/4), 1 Wadi Hali (27/4)

### **Lesser Whitethroat** *Curruca curruca*

1 Canyons E of Al-‘Ula (28/4)

### **Yemen Warbler** *Curruca buryi*

4 Al Soudah creek (24/4) 1 Wadi Ghathal (26/4)

### **Arabian Warbler** *Curruca l. leucomelaena*

3 North Habala Park (24/4), 2 Habala plateau (24/4), 3 Wadi Dahna (26/4)



*Arabian Warbler, Al Habala.*

### **Ménétriés's Warbler** *Curruca mystacea*

1 Wadi Dahna (26/4)

### **Common Whitethroat** *Curruca communis*

1 North Habala Park (24/4), 3 Habala viewpoint (24/4), 5 Wadi Dahna (26/4)

## White-eyes

### **Abyssinian White-eye** *Zosterops abyssinicus arabs*

10 North Habala Park (24/4), 20 Al Soudah creek (24/4), 2 Raidah NR (25/4), 10 Mahvar tourist park (27/4)

### **“Mangrove White-eye”** *Zosterops abyssinicus*

2 Either mangroves (22/4)

*Note: The populations of Abyssinian White-eyes that inhabits mangrove habitat along the Red Sea coast and SW Saudi Arabia differs not only in choice of habitat, but also size and plumage. It is genetically close to the montane arabs subspecies and probably represents a recent divergence. More research into its status is needed.*

## Laughingthrushes & allies

### **Arabian Babbler** *Argya squamiceps*

*squamiceps*: Hegra (29/4)

*yemensis*: 2 Az Zuhur (23/4), 20 Sabya (23/4), 20 Lake Al-Saad (23/4), 2 Habala plateau (24/4), 10 Habala viewpoint (25/4), 1 Wadi Dahna (26/4), 10 Wadi Ghathal (26/4), 3 Mahvar tourist park (27/4)



*Arabian Babbler, Sabya*

## Starlings, Rhabdornis

### **Common Myna** *Acridotheres t. tristis*

1 000 Jazan city (22/4), Az Zuhur (23/4)

**Violet-backed Starling** *Cinnyricinclus leucogaster arabicus*

2 North Habala Park (24/4), 5 Al Soudah creek (24/4), 4 Wadi Dahna (26/4), 10 Wadi Ghathal (26/4), 1 Mahvar tourist park (26/4)

**Tristram's Starling** *Onychognathus tristramii*

20 North Habala Park (24/4), 30 Habala viewpoint (24/4), 10 Habala plateau (24/4), 100 Habala viewpoint (25/4), 10 Mahvar tourist park (26/4), 30 Mahvar tourist park (27/4), 10 Canyons E of Al-'Ula (28/4)

**Thrushes**

**Yemen Thrush** *Turdus menachensis* **NT**

5 Al Soudah creek (24/4), 10 Raidah NR (25/4), 2 Mahvar tourist park (26/4)



Yemen Thrush, Al Soudah

**Chats, Old World Flycatchers**

**Black Scrub Robin** *Cercotrichas podobe melanoptera*

5 Az Zuhur (23/4), 20 Sabya (23/4), 10 Lake Al-Saad (23/4), 10 Wadi Hali (27/4)

**Rufous-tailed Scrub Robin** *Cercotrichas galactotes familiaris*

2 Az Zuhur (23/4), 2 Sabya (23/4), 5 Lake Al-Saad (23/4), 3 Wadi Hali (27/4)

**Spotted Flycatcher** *Muscicapa striata*

1 Either mangroves (22/4), 1 Sabya (23/4), 2 Lake Al-Saad (23/4)

**Gambaga Flycatcher** *Muscicapa gambagae*

3 North Habala Park (24/4), 1 Wadi Dahna (26/4), 2 Mahvar tourist park (27/4)

**Common Nightingale** *Luscinia megarhynchos*

1 Sabya (23/4), 1 North Habala park (24/4)

**White-throated Robin** *Irania gutturalis*

1 Sabya (23/4), 10 North Habala Park (24/4), 3 Habala plateau (24/4)

**Common Redstart** *Phoenicurus ph. phoenicurus*

10 North Habala Park (24/4), 1 Habala plateau (24/4), 3 Wadi Dahna (26/4)



*Little Rock Thrush, Al Soudah*

**Little Rock Thrush** *Monticola rufocinereus sclateri*

1 Al Soudah creek (24/4), 7 Raidah NR (25/4), 10 Wadi Dahna (26/4), 5 Wadi Ghathal (26/4), 2 Mahvar tourist park (27/4)

**Whinchat** *Saxicola rubetra*

1 Lake Al-Saad (23/4), 1 Habala plateau (24/4)

**African Stonechat** *Saxicola torquatus felix*

3 Al Soudah creek (24/4), 1 Raidah NR (25/4), 1 Bihan (27/4)

**Northern Wheatear** *Oenanthe oenanthe libanotica*

1 Az Zuhur (23/4), 1 Deserts N of Al-'Ula (30/4)

**Buff-breasted Wheatear** *Oenanthe bottae*

3 North Habala Park (24/4), 1 Bihan (27/4)

*Note: Often treated as a subspecies of Red-breasted Wheatear (Oe. bottae), including subspecies frenata from Eritrea and Ethiopia ("Rusty-breasted Wheatear").*

