

Trip Report for SE Egypt 16-22 Sept. 2005.

Participants:

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Itinerary:

15/9. Charter flight Stockholm-Hurghada. Rental car pickup and drive down to Shams Alam Beach Resort (around 350 km) in the dark. Stayed at Shams Alam for the whole week (excellent, and with superb snorkelling at the hotel beach).

16/9. Morning in Shams Alam (this green hotel area as well as others along the Red Sea coast are very good migrant traps). Rest of the day at Hamata mangroves (best approach from the south, two kilometres north of Hamata village).

17/9. Morning and evening at Shams Alam and Wadi Gemal (1-2 km south of Shams Alam). There Polish ringers were trying to caught migrants with a rather poor result (10-15 birds a day). Mid day in different desert scrubs between Marsa Alam (to refuel petrol) and Shams Alam.

18/9. Early morning start for Ber Shelaten (around 200 km south of Shams Alam), where birding most of the day. Most camel carcasses and vultures were found around the camel market south of the southern road in the village. Evening at Hamata mangroves.

19/9. Morning at Shams Alam and afternoon and evening at Hamata.

20/9. Morning at Shams Alam and petrol refuel trip to Marsa Alam. Afternoon and evening at Hamata.

21/9. Morning at Shams Alam and afternoon and evening at Hamata.

22/9. Morning at Shams Alam. Then travel back to Hurghada birding en route. Evening charter flight back to Sweden.

We had to show our passports once when driving south in the dark (first night), and when entering Ber Shelaten. Otherwise no problem at the police or military checkpoints (about six of them between Hurghada and Ber Shelaten). We were friendly shown off not allowed birding twice. By military at the beach in Ber Shelaten, and by police/hotel security outside one of the larger Hotel resorts north of Marsa Alam.

Bird list.

For the more common species seen all or most days the highest daily counts are given in parenthesis.

Common Teal *Anas crecca*. 2 at Hamata 20/9.

Northern Pintail *Anas acuta*. A few birds (up to 30) were seen in the large migrating flocks of Garganeys.

Garganey *Anas querquedula* (1000+)

Northern Shoveler *Anas clypeata* (10)

Common Quail *Coturnix coturnix* (5)

Brown Booby *Sula leucoogaster*. 1 at Hamata 16/9.

Black-crowned Night Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax* (70)

Striated Heron *Butorides striata* (10)

Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis*. 1 at Shams Alam 20-22/9.

Squacco Heron *Ardeola ralloides*. Seen two days, 16/9 (6) and 20/9 (35). Most at Hamata.

