

Field guide series

# Birds of AlUla



الاولا  
ALULA





**Field guide series**  
**Birds of AIUIa**

## Field guide series: Birds of ALUla

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### First Edition

July 2024

### ISBN

978-989-36005-1-1

### Printed in KSA by

Sarawat Printing and Publishing

### Citation

Sousa, J., Coelho, A.P., Silva, A., Alothyqi, N., Taheri, A., Tarroso, P., and Brito J.C. (2024). Birds of ALUla. In: Gonçalves, D.V., Khalatbari, L., Santos, B., Yusefi, G.H., and Brito, J.C. (2024). Field guide series – Fauna of ALUla.

This book is a product of the collaborative efforts within the framework of the 'Inventory of ALUla Flora & Fauna' project. We extend our gratitude to every colleague from The Royal Commission for ALUla who contributed to the series. They include members of the Tourism Department for their support and the rangers who assisted in data collection.

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# Birds of AIUla

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Royal Commission for AIUla  
BIOPOLIS/CIBIO-InBIO/BIODESERTS





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# Foreword

As the Director of Research in the Wildlife & Natural Heritage department of the Royal Commission for AlUla (RCU), it gives me great pleasure to introduce the Field Guide to the Birds of AlUla. This book and its sister volumes are the culmination of 24 months of collaborative efforts by RCU and BIOPOLIS/CIBIO-InBIO, BIODESERTS research group. The guides are the result of the ambitious Inventory of AlUla Fauna project, which aimed to create a meticulous record of the biodiversity treasures of this extraordinary region.

This expertly curated book is a testament to the passion and curiosity, displayed by the team, towards the natural world, and the deep-rooted desire to understand the underlying workings of nature. It is often the unexpected, the puzzling or the surprising that fire our imagination, inspire us to persevere every day in the field, and lead to new ideas and new discoveries. As such, there are few places left in the world for discovery – where there are empty pages in the book of biodiversity.

AlUla, Saudi Arabia, is one of those places.

The AlUla region, in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, stands as a testament to the rich tapestry of human history and natural wonders. Its landscape, framed by majestic sandstone mountains and remnants of extensive volcanic activity, has been a cradle for civilizations dating back millennia. The region has witnessed the rise and fall of ancient cultures such as the Dadanites, Lihyanites and Nabataeans, leaving behind a legacy of architectural marvels and inscriptions that adorn its rugged cliffs.

As extensive as the cultural history is of AlUla, so was the biodiversity of the region underdescribed, until the ‘Inventory of AlUla Fauna’ project embarked on a journey to explore the biodiversity of this unique area. The dedicated team conducted surveys across 541 sites, employing various methodologies, resulting in an astounding assembly of over 31,000 observations, illuminating the fauna diversity of AlUla in unprecedented detail.

The findings of this endeavor are as remarkable as they are revelatory. A total of 622 taxa inhabiting the AlUla region were recorded.

Out of those, 59% were never before reported, either for the AIUla region, for the Kingdom, or for science.

Consequently, a wide-ranging series of field identification guides on the region's mammals, birds, reptiles and invertebrates were compiled to share our discoveries with the world. The series of field guides will join already existing guides on the geology of AIUla and the historical uses of plants in the AIUla area. The intention in the publication of the various field guides is that they serve as invaluable resources for researchers, conservationists and nature enthusiasts alike.

RCU is committed to the conservation and sustainable management of the natural resources of AIUla county, in synergy with the preservation of the cultural and historical treasures, for generations to come.

We encourage you to visit AIUla and experience its natural beauty firsthand. During your adventure, may these field guides serve as your companions, enriching your understanding of the biodiversity that surrounds you.

**Lourens van Essen**

*The Royal Commission for AIUla*

*Wildlife & Natural Heritage Department*

*Research & Advisory Director*

# 1. Introduction

This guide marks the first comprehensive assessment of birds in AlUla County and its surrounding regions. It offers unique insights into the diversity, distribution, and abundance of birds found in AlUla. A total of 165 bird species are illustrated and detailed in this guide, including 3 non-native species. However, this number may increase as further taxonomic reviews, discoveries of cryptic species, and new sightings are made. The information presented is based on an extensive literature review and over a year of intensive fieldwork conducted by the authors. While the region hosts additional bird species, particularly during migration (e.g. Lesser Kestrel *Falco naumanni*, Eastern Bonelli's Warbler *Phylloscopus orientalis*, Red-tailed Shrike *Lanius phoenicuroides*, Barred Warbler *Curruca nisoria*, Eastern Orphean Warbler *Curruca crassirostris*), their inclusion in this guide has been restricted due to lack of sightings during fieldwork and confirmations from bibliographic sources. Additionally, during events of heavy rains, ephemeral pools are created all around which attract migratory waterbirds on the move (e.g. Black-winged Stilt *Himantopus himantopus*, Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*, Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*). Due to the irregularity of these events, several of these species were not included in the guide.

The primary aim of this guide is to equip both amateur and professional ornithologists with the tools needed to identify the birds of AlUla. Situated in the northwestern part of the Arabian Peninsula within the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA), AlUla lies within the Palearctic realm. Most of the area consists of Deserts & Xeric Shrublands and occupies a significant biogeographical position as it intersects five ecoregions and two global biodiversity hotspots. This geographical location supports a rich diversity of flora and fauna, especially species adapted to arid environments. According to OSME (Ornithological Society Of The Middle East The Caucasus And Central Asia), the Arabian Peninsula hosts 517 recognised bird species, 15 of which are endemic, and one is endemic to the country: the Arabian Magpie. This, and a further 19 species, are globally threatened. Despite high regional diversity, the knowledge of bird diversity and distribution in the AlUla region remains

limited. Consequently, the Royal Commission for AlUla (RCU) has supported the creation of a bird inventory for the area.

AlUla represents a remarkable blend of human and natural heritage and is rapidly becoming a leading global destination for those seeking distinctive experiences and spectacular desert landscapes. It serves as a model for international efforts that integrate natural and cultural heritage into a living environment. Under the Vision 2030 framework, RCU's development plan includes initiatives across archaeology, tourism, culture, education, and the arts. Key aspects of the project focus on the preservation of cultural heritage, natural resources, tourism development, and the socio-economic advancement of the region. Within this framework, the guide aims to support species monitoring, research programs, and tourism activities.

The authors express their gratitude to numerous individuals who offered guidance and support throughout the preparation of this guide. Special thanks go to André Vicente Liz, Bárbara Santos, Diogo Ferreira, Duarte Gonçalves, Francisco Álvares, Fulvio Licata, G. Hosein Yusefi, Hugo Rebelo, László Patkó, Leili Khalatbari, Margareta Lakušić, Martina Panisi, Mohammad Darwish, Nuno Ferrand, Sophia Rosa, Vidak Lakušić, Yuri Simone, Zbyszek Boratyński and the conservation rangers for their efforts in collecting bird records. Davina Falcão is acknowledged for her exceptional illustrations; Alaaeldin I Soutan, Ayman A. Abdulkareem, Ingrid Stirnemann, László Patkó, and the RCU for their support in conducting fieldwork in AlUla. Lastly, the authors thank the residents of AlUla for their hospitality and the RCU for commissioning and overseeing the guide's production.

## 2. How To Use This Guide

The field guide is structured to provide general information about the AIUla region and birds, followed by a brief description and illustration of all of the species recorded so far.

Chapters 3 and 4 provide a synoptic overview of the geographical and ecological context of AIUla, describing the topography, its diverse biomes and habitats, climate and weather conditions, and designated conservation areas.

It is followed by a glossary and list of abbreviations that will help navigate the guide (Ch. 5), an overview of birds' biology and diversity (Ch. 6), with a focus on the families and species inhabiting the AIUla region, and an illustrated section (Ch. 7) that will guide the readers in the first steps in the identification of birds at the family and genus levels, using relevant diagnostic morphological traits.

Chapter 8 contains detailed information accompanied by line-art illustrations for 165 bird species present in the AIUla region. Species are listed according to the phylogenetic order provided in Chapter 6. For each species, it provides:

- the common and scientific names;
- the global distribution, including information on migratory behaviour of the species (resident, migratory or partly migratory, with detailed wintering ground for migratory populations);
- the distribution in AIUla, including the conservation areas where the species was observed. For the species not observed within the conservation areas, it provides an approximate indication of the locality of the observation;
- a map with a prediction of the occurrence probability of the species in the AIUla region. Occurrence probabilities for each species were mapped based on the definition of the climatic envelope, (i.e. the set of climatic conditions within which the species is predicted to occur where the environmental requirements are suitable for the species to live and survive). In the current case, the climatic envelope was defined based on the Normalised Difference Vegetation Index and Land-Surface Temperature derived by remote sensing where

the species currently occurs in the AIUla region. Averages for both variables were estimated based on the observational data for each species and mapped as occurrence probabilities at 1 km spatial resolution:

- the body measurements of the animal (total body length and weight), and wingspan for species that are often seen ‘on the wing’, such as birds of prey (diurnal and nocturnal), storks, crows, swallows and swifts;
- the most relevant identification traits, such as plumage and morphological characteristics, including eventual differences between sexes and age groups;
- the frequented habitat and habits, including diet and behaviour, and activity type whenever relevant (diurnal, crepuscular or nocturnal);
- an evaluation of abundance indicating the likelihood of encountering each species in the wild, based on the number of sites at which the species was observed. The categories used are abundant (observed in more than 30 sites), common (16 to 30 sites), uncommon (7 to 15 sites), scarce (2 to 6 sites), rare (1 single site), and not evaluated (when it was not possible to determine the abundance). Adjustments of abundance were made whenever necessary for better representation of a given species. For example, some species, despite being evaluated with a low abundance level due to being observed in few sites, can be locally numerous (e.g White-eared Bulbul, only found in Tayma, and Pale Sparrow in Harrat Khaybar). The same species can have several abundances in the region, one for each status (see below) e.g. *Neophron percnopterus* Abundance: Rare, Scarce, Rare;
- the species status in the region: resident, passage migrant, migratory breeder and winter visitor. The same species can have multiple status in the region, e.g. *Neophron percnopterus* Status: Resident, Passage migrant, Winter visitor; and
- the conservation status following International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) criteria, evaluated at global and regional levels. Regional level conservation status was based on the most recent available assessment for birds of the Arabian Peninsula (Symes et. al. 2015).

Chapter 9 identifies the important areas for bird conservation in the AIUla region based on the distribution of bird species richness at 1 km spatial resolution. The estimated species richness was calculated from the sum of the individual distribution maps for each species displayed in Chapter 8.

Chapter 10 provides a synthetic checklist of the birds of AIUla,

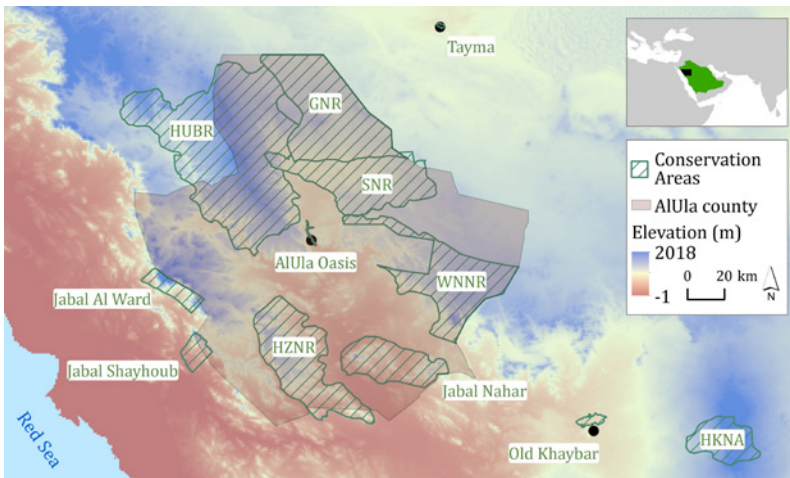
including species names and conservation status.

Lastly, the book concludes with the bibliographical references suggested for further reading (Ch. 11) and an Index (Ch. 12).

Data for the production of this field guide were based on fieldwork performed by the BIODESERTS research group and available literature. The fieldwork comprised four sampling missions in November/December 2022, January/March 2023, May/June 2023, and October/November 2023, to collect species distribution data in 120 sampling sites. The missions aimed to cover the distinct climatic conditions experienced in the AUJa region throughout the year, thus representing the variability in the activity patterns of birds across the different seasons. The field sampling scheme encompassed the environmental variability of the AUJa region. Visual encounter surveys and counting points were performed in the early morning and late afternoon, when birds are most active, for foraging and defending their territories. Nocturnal birds were sampled using counting points with play-back calls. Other signs of bird presence, such as droppings and abandoned eggs, were also collected to identify the species. Additionally, mistnets were used to target less conspicuous species, and all individuals captured were sexed and aged (juvenile or adult) whenever possible; body measurements were collected, and reference photographs were taken. In addition, distribution data were collected from available literature, online databases (e.g., Global Biodiversity Information Facility data portal) and local collaborators.

### 3. Map of AlUla

The region of AlUla is located in north-western KSA, encompassing distinct, important habitats and containing relevant floral and faunal diversity (**Figure 1**). To safeguard the protection of natural heritage in the region, 12 conservation areas have been gazetted: the Nature Reserves of Harrat Uwayrid, Wadi Nakhlah, AlGhameel, Harrat AlZabin and Sharaan, the mountains of Jabal Nahar, Jabal Al Ward and Jabal Shayhoub, the National Geopark of Harrat Khaybar, and the Oases of AlUla, Old Khaybar and Tayma (**Table 1**).



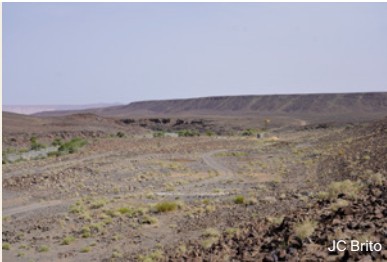
**Figure 1** Location of AlUla, major urban areas, and conservation areas for the protection of natural values and ecological heritage in the county.



**Table 1** Conservation areas within the AIUa region.

Acronym	Name	Category	Area (km <sup>2</sup> )
HUBR	Harrat Uwayrid	Biosphere Reserve	4,680
WNNR	Wadi Nakhlah	Nature Reserve	1,602
GNR	AlGhameel	Nature Reserve	2,115
HZNR	Harrat AlZabin	Nature Reserve	1,677
SNR	Sharaan	Nature Reserve	1,550
HKNA	Harrat Khaybar	National Geopark	600
JNAH	Jabal Nahar	Special Conservation Area	883
JWAR	Jabal Al Ward	Special Conservation Area	251
JSHA	Jabal Shayhoub	Special Conservation Area	174
OKHA	Old Khaybar	Special Conservation Area	56
ALUO	AIUa Oasis	Special Conservation Area	10
TAYM	Tayma	Special Conservation Area	6

**Figure 2** Photographs of the main landscapes found in the conservation areas of the AIUa region and examples of associated invertebrates that can be found at each site.



Harrat Uwayrid: *wadi* in rocky basalt plateau  
– Site 001



Harrat Uwayrid: sandy volcano crater  
– Site 023



Wadi Nakhlah: sandy *wadi* and rock outcrops  
– Site 075



Wadi Nakhlah: sandy *wadi* and rocky hills  
– Site 080



AlGhameel: rock outcrops in sandy desert  
– Site 044



AlGhameel: sandy desert and sandstone  
outcrops – Site 057



Harrat AlZabin: rocky plateau and outcrops  
– Site 095



Harrat AlZabin: rocky wadi and outcrops  
– Site 097



Sharaan: sandy valley and sandstone  
outcrops – Site 059



Sharaan: sandy valley and sandstone  
outcrops – Site 070



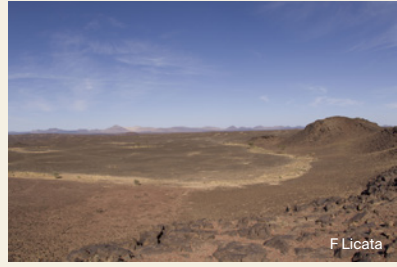
Jabal Nahar: basalt outcrops  
– Site 128



Jabal Nahar: sandy valley  
– Site AH060



Harrat Khaybar: rocky *wadi* in basalt plateau  
– Site 143



Harrat Khaybar: basalt plateau  
– Site 144



Jabal Al Ward: rocky *wadi* in basalt mountain  
– Site 118



Jabal Al Ward: basalt plateau  
– Site 198



Jabal Shayhoub: rocky *wadi* in basalt mountain  
– Site 119



Jabal Shayhoub: rocky *wadi* in basalt mountain  
– Site 122



Old Khaybar: oasis  
– Site 140



Old Khaybar: irrigation channels in oasis  
– Site 140



AlUla Oasis: oasis – Site 150



AlUla Oasis: oasis – Site 153



Tayma: oasis – Site 136



Tayma: sabkha – Site 136

<b>Harrat Uwayrid</b>	S001:	<i>C. gallicus</i> , <i>C. melanocephala</i> , <i>M. solitarius</i> , <i>P. hispaniolensis</i> , <i>P. tristis</i> ;
	S023:	<i>A. noctua</i> , <i>C. ruficollis</i> , <i>O. tristranii</i> , <i>S. hadorami</i> .
<b>Wadi Nakhlah</b>	S075:	<i>A. nisus</i> , <i>A. melanocephala</i> , <i>C. communis</i> , <i>C. melanocephala</i> , <i>C. nana</i> , <i>G. fulvus</i> , <i>H. rustica</i> , <i>M. flava</i> , <i>P. phoenicurus</i> , <i>P. lichtensteinii</i> , <i>R. riparia</i> ;
	S080:	<i>C. livia</i> , <i>L. excubitor</i> .
<b>AlGhameel</b>	S044:	<i>A. alaudipes</i> , <i>A. cinctura</i> , <i>A. nipalensis</i> , <i>B. ascalaphus</i> , <i>O. hispanica</i> , <i>C. gallicus</i> , <i>C. aeruginosus</i> , <i>C. nana</i> , <i>F. concolor</i> , <i>M. solitarius</i> , <i>O. hispanica</i> , <i>S. borin</i> ;
	S057:	<i>A. alaudipes</i> , <i>I. pallida</i> , <i>S. atricapilla</i> , <i>S. borin</i> .
<b>Harrat AlZabin</b>	S095:	<i>A. nisus</i> , <i>A. campestris</i> , <i>A. fasciata</i> , <i>P. lichtensteinii</i> , <i>S. atricapilla</i> ;
	S097:	<i>A. melanocephala</i> , <i>C. hellmayri</i> , <i>C. leucomelaena</i> , <i>D. dora</i> , <i>S. hadorami</i> .
<b>Sharaan</b>	S059:	<i>A. nisus</i> , <i>A. chukar</i> , <i>B. ascalaphus</i> , <i>C. gallicus</i> , <i>C. garrulus</i> , <i>F. concolor</i> , <i>I. pallida</i> , <i>N. percnopterus</i> , <i>O. deserti</i> , <i>S. torquatus</i> ;
	S070:	<i>A. pallidus</i> , <i>C. rhipidurus</i> , <i>M. solitarius</i> , <i>P. ochruros</i> , <i>S. hadorami</i> .