**Isabelline Wheatear** *Oenanthe isabellina*

1 Jazan city (22/4), 1 Az Zuhur (23/4), 1 Abu Arish (23/4), 1 Habala plateau (24/4), 1 Harrat viewpoint (29/4)

**Hooded Wheatear** *Oenanthe monacha*

1 Canyons E of Al-‘Ula (28/4)

**Eastern Black-eared Wheatear** *Oenanthe melanoleuca*

1 Canyons E of Al-‘Ula (28/4)

**Cyprus Wheatear** *Oenanthe cypriaca*

1 Either mangroves (22/4)

**Pied Wheatear** *Oenanthe pleschanka*

1 Az Zuhur (23/4)

**Blackstart** *Oenanthe melanura neumanni*

2 Wadi Hali (27/4)

**White-crowned Wheatear** *Oenanthe leucopyga ernesti*

10 Canyons E of Al-‘Ula (28/4), 2 Harrat viewpoint (29/4), 1 Hegra (29/4)

*Note: Genetic results (Aliabadian et.al. 2012) indicate that subspecies ernesti and leucopyga might best be treated as separate species, but more research is needed.*



*White-crowned Wheatear, Al-‘Ula*

**Mourning Wheatear** *Oenanthe l. lugens*

4 Deserts N of Al-‘Ula (30/4)

*Note: Shirihai & Svensson (2018) noted Iranian populations could be worthy of species status, but because populations to the west through to Syria had undetermined affinities, they preferred to leave it as subspecies of Oe. lugens.*

**Arabian Wheatear** *Oenanthe l. lugentoides*

1 North Habala Park (24/4), 1 Habala viewpoint (24/4), Al Soudah creek (24/4), 3 Habala plateau (24/4), 2 Raidah NR (25/4), 5 Wadi Dahna (26/4), 2 Mahvar tourist park (27/4)

**Sunbirds**

**Nile Valley Sunbird** *Hedydipna metallica*

10 Az Zuhur (23/4), 10 Sabya (23/4), 5 Lake Al-Saad (23/4), 10 Wadi Hali (27/4), 2 Wadi Zahra (27/4)



*Nile Valley Sunbird, Wadi Hali*

**Palestine Sunbird** *Cinnyris osea osea*

2 North Habala Park (24/4), 10 Al Soudah creek (24/4), 30 Raidah NR (25/4), 6 Habala viewpoint (25/4), 20 Wadi Dahna (26/4), 10 Mahvar tourist park (27/4), 2 Wadi Atudh (27/4)

*Note: Geographically isolated subspecies decorsei in Central Africa might be better treated as a separate species ("Decorse's Sunbird").*

**Arabian Sunbird** *Cinnyris hellmayri kinneari*

4 Raidah NR (25/4), 3 Wadi Zahra (27/4)

**Old World Sparrows, Snowfinches**

**House Sparrow** *Passer domesticus indicus*

50 Sabya (22/4), 100 Jazan city (22/4), Az Zuhur (23/4), 30 North Habala Park (24/4)

## Weavers, Widowbirds

### **Rüppell's Weaver** *Ploceus galbula*

5 Jazan city (22/4), 1 Either mangroves (22/4), 20 Az Zuhur (23/4), 200 Sabya (23/4), 100 Lake Al-Saad (23/4), 30 North Habala Park (24/4), 20 Al Soudah creek (24/4), 10 Habala plateau (24/4), 100 Wadi Hali (27/4)

## Waxbills, Munias & Allies

### **African Silverbill** *Euodice cantans orientalis*

2 Az Zuhur (23/4), 10 Sabya (23/4), 100 Lake Al-Saad (23/4)

### **Arabian Waxbill** *Estrilda rufibarba*

300 Lake Al-Saad (23/4), 2 Wadi Ghathal (26/4)



Arabian Waxbill and African Silverbill, Lake Al-Saad.

## Wagtails, Pipits

### **Western Yellow Wagtail** *Motacilla flava*

*lutea*: 2 Either mangroves (22/4)

*flava*: 1 Either mangroves (22/4), 10 Wadi Dahna (26/4), 1 Mahvar tourist park (27/4)

*beema*: 1 Lake Al-Saad (23/4), 1 Wadi Dahna (26/4), 1 Wadi Hali (27/4)

*thunbergi*: 100 Either mangroves (22/4), 30 Jazan Corniche (22/4), 50 Lake Al-Saad (23/4)

### **African Pipit** *Anthus cinnamomeus eximius*

1 Mahvar tourist park (27/4)

### **Long-billed Pipit** *Anthus similis arabicus*

2 Habala plateau (24/4), 1 Raidah NR (25/4), 1 Wadi Ghathal (26/4), 1 Mahvar tourist park (26/4), 1 Mahvar tourist park (27/4)