Western Reef Egret *Egretta gularis* (100+)
Little Egret *Egretta garzetta* (35)
Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea* (100+)
Purple Heron *Ardea purpurea* (15)
Eurasian Spoonbill *Platalea leucorodia* (5)
Egyptian Vulture *Neophron percnopterus*. 40+ in Ber Shelaten 18/9.
Eurasian Griffon Vulture *Gyps fulvus*. 1 in Ber Shelaten 18/9.
Lappet-faced Vulture *Torgos tracheliotus*. 29+ in Ber Shelaten 18/9.
Western Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus* (10)
Pallid Harrier *Circus macrourus*. 1 first-year 19/9.
Montagu's Harrier *Circus pygargus*. A total of 10, all first-year birds.
Booted Eagle *Hieraetus pennatus*. 1 of the pale form at Hamata 20/9.
Osprey *Pandion haliaetus* (10+)
Common Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*. 1 in Hurghada 22/9.
Red-footed Falcon *Falco vespertinus*. A flock of 14 migrating just south of Safaga 22/9.
Sooty Falcon *Falco concolor*. Up to 5 daily including at least 7 different birds; adults, first- and second year birds. Most falcons were seen at Shams Alam and Hamata.
Lanner Falcon *Falco biarmicus*. Up to 5 daily, most birds juvenile but also a couple of nice *tantypertus* adult birds.
Barbary Falcon *Falco pelegrinoides*. One adult at Shams Alam 21/9.
Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus*. One in the small reed-bed near the shore 1 km south of Shams Alam 17/9.
Little Crane *Porzana parva*. 1 female caught by hand in Shams Alam 21/9.
Corn Crane *Crex crex*. 1 ringed by Polish ringers in the small reed-bed near the shore 1 km south of Shams Alam 17/9.
Eurasian Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*. 1 at Hamata 16/9.
Crab-plover *Dromas ardeola*. Common at Hamata mangroves where the highest count was 134+ on the 18/9. They were spread out during the day, but roosting together in the southern part when high tide in the evening. There were at least 25 on the shore at Ber Shelaten 18/9.
Cream-coloured Courser *Cursorius cursor*. One in the desert north of Ber Shelaten, and 3 in Ber Shelaten 18/9.
Collared Pratincole *Glareola pratincola*. One at Hamata 19/9 and 41 there 20/9.
Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius*. Seen four days with up to 4 birds.
Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula* (20)
Kentish Plover *Charadrius alexandrinus* (50+)
Lesser Sand Plover *Charadrius mongolus*. One at Hamata 19/9.
Greater Sand Plover *Charadrius leschenaultii* (100+)
Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola* (15)
White-tailed Lapwing *Vanellus leucurus*. 4 at Hamata 21/9.
Sanderling *Calidris alba*. 5 at Hamata 16/9.
Little Stint *Calidris minuta* (20)
Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea*. Singles at Hamata 16 and 21/9.
Dunlin *Calidris alpina*. Up to 3 most days at Hamata.
Ruff *Philomachus pugnax* (100+)
Common Snipe *Gallinago gallinago* (7)
Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*. A group of 300 at Hamata 21/9.
Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*. One at Hamata 19/9.

Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*. One or two at Hamata.
Eurasian Curlew *Numenius arquata* (20)
Common Redshank *Tringa totanus* (20)
Marsh Sandpiper *Tringa stagnatilis*. One south of Shams Alam 17/9, and up to 20 at Hamata 19-21/9.
Common Greenshank *Tringa nebularia* (30)
Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*. 7 south of Shams Alam 17/9.
Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola* (20)
Terek Sandpiper *Xenus cinereus*. 1 at Hamata 20-21/9.
Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*. Up to 3 seen during 3 days.
Ruddy Turnstone *Arenaria interpres* (10)
Sooty Gull *Larus hemprichii* (30)
White-eyed Gull *Larus leucophthalmus* (100+)
Slender-billed Gull *Larus genei* (50)
Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus*. Just 4 birds seen, 2 *fuscus* and 2 *heuglini*.
Gull-billed Tern *Gelochelidon nilotica*. 1 at Hamata 16/9.
Caspian Tern *Sterna caspia* (50)
Greater Crested Tern *Sterna bergii*. Singles at Hamata 19-20/9.
Lesser Crested Tern *Sterna bengalensis* (500+)
White-cheeked Tern *Sterna repressa* (500+)
Bridled Tern *Sterna anaethetus*. Up to 50 at Hamata 18-20/9.
Sooty Tern *Sterna fuscata*. 1 first-year at Hamata 18/9.
Whiskered Tern *Chlidonias hybrida*. 1 adult south of Shams Alam 17/9.
Black Tern *Chlidonias niger*. 4 flying south at Hamata 16/9.
White-winged Black Tern *Chlidonias leucopterus*. Two flocks of together about 80 birds flying south at Hamata 16/9, and 3 resting there 21/9.
Crowned Sandgrouse *Pterocles coronatus*. Over 100 just around the road a little north of Ber Shelaten in the afternoon of 18/9. 3 north of Shams Alam 21/9.
Rock (Feral) Dove *Columba livia* (50)
African Collared Dove *Streptopelia roseogrisea*. 2 around Shams Alam all week.
European Turtle Dove *Streptopelia turtur* (30)
Laughing Dove *Streptopelia senegalensis* (100+)
Common Cuckoo *Cuculus canorus* (5)
European Nightjar *Caprimulgus europaeus*. One nightjar was discovered sitting far out in the mangrove at Hamata 16/9. Probably an European Nightjar but prolonged middle tail feathers and white feathers on the breast seemed odd (moulting?).
Common Swift *Apus apus*. Singles on 3 days.
Common Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis* (10)
European Bee-eater *Merops apiaster*. Heard a few times and up to 4 seen at Hamata.
European Roller *Coracias gallicus* (50+)
Hoopoe *Upupa epops* (10)
Eurasian Wryneck *Jynx torquilla*. Singles 17/9 (Shams Alam) and 20/9 (Hamata).
Bar-tailed Lark *Ammomanes cincturus*. 20 north of Ber Shelaten 18/9.
Desert Lark *Ammomanes deserti* (8)
Greater Hoopoe Lark *Alaemon alaudipes*. A total of 12 birds seen on 3 days, most along the road down to Ber Shelaten 18/9.
Greater Short-toed Lark *Calandrella brachydactyla* (100+)
Sand Martin *Riparia riparia* (10)
Swallow *Hirundo rustica* (50+)