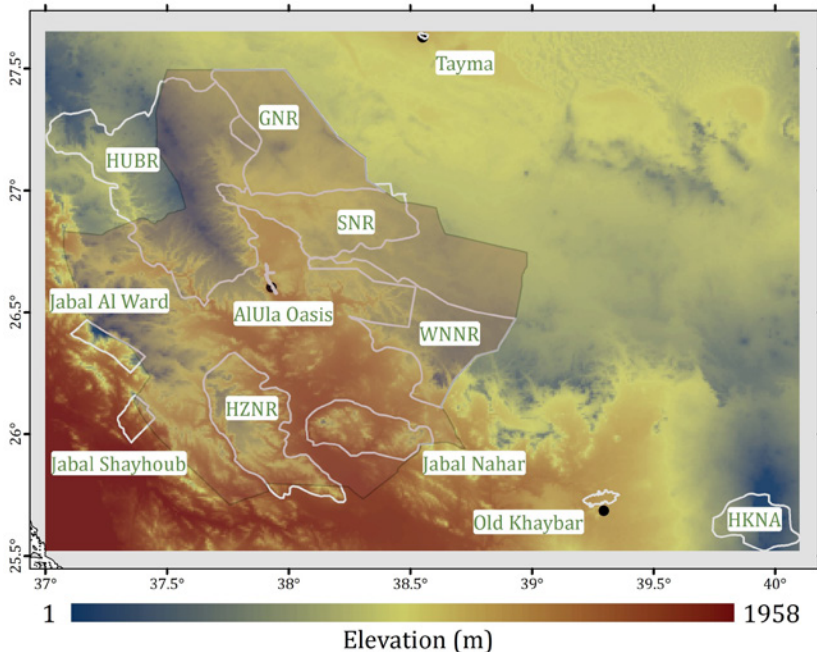
<b>Jabal Nahar</b>	S128:	<i>B. githagineus</i> , <i>C. mystacea</i> , <i>L. excubitor</i> , <i>O. capensis</i> , <i>O. monacha</i> , <i>S. hadorami</i> ;
	AH060:	<i>C. nana</i> , <i>O. lugens</i> .
<b>Harrat Khaybar</b>	S143:	<i>A. rufescens</i> , <i>A. chrysaetos</i> , <i>C. brachydactyla</i> , <i>C. coturnix</i> , <i>M. alba</i> , <i>M. flava</i> ;
	S144:	<i>A. monachus</i> , <i>A. rufescens</i> , <i>A. campestris</i> , <i>A. noctua</i> , <i>E. bilopha</i> , <i>G. fulvus</i> , <i>M. alba</i> , <i>O. deserti</i> , <i>O. isabellina</i> , <i>O. oenanthe</i> , <i>P. trochilus</i> .
<b>Jabal Al Ward</b>	S118:	<i>A. melanocephala</i> , <i>A. fasciata</i> , <i>A. verreauxii</i> , <i>C. hellmayri</i> , <i>C. leucomelaena</i> , <i>S. hadorami</i> ;
	S198:	<i>A. noctua</i> , <i>C. osea</i> , <i>P. inornatus</i> , <i>P. trochilus</i> .
<b>Jabal Shayhoub</b>	S119:	<i>A. pallidus</i> , <i>C. hellmayri</i> , <i>C. mystacea</i> , <i>F. tinnunculus</i> , <i>L. excubitor</i> , <i>M. cyanophrys</i> ;
	S122:	<i>A. melanocephala</i> , <i>D. doriae</i> , <i>I. pallida</i> , <i>S. hadorami</i> .
<b>Old Khaybar</b>	S140:	<i>A. tristis</i> , <i>A. atthis</i> , <i>A. purpurea</i> , <i>A. ralloides</i> , <i>C. aegyptius</i> , <i>C. nubicus</i> , <i>C. galactotes</i> , <i>C. podobe</i> , <i>E. cantans</i> , <i>G. chloropus</i> , <i>H. smyrnensis</i> , <i>H. ampelinus</i> , <i>M. cinerea</i> , <i>M. striata</i> , <i>O. oriolus</i> , <i>P. phoenicurus</i> , <i>S. atricapilla</i> , <i>T. alba</i> .
<b>AIUla Oasis</b>	S150:	<i>A. krameri</i> , <i>A. squamiceps</i> , <i>C. podobe</i> , <i>C. rhipidurus</i> , <i>P. galbula</i> , <i>S. turtur</i> ;
	S153:	<i>A. squamiceps</i> , <i>C. podobe</i> , <i>C. ruficollis</i> , <i>O. tristramii</i> , <i>P. gracilis</i> .
<b>Tayma</b>	S136:	<i>A. nisus</i> , <i>A. scirpaceus</i> , <i>A. krameri</i> , <i>A. purpurea</i> , <i>C. galactotes</i> , <i>G. cristata</i> , <i>H. pennatus</i> , <i>H. rustica</i> , <i>L. minor</i> , <i>L. svecica</i> , <i>M. persicus</i> , <i>M. migrans</i> , <i>P. apivorus</i> , <i>P. leucotis</i> , <i>R. obsoleta</i> , <i>R. riparia</i> , <i>S. torquatus</i> , <i>S. atricapilla</i> , <i>V. spinosus</i> .

## 4. Geography, Climate and Habitats

The AlUla region is located in the northern sector of the Hijaz Mountain range of the Arabian Peninsula, between latitudes 25°30' and 27°40' and longitudes 37°00' and 40°50'. It covers an area of about 22,500 km<sup>2</sup>, of which about 20% is included in conservation areas. The AlUla region is fully encompassed in the Palaearctic Realm, and most of it comprises the Biome Deserts & Xeric Shrublands and has an exceptional biogeographical position in the transition zone between four Ecoregions: the Arabian desert, North Arabian desert, Red Sea-Arabian Desert shrublands, and Deserts & Xeric Shrublands. In addition, parts of the Jabal Al Ward are included in the Biome Mediterranean Forests, Woodlands & Scrub and are part of a fifth Ecoregion: Eastern Mediterranean conifer-broadleaf forests. The AlUla region is located halfway between two global biodiversity hotspots: the Mediterranean Basin and the Horn of Africa (which includes a section in the south-western Arabian Peninsula).

### Topography

The Hijaz Mountain range dominates the landscapes of the AlUla region, with the altitude of the summits reaching 1,958 m on Harrat Khaybar, 1,940 m on Jabal Al Ward, and 1,711 m on Harrat Uwayrid (**Figure 3**). The conservation areas located in the Hijaz Mountains are topographically heterogeneous, and elevation in the Harrat Uwayrid, Harrat AlZabin, Jabal Al Ward, Jabal Shayhoub and Jabal Nahar spans over 1,000 m between the lowland areas and the mountainous summits. By way of contrast, the oases of AlUla, Tayma and Old Khaybar are located between 600 m and 800 m in elevation and are generally flat, following the courses of river beds. The conservation areas of AlGhameel, Sharaan and Wadi Nakhlah are located on the north-western extreme of the Great Nafud sands, where the altitude ranges from 650 m up to 1,500 m.



**Figure 3** Elevation in the AIUla region. AIUla county (grey polygon), major urban areas (black dot), and conservation areas (white polygons) are identified.

### Climate

The AIUla region comprises one of the most arid parts of the Arabian Peninsula. In the city of AIUla, the summers are long, sweltering, arid and clear, and the winters are short, cool, dry and mostly clear. The average temperature typically varies from a minimum of 3 °C up to a maximum of 38 °C, and is rarely below 0 °C or above 40 °C. The hot season lasts four months, from June to September, with an average daily high temperature above 35 °C. The hottest months are August and September, with an average high of 38 °C and a low of 20-22 °C. The cool season lasts three months, from December to February, with an average daily high temperature below 24 °C. The coldest months of the year are January and February, with an average low of 4-5 °C and a high of 21-22 °C. There is no significant seasonal variation in the frequency of wet days (i.e., days with precipitation above 1 mm). Thus, the quantity of rainfall does not vary significantly over the year. The highest rainfall is recorded in January, with an average total rainfall of 2.9 mm, followed

by December, February and March, with average total rainfall of 1.7 mm. The average total rainfall from June to August is 0 mm.

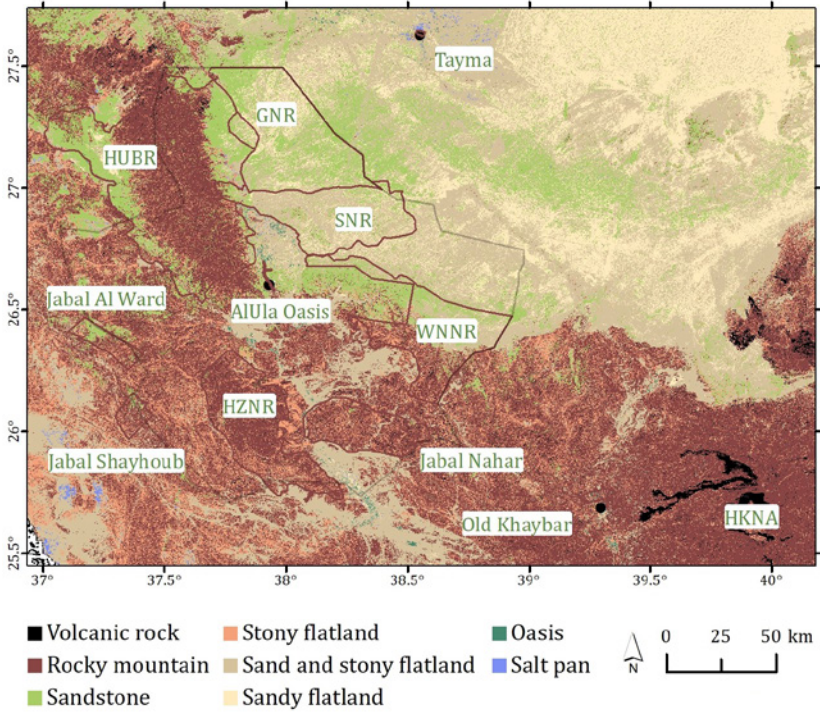
Annual average temperature within the AlUla region follows a latitudinal gradient, where southern regions are warmer, and the temperature may reach up to 26.8 °C. In comparison, northern regions are cooler, and the temperature may drop to 17 °C. Within the conservation areas, Jabal Nahar and Old Khaybar exhibit the highest annual average temperatures (around 25 °C). In contrast, Harrat Uwayrid, AlGharameel, Sharaan and Jabal Al Ward exhibit the coldest annual average temperatures (around 20-21 °C). The highest amplitude in annual average temperature within the conservation areas is recorded in Harrat Uwayrid (5.3 °C) and Jabal Al Ward (6.3 °C).

Average total precipitation within the AlUla region follows a longitudinal gradient, where eastern regions are wetter and precipitation may reach up to 154 mm/year. In comparison, western regions are drier, and precipitation may drop to 32 mm/year. Within the conservation areas, Wadi Nakhlah and Harrat Khaybar exhibit the highest average total precipitation (84 and 125 mm/year, respectively). In contrast, Jabal Shayhoub and the AlUla Oasis exhibit the lowest average total precipitation (52 and 60 mm/year, respectively). The highest amplitude in average total precipitation within the conservation areas is recorded in Jabal Al Ward (67 mm/year) and Harrat Khaybar (53 mm/year).

### Land cover

The AlUla region comprises eight main land cover categories (**Figure 4**): 1) Rocky mountain (32.8%) covering most of Jabal Al Ward, Jabal Nahar, Jabal Shayhoub, Harrat AlZabin, Harrat Uwayrid, southern Harrat Khaybar, and southern Wadi Nakhlah; 2) Sand and stony flatlands (30.4%) covering most of Sharaan, southern AlGharameel, and northern Wadi Nakhlah; 3) Stony flatland (13.4%) covering lowland areas surrounding the mountain areas; 4) Sandy flatland (12.3%) covering AlGharameel and Sharaan; 5) Sandstone (9.3%) covering most of AlGharameel, Sharaan, western Harrat Uwayrid, and northern Wadi Nakhlah; 6) Volcanic rock (1.3%) covering most of Harrat Khaybar; 7) Salt pan (0.3%) covering parts of Tayma; and 8) Oasis (0.2%) covering the oases of AlUla, Tayma and Old Khaybar.

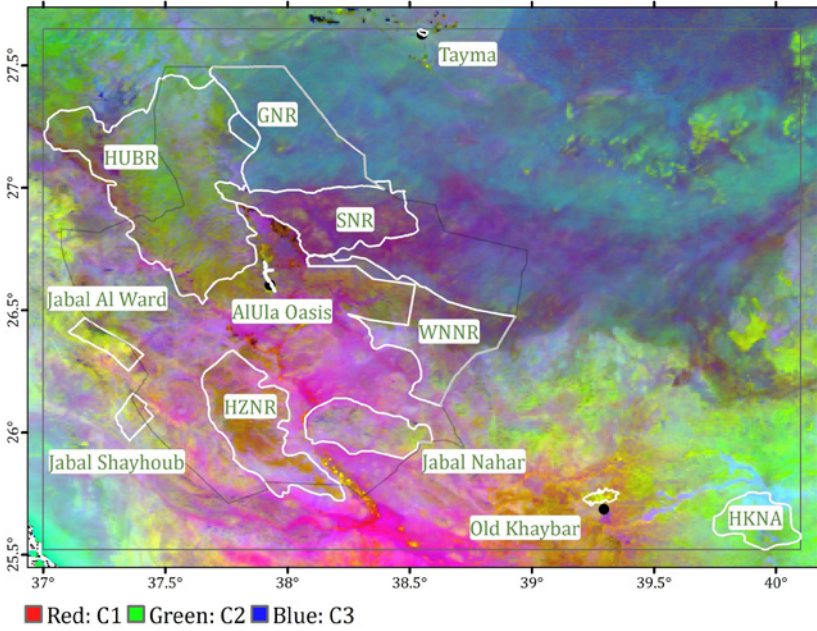




**Figure 4** Main land-cover categories found in the AIUla region. AIUla county (grey polygon), major urban areas (black dots) and conservation areas (brown polygons) are identified.

### Environmental variation

The environmental variation within the AIUla region is mostly related to the availability of water and types of land cover (**Figure 5**). Five broad environmental units can be identified within the conservation areas of the AIUla region: 1) the north-eastern barren or sandy plains (blue colouration) dominating AlGhrameel, Sharaan and the northern and eastern sectors of Wadi Nakhlah; 2) the vegetated areas along the oases of AIUla, Old Khaybar and Tayma, and the plateaux of Harrat AlZabin (pink colouration); 3) the south-western mountain areas of Jabal Al Ward and Jabal Shayhoub, and parts of Jabal Nahar (yellow-green colouration); 4) the rocky mountains of Harrat AlZabin, Harrat Uwayrid, and the southern sector of Wadi Nakhlah (brown-green colouration); and 5) the volcanic lava fields of Harrat Khaybar (light blue colouration).



**Figure 5** Environmental variability in AIUla county depicted by Harmonic Regression. Scaled coefficients (depicted in RGB colour palette) represent variation in the Normalised Difference Vegetation Index (NDVI; 250m resolution; MODIS satellite) along 2011-2020. AIUla county (grey polygon), major urban areas (black dot) and conservation areas (white polygons) are identified.

# 5. Glossary, Abbreviations and Map Symbology

Technical words, abbreviations and map symbols used in the Field Guide.

- Anterior:** Near the front of the body.
- Axillaries:** Area where the underwing connects to the body, corresponding to the underarm area in a human.
- Bib:** Different coloured feathers on the throat and upper chest forming a distinctive pattern.
- Breeding plumage:** Distinctive set of feathers a bird develops during the breeding season, often more colourful than its non-breeding appearance.
- Breeding male:** Male in breeding plumage.
- Breeding female:** Female in breeding plumage.
- Call:** A short, simple vocalisation.
- Crepuscular:** Active at twilight.
- Cryptic:** Camouflaged, difficult to detect.
- Diurnal:** Active during the day.
- Endemic:** Native or confined to a particular region.
- Genus:** Taxonomic rank in the biological classification between the Family and the Species levels. The genus forms the first part of the binomial species name.
- Gorget:** A patch of coloured feathers on the throat of a bird.
- Gregarious:** Birds that associate in flocks or groups.
- Harrat:** Volcanic lava field.
- Immature:** A bird that has not yet acquired adult plumage.
- Insectivorous:** Animal which feeds mainly on insects.
- Invertebrates:** Animals without a backbone.
- Iridescent:** Showing changing colours depending on the angle of the light.
- Juvenile:** A bird born in that year, still on its first plumage, typically acquired on the nest.
- Mask:** Broad dark patch surrounding eye.
- Migration:** Seasonal movement between breeding and non-breeding areas.
- Migratory breeder:** Species that visit a territory to breed, usually found from spring to summer.
- Molt:** The process of shedding and regrowing feathers.
- Nocturnal:** Active during the night.
- Partly migratory:** Species with migratory populations and resident populations.
- Passage migrant:** Species passing through the territory on migration, usually between March-May (spring migration) and September-October (autumn migration).
- Preening:** The act of grooming and maintaining feathers.
- Primary projection:** length from the last primary tip to the last tertial tip.
- Rachis:** The central shaft of a feather.
- Resident:** Sedentary, staying in the same area year-round.

*Sabkha*: Salt-encrusted mudflat or sandflat located in internal, closed drainage basins, but also often found near seacoasts and usually in hot, dry regions.

**Song**: A variably complex vocalisation made by a bird, most commonly used to attract a partner, or defend its territory.

**Terrestrial**: Living on the ground.

**Underparts**: Areas located on the bird's underside, including the chest, flanks, belly and undertail.

**Undertail**: The underside of the tail.

**Underwing**: The underside of the wing.

**Upperparts**: Areas located on the bird's upperside, including nape, back, shoulders, rump and upper part of tail.

**Uppertail**: The upper side of the tail.

**Upperwing**: The upper side of the wing.

**Vertebrates**: Animals with a backbone.

**Vocalisation/Voice**: A general term for any sound that a bird makes.

*Wadi*: River valley or ephemeral riverbed.

