

Hotel Mövenpick, El Gouna, Egypt 19 March – 25 March 2010

My wife and I stayed at Mövenpick hotel during this period on a combined birding and vacation trip. Birding was done every day during the morning hours, 06:00 – 09:00 and during two days watching the raptor migration from the El Gouna entrance gate and from the Farm land. Weather was sunny, 18 – 28 Celsius during the entire period. Winds were northwesterly, heavy in the beginning of the period with storm winds the day we arrived and lighter towards the end.

Top of the week was the morning 23/3 at the southern lagoon, where 2 barbary falcons were seen hunting (or just having fun) during some 45 minutes harassing curlews, other waders and a short-eared owl (!). A flamingo was searching for food and an adult male pallid harrier flew north low over the lagoon.

The two days when I was watching the raptor migration were not the best. Most of the birds passed distant over the mountings. I had, though, a good view of a 2 cy imperial eagle soaring in the mountain area.

Another place I can recommend is the Fish farm close to the Egyptian brewery. It is a very nice place and I had several herons there and also pied kingfisher and a stonechat.

The golfcourse was a bit of disappointment. Five (!) yellow wagtails seen during the whole week. I had expected at least a hundred.

List of birds

Great cormorant/Storskarv	Seen a few times at lagoon and at Mövenpick, probably the same bird
Striated heron/Mangrovehäger	1 fish farm 24/3
Cattle Egret/Kohäger	Daily, up to 20
Little egret/Silkeshäger	1 fish farm 24/3
Squacco heron/rallhäger	1 at lagoon 21/3 and 1 at fish farm 24/3
Grey Heron/Gråhäger	Almost daily, lagoon and golf course: up to 5
Western Reef heron/Revhäger	Mövenpick 25/3: 1 white morph
Small unidentified heron/ liten oidentifierad häger	1 flying over canals Mövenpick 22/3
White stork/ Vit stork	200 migrating, seen from El Gouna Entrance gate 20/3 and 700 low over Mövenpick later the same day searching for night rest. 1 stood close to farm land 24/3
Spoonbill/Skedstork	Lagoon 25/3:1 ad
Greater Flamingo/Flamingo	Lagoon 23/3:1 ad
Osprey/ Fiskgjuse	Seen almost daily
Steppe eagle/stäppörn	4 migrating on 20 March
Unidentified eagles/örnar	11 migrating on 20 March, probably steppe eagles

Imperial eagle/kejsarörn	A 2cy bird seen soaring/hunting in the mountain area of El Gouna 24/3
Black kite/Brun glada	3 and 2 migrating early mornings over golf course 19 and 24/3 respectively. 5 resident, rubbish tip, farm area 24/3
Marsh Harrier/ Brun kärrhök	1 female 18 March near Hurghada and 1 ad male farm land 24/3
Pallid harrier/stäpphök	1 ad male flying north low over the lagoon morning 23/3
Steppe buzzard/Stäppvråk	25 migrating 20/3, 15 migrating 24/3
Eurasian Sparrowhawk/sparvhök	3 observations, lagoon and farm land
Barbary falcon/Berberfalk	2 ad hunting at lagoon 23/ and 1 ad at the same place 25/3
Large falcon/storfalk	1 soaring in the mountain area 20/3
Kestrel/ Tornfalk	4 - 5 pairs
Quail/ Vaktel	1 at golf course 24/3, 10 minutes later hit by a Kestrel
Common crane/trana	17 migrating 20/3
Kentish plover/Svartbent strandpip	Lagoon: 2 on 23/3
Greater sand plover/Ökenpipare	Lagoon: up to 5, 21-23/3
Grey plover/Kustpipare	Lagoon: 4, 24-24/3
Common ringed plover/Större strandpipare	Lagoon: 13, 23-25/3
Common sandpiper/Drillsnäppa	Lagoon: 1, 24/3 and golf canal 1, 25/3
Common redshank/Rödbena	1 or 2 seen almost daily, lagoon and Mövenpick
Common greenshank/Gluttsnäppa	Lagoon: 1 or 2 seen several days
Marsh sandpiper?/Dammsnäppa?	Flew over Downtown 23/3
Spur-winged plover/Sporrvipa	2 resident at the area between golf course and Mövenpick during the whole period, 2 at lagoon and 3 at the golf course 22/3
Curlew/Storspov	Daily at golf course or lagoon, up to 10
White-eyed gull/Vitögd mås	Daily, Mövenpick
Slender-billed gull/Långnäbbad mås	Daily, up to 10, lagoon and Mövenpick
Lesser blacked gull/Larus fuscus fuscus/silltrut	Daily. 110 adults and 1 2cy migrating north low over the water 16:00-17:00, 21/3
Lesser blacked gull/Larus fuscus heuglini?/silltrut heuglini?	2 ad over Mövenpick 20/3 Lagoon 21/3: 1 ad, 1 2cy and 1 3cy (stood together)
Caspian tern/ Skräntärna	Daily, up to 10
Crested tern/Tofstärna	Mövenpick, up to 6 on 20/3
White-cheeked tern/Vitkindad tärna	Mövenpick, up to 12, winter or 2 cy
Eurasian collared dove/turkduva	2-3 seen occasionally