Tawny Pipit *Anthus campestris*. Singles 16-17/9, and 2 in Ber Shelaten 18/9.

Tree Pipit *Anthus trivialis*. One in Hamata 20/9.

Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava* (100+)

Thrush Nightingale *Luscinia luscinia*. Up to 5 daily 19-22/9.

Common Nightingale *Luscinia megarhynchos*. One in Shams Alam 19-21/9.

Black Redstart *Phoenicurus ochruros*. One male of the *semirufus* race at Hamata 20/9.

Common Redstart *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*. Up to 3 most days.

Winchat *Saxicola rubetra* (10+)

Isabelline Wheatear *Oenanthe isabellina*. Only one south of Hamata 18/9.

Northern Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe* (10+)

Black-eared Wheatear *Oenanthe hispanica*. Single males south of Hamata 18/9 and Shams Alam 22/9.

Desert Wheatear *Oenanthe deserti*. A total of nine seen at various places.

White-crowned Wheatear *Oenanthe leucopyga*. 1 north of Bernice 18/9 and 1 north Shams Alam 22/9.

Sedge Warbler *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*. One most days at Shams Alam.

Eastern Olivaceous Warbler *Hippolais pallida* (10)

Olive-tree Warbler *Hippolais olivetorum*. One at Shams Alam 17/9.

Spectacled Warbler *Sylvia conspicillata*. A total of 5 seen; in the desert, at Shams Alam and in the mangrove at Hamata.

Eastern Orphean Warbler *Sylvia crassirostris*. A total of 7 seen, most at Shams Alam.

Lesser Whitethroat *Sylvia curruca* (5)

Common Whitethroat *Sylvia communis*. 1-2 birds seen most days.

Wood Warbler *Phylloscopus sibilatrix*. One in the desert and 1 at Shams Alam 17/9.

Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita* (10+)

Willow Warbler *Phylloscopus trochilus* (5+)

Spotted Flycatcher *Muscicapa striata* (20+)

Eurasian Golden Oriole *Oriolus oriolus* (30)

Red-backed Shrike *Lanius collurio* (20+)

Lesser Grey Shrike *Lanius minor*. Single birds were seen on 3 days.

Woodchat Shrike *Lanius senator* (7)

Masked Shrike *Lanius nubicus* (6)

House Crow *Corvus splendens*. 3 in Safaga 22/9.

Hooded Crow *Corvus corone cornix*. About 5 at the airport in Hurghada 22/9.

Brown-necked Raven *Corvus ruficollis* (50+)

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*. 10+ in Safaga 22/5.

Spanish Sparrow *Passer hispaniolensis*. A small colony (up to 10) at Shams Alam.

Ortolan Bunting *Emberiza hortulana*. Single birds were seen on 3 days.

Cretzschmar's Bunting *Emberiza caesia*. A male at Shams Alam 22/9.

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Compiled by Staffan Rodebrand