**Winter plumage**: Non-breeding plumage.

**Winter visitor**: Species found in the region to spend the winter, usually from November to February.

**Xeric**: Very dry.

## Abbreviations

C	central
c.f.	compare
cm	centimetres
E	eastern
e.g.	for example
et al.	and others
F	female
i.e.	that is
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
km	kilometres
L	body length
m	metres
M	male
mm	millimetres
N	northern
NA	not available
NE	north-eastern
NW	north-western
S	southern
SE	south-eastern
ssp	subspecies
SW	south-western
W	western
WC	west-central
WS	wingspan
Wt	Weight
DD	Data Deficient (IUCN Red list criteria)
LC	Least Concern (IUCN Red list criteria)
NT	Near Threatened (IUCN Red list criteria)
VU	Vulnerable (IUCN Red list criteria)
EN	Endangered (IUCN Red list criteria)
CR	Critically Endangered (IUCN Red list criteria)
EW	Extinct in the Wild (IUCN Red list criteria)
EX	Extinct (IUCN Red list criteria)

- RE Regionally Extinct (IUCN Red list criteria)
- NE Not Evaluated (IUCN Red list criteria)
- NA marginal species Not Applicable for conservation status assessment (Symes et al. 2015)

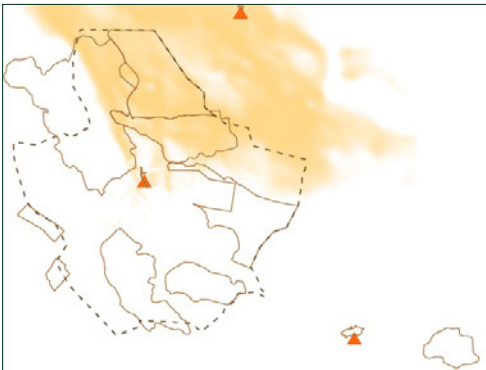
**Symbology**

- ♂ Male
- ♀ Female

**Map symbology**

In the distribution maps for each species:

- dashed polygon: AIUla county
- brown polygons: conservation areas
- orange triangles: cities
- yellow shading: areas of probability of species occurrence, where darker tones indicate a higher occurrence probability.



## 6. Bird Taxonomy

Taxonomic names are given through a process dependent on phylogeny – the history of the evolution and relationships of living beings. Increasing scientific knowledge based on new molecular or morphological evidence may imply updates in phylogeny, which in turn may cause the names of species to change over time. This guide follows the most updated taxonomy and nomenclature of *BirdLife International* (Version 7.0) and *the Handbook of the Birds of the World*, also used by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). The sequence in which the bird species are presented in the book is based on this taxonomic list; however, some adjustments have been made to make it easier to compare similar species. Subspecies (a category in biological classification that ranks immediately below a species) are mentioned only when a particular, and clearly distinctive, subspecies occurs in Arabia (e.g. highly migratory Steppe Buzzard, *Buteo buteo vulpinus*) or when it is considered a separate species by other taxonomic authorities (e.g. Barbary Falcon, *Falco peregrinus peregrinoides*).

### The Class Aves

Birds are one of the most varied vertebrate groups on Earth, representing almost a third of terrestrial vertebrate diversity. Having evolved from dinosaurs during the Jurassic period, birds are currently acknowledged as being a group of theropod dinosaurs.

Birds belong to the Class Aves, which is very close evolutionarily to the class Reptilia. Despite sharing some characteristics with reptiles, such as being oviparous and having scales on their skin, birds are warm-blooded animals that have a very high metabolism. They are well adapted to their typical locomotion mode: flying - having lightweight bones, toothless beaked jaws and most of their bodies covered by feathers.

Birds inhabit all continents, and are able to survive and thrive in all major ecosystems on Earth. Amongst other features, they have changed their morphology, diet, behaviour and physiology to adapt to even the most extreme environments. Desert birds, for example, are able to obtain the necessary moisture from their food when water availability is scarce,

while using behavioural and physiological adaptations to reduce water loss through thermoregulation.

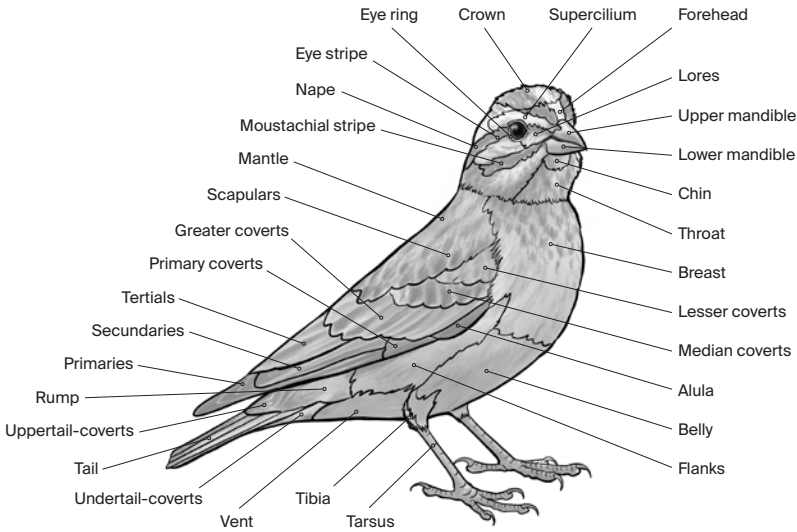
This adaptability is reflected in the very high diversity of birds worldwide, with around 10,000 species currently described. At present, 517 species belonging to 74 families of 25 orders have been recorded throughout KSA. This 'Field Guide to the Birds of AlUla' covers the following:

- Order Struthioniformes (ostriches): 1 species in AlUla region.
- Order Galliformes (partridges, quails): 4 species in AlUla; 1 family.
- Order Columbiformes (pigeons, doves): 6 species in AlUla; 1 family.
- Order Pterocliiformes (sandgrouse): 1 species in AlUla.
- Order Caprimulgiformes (swifts, nightjars): 6 species in AlUla; 2 families.
- Order Cuculiformes (cuckoos): 1 species in AlUla.
- Order Gruiformes (rails, moorhens): 1 species in AlUla.
- Order Ciconiiformes (storks): 2 species in AlUla; 1 family.
- Order Pelecaniformes (egrets, herons): 6 species in AlUla; 1 family.
- Order Charadriiformes (lapwings, coursers): 2 species in AlUla; 2 families.
- Order Strigiformes (owls): 5 species in AlUla; 2 families.
- Order Accipitriformes (hawks, eagles, kites, vultures): 24 species in AlUla; 2 families.
- Order Bucerotiformes (hoopoes): 1 species in AlUla.
- Order Coraciiformes (kingfishers, rollers, bee-eaters): 6 species in AlUla; 3 families.
- Order Piciformes (woodpeckers): 2 species in AlUla; 1 family.
- Order Falconiformes (falcons): 4 species in AlUla; 1 family.
- Order Psittaciformes (parrots): 2 species in AlUla; 1 family.
- Order Passeriformes (perching birds): 91 species in AlUla; 23 families.

# 7. Bird Topography

Birds can be identified by considering a combination of external morphological characteristics, together with the behaviour and location of the individual.

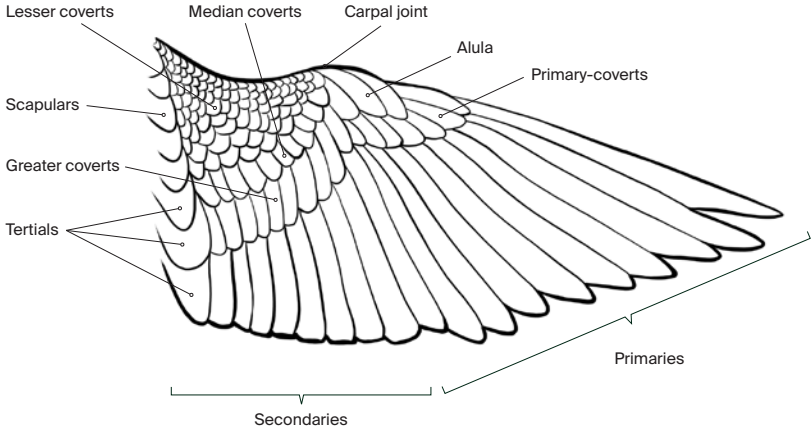
For perching birds, the colouration of plumage in certain areas of the bird's body (lore, nape, flanks), as well as the format of some crucial body parts (bill, tail, primary projection, legs) can help distinguish between closely related species (**Figure 6**).



**Figure 6** Lateral view of a passeridae, with the names of the main terms used for describing morphological characteristics.

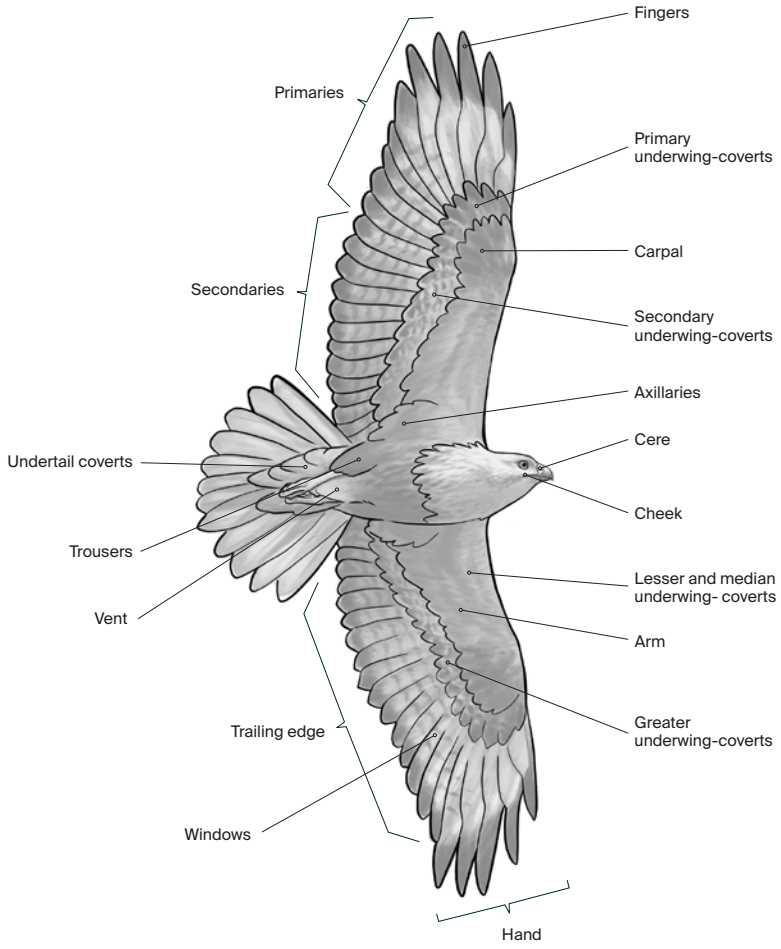


Some features of the wing are particularly relevant when identifying birds. The general shape of the wing, the colour pattern of the main flight feathers, wing coverts, as well as the colour of the alula, carpal joint and 'windows', are helpful to distinguish close species (**Figure7**).



**Figure 7** Open wing and relevant terms used for describing the main wing features of birds.

Birds of prey have specific distinctive features that must be carefully observed when attempting to distinguish between closely related species (**Figure 8**). Not only is the colouration important, but also the format of the wings and how they are positioned in flight; the number of fingers in the hand, the colour of the carpal joint, as well as the format of the tail are some of the features that should be well observed.



**Figure 8** Relevant terms used for describing large flying birds, such as birds of prey.



## 8. Species Accounts



**Common Ostrich**  
***Struthio camelus*** Linnaeus,  
 1758



**Global distribution:** Resident across the Sahel into E Africa, and S Africa. Ssp *S. c. syriacus* was once present throughout Arabia, but became extinct in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century. Reintroduction efforts are being made in the region.

**Distribution in AIU/a:** Regionally extinct.

**Measurements:** L: M 210-275 cm, F 175-190 cm; Wt: M 100-156 kg, F 90-110 kg.

**Identification:** Huge, flightless, unmistakable, with long powerful legs and neck. Breeding male has black and white plumage with a reddish neck and legs. Female and immature pale-brown with pallid neck and legs.

**Habitat and habits:** Found alone or in small groups, occurred in open land with scrub such as stony plains and harrats, and arid steppes. Feeds on grasses, seeds and leaves. Also, some insects and small vertebrates. Nests on the ground.

**Status:** Resident.

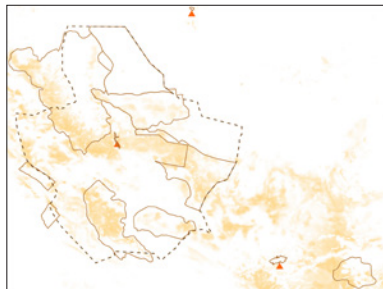
**Abundance:** Extinct.

**Conservation status:** LC/RE.



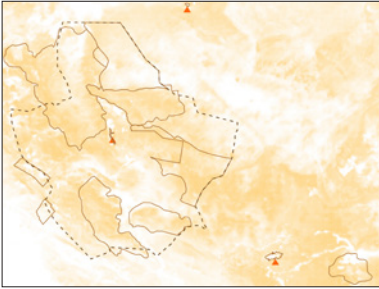
**Chukar*****Alectoris chukar*** (Gray, 1830)**Global distribution:** Resident; found from Greece and NW Arabia to E China.**Distribution in AIUla:** Harrat Uwayrid, Sharaan, Jabal Al Ward.**Measurements:** L: 34-38 cm; Wt: 550-675 g.**Identification:** Medium-sized, compact, pale sandy-grey partridge with grey crown, red bill and eye-ring, a bold black stripe from forehead, bordering a creamy white bib and bold barring on the flanks.**Habitat and habits:** Found in pairs or small numbers in harrats, rocky valleys and hillsides, and semi-deserts. Feeds on the ground on seeds, grains, roots, berries, seedlings and insects. Nests on the ground.**Status:** Resident.**Abundance:** Scarce.**Conservation status:** LC/LC.**Arabian Partridge*****Alectoris melanocephala***

(Rüppell, 1835)

**Global distribution:** Resident; endemic to Arabia, found across the W mountain ranges, Yemen and Oman.**Distribution in AIUla:** Wadi Nakhlah, Jabal Al Ward, Jabal Shayhoub, Harrat AlZabin.**Measurements:** L: 39-43 cm; Wt: M 724 g, F 522 g.**Identification:** Similar to the Chukar, but larger, with longer neck and tail, and dark tail corners seen in flight. Black crown and a broad white supercilium and throat.**Habitat and habits:** Found in pairs or small numbers in rocky hillsides with bushes, mountains and wadis. Feeds on seeds, vegetable matter, and insects on the ground. Active at dusk. Nests on the ground.**Status:** Resident.**Abundance:** Uncommon.**Conservation status:** LC/LC.

**Sand Partridge**

***Ammoperdix heyi*** (Temminck, 1825)



**Global distribution:** Resident; found from NE Sudan to S Syria and across Arabia.

**Distribution in AIUia:** All areas except Tayma.

**Measurements:** L: 22-25 cm;  
Wt: 180-200 g.

**Identification:** Small, sandy-coloured partridge, with rusty-brown tail corners. Male has a blue-grey head with a white patch on cheek and lore, flanks heavily banded and orange-yellow bill. Female is duller, lacking white on head.

**Habitat and habits:** Found in pairs or groups of up to several dozen, in rocky hillsides, wadis, cliffs, harrats and semi-deserts. Feeds on the ground on seeds, berries and insects. Nests on the ground, hidden in bushes or rocks.

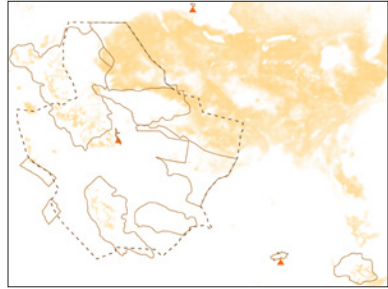
**Status:** Resident.

**Abundance:** Abundant.

**Conservation status:** LC/LC.

**Common Quail**

***Coturnix coturnix*** (Linnaeus, 1758)



**Global distribution:** Partly migratory; breeds from W Europe to Siberia and the Himalayas and patchily in NW, E and S Africa; winters in Sahel, E Africa, and S Asia.

**Distribution in AIUia:** AlGharameel, Sharaan, Harrat Khaybar.

**Measurements:** L: 16-20 cm;  
Wt: 70-155 g.

**Identification:** Small, compact game bird, with short tail and long wings. Cryptic ochre plumage mottled grey and black, pale-yellow supercilium, and stripes down back and flanks. Male with dark throat markings, female has pale throat.

**Habitat and habits:** Found alone or in small groups, in cereal crops, pivot-irrigated fields, grassland and desert meadows. Feeds on seeds, grains, grasses, weeds and occasionally invertebrates.

**Status:** Passage migrant, Winter visitor.

**Abundance:** Scarce, Scarce.

**Conservation status:** LC/LC.



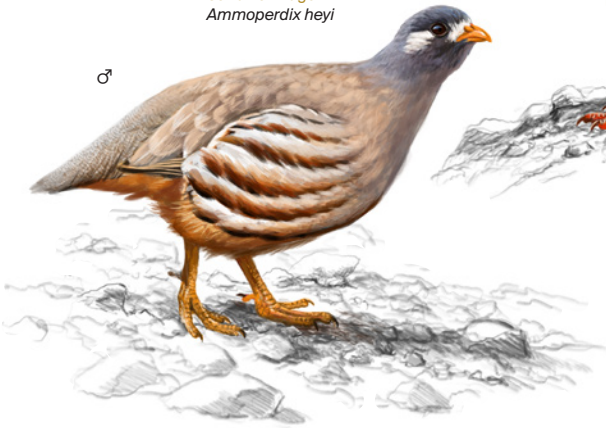
Chukar  
*Alectoris chukar*



Arabian Partridge  
*Alectoris melanocephala*

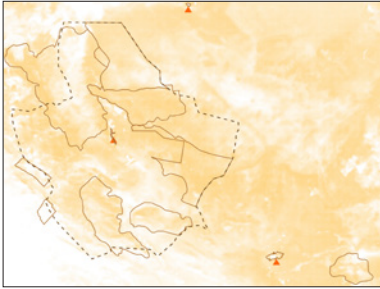
Sand Partridge  
*Ammoperdix heyi*

♂



Common Quail  
*Coturnix coturnix*



**Rock Dove*****Columba livia*** Gmelin, 1789

**Global distribution:** Resident; native to N Africa, S Europe, Middle East, C and S Asia. It has been introduced worldwide.