Laughing Dove/ Palmduva	Common
Short-eared owl/jorduggla	1 hunting over the lagoon 23/3 and 25/3, occasionally sat on open ground
Common or pallid swift/ Tornseglare eller Blek tornseglare	1 farm land 24/3
Kingfisher/Kungsfiskare	Lagoon: 23/3
Pied kingfisher/Gråfiskare	1 Mövenpick and 2 fish farm 24/3, 2 lagoon 25/3
Eurasian Wryneck/göktyta	1 at Mövenpick 24/3
Hoopoe/ Härfågel	Seen daily, up to 5
Short-toed lark/ Korttålarcka	Daily on golf course, up to 90
Sand Martin/ Backsvala	A few seen on the golf course
Swallow/ Ladusvala	Common
Red-rumped swallow/Rostgumpsvala	Common
House Martin/ Hussvala	Seen daily
Tawny pipit/ Fältpiplärka	Seen almost daily, Mövenpick and golf course 2-4
Tree pipit/trädpiplärka	Golf course and Mövenpick, 3 observations
Red-throated pipit/ Rödstrupig piplärka	Daily at the golf course, up to 20
Yellow Wagtail/ Gulärkla	4 feldegg and 1 flava at golf course and Mövenpick.
Pied Wagtail/ Sädesärkla	Common
Bluethroat/ Blåhake	1 in a garden near the entrance to the Steigenberger area, 22/3
Common redstart/rödstart	1 male golf course 23/3
Whinchat/Buskskvätta	1 female/winter Steigenberger 22/3
Stonechat/Svarthakad buskskvätta	1 female/winter Mövenpick 20/3 and 1 ad male Fish farm 24/3
Isabelline Wheatear/Isabellastenskvätta	Up to 15 at golf course
Northern Wheatear/ Stenskvätta	Up to 5, golf course and road south of Mövenpick
Desert Wheatear/Ökenstenskvätta	1 ad male golf course 23/3 and 1 ad male farm land 24/3
Pied Wheatear/Nunnestenskvätta	1 ad male road south of Mövenpick 23/3
Black-eared Wheatear/Medelhavsstenskvätta	1 (2cy male?) road south of Mövenpick 23/3 and 25/3
Sardinian Warbler/Sammetshatta	1 female golf course 23/3
Ruppels Warbler/Svarthakad sångare	1 female Mövenpick 24/3
Subalpine warbler/Rödstrupig sångare	1 female in a garden near the entrance to the Steigenberger area 22/3
Lesser Whitethroat/ Ärtsångare	Very common
Chiffchaff/ Gransångare	Very common

Woodchat Shrike/ Rödhuvad törnskata	1 ad male golf course 22/3
Hooded crow/ Grå Kråka	Up to 15
Brown-necked raven/Ökenkorp	A few seen outside El Gouna, one at the El Gouna entrance gate 20/3 and 1 close to the farm land 24/3
House sparrow/Gråsparv	Daily. Up to 75 at Mövenpick

Christer Forsberg