**Red-throated Pipit** *Anthus cervinus*

3 Lake Al-Saad (23/4), 5 Mahvar tourist park (27/4)

**Finches, Euphonias**

**Sinai Rosefinch** *Carpodacus synoicus*

16 Canyons E of Al-‘Ula (28/4)

**Arabian Serin** *Crithagra rothschildi*

5 North Habala Park (24/4), 5 Wadi Dahna (26/4), 1 Bihan (27/4), 2 Wadi Atudh (27/4)



*Arabian Serin, Al Habala*

**Yemen Serin** *Crithagra menachensis*

1 Habala viewpoint (25/4), 1 Wadi Dahna (26/4), 2 Mahvar tourist park (27/4)

**Yemen Linnet** *Linaria yemenensis*

5 Al Soudah creek (24/4), 1 Raidah NR (24/4), 10 Raidah NR (25/4), 4 Wadi Dahna (26/4), 4 Wadi Ghathal (26/4), 1 Mahvar tourist park (26/4), 10 Mahvar tourist park (27/4)

**Buntings**

**Ortolan Bunting** *Emberiza hortulana*

1 Mahvar tourist park (26/4), 3 Mahvar tourist park (27/4)

**Striolated Bunting** *Emberiza s. striolata*

3 Canyons E of Al-‘Ula (28/4)

**Cinnamon-breasted Bunting** *Emberiza tahapisi arabica*

1 Lake Al-Saad (23/4), 2 Wadi Dahna (26/4), 2 Wadi Ghathal (26/4)

## Mammals

### **Red Fox** *Vulpes arabica*

1 Wadi Dahna (26/4), 1 desert N of Al-‘Ula (29/4)

### **Hamadryas Baboon** *Papio hamadryas*

50 Abha–Jazan Highway (24/4), 100 Raidah NR (25/4), 50 Wadi Zahra (27/4)



*Hamadryas Baboons, Raidah Nature Reserve*

## Reptiles

### **Anderson's Rock Agama** *Acanthocercus adramitanus*

3 North Habala Park (24/4), Habala viewpoint (24/4)

### **Yemen Rock Agama** *Acanthocercus yemensis*

2 Wadi Ghathal (26/4)

### **Egyptian Spiny-tailed Lizard** *Uromastyx aegyptia*

1 Hegra (29/4)

### **Rough-tailed Gecko** *Cyrtopodion scabrum*

1 Lake Al-Saad (23/4)

### **Blanford's Semaphore Gecko** *Pristurus rupestris*

Habala viewpoint (25/4), Habala viewpoint (25/4), 1 Jabal Thirban (27/4)

### **Nidua Fringe-fingered Lizard** *Acanthodactylus scutellatus*

2 Deserts N of Al-‘Ula (29/4)

### **Blanford's Short-Nosed Desert Lizard** *Mesalina brevirostris*

1 Deserts N of Al-‘Ula (29/4)

## Butterflies

**Plain Tiger** *Danaus chrysippus*

Wadi Dahna (26/4)

**Yellow Pansy** *Junonia hierta*

Habala viewpoint (25/4)

**Blue Pansy** *Junonia orithya*

Raidah NR (25/4), 10 Wadi Ghathal (26/4)

**Desert Fritillary** *Melitaea deserticola*

Wadi Ghathal (26/4)

**White-spotted Commodore** *Precis limnoria*

Habala viewpoint (25/4)

**Painted Lady** *Vanessa cardui*

Wadi Dahna (26/4)

**Black-striped Hairtail** *Anthene amarah*

Wadi Dahna (26/4), Wadi Ghathal (26/4)

**Small Copper** *Lycaena phlaeas*

Jabal Thirban (27/4)

**Little Tiger Blue** *Tarucus balkanicus*

Sabya (23/4), 1 Wadi Hali (27/4)

**Pioneer White** *Belenois aurota*

North Habala Park (24/4)

**Small Salmon Arab** *Colotis amata calais*

Sabya (23/4), Wadi Hali (27/4)

**Blue-spotted Arab** *Colotis phisadia*

4 Wadi Hali (27/4)

**Bath White** *Pontia daplidice*

Wadi Dahna (26/4)

**Citrus Swallowtail** *Papilio demodocus*

Raidah NR (25/4)

## Grasshoppers

**Red-winged Grasshopper** *Oedipoda germanica*  
Habala viewpoint (25/4)

**Scarlet Band-winged Grasshopper** *Oedipoda miniata*  
1 Wadi Hali (27/4)

## Dragonflies

**Emperor Dragonfly** *Anax imperator*  
1 North Habala Park (24/4)

**Northern Banded Groundling** *Brachythemis impartita*  
Lake Al-Saad (23/4)

**Broad Scarlet** *Crocothemis erythraea*  
Sabya (23/4)

**Wandering Glider** *Pantala flavescens*  
Jabal Thirban (27/4)

**Violet Dropwing** *Trithemis annulata*  
Lake Al-Saad (23/4)

**Red-veined Dropwing** *Trithemis arteriosa*  
Jabal Thirban (27/4)