**Distribution in AIU/a:** All areas.

**Measurements:** L: 30-35 cm;  
Wt: 180-355 g.

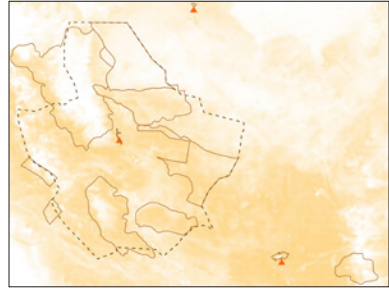
**Identification:** Large light-grey dove, with white rump and two black wing bars. Head, neck and tail are darker, with iridescent purple and green on the neck. Feral individuals can be found in a wide variety of colours and patterns.

**Habitat and habits:** Gregarious, found in mountains, cliffs and rocky wadis, and in association with humans on farmland and any type of settlements. Feeds on seeds and grains, fruits, occasionally invertebrates, and also on human food scraps. Nests on cliffs and buildings.

**Status:** Resident.

**Abundance:** Abundant.

**Conservation status:** LC/LC.

**Namaqua Dove*****Oena capensis*** (Linnaeus, 1766)

**Global distribution:** Resident; found across sub-Saharan Africa, excluding rainforests, and Arabia.

**Distribution in AIU/a:** All areas except Sharaan and AlGhameel.

**Measurements:** L: 22-26 cm;  
Wt: 28-54 g.

**Identification:** Tiny, slim dove (slightly larger than a sparrow), pale sandy-grey, with rufous wings seen in flight and a very long dark tail. Male with black mask and chest, and red and yellow bill. Female is plain with dark bill, juvenile has a variegated pattern.

**Habitat and habits:** Found usually alone or in pairs, in semi-desert, wadis, oases, farmland, palm groves and towns. Feeds on seeds on the ground. Nests in bushes.

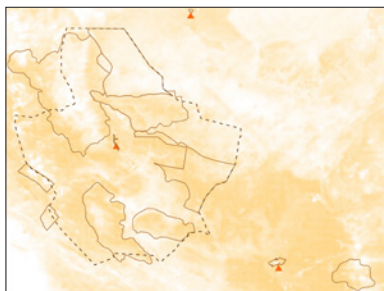
**Status:** Resident.

**Abundance:** Common.

**Conservation status:** LC/LC.

## Laughing Dove *Spilopelia senegalensis*

(Linnaeus, 1766)



**Global distribution:** Resident; found across Africa, extending to India, Kazakhstan and Middle East.

**Distribution in AIUa:** All areas.

**Measurements:** L: 27 cm; Wt: 71-92 g.

**Identification:** Small and slim dove with short wings and a long tail with white corners and grey centre. Mauve-pink from head to chest, black spotted neck-patch, sandy-brown back and scapulars, followed by a grey panel and dark wing tips. Female is duller.

**Habitat and habits:** Found usually in pairs or small groups, in semi-desert, oases, farmland, palm groves, towns and parks. Feeds on the ground on seeds, occasionally fruits and insects. Nests in trees, bushes and buildings.

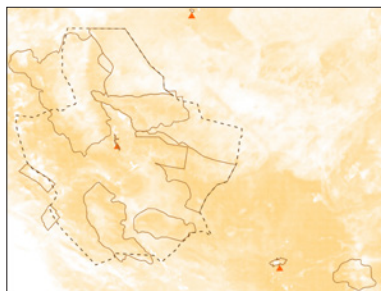
**Status:** Resident.

**Abundance:** Abundant.

**Conservation status:** LC/LC.

## Eurasian Collared-dove *Streptopelia decaocto*

Frivaldszky, 1838



**Global distribution:** Resident; spans from W Europe and N Africa to E Asia. Introduced in North America and the Caribbean.

**Distribution in AIUa:** All areas.

**Measurements:** L: 30-31 cm;

Wt: 112-264 g.

**Identification:** Large, plain, pale dove with long wings and tail. Distinctive black half-collar and tail with a broad white terminal band. Trisyllabic song, “hoo-hoooo-hoo”, helpful to separate from African Collared-dove.

**Habitat and habits:** Found usually in pairs or small groups, associated with human presence, in farmland, towns, villages and parks, also in some isolated wadis. Feeds on the ground on seeds and grains, occasionally other plant matter and food scraps. Nests in trees, bushes and buildings.

**Status:** Resident.

**Abundance:** Abundant.

**Conservation status:** LC/LC.

**African Collared-dove**  
***Streptopelia roseogrisea***  
 (Sundevall, 1857)



**Global distribution:** Partly migratory; resident throughout Sahel, migratory populations breed north and south of its main African range to SW Arabia.

**Distribution in AIUla:** Jabal Al Ward.

**Measurements:** L: 26 cm;

Wt: 130-166 g.

**Identification:** Very similar to the Eurasian Collared-dove, but slightly smaller, paler and with shorter tail. Belly is whiter and flight feathers and uppertail are darker. Multisyllabic song helpful to separate.

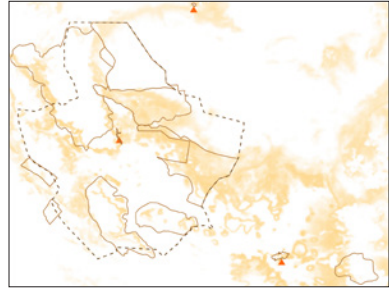
**Habitat and habits:** Found usually in small groups, in open woodland, semi-deserts, farmland and towns. Feeds on the ground on seeds, occasionally berries and other plant matter, and insects. Nests in trees and bushes.

**Status:** Breeding migrant, Winter visitor.

**Abundance:** Scarce, Scarce.

**Conservation status:** LC/LC.

**European Turtle-dove**  
***Streptopelia turtur*** (Linnaeus,  
 1758)



**Global distribution:** Migratory species; breeds throughout Europe and N Africa to Kazakhstan and W China; winters in Sahel.

**Distribution in AIUla:** Old Khaybar, AIUla Oasis.

**Measurements:** L: 27-29 cm;

Wt: 99-170 g.

**Identification:** Small and slim dove with a barred black-and-white neck patch, pinkish chest, and mottled orange and black wing coverts. In flight, tail is dark with broad white terminal band. Juveniles are duller and lack neck patch.

**Habitat and habits:** Found in pairs or small groups, in open woodland, oases, date palm plantations and farmland. Feeds mostly on the ground, on seeds and fruits, occasionally invertebrates. Nests in trees or bushes.

**Status:** Breeding migrant, Passage migrant.

**Abundance:** Scarce, Uncommon.

**Conservation status:** VU/LC.

Rock Dove  
*Columba livia*



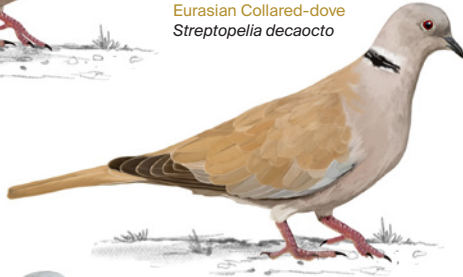
Namaqua Dove  
*Oena capensis*



Laughing Dove  
*Spilopelia senegalensis*



Eurasian Collared-dove  
*Streptopelia decaocto*



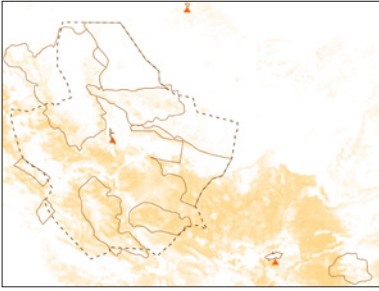
African Collared-dove  
*Streptopelia roseogrisea*



European Turtle-dove  
*Streptopelia turtur*



**Lichtenstein's Sandgrouse**  
***Pterocles lichtensteinii***  
 Temminck, 1825



**Global distribution:** Resident; occurs from W Sahara to E Africa extending to W and S Arabia, Iran and Pakistan.

**Distribution in AlUla:** AlGharameel, Harrat AlZabin, Old Khaybar, Jabal Nahar, Jabal Al Ward, Harrat Uwayrid, Wadi Nakhlah.

**Measurements:** L: 22-26 cm;

Wt: M 175-250 g, F 190-230 g.

**Identification:** Small and short-tailed sandgrouse, with pale-yellow plumage densely vermiculated black and white. Male with yellow eye-ring, orange bill, two black and white bars on forehead, rusty and black bands across the chest and wings. Female lacks distinct markings and has a pale eye-ring and dark bill.

**Habitat and habits:** Shy, mainly nocturnal, found in small groups at water points to drink at dusk, in rocky deserts and wadis, and arid mountains, with scattered vegetation. Feeds mainly on seeds, also other plant matter and insects. Nests on the ground.

**Status:** Resident.

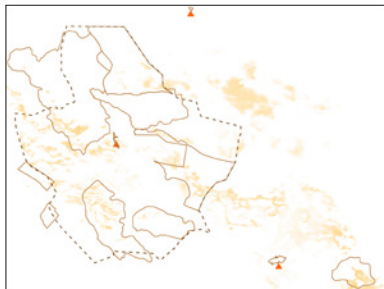
**Abundance:** Common.

**Conservation status:** LC/LC.



## European Nightjar *Caprimulgus europaeus*

Linnaeus, 1758



**Global distribution:** Migratory; breeds from W Europe to Mongolia; winters in sub-Saharan Africa, mainly in E and S Africa.

**Distribution in AIUla:** Harrat Khaybar.

**Measurements:** L: 24-28 cm;

Wt: M 51-101 g, F 67-95 g.

**Identification:** Cryptic, mottled grey, brown and white nightjar with a long tail and pointy wings. Has a distinctive white-buff band on wing coverts and scapulars. In flight, males show conspicuous white spots on wingtips and tail edges.

**Habitat and habits:** Solitary, found anywhere in migration, mainly on open areas with scattered vegetation. Nocturnal, feeds on flying insects, sometimes around streetlights.

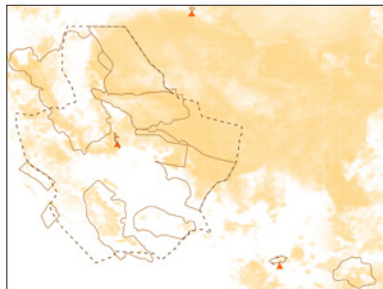
**Status:** Passage migrant.

**Abundance:** Scarce.

**Conservation status:** LC/NA.

## Egyptian Nightjar *Caprimulgus aegyptius*

Lichtenstein, 1823



**Global distribution:** Migratory; breeds in N Africa, the Nile Delta and C Asia; winters mainly in Sahel.

**Distribution in AIUla:** AlGHarameel, Sharaan, Old Khaybar, Harrat Khaybar, Tayma.

**Measurements:** L: 24-27 cm;

Wt: M 68-93 g, F 70 g.

**Identification:** Cryptic, pale, sandy-grey nightjar with relatively short tail, distinctively lacking wing band and any visible white markings.

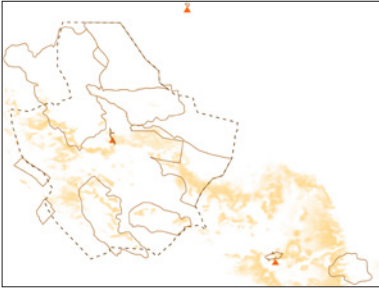
**Habitat and habits:** Solitary or in small groups on migration when it can appear anywhere. Favours deserts, semi-deserts and arid clay plains with tamarisks. Nocturnal, feeds on flying insects.

**Status:** Passage migrant.

**Abundance:** Uncommon.

**Conservation status:** LC/LC.

**Nubian Nightjar**  
***Caprimulgus nubicus***  
 Lichtenstein, 1823



**Global distribution:** Resident with some post-breeding dispersion; found in E Africa from Sudan to Tanzania, S and W Arabia, and Palestine and Jordan.

**Distribution in AUJa:** Old Khaybar, Harrat Uwayrid, Harrat AlZabin.

**Measurements:** L: 20-22 cm;  
 Wt: M 46-56 g, F 49-69 g.

**Identification:** Small and compact nightjar with a short tail and broad, rounded wings. Similar cryptic plumage to the European Nightjar, but with rusty neck-band, wing-bars and underparts, contrasting with dark wingtips. Male with more conspicuous white spots on wingtips and tail edges.

**Habitat and habits:** Solitary or in pairs during breeding season, found in sand and stony deserts with trees, wadis and date groves. Nocturnal, feeds on flying insects. Nests on the ground, hidden in bushes.

**Status:** Resident.

**Abundance:** Uncommon.

**Conservation status:** LC/LC.

European Nightjar  
*Caprimulgus europaeus*



Egyptian Nightjar  
*Caprimulgus aegyptius*



Nubian Nightjar  
*Caprimulgus nubicus*



**Alpine Swift**  
***Tachymarptis melba***  
 (Linnaeus, 1758)



**Global distribution:** Partly migratory; breeds in E and S Africa, and across the Mediterranean to S Asia through Turkey and Arabia; winters primarily in sub-Saharan Africa.

**Distribution in AIUla:** AlGharameel.

**Measurements:** L: 20-22 cm;  
 WS: 54-60 cm; Wt: 76-120 g.

**Identification:** Large, robust, dark-brown swift, with broad scythe-like wings and a short, forked tail. Has a distinctive white belly and throat patch.

**Habitat and habits:** Found alone or in small groups, anywhere on migration, mainly in areas with abundance of food. Feeds on flying insects, up to 40 m in the air. Spends much of its life in the air, landing only to nest. Some nocturnal activity. Breeds colonially in cliffs and mountains.

**Status:** Passage migrant, Breeding migrant.

**Abundance:** Scarce, Scarce.

**Conservation status:** LC/LC.

**Common Swift**  
***Apus apus*** (Linnaeus, 1758)



**Global distribution:** Migratory; breeds from NW Africa and W Europe to Siberia, Mongolia, and N China; winters in C and S Africa.

**Distribution in AIUla:** Sharaan.

**Measurements:** L: 16-18 cm;  
 WS: 40-44 cm; Wt: 31-52 g.

**Identification:** Medium-sized plain black swift with scythe-like pointy wings and forked tail. Pale throat patch smaller and less visible, and monosyllabic call helpful to separate from the Pallid Swift.

**Habitat and habits:** Gregarious, found anywhere on migration, mainly in areas with abundance of food such as plantations, oases and water bodies. Spends its life in the air, landing only to nest. Feeds on flying insects.

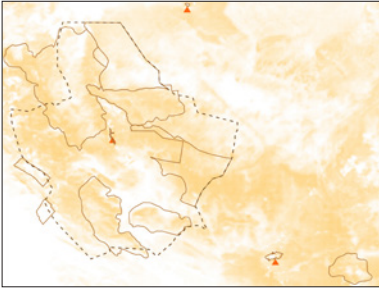
**Status:** Passage migrant.

**Abundance:** Scarce.

**Conservation status:** LC/LC.



**Pallid Swift**  
***Apus pallidus*** (Shelley, 1870)



**Global distribution:** Partly migratory; breeds across the Mediterranean, Chad, Niger, Arabian Peninsula and Gulf; winters mainly from W Africa to Sudan.

**Distribution in AIUa:** All areas except AlGharameel, Jabal Nahar, Old Khaybar and Tayma.

**Measurements:** L: 16-18 cm;  
 WS: 39-44 cm; Wt: 42 g.

**Identification:** Medium-sized dark-brown swift, very similar to the Common Swift, but with broader pale throat patch and forehead, dark eye patch, paler secondaries, and a scaly body pattern. Disyllabic calls are helpful for identification.

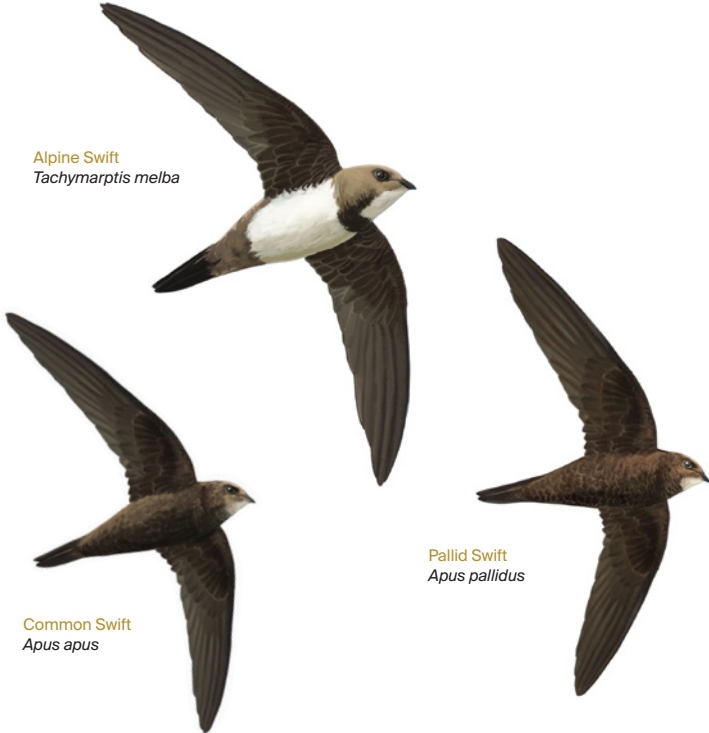
**Habitat and habits:** Gregarious, found in cliffs, gorges and areas with abundance of food, such as plantations, oases and water bodies. Feeds in the air on flying insects. Colonial breeder, nests in cliffs, caves and buildings.

**Status:** Breeding migrant, Passage migrant.

**Abundance:** Uncommon, Common.

**Conservation status:** LC/LC.

Alpine Swift  
*Tachymarptis melba*



Common Swift  
*Apus apus*

Pallid Swift  
*Apus pallidus*

**Great Spotted Cuckoo**  
***Clamator glandarius***  
(Linnaeus, 1758)



**Global distribution:** Partly migratory; breeds throughout S Europe to Iraq, and sub-Saharan Africa; winters in Sahel and E Africa.

**Distribution in AlUla:** Harrat Uwayrid.

**Measurements:** L: 35-40 cm;  
Wt: 118-168 g.

**Identification:** Large cuckoo with a long tail, white spotted dark upperparts, creamy-pale underparts, and a light-grey head and crest. Juvenile with rusty-brown primaries and black crest.

**Habitat and habits:** Solitary, found in open woodland, rocky hillsides and cultivation with bushes and trees. Feeds within vegetation or on the ground on insects, mainly caterpillars, and lizards.

**Status:** Passage migrant.

**Abundance:** Rare.

**Conservation status:** LC/NT.



**Common Moorhen**  
***Gallinula chloropus***  
(Linnaeus, 1758)<sup>1</sup>



**Global distribution:** Partly migratory; breeds throughout Europe and much of Africa and Asia. Migratory populations winter within its S resident range.

**Distribution in AIUia:** Old Khaybar.

**Measurements:** L: 30-38 cm;

Wt: M 249-493, F 192-343 g.

**Identification:** Small, dark, duck-like waterbird, with a bold white lateral stripe and white under tail-coverts, red frontal shield and thin yellow-tipped red bill. Out of water shows long green-yellow legs with long toes. Juvenile is duller with dark bill.

**Habitat and habits:** Found in pairs or family groups in wetlands with vegetated margins, like streams and ponds. Omnivorous, feeds on plants and algae, land and water invertebrates, and small vertebrates. Nests in dense vegetation on or slightly above water.

**Status:** Resident, Passage migrant, Winter visitor.

**Abundance:** Scarce, Scarce, Scarce.

**Conservation status:** LC/LC.

**White Stork**  
***Ciconia ciconia*** (Linnaeus, 1758)<sup>2</sup>



**Global distribution:** Migratory; breeds from W Europe and N Africa to C Asia; winters mainly in sub-Saharan Africa and S Asia.

**Distribution in AIUia:** AlGharameel, Sharaan.

**Measurements:** L: 100-102 cm;

WS: 155-165 cm; Wt: 2275-4400 g

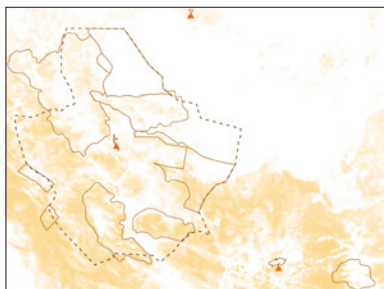
**Identification:** Large stork with long red bill and legs. White overall except for black flight feathers.

**Habitat and habits:** Gregarious, found anywhere on migration, favouring open country, wetlands, farmland and dumps. Opportunistic, feeds on any large invertebrate and small vertebrate it can catch, also carrion and food scraps in dumps.

**Status:** Passage migrant.

**Abundance:** Rare.

**Conservation status:** LC/NT.

**Black Stork*****Ciconia nigra*** (Linnaeus, 1758)

**Global distribution:** Partly migratory; breeds from W Europe to E Asia; winters in sub-Saharan Africa and S to SE Asia. Resident populations in Iberia and S Africa.

**Distribution in AIUla:** Harrat Uwayrid, Jabal Al Ward, Harrat AlZabin.

**Measurements:** L: 95-100 cm; WS: 144-155 cm; Wt: 3000 g.

**Identification:** Similar to the White Stork, but slightly smaller, glossy black all over with white belly and axillaries, and red bill, eye-ring and legs. Juvenile is duller with pale bill and legs.

**Habitat and habits:** Shy, found alone or in small groups in migration, mainly streams, ponds, marshes and irrigated fields. Feeds mostly on fish, but also on aquatic invertebrates, amphibians and other small vertebrates.

**Status:** Passage migrant.

**Abundance:** Scarce.

**Conservation status:** LC/NE.



White Stork  
*Ciconia ciconia*



Common Moorhen  
*Gallinula chloropus*



Black Stork  
*Ciconia nigra*

**Grey Heron*****Ardea cinerea*** Linnaeus, 1758

**Global distribution:** Partly migratory; breeds from W Europe to E and SE Asia, and throughout sub-Saharan Africa; winters across the Mediterranean, parts of Middle East and C and S Asia, and within its S resident range.

**Distribution in AIUla:** Found outside protected areas, between Harrat AlZabin and Jabal Nahar.

**Measurements:** L: 90-98 cm; Wt: 1020-2073 g.

**Identification:** Large, powerful grey heron, with a stout bill and white neck, head and underparts. Black eye stripe, shoulder patch and flight feathers. In flight, two white patches in the carpal joint are diagnostic. Juvenile is duller.

**Habitat and habits:** Solitary or in small numbers, found in wetlands such as streams, ditches, ponds, reservoirs and reedbeds. Opportunistic, feeds on fish, amphibians, other small vertebrates and aquatic invertebrates. Some crepuscular and nocturnal activity.

**Status:** Passage migrant, Winter visitor.

**Abundance:** Scarce, Scarce.

**Conservation status:** LC/NT.

**Purple Heron*****Ardea purpurea*** Linnaeus, 1766

**Global distribution:** Partly migratory; breeds patchily from Europe to SE Asia and in sub-Saharan Africa; winters within its S resident range, in Arabia and Nile Valley.

**Distribution in AIUla:** Tayma, Old Khaybar.

**Measurements:** L: 78-90 cm; Wt: M 617-1218 g, F 525-1135 g.

**Identification:** Large, elegant heron, with long legs, slender neck and bill, and narrow head with black crown and cheek line. Slightly smaller than the Grey Heron, has a rufous neck, with black stripes and undertail coverts. Upperparts are blue-grey. Juvenile is rusty brown with dark markings. No white on wings in flight.

**Habitat and habits:** Shy, found alone or in small groups in well vegetated wetlands, such as marshes, reedbeds and streams. Feeds on fish, aquatic invertebrates, occasionally small mammals, and reptiles. Some crepuscular activity.

**Status:** Passage migrant, Winter visitor.

**Abundance:** Scarce, Scarce.

**Conservation status:** LC/NT.

**Squacco Heron*****Ardeola ralloides*** (Scopoli, 1769)

**Global distribution:** Partly migratory; resident in sub-Saharan Africa; breeds patchily from the Mediterranean to C Asia; winters within its resident range and the Nile Valley.

**Distribution in AIUla:** Old Khaybar.

**Measurements:** L: 42-47 cm;

Wt: 230-370 g.

**Identification:** Small, compact and cryptic heron, buffy-brown with thick striped neck. In flight shows pure white wings and tail. Breeding adults have long plumes on the nape and blue bill with back tip.

**Habitat and habits:** Solitary or in small numbers, found in streams, ditches and ponds. Feeds mainly on aquatic insect larvae, fish and amphibians. Some crepuscular and nocturnal activity.

**Status:** Passage migrant, Winter visitor.

**Abundance:** Uncommon, Uncommon.

**Conservation status:** LC/LC.

**Cattle Egret*****Bubulcus ibis*** (Linnaeus, 1758)

**Global distribution:** Partly migratory; breeds from Patagonia to N USA, sub-Saharan and NW Africa, and patchily from W Europe to Caucasus; winters within its S resident range.

**Distribution in AIUla:** Found outside protected areas, N of Old Khaybar.

**Measurements:** L: 46-56 cm;

Wt: 270-512 g.

**Identification:** Small compact white heron with short neck and legs, and short yellow bill. In breeding plumage, orange-buff crown, chest and back, with reddish bill. Juvenile has dark bill.

**Habitat and habits:** Gregarious, less dependent on wetlands, it is found on farmland associated with livestock, ploughed fields, pivot-irrigated fields, lawns and dumps. Feeds mainly on insects and small vertebrates, pecked from the ground while walking.

**Status:** Passage migrant, Winter visitor.

**Abundance:** Uncommon, Uncommon.

**Conservation status:** LC/LC.

**Little Egret**  
***Egretta garzetta*** (Linnaeus,  
 1766)



**Global distribution:** Partly migratory; breeds throughout sub-Saharan and NW Africa, patchily across Europe, to S and SE Asia and Australia; winters mostly within its S resident range and Arabia.

**Distribution in AIUia:** Wadi Nakhlah.

**Measurements:** L: 55-65 cm;  
 Wt: 280-710 g.

**Identification:** Small elegant white heron, larger than Cattle Egret, with a long neck, long slender black bill and long black legs with yellow feet.

**Habitat and habits:** Found alone or in small groups, in streams, ditches, ponds, reservoirs and irrigated fields. Opportunistic, feeds on fish and amphibians, aquatic and land invertebrates.

**Status:** Passage migrant, Winter visitor.

**Abundance:** Scarce, Scarce.

**Conservation status:** LC/LC.

**Black-crowned Night-heron**  
***Nycticorax nycticorax***  
 (Linnaeus, 1758)



**Global distribution:** Partly migratory; breeds throughout the Americas, Europe, Asia and sub-Saharan Africa; winters within its S resident range.

**Distribution in AIUia:** Sharaan.

**Measurements:** L: 58-66 cm;  
 Wt: 278-1100 g.

**Identification:** Small, compact heron, with short neck, legs and tail and a black heavy bill. Black cap and back, red eye, pale-grey wings and tail, and white underparts. Juvenile is brown and streaked, with yellow eyes.

**Habitat and habits:** Found alone or in small groups on migration. Active at dusk, roosts hidden in vegetation during the day, on wetlands. Opportunistic, feeds on aquatic and land invertebrates and small vertebrates.

**Status:** Passage migrant, Winter visitor.

**Abundance:** Scarce, Rare.

**Conservation status:** LC/LC.

Grey Heron  
*Ardea cinerea*



Purple Heron  
*Ardea purpurea*



Squacco Heron  
*Ardeola ralloides*



Cattle Egret  
*Bubulcus ibis*



Little Egret  
*Egretta garzetta*

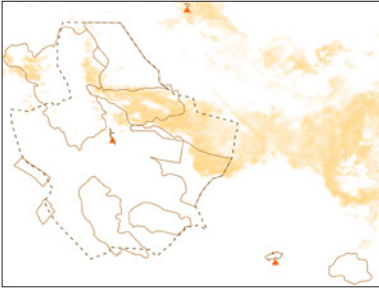


Black-crowned  
Night-heron  
*Nycticorax nycticorax*





**Spur-winged Lapwing**  
***Vanellus spinosus*** (Linnaeus,  
 1758)



**Global distribution:** Partly migratory; breeds from W to E Africa, Nile Valley and scattered around the Middle East; winters within its S resident range.

**Distribution in AIU/a:** Tayma.

**Measurements:** L: 25-28 cm;  
 Wt: 127-177 g

**Identification:** Large plover with long dark legs. Pale grey-brown upperparts, black head and underparts, white cheeks and neck sides. In flight, tri-coloured wing patterns are visible: black flight feathers, pale grey-brown coverts, and a white band in between. Tail white with broad black terminal band.

**Habitat and habits:** Found in pairs or small groups, in temporary ponds, reservoirs, wastewater ponds and irrigated fields. Feeds on insects and larvae. Nests on the ground, noisy in breeding season.

**Status:** Resident.

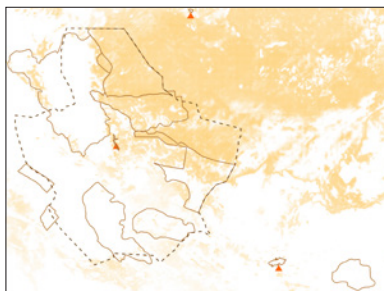
**Abundance:** Scarce.

**Conservation status:** LC/LC.

Spur-winged Lapwing  
*Vanellus spinosus*



**Cream-coloured Courser**  
***Cursorius cursor*** (Latham,  
 1787)



**Global distribution:** Partly migratory; breeds throughout N Africa and Middle East to Pakistan; winters mainly in Sahel, Pakistan and NW India.

**Distribution in AIUla:** AlGharameel, Wadi Nakhlah, Sharaan.

**Measurements:** L: 19-24 cm;  
 Wt: 102-119 g.

**Identification:** Medium-sized desert wader, sandy-brown with long legs and a thin, down-curved bill. Blue-grey crown, black and white stripes from eye meeting in 'V' shape at nape. In flight shows black underwing and on upperwing from carpal joint to tip. Juvenile is duller and lightly spotted.

**Habitat and habits:** Found alone, in pairs or small groups after breeding, in open flat sandy, gravel and stony deserts and semi-deserts, and short grassland. Feeds mainly on larval insects and other invertebrates, seeds, and occasionally lizards. Nests on the ground.

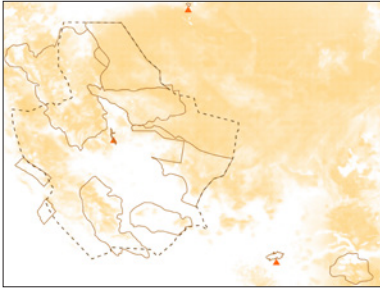
**Status:** Resident, Passage migrant, Winter visitor.

**Abundance:** Uncommon, Uncommon, Uncommon.

**Conservation status:** LC/LC.

Cream-coloured Courser  
*Cursorius cursor*



**Little Owl*****Athene noctua*** (Scopoli, 1769)

**Global distribution:** Resident; found from W Europe to China, N and NE Africa and the Middle East.

**Distribution in AIUla:** All areas except Harrat AlZabin, Jabal Nahar, Old Khaybar and Tayma.

**Measurements:** L: 21-23 cm; WS: 54-58 cm; Wt: 162-206 g.

**Identification:** Small and compact owl, with a large, rounded head, no facial disc, big yellow eyes, and long legs. Plumage varies from dark-brown to pale-sandy (*A. n. lilith*). White spotted upperparts and streaked underparts. Displays a 'false face' on nape. Common calls, a mellow "koooah" or a high-pitch short "weew".

**Habitat and habits:** Found alone or in small numbers, in rocky hills, wadis, harrats and lava fields, semi-deserts with rocky outcrops and farmland. Nocturnal with some diurnal activity, mainly at dawn and dusk. Feeds on large insects, rodents, small birds, and reptiles. Nests on cavities in rock, trees or buildings.

**Status:** Resident.

**Abundance:** Common.

**Conservation status:** LC/LC.

**Pallid Scops-owl*****Otus brucei*** (Hume, 1873)

**Global distribution:** Partly migratory; breeds patchily in Levant, Iraq, E Oman, UAE and from Iran to Kazakhstan and Pakistan; winters in S Asia, and sparingly in Palestine and Arabia.

**Distribution in AIUla:** Harrat AlZabin.

**Measurements:** L: 18-21 cm; WS: 54-64 cm; Wt: 100-110 g.

**Identification:** Small, pale-grey owl with yellow eyes and thick ear-tufts, not prominent when relaxed. Very similar to the Eurasian Scops-owl (not illustrated), but tail extends beyond wingtips, scapular 'braces' are buffish (not white). Dark streaked below, without white barring.

**Habitat and habits:** Solitary, well camouflaged in large trees on wadis, rocky plains and hills, semi-desert, palm groves and parks. Nocturnal, preys on large insects, small mammals, birds, and reptiles.

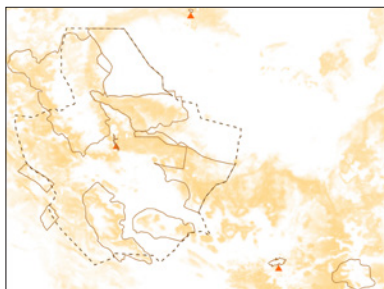
**Status:** Winter visitor.

**Abundance:** Rare.

**Conservation status:** LC/LC.

**Desert Tawny Owl**

***Strix hadorami*** Kirwan,  
Schweizer & Copete, 2015



**Global distribution:** Resident; found throughout Arabia, associated with the main mountain ranges, S Levant, Sinai and E Egypt.

**Distribution in AIUla:** All areas except AlGharameel, Harrat Khaybar, Old Khaybar and Tayma.

**Measurements:** L: 30-35 cm;  
WS: 95-98 cm; Wt: 140-284 g.

**Identification:** Medium, sandy-pale owl with a large, rounded head, orangey eyes, whitish facial disc and underparts, light-ochre barred. Wings and tail are boldly dark barred. Song is a 5 syllabic "Hu! Hu-hu hu-hu".

**Habitat and habits:** Found alone or in pairs, in rocky mountains and deserts with high sandstone cliffs, escarpments and canyons. Nocturnal, feeds mainly on rodents, also geckos, small birds, and insects. Nests in cliffs.

**Status:** Resident.

**Abundance:** Uncommon.

**Conservation status:** LC/LC.

**Pharaoh Eagle-owl**

***Bubo ascalaphus*** Savigny,  
1809



**Global distribution:** Resident; found in NW Africa and scattered throughout the Sahara, Sahel and Middle East.

**Distribution in AIUla:** AlGharameel, Sharaan, Wadi Nakhlah.

**Measurements:** L: 45-50 cm;  
WS: 100-120 cm; Wt: M 1900g,  
F 2300 g.

**Identification:** Medium-large sandy-pale owl with prominent ear-tufts and large orangey eyes. Facial disc framed dark, white throat, chest broadly dark streaked, and dark blotched upperparts. Song a deep monosyllabic "huo".

**Habitat and habits:** Solitary, found in sandy areas with sandstone outcrops, cliffs and escarpments, and rocky mountains. Nocturnal, feeds mainly on rodents. Preys also on medium-sized mammals, birds, reptiles, and large invertebrates. Nests in cliffs.

**Status:** Resident.

**Abundance:** Uncommon.

**Conservation status:** LC/LC.

Little Owl  
*Athene noctua*



Pallid Scops-owl  
*Otus brucei*

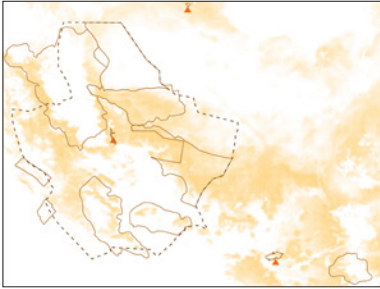


Desert Tawny Owl  
*Strix hadorami*



Pharaoh Eagle-owl  
*Bubo ascalaphus*

**Common Barn-owl**  
*Tyto alba* (Scopoli, 1769)



**Global distribution:** Resident; cosmopolitan, found throughout the Americas, Europe, Africa, Middle East, S and SE Asia, and Australia.

**Distribution in AIUla:** Old Khaybar, Harrat Uwayrid, AIUla Oasis.

**Measurements:** L: 29-44 cm; WS: 80-95 cm; Wt: 187-455 g.

**Identification:** Medium-sized owl with heart-shaped facial disc and black eyes. The region's ssp (*T. a. erlangeri*) has a white face and underparts, lightly spotted in some birds, and pale-orange and grey upperparts. Calls include hissing and screeching sounds.

**Habitat and habits:** Found alone or in pairs in palm groves, farmland, semi-deserts, often associated with human presence. Nocturnal, hunts mostly rodents, also bats, small birds and large insects. Nests on cavities in rock, trees or buildings.

**Status:** Resident.

**Abundance:** Scarce.

**Conservation status:** LC/LC.

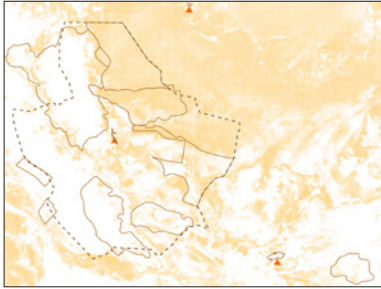


Common Barn-owl  
*Tyto alba*

## Black-winged Kite

*Elanus caeruleus*

(Desfontaines, 1789)<sup>1</sup>



**Global distribution:** Resident; found in SW Europe, N and sub-Saharan Africa, Middle East and S and SE Asia. Strong post-breeding dispersion.

**Distribution in AIUla:** Sharaan.

**Measurements:** L: 30-37 cm; WS: 77-92 cm; Wt: M 197-277 g, F 219-343 g.

**Identification:** Small, falcon-sized raptor with broad pointy wings, short tail, and large head with red eyes. Upperparts are pale-grey with black shoulders. Underparts white, with black wing tips. Juvenile with rusty underparts and white fringes on upperparts.

**Habitat and habits:** Found alone or in pairs, in open areas with scattered trees, semi-deserts, farmland and plantations. Feeds mostly on rodents, detected from perches or by hovering. Also takes other small mammals, birds, reptiles, and insects.

**Status:** Winter visitor.

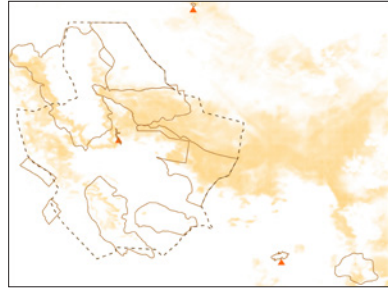
**Abundance:** Scarce.

**Conservation status:** LC/VU.

## European Honey-buzzard

*Pernis pivorus* (Linnaeus,

1758)<sup>2</sup>



**Global distribution:** Migratory; breeds from W Europe to Iran and Siberia; winters in sub-Saharan Africa.

**Distribution in AIUla:** Tayma, AIUla Oasis.

**Measurements:** L: 52-60 cm; WS: 118-150 cm; Wt: 360-1050 g.

**Identification:** Medium-sized raptor, with small projected head. Relatively long tail with 3 bands (1 terminal and 2 at base), broad, curved wings with same pattern and 5 'fingers'. Variable plumage: dark, pale and rufous, with dark carpal patch on underwing. Adult with yellow eyes, juvenile, brown. Male with grey head, female and juvenile, brown.

**Habitat and habits:** Migrates in flocks, when it can be found anywhere. Feeds mainly on wasps and hornets from nests, and on other large insects, small mammals, reptiles and birds.

**Status:** Passage migrant.

**Abundance:** Scarce.

**Conservation status:** LC/NE.

**Oriental Honey-buzzard*****Pernis ptilorhynchus***

(Temminck, 1821)



**Global distribution:** Partly migratory; breeds throughout S and SE Asia and from Far Eastern Russia to Japan; winters within its S breeding range, and in Arabia.

**Distribution in AIUla:** Tayma.

**Measurements:** L: 52-68 cm; WS: 115-155 cm; Wt: M 750-1280 g, F 950-1490 g.

**Identification:** Similar but larger than the European Honey-buzzard, with broader, '6 fingers', wings, and shorter tail. Lacks dark carpal patch. Adult with defined 'gorget' on throat. Male has grey head, dark eyes, and only 2 broad dark tail bands. Female has brown head and yellow eyes. Juvenile has brown head, dark eyes, and usually pale rump.

**Habitat and habits:** Solitary or in small numbers, found in open woodland, irrigated farmland, and oasis. Feeds on social bees, wasps, combs and honey, and on other large insects, small mammals, and birds.

**Status:** Passage migrant, Winter visitor.

**Abundance:** Rare-Rare.

**Conservation status:** LC/NA.

Black-winged Kite  
*Elanus caeruleus*



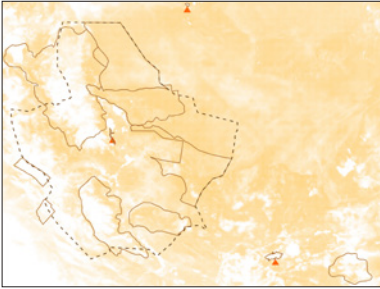
European  
Honey-buzzard  
*Pernis apivorus*



Oriental Honey-buzzard  
*Pernis ptilorhynchus*



**Egyptian Vulture**  
***Neophron percnopterus***  
 (Linnaeus, 1758)



**Global distribution:** Partly migratory; breeds across the Mediterranean, Sahara and Sahel to C and S Asia; winters mainly within its resident S range.

**Distribution in AIUa:** Sharaan, Harrat Khaybar.

**Measurements:** L: 54-70 cm; WS: 146-175 cm; Wt: 1600-2400 g.

**Identification:** Small, black and white vulture with a bare yellow face and slender bill. Long, straight wings and wedge-shaped tail. Juvenile is dark with pale-grey face and feet.

**Habitat and habits:** Solitary or in small numbers at rich feeding sites, found in open, arid land, mountains, wadis, and dumps. Feeds mainly on carrion scraps, rejected by other vultures, also large insects, eggs, and human food scraps. Nests in cliffs.

**Status:** Resident, Passage migrant, Winter visitor.

**Abundance:** Rare, Scarce, Rare.

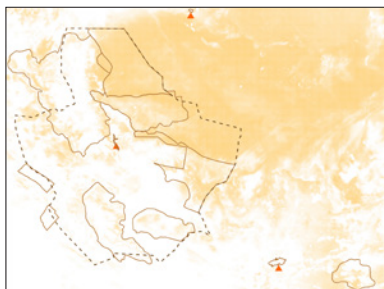
**Conservation status:** EN/VU.



Adult



Juvenile

**Griffon Vulture*****Gyps fulvus*** (Hablizl, 1783)

**Global distribution:** Partly migratory; breeds across the Mediterranean to Middle East, and parts of C Asia. Primarily immatures winter across Sahel, NW and NE Africa, S Europe to the Middle East, and C and S Asia.

**Distribution in AIUla:** Harrat Uwayrid, Harrat Khaybar, Wadi Nakhlah.

**Measurements:** L: 106-120 cm; WS: 233-276 cm; Wt: 6000-11000 g.

**Identification:** Huge brown vulture, with long, broad, curved wings and a short dark tail. Pale head and neck, dark flight feathers and pale-brown body. Juvenile is darker, with brownish ruff and grey bill, adult with white ruff and yellow bill. Soars with wings raised in shallow 'V' shape.

**Habitat and habits:** Gregarious, found in mountains and harrats, but occurs anywhere looking for food. Feeds on carrion, refuses dumps. Nests in cliffs.

**Status:** Resident, Passage migrant, Winter visitor.

**Abundance:** Rare, Uncommon, Uncommon.

**Conservation status:** LC/EN.

**Cinereous Vulture*****Aegypius monachus***

(Linnaeus, 1766)



**Global distribution:** Partly migratory; breeds in Iberia and Turkey to Mongolia and China. Primarily immatures winter in W Sahel and N Africa, Middle East and Himalayas to the Korean Peninsula.

**Distribution in AIUla:** Harrat Uwayrid, Harrat Khaybar.

**Measurements:** L: 102-112 cm; WS: 250-295 cm; Wt: 7000-12500 g.

**Identification:** Huge dark vulture with pale feet, long, broad straight wings and short tail. Underwing coverts darker than flight feathers. Juvenile is darker with black head, adult with white crown. Like the Lappet-faced Vulture, soars with lowered outer wings.

**Habitat and habits:** Solitary or in flocks with other migratory raptors, found in desolate mountains, harrats, steppe and semi-desert. Feeds on carrion.

**Status:** Winter visitor.

**Abundance:** Rare.

**Conservation status:** NT/NE.

**Lappet-faced Vulture**  
***Torgos tracheliotos*** (Forster, 1791)



**Global distribution:** Resident; found throughout sub-Saharan Africa and Arabia.

**Distribution in AIUia:** AlGharameel.

**Measurements:** L: 115 cm;  
 WS: 280 cm; Wt: 5400-9400 g.

**Identification:** Huge dark-brown vulture with long, broad, slightly arched wings and a short tail. Pale naked head, dark ruff, brown-and-white streaked chest, pale 'trousers' and pale narrow stripe on undercoverts. Immature is darker.

**Habitat and habits:** Usually seen in pairs in open semi-desert and desert with scattered trees. Feeds on carrion, dominating other scavenger birds. Nest is huge, in Acacia trees.

**Status:** Resident.

**Abundance:** Rare.

**Conservation status:** EN/VU.



Griffon Vulture  
*Gyps fulvus*



Cinereous Vulture  
*Aegypius monachus*



Lappet-faced Vulture  
*Torgos tracheliotos*



## Greater Spotted Eagle

*Clanga clanga* (Pallas, 1811)



**Global distribution:** Migratory; breeds from E Europe to E Asia; winters locally in S Europe, E Africa, Middle East, India and parts of SE Asia.

**Distribution in AIUla:** AlGharameel.

**Measurements:** L: 59-71 cm; WS: 155-180 cm; Wt: M 1500-1900 g, F 1800-2500 g.

**Identification:** Medium-large dark eagle with long rectangular wings and a short tail. Single white 'comma' at the wrist of the underwing, and coverts darker than flight feathers. Juvenile with white spots throughout the upperparts and pale 'trousers'.

**Habitat and habits:** Solitary or in small groups in winter, near wetlands and human-made areas like irrigated crops, reservoirs and dumps. Opportunistic, feeds on small mammals, medium-sized birds, carrion, reptiles and large insects.

**Status:** Passage migrant, Winter visitor.

**Abundance:** Rare, Rare.

**Conservation status:** VU/NE.

## Steppe Eagle

*Aquila nipalensis* Hodgson, 1833



**Global distribution:** Migratory; breeds from Asia Minor and Caspian to NE China; winters in S and E Africa, Middle East, India and parts of SE Asia.

**Distribution in AIUla:** AlGharameel, Harrat AlZabin, Harrat Uwayrid, Sharaan, Wadi Nakhlah, Jabal Nahar, Harrat Khaybar.

**Measurements:** L: 60-81 cm; WS: 165-214 cm; Wt: M 2000-3500 g, F 2300-4900 g.

**Identification:** Large eagle with broad wings and 'hand'. Adult is dark-brown with yellowish nape, dark carpal patches, barred flight feathers and trailing edge. Juvenile is paler with broad white band on the underwing and white trailing edge. Long yellow gape-line on bill extends to rear of the eye.

**Habitat and habits:** Gathers in groups on migration, appearing anywhere, including dumps and human settlements. Preys mainly on small and medium-sized mammals, feeding also on carrion and food scraps.

**Status:** Passage migrant, Winter visitor.

**Abundance:** Uncommon, Scarce.

**Conservation status:** EN/NE.

**Eastern Imperial Eagle*****Aquila heliaca*** Savigny, 1809

**Global distribution:** Partly migratory; breeds from E Europe to NE Asia; winters in E Africa, Middle East, India and SE Asia.

**Distribution in AIUla:** Sharaan.

**Measurements:** L: 72-84 cm; WS: 180-215 cm; Wt: M 2450-2720 g, F 3160-4530 g.

**Identification:** Large, with relatively short tail and rectangular wings. Adult is dark with pale-golden nape, white shoulder patches and terminal tail band. Juvenile is dark-streaked, pale sandy-brown, getting progressively darker with age.

**Habitat and habits:** Solitary or in small groups, found in semi-deserts with trees, steppe and dumps. Preys mainly on small to medium-sized mammals, also birds, reptiles and carrion.

**Status:** Winter visitor.

**Abundance:** Scarce.

**Conservation status:** VU/NE.

**Golden Eagle*****Aquila chrysaetos*** Gray, 1860

**Global distribution:** Partly migratory; occurs across most of the Palearctic, Arabia and North America.

**Distribution in AIUla:** Harrat Khaybar.

**Measurements:** L: 70-99 cm; WS: 185-222 cm; Wt: M 2387-4500 g, F 3048-6460 g.

**Identification:** Large, dark-brown with a golden nape and upper wing patch, long tail and rounded wings. Juvenile with white tail and dark terminal band, and white wing panel. Wings in a shallow 'V' while soaring.

**Habitat and habits:** Solitary or in pairs, found in mountainous areas and semi-deserts with trees. Preys mostly on small and medium-sized mammals, also birds, reptiles and carrion. Nests in cliffs, rarely in trees.

**Status:** Resident.

**Abundance:** Rare.

**Conservation status:** LC/EN.

**Verreaux's Eagle*****Aquila verreauxii*** Lesson,  
1830

**Global distribution:** Resident; found from E Africa to S Africa, with isolated populations in Chad, Niger, Egypt and Arabia.

**Distribution in AIUla:** Jabal Al Ward.

**Measurements:** L: 80-90 cm;  
WS: 181-219 cm; Wt: M 3000-4150 g,  
F 3100-5800 g.

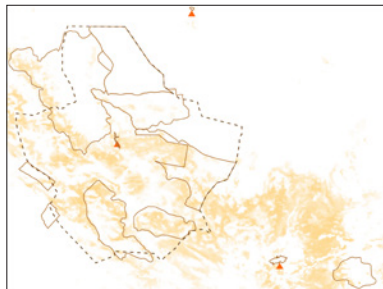
**Identification:** Striking large black eagle, with long tail and wings, with a unique paddle shape, more pronounced in female, and pale 'windows'. Pure-white rump, lower back, and 'V' on shoulders. Juvenile with brownish back and streaked underbody.

**Habitat and habits:** Found alone or in pairs in rocky mountains, where it nests in cliffs and ravines. Highly reliant on Rock Hyrax, catches prey by surprise, hunting alone or cooperatively in pairs. Can also take other medium-sized mammals, birds and reptiles.

**Status:** Resident.

**Abundance:** Rare.

**Conservation status:** LC/EN.

**Bonelli's Eagle*****Aquila fasciata*** (Vieillot, 1822)

**Global distribution:** Resident; found from Iberia and NW Africa, extending across the Mediterranean, Middle East, and S Asia to SE China.

**Distribution in AIUla:** Harrat AlZabin, Jabal Al Ward, Harrat Uwayrid, Wadi Nakhlah, Jabal Nahar.

**Measurements:** L: 55-67 cm;  
WS: 143-176 cm; Wt: M 1400-2240 g,  
F 2100-3025 g.

**Identification:** Medium-large and powerful with a long tail with broad terminal band. White, streaked underbody, contrasting with dark wings. White mantle patch on dark-brown upperparts. Juveniles with rufous underparts, lacking terminal tail band.

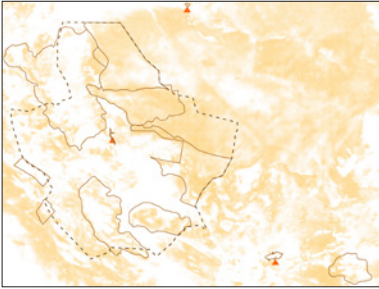
**Habitat and habits:** Found alone or in pairs in rocky mountains and wooded hills. Feeds mainly on medium-sized birds and mammals, occasionally large lizards. Nests in cliffs.

**Status:** Resident.

**Abundance:** Scarce.

**Conservation status:** LC/LC.

**Short-toed Snake-eagle**  
***Circaetus gallicus*** (Gmelin,  
 1788)



**Global distribution:** Partly migratory; bBreeds from SW Europe and NW Africa to Mongolia and S Asia, including parts of Arabia; wWinters in Sahel.

**Distribution in AIUla:** Harrat Uwayrid, Jabal Shayhoub, AlGhameel, Sharaan

**Measurements:** L: 62-70 cm;  
 WS: 166-188 cm; Wt: M 1200-2000 g,  
 F 1300-2300 g.

**Identification:** Large, pale, big headed eagle with orangey eyes and long, broad wings. Brown head and 'bib', white underparts coarsely brown barred with barred tail. Juvenile is paler, some have pale throat.

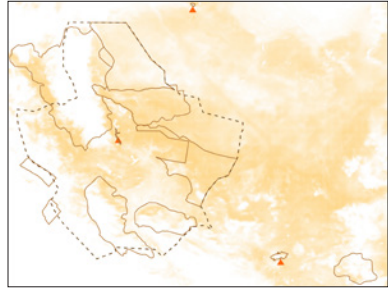
**Habitat and habits:** Solitary, found in open woodland, semi deserts, harrats and stony foothills. Specialised on preying reptiles, mainly snakes, detected from high perches or by hovering, preys mostly on snakes. Nests in trees or cliffs.

**Status:** Breeding migrant, Passage migrant, Winter visitor.

**Abundance:** Rare, Scarce, Scarce.

**Conservation status:** LC/VU.

**Booted Eagle**  
***Hieraaetus pennatus***  
 (Gmelin, 1788)



**Global distribution:** Migratory; bBreeds from SW Europe and NW Africa to Asia and Mongolia; wWinters across sSub-Saharan Africa and S Asia.

**Distribution in AIUla:** Tayma, Harrat Uwayrid.

**Measurements:** L: 42-51 cm;  
 WS: 113-138 cm; Wt: M 510-770 g,  
 F 840-1250 g

**Identification:** Small eagle with squared tail, long wings with prominent fingers, pale upper wing patches and rump. Two colour types: pale, with white underparts and black flight-feathers; and dark, varying from dark-brown to rufous underparts with paler 'windows'.

**Habitat and habits:** Alone or in small numbers soaring over any type of habitat on migration, favouring open wooded areas. Feeds mainly on small and medium-sized birds, small mammals, and occasionally reptiles.

**Status:** Passage migrant.

**Abundance:** Uncommon.

**Conservation status:** LC/NE.

Greater Spotted Eagle  
*Clanga clanga*



Adult



Juvenile

Steppe Eagle  
*Aquila nipalensis*



Adult



Juvenile

Eastern Imperial Eagle  
*Aquila heliaca*



Adult



Juvenile



Golden Eagle  
*Aquila chrysaetos*



Adult



Juvenile

Verreaux's Eagle  
*Aquila verreauxii*



Adult



Juvenile

Bonelli's Eagle  
*Aquila fasciata*



Adult





Short-toed Snake-eagle  
*Circaetus gallicus*

Booted Eagle  
*Hieraaetus pennatus*



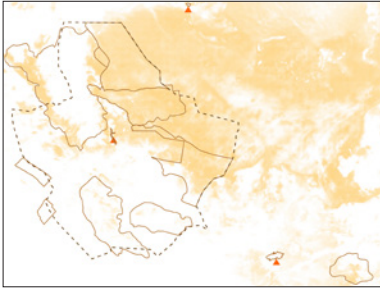
Dark



Pale

**Western Marsh-harrier*****Circus aeruginosus***

(Linnaeus, 1758)



**Global distribution:** Partly migratory; breeds from W Europe to Mongolia; winters in S Europe, the Nile Valley, sub-Saharan Africa and S Asia.

**Distribution in AIUla:** AlGharameel, Harrat Khaybar, Wadi Nakhlah, Sharaan.

**Measurements:** L: 43-54 cm; WS: 115-145 cm; Wt: M 405-730 g, F 540-960 g.

**Identification:** Large harrier with typical long wings and tail. Adult male with brown body, pale-grey, tail and wings, with black tips. Female and juvenile dark-brown with cream crown and throat, female with cream shoulders.

**Habitat and habits:** Found alone in open land, soaring low in an open 'V' shape, or in groups in rich wetlands and irrigated-pivot fields. Opportunistic, feeds on small and medium-sized birds, eggs and chicks, small mammals, reptiles, large insects, and carrion.

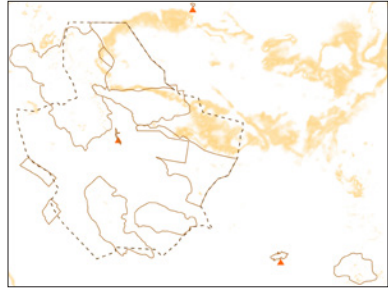
**Status:** Passage migrant, Winter visitor.

**Abundance:** Uncommon, Uncommon.

**Conservation status:** LC/NT.

**Pallid Harrier*****Circus macrourus*** (Gmelin,

1770)



**Global distribution:** Migratory; breeds from SE Europe to W Mongolia; winters in the Afrotropic, parts of the Middle East and S Asia.

**Distribution in AIUla:** Harrat Khaybar.

**Measurements:** L: 40-48 cm; WS: 100-121 cm; Wt: M 235-416 g, F 402-550 g.

**Identification:** Similar to the Montagu's Harrier, lacks dark wing bands. Adult male is pale grey with black wingtip wedges. Female has darker underwing coverts and a pale neck collar. Juvenile displays a dark 'boa' and pale collar.

**Habitat and habits:** Found alone, or in small groups during migration, flying low in open land, favouring grassland, farmland and scrub desert. Feeds mainly on small birds and mammals, and large insects in winter grounds.

**Status:** Passage migrant, Winter visitor.

**Abundance:** Uncommon, Scarce.

**Conservation status:** NT/NE.

**Montagu's Harrier*****Circus pygargus*** (Linnaeus,  
1758)

**Global distribution:** Migratory; breeds from W Europe and NW Africa to C Asia; winters across Sahel to W Yemen, S Africa and S Asia.

**Distribution in AUUla:** Sharaan.

**Measurements:** L: 39-49 cm;  
WS: 102-123 cm; Wt: M 227-305 g,  
F 254-445 g.

**Identification:** Elegant harrier with long, slender wings, showing 4 'fingers' and a black band on upperwing and underwing. Male is grey, with black primaries and brown underwing coverts. Female and juvenile are brown, with white ring on the base of the tail. Juvenile with plain rufous underparts, lacks black wing band.

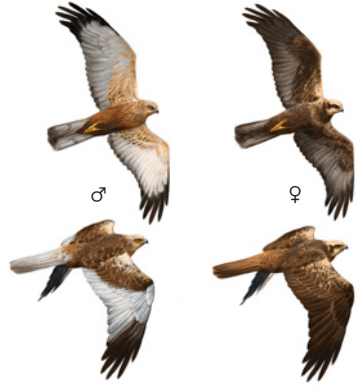
**Habitat and habits:** Found alone, or in small groups during migration, flying low in any open land, favouring marshes and farmland. Feeds mainly on small ground birds and mammals, locally on lizards and large insects.

**Status:** Passage migrant.

**Abundance:** Scarce.

**Conservation status:** LC/NE.

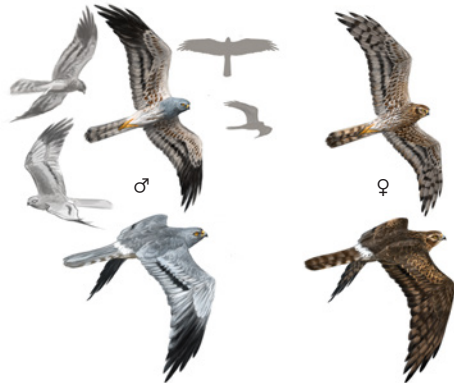
Western Marsh-harrier  
*Circus aeruginosus*



Pallid Harrier  
*Circus macrourus*



Montagu's Harrier  
*Circus pygargus*



**Shikra*****Accipiter badius*** (Gmelin, 1788)

**Global distribution:** Partly migratory; breeds from sub-Saharan Africa to SE Asia, including SW Arabia and Oman; winters in W Sahel and parts of Arabia.

**Distribution in AIUla:** Sharaan.

**Measurements:** L: 25-44,5 cm; WS: 48-68 cm; Wt: M 100-193 g, F 130-266 g.

**Identification:** Small hawk, with a prominent tomial tooth, short wings, and a long tail with rounded corners. Male has a rufous hindcollar and barring below, and a red eye. Female is darker, with yellow eyes and less rufous barring, usually lacking hindcollar. Juvenile is darker, with dark streaked below and a throat stripe.

**Habitat and habits:** Found alone or in pairs, in open woodland, wadis and parkland. Preys mostly on lizards and small birds, also rodents and large insects.

**Status:** Passage migrant.

**Abundance:** Rare.

**Conservation status:** LC/LC.

**Levant Sparrowhawk*****Accipiter brevipes*** (Severtsov, 1850)

**Global distribution:** Migratory; breeds from the Balkans to C Asia; winters mainly in the E Sahel.

**Distribution in AIUla:** AlGharameel.

**Measurements:** L: 30-37 cm; WS: 64-74 cm; Wt: M 140-275 g, F 183-290 g.

**Identification:** Similar to the Eurasian Sparrowhawk, but with dark eyes and longer, pointy wings with black tips, looking more falcon-like. Adult with grey upperparts (bluish in male) and orange-banded underparts. Female is darker, with a throat stripe. Juvenile is dark-brown with pale, dark streaked, underparts.

**Habitat and habits:** On migration congregates in large flocks following the foothills. Feeds on lizards, large insects, small birds, and mammals.

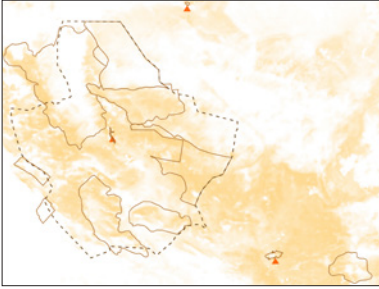
**Status:** Passage migrant.

**Abundance:** Rare.

**Conservation status:** LC/NE.

## Eurasian Sparrowhawk

### *Accipiter nisus* (Linnaeus, 1758)



**Global distribution:** Partly migratory; breeds throughout Europe and NW Africa to the Russian Far East and Japan; winters in S Europe and E Africa to E Asia, including Arabia.

**Distribution in AIUia:** All areas except Jabal Shayhoub, AlGharameel and Old Khaybar.

**Measurements:** L: 28-40 cm; WS: 56-78 cm; Wt: M 105-196 g, F 185-350 g

**Identification:** Small bulky raptor, with broad rounded wings and long squared tail. Adult has grey upperparts, male with rufous cheek and barring below, and female with dark barring. Juvenile is dark-brown above with coarsely barred underparts. Note golden eyes.

**Habitat and habits:** Solitary or gregarious on migration, found in oases, plantations, and wooded parks. Hunts small and medium-sized birds, male hunts smaller prey in heavier vegetated areas.

**Status:** Passage migrant, Winter visitor.

**Abundance:** Uncommon, Common.

**Conservation status:** LC/NE.



Levant Sparrowhawk  
*Accipiter brevipes*





♂

Shikra  
*Accipiter badius*



♀



♂

Levant Sparrowhawk  
*Accipiter brevipes*



♀



♂

Eurasian Sparrowhawk  
*Accipiter nisus*

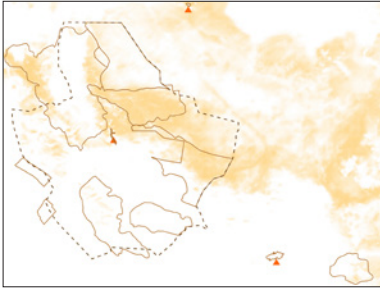


♀



**Black Kite**

***Milvus migrans*** (Boddaert, 1783)



**Global distribution:** Partly migratory; resident from sub-Saharan Africa to SE Asia and Australia. Migratory populations breed from W Europe and NW Africa to E Asia; winters in its resident ranges and the Middle East.

**Distribution in AIUla:** AIUla Oasis, Tayma, AlGharameel, Wadi Nakhlah, Harrat Uwayrid, Harrat Khaybar, Sharaan.

**Measurements:** L: 44-66 cm; WS: 120-153 cm; Wt: M 630-928 g, F 750-1080 g.

**Identification:** Medium-sized dark-brown raptor with a grey head, and slightly bifurcated tail. Long narrow wings showing 6 black 'fingers' and diffuse pale 'windows'. Juvenile has a dark mask. Buoyant flight, often with arched wings.

**Habitat and habits:** Solitary or gregarious on migration, found anywhere, especially at feeding hotspots like wetlands, farmland and dumps. Opportunistic, feeds on human scraps, carrion, small vertebrates, and large insects.

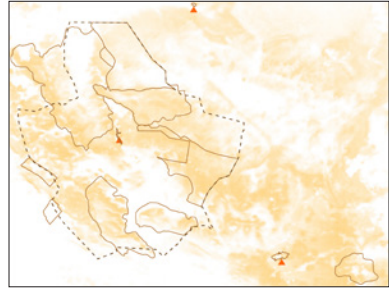
**Status:** Passage migrant, Winter visitor.

**Abundance:** Uncommon, Uncommon.

**Conservation status:** LC/LC.

**Steppe/Common Buzzard**

***Buteo buteo*** (Linnaeus, 1758)



**Global distribution:** The ssp. in the region, *B. b. vulpinus*, is highly migratory, breeding from Finland and E Russia to C Asia; winters in E and S Africa, and S Asia.

**Distribution in AIUla:** Wadi Nakhlah, Harrat AlZabin, Jabal Al Ward, Old Khaybar, Harrat Khaybar.

**Measurements:** L: 40-52 cm; WS: 100-125 cm; Wt: M 427-1183 g, F 486-1364 g.

**Identification:** Medium-sized raptor with variable plumage, similar to the larger Long-legged Buzzard. Generally separable by the absence of prominent dark carpal patch, darker head, and faintly barred tail, usually with a terminal band.

**Habitat and habits:** Found anywhere during autumn migration in large soaring flocks, often reaching several hundred individuals. Mainly feeds on rodents, other small mammals, and reptiles.

**Status:** Passage migrant.

**Abundance:** Common.

**Conservation status:** LC/LC.

## Long-legged Buzzard

***Buteo rufinus*** (Cretzschmar, 1827)



**Global distribution:** Partly migratory; breeds from N Africa and the Balkans to C Asia, with scattered populations in Arabia; winters mainly in E Africa and S Asia.

**Distribution in AIUla:** Wadi Nakhlah, AlGharameel, Old Khaybar, Harrat Uwayrid, Sharaan.

**Measurements:** L: 43-62 cm; WS: 112-160 cm; Wt: M 590-1281 g, F 945-1760 g.

**Identification:** Large, long-winged buzzard with three colour morphs: pale, rufous, and dark. All feature black wing tips and trailing edge, and dark carpal patches. Dark morph has a terminal tail band, others an unbarred rufous-pale tail. Soars with wings in a 'V' shape.

**Habitat and habits:** Solitary or in pairs, found on prominent perches in open deserts, semi-deserts, mountains, open woodland, and farmland. Feeds mainly on small mammals and reptiles, occasionally small birds, and large insects. Nests on cliffs and trees.

**Status:** Resident, Passage migrant, Winter visitor.

**Abundance:** Rare, Uncommon, Uncommon.

**Conservation status:** LC/LC.

Black Kite  
*Milvus migrans*



Steppe/Common Buzzard  
*Buteo buteo*



*Ssp buteo*



*Ssp vulpinus*



*Ssp vulpinus*



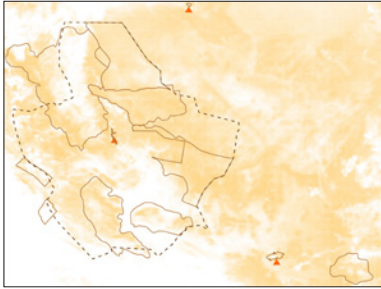
*Ssp buteo*

Long-legged Buzzard  
*Buteo rufinus*



## Common Hoopoe

*Upupa epops* Linnaeus, 1758<sup>1</sup>



**Global distribution:** Partly migratory; breeds across much of Africa (except Sahara and equatorial rainforests), Eurasia and Arabia; winters mainly within its resident S range.

**Distribution in AIUla:** All areas except Jabal Nahar.

**Measurements:** L: 19-32 cm;  
Wt: 46-89 g.

**Identification:** Unmistakable, with a large crest, usually closed, long down-curved bill, ochre plumage, and black and white stripes on wings and tail.

**Habitat and habits:** Solitary or in pairs, found in open woodland, wadis, oases, palm groves, farmland and parks. Feeds on invertebrates dug from the ground. Nests in crevices, on trees, rocks, cliffs or buildings.

**Status:** Resident, Passage migrant.

**Abundance:** Common, Common.

**Conservation status:** LC/LC.

## Common Kingfisher

*Alcedo atthis* (Linnaeus, 1758)<sup>2</sup>



**Global distribution:** Partly migratory; breeds from NW Africa and W Europe to E Asia and SE Asia; winters within their resident S range, and Middle East.

**Distribution in AIUla:** Old Khaybar.

**Measurements:** L: 16-18 cm;  
Wt: 23-35 g.

**Identification:** Small bright blue kingfisher with a very short tail, orange cheeks and underparts, white throat, turquoise back, and a long, black bill. Female has an orange base to bill.

**Habitat and habits:** Found alone or in pairs, in streams, ditches, ponds and reservoirs. Feeds on fish, aquatic invertebrates and tadpoles, caught by diving. Shy, often seen as a fast blue flash flying over water along with a high-pitch call.

**Status:** Passage migrant, Winter visitor.

**Abundance:** Scarce, Scarce.

**Conservation status:** LC/NT.

**White-breasted Kingfisher**  
***Halcyon smyrnensis***  
 (Linnaeus, 1758)



**Global distribution:** Resident with some winter dispersal; found from E Mediterranean to SE Asia, with sporadic presence in Arabia, mainly during winter.

**Distribution in AIUia:** Old Khaybar.

**Measurements:** L: 26-30 cm;  
 Wt: M 85-88 g, F 110 g.

**Identification:** Large colourful kingfisher with a long, dark-red bill. Dark-brown head, belly and flanks contrast with a white throat and chest, and a turquoise back and tail. In flight, wings display a broad white patch and black tips.

**Habitat and habits:** Solitary, found in high perches near wetlands, palm groves and dry woodlands. Feeds on invertebrates, fish, amphibians, small reptiles and rodents, diving on prey.

**Status:** Winter visitor.

**Abundance:** Rare.

**Conservation status:** LC/LC.

Common Kingfisher  
*Alcedo atthis*

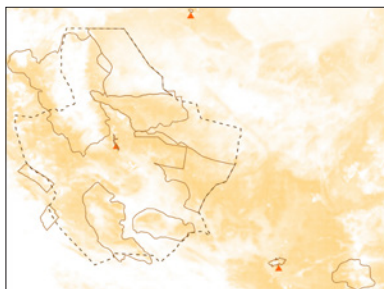


Common Hoopoe  
*Upupa epops*



White-breasted Kingfisher  
*Halcyon smyrnensis*

**Arabian Green Bee-eater**  
***Merops cyanophrys*** Latham,  
 1802



**Global distribution:** Resident; near endemic to Arabia, absent in the N, NE and Empty Quarter, occurring also in Jordan and Palestine.

**Distribution in AIUla:** All areas except Jabal Nahar, Harrat Khaybar and Tayma.

**Measurements:** L: 16-18 cm;  
 Wt: 15-20 g.

**Identification:** Smallest bee-eater in the region, with shiny green plumage, electric-blue face and throat, black eye-stripe and neck band and relatively short tail projection. In flight, rusty underwings visible. Juvenile duller, lacking tail projection.

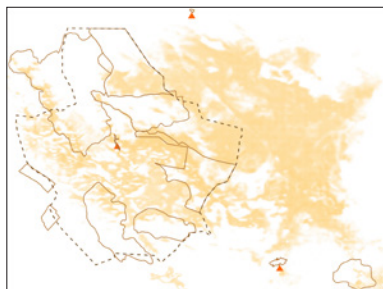
**Habitat and habits:** Found in pairs or small groups in open areas with trees, including semi-deserts, wadis, oases and palm groves. Feeds on flying insects. Nests in long tunnels excavated in sandy banks.

**Status:** Resident.

**Abundance:** Abundant.

**Conservation status:** LC/LC.

**Blue-cheeked Bee-eater**  
***Merops persicus*** Pallas, 1773



**Global distribution:** Migratory; breeds in NW Africa, W Sahel and patchily from the Nile Delta to Kazakhstan and NW India; winters in sub-Saharan Africa.

**Distribution in AIUla:** Tayma, Harrat Khaybar.

**Measurements:** L: 31 cm; Wt: 38-56 g.

**Identification:** Large green bee-eater with long tail projection (longer in male), black eye-stripe, blue cheeks and supercilium, and a yellow and chestnut throat patch. Rusty-red underwings seen in flight. Juvenile is duller, with rusty throat and lacking tail projection.

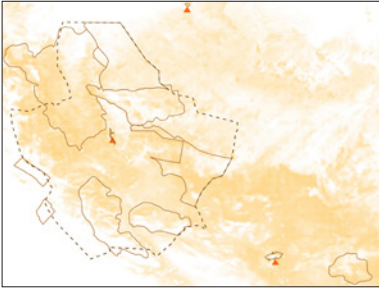
**Habitat and habits:** Gregarious on migration, found mainly in areas with abundance of food, such as wetlands, oases, palm groves, farmland and wadis. Feeds on flying insects.

**Status:** Passage migrant.

**Abundance:** Uncommon.

**Conservation status:** LC/LC.

**European Bee-eater**  
***Merops apiaster*** Linnaeus,  
 1758



**Global distribution:** Migratory; breeds from W Europe and NW Africa to W Mongolia and N India; winters mainly in sub-Saharan Africa.

**Distribution in AIUla:** Harrat Khaybar, AIUla Oasis, Sharaan.

**Measurements:** L: 25-29 cm;  
 Wt: 44-78 g.

**Identification:** Large colourful bee-eater, with a broad black eye-stripe, chestnut crown, back and wing coverts, turquoise supercilium, primaries, tail and underparts, yellow throat and scapulars, and relatively short tail projection. Juvenile is duller, with pale-greenish back and lacking tail projection.

**Habitat and habits:** Gregarious, found on migration in areas with abundance of food, such as wetlands, oases, palm groves, farmland and wadis. Hunts insects in flight. Very vocal, helpful to detect passing high flying flocks.

**Status:** Passage migrant.

**Abundance:** Uncommon.

**Conservation status:** LC/LC.



Arabian Green Bee-eater  
*Merops cyanophrys*



European Bee-eater  
*Merops apiaster*



Blue-cheeked Bee-eater  
*Merops persicus*

## European Roller

***Coracias garrulus*** Linnaeus, 1758<sup>1</sup>



**Global distribution:** Migratory; breeds across the Mediterranean and from E Europe to Iran in the S and Kazakhstan in the E; winters in sub-Saharan Africa.

**Distribution in AIUla:** Sharaan.

**Measurements:** L: 31-32 cm; Wt: 127-160 g.

**Identification:** Bright turquoise-blue bird with a stout bill, reddish-brown back, deep-blue shoulder patch, rump and base of tail, and black flight feathers. Underparts are turquoise-blue with striking deep-blue flight feathers. Juvenile is duller.

**Habitat and habits:** Solitary or in small groups on migration, found mainly in open land with scattered trees or other prominent perches. Feeds on large invertebrates, small reptiles, and mammals.

**Status:** Passage migrant.

**Abundance:** Scarce.

**Conservation status:** LC/NT.

## Eurasian Wryneck

***Jynx torquilla*** Linnaeus, 1758<sup>2</sup>



**Global distribution:** Migratory; breeds from W Europe and NW Africa to the Russian Far East and NE China; winters mainly in sub-Saharan Africa, S and SE Asia.

**Distribution in AIUla:** AIUla Oasis.

**Measurements:** L: 16-18 cm; Wt: 30-50 g.

**Identification:** Small, cryptic woodpecker, with a short pointy bill, upperparts mottled grey and brown, dark eye-stripe, buff throat, pale, dark-barred underparts, and a long tail. A dark stripe runs from crown to back.

**Habitat and habits:** Solitary and elusive, found anywhere on migration, mainly in open woodland, oases, wadis, parks and palm groves. Feeds on invertebrates in the ground, mainly on ants caught with its long sticky tongue.

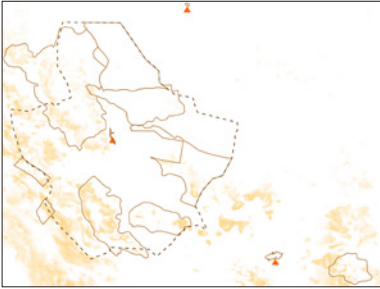
**Status:** Passage migrant.

**Abundance:** Scarce.

**Conservation status:** LC/NA.



**Arabian Woodpecker**  
***Dendropicos dora*** (Bates &  
 Kinnear, 1935)



**Global distribution:** Resident; endemic to Arabia, found across its W mountain ranges.

**Distribution in AIUa:** Harrat AlZabin, Jabal Shayhoub.

**Measurements:** L: 18 cm; Wt: 41,5 g.

**Identification:** Small pale-brown woodpecker, with black and white barred wings and tail, and red belly patch, duller in female. Male has red crown and nape.

**Habitat and habits:** Solitary or in pairs, found in open rocky woodland, mountain slopes and wadis with mature acacia. Feeds on insects drilled from trees. Nests in holes excavated in trunks.

**Status:** Resident.

**Abundance:** Scarce.

**Conservation status:** NT/VU.

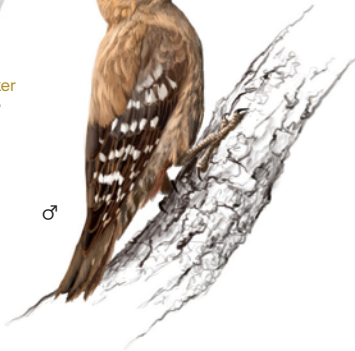
European Roller  
*Coracias garrulus*

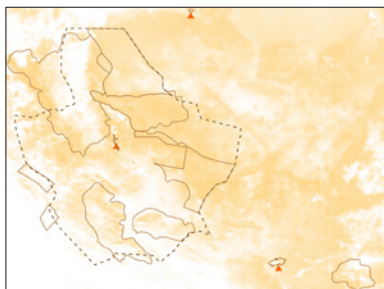


Eurasian Wryneck  
*Jynx torquilla*

Arabian Woodpecker  
*Dendropicos dora*

♂



**Common Kestrel*****Falco tinnunculus*** Linnaeus,  
1758

**Global distribution:** Partly migratory; breeds throughout much of Eurasia, Africa and Middle East; winters within its S and W resident range, and in S and SE Asia.

**Distribution in AIUla:** All areas.

**Measurements:** L: 27-35 cm; WS: 57-79 cm; Wt: M 136-252 g, F 154-314 g.

**Identification:** Medium-sized falcon with a diffuse moustache-stripe, long narrow wings and tail, featuring a broad black terminal band. Heavily spotted on its reddish-brown back, forewings, and pale underparts. Male has a grey head and tail.

**Habitat and habits:** Found alone or in pairs, widespread in open habitats. Feeds mostly on small mammals, less frequently large insects, lizards and passerines. Drops on prey from high perches or by hovering. Nests in holes on cliffs, rocks, or buildings.

**Status:** Resident, Passage migrant, Winter visitor.

**Abundance:** Common, Uncommon, Uncommon.

**Conservation status:** LC/LC.

**Sooty Falcon*****Falco concolor*** Temminck,  
1825

**Global distribution:** Migratory; breeds in NE Africa, throughout the Red Sea coast and islands, parts of the Gulf coast and SW Pakistan; winters in Madagascar and across the Mozambique coastline.

**Distribution in AIUla:** AlGharameel, Sharaan.

**Measurements:** L: 32-36 cm; WS: 75-88 cm; Wt: 298-350 g.

**Identification:** Medium-sized falcon with long, pointy wings. Adult is all-grey, with a yellow eye-ring and feet. Male has darker 'hands.' Juvenile has streaked rusty-pale underparts, a dark moustache, and a broad terminal tail band.

**Habitat and habits:** Found alone, in pairs or small groups, in deserts with canyons and cliffs. Predominantly hunts birds in flight, at dawn and dusk. Also preys on bats, voles and large insects. Nests on cliffs.

**Status:** Breeding migrant, Passage migrant.

**Abundance:** Rare, Scarce.

**Conservation status:** VU/EN.

**Eurasian Hobby**  
***Falco subbuteo*** Linnaeus,  
 1758



**Global distribution:** Migratory; breeds across Europe to the Russian Far East and E China; winters mainly in sub-Saharan Africa.

**Distribution in AIUa:** Old Khaybar.

**Measurements:** L: 28-36 cm; WS: 68-84 cm; Wt: M 131-232 g, F 141-340 g.

**Identification:** Small, agile falcon with long, narrow wings. Adult with dark, plain upperparts, white face with dark moustache, heavily streaked whitish underparts, and reddish 'trousers'. Juvenile similar to the Sooty Falcon juvenile, lacking terminal tail band.

**Habitat and habits:** Usually found alone, anywhere on migration, especially around wetlands, open woodland, and farmland. Hunts in flight, targeting large insects and small birds.

**Status:** Passage migrant.

**Abundance:** Scarce.

**Conservation status:** LC/NA.

Common Kestrel  
*Falco tinnunculus*



♂

Sooty Falcon  
*Falco concolor*

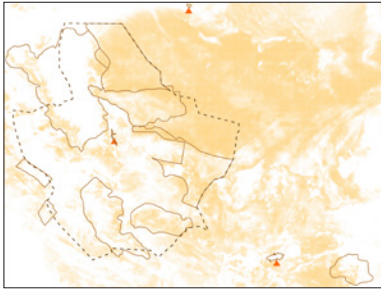


Eurasian Hobby  
*Falco subbuteo*



♂

**Peregrine  
Falcon/Barbary Falcon**  
*Falco peregrinus* Tunstall, 1771



**Global distribution:** Partly migratory and widespread around the world, excluding Antarctica. Barbary Falcon (*F. p. pelegrioides*) is a resident ssp, scattered across N Africa to Iraq and Arabia.

**Distribution in AIUla:** Wadi Nakhlah, Harrat Uwayrid, AlGhameel.

**Measurements:** L: 36-58 cm; WS: 79-114 cm; Wt: M 410-1060 g, F 595-1600 g.

**Identification:** Large, powerful falcon, with a wide dark moustache, broad pointy wings, and short squared tail. Adult with white, heavily barred underparts. Juvenile with streaked, rusty-pale underparts. Barbary Falcon is smaller, with a thinner moustache, rusty-pale underparts, finely barred and a rufous nape.

**Habitat and habits:** Solitary or in pairs, favours prey-rich areas like wetlands and farmland during migration. Breeds in mountains and semi-desert with cliffs. Fastest bird in the world, chases prey down at high speed, mainly birds. Nests in cliffs.

**Status:** Resident, Passage migrant, Winter visitor.

**Abundance:** Rare, Rare, Rare.

**Conservation status:** LC/VU.



**Rose-ringed Parakeet**  
***Alexandrinus krameri***  
 (Scopoli, 1769)



**Global distribution:** Resident; native to Sahel and S Asia. Cage escapees lead to feral populations around the world, including in Arabia.

**Distribution in AlUla:** AlUla Oasis, Tayma.

**Measurements:** L: 37-43 cm;  
 Wt: 95-143 g.

**Identification:** Medium-sized green parakeet with a very long slender tail and red bill. Male has a black chin and black-and-rosy neck ring.

**Habitat and habits:** Gregarious, found in noisy flocks in oases, palm groves, parks and gardens. Feeds on fruits, seeds and nectar. Nests on cavities in trees, sometimes in buildings.

**Status:** Resident (Introduced).

**Abundance:** Uncommon.

**Conservation status:** LC/NA.

**Alexandrine Parakeet**  
***Palaeornis eupatria***  
 (Linnaeus, 1766)



**Global distribution:** Resident; native to S and SE Asia. Cage escapees lead to feral populations in various parts of the world, including in Arabia.

**Distribution in AlUla:** AlUla Oasis.

**Measurements:** L: 50-62 cm;  
 Wt: 198-258 g.

**Identification:** Large green parakeet with a very long tail, big head, heavy red bill, and a dark-red patch on each shoulder. Male has a black chin and a black-and-rosy neck ring, broader than in the Rose-ringed Parakeet.

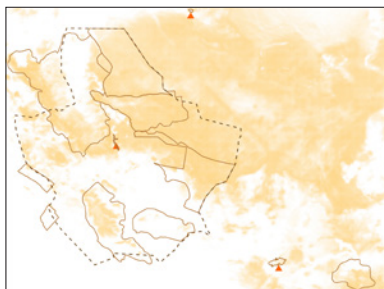
**Habitat and habits:** Found in small, noisy flocks, in oases, palm groves, parks and gardens. Feeds on fruits, seeds and nectar. Nests on cavities in trees, sometimes in buildings.

**Status:** Resident (Introduced).

**Abundance:** Rare.

**Conservation status:** NT/NA.

**Eurasian Golden Oriole**  
***Oriolus oriolus*** (Linnaeus,  
 1758)



**Global distribution:** Migratory; breeds from NW Africa and W Europe to E Mongolia with small breeding populations in Arabia; winters in sub-Saharan Africa.

**Distribution in AIUla:** Harrat Khaybar, Harrat Uwayrid, Old Khaybar, AIUla Oasis.

**Measurements:** L: 24-25 cm;  
 Wt: 42-102 g.

**Identification:** Male unmistakable with bright-yellow head and body, and black lores, wings and tail. Female and immature with greenish-yellow upperparts, pale streaked underparts, and dusky-brown wings.

**Habitat and habits:** Shy and hard to see, it's found alone or in pairs, usually in open woodland, parks and gardens. Feeds mainly on small invertebrates and fruits, occasionally nectar, pollen and seeds.

**Status:** Passage migrant.

**Abundance:** Scarce.

**Conservation status:** LC/LC.



Rose-ringed Parakeet  
*Alexandrinus krameri*

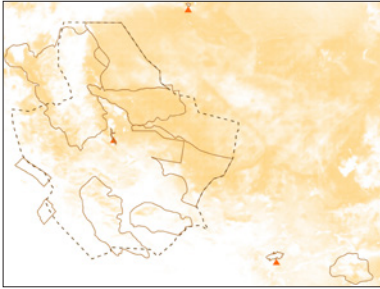


Alexandrine Parakeet  
*Palaeornis eupatria*



Eurasian Golden Oriole  
*Oriolus oriolus*

**Brown-necked Raven**  
*Corvus ruficollis* Lesson, 1831



**Global distribution:** Resident; occurs from N Africa to S Pakistan and C Asia.

**Distribution in AIUla:** AIUla Oasis, Wadi Nakhlah, Harrat Uwayrid, Sharaan, AlGhameel, Harrat AlZabin, Harrat Khaybar, Jabal Nahar.

**Measurements:** L: 52-56 cm; WS: 103-120 cm; Wt: 500-647 g.

**Identification:** Large, black desert corvid, with long and relatively narrow wings and bill, and a diamond shaped tail. Brown neck, only visible at close range and in right light conditions.

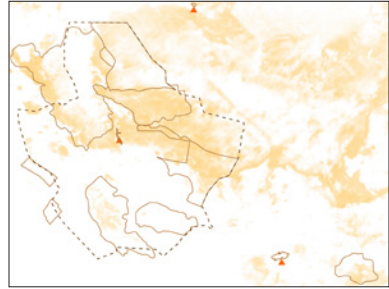
**Habitat and habits:** Found alone, in pairs or small groups in deserts, semi-deserts, arid mountains and close to human settlements. Omnivorous and opportunistic, feeds mainly on invertebrates, small vertebrates, carrion and food scraps. Nests in trees, cliffs and pylons.

**Status:** Resident.

**Abundance:** Abundant.

**Conservation status:** LC/LC.

**Fan-tailed Raven**  
*Corvus rhipidurus* Hartert, 1918



**Global distribution:** Resident; occurs through W and S Arabia, E Africa and parts of Sahel.

**Distribution in AIUla:** AIUla Oasis, Harrat Khaybar, Harrat Uwayrid, Sharaan, AlGhameel, Wadi Nakhlah, Jabal Shayhoub.

**Measurements:** L: 46-47 cm; WS: 103-110 cm; Wt: 512-734 g.

**Identification:** Medium-large black corvid with a strong heavy bill, shorter and broader wings than Brown-necked Raven, and a disproportionately short fan-like tail.

**Habitat and habits:** Found in small and medium-size groups, in rocky areas or deserts with high cliffs and close to human settlements. Omnivorous, feeds mostly on grain, berries, dates, invertebrates and food scraps. Nests in cliffs.

**Status:** Resident.

**Abundance:** Common.

**Conservation status:** LC/LC.

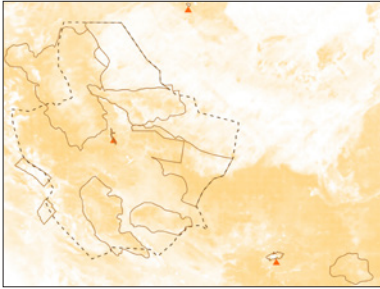
Brown-necked Raven  
*Corvus ruficollis*



Fan-tailed Raven  
*Corvus rhipidurus*





**Red-backed Shrike*****Lanius collurio*** Linnaeus, 1758

**Global distribution:** Migratory; breeds from W Europe to E Kazakhstan and W Siberia; winters in E and S Africa.

**Distribution in AlUla:** Wadi Nakhlah, Harrat Khaybar, AlUla Oasis.

**Measurements:** L: 17-18 cm; Wt: 23-34 g.

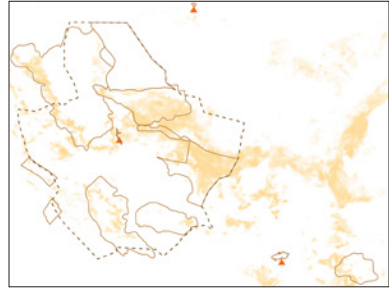
**Identification:** Small sized shrike. Male with grey head, black mask, chestnut upperparts, pinkish-white underparts and black tail. Female duller with vermiculated underparts. Juvenile similar to female, but with barred upperparts and brown tail with white edges.

**Habitat and habits:** Found alone or in small numbers during migration in vegetated areas, such as open scrubland with scattered trees, wadis, oases, plantations and parks. Feeds mainly on large insects, but also lizards, rodents and small birds, impaling its prey on vegetation thorns.

**Status:** Passage migrant.

**Abundance:** Common.

**Conservation status:** LC/NA.

**Isabelline Shrike*****Lanius isabellinus*** Ehrenberg, 1833

**Global distribution:** Migratory; breeds throughout Asia and Iran; winters in E and S Arabia, E Africa, and Sahel.

**Distribution in AlUla:** Harrat AlZabin, Wadi Nakhlah.

**Measurements:** L: 16,5-18 cm; Wt: 26-33,5 g.

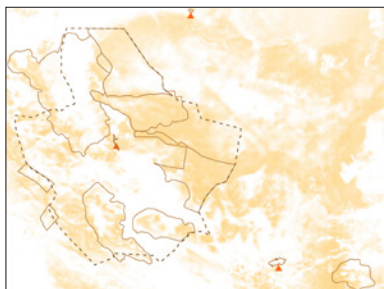
**Identification:** Small, pale shrike, very much like Red-tailed Shrike. Sandy-grey upperparts with subdued cream-coloured supercilium. Female and juvenile with buff-washed mask and vermiculation on the underparts.

**Habitat and habits:** Found alone or in small numbers, mostly in open scrubland with scattered trees, plantations and parks. Feeds mainly on large insects and occasionally small vertebrates, dropping on the prey from a low perch.

**Status:** Passage migrant, Winter visitor.

**Abundance:** Uncommon, Scarce.

**Conservation status:** LC/NE.

**Lesser Grey Shrike*****Lanius minor*** Gmelin, 1788

**Global distribution:** Migratory; breeds from S Europe to Kazakhstan; winters in S Africa.

**Distribution in AIUla:** Jabal Al Ward, Tayma, Harrat Khaybar, Harrat AlZabin.

**Measurements:** L: 19-23 cm;  
Wt: 41-62 g.

**Identification:** Medium-sized shrike with a stout bill, black mask, forehead, and wings featuring a white patch. Grey upperparts, white throat and pinkish underparts. Immature lacks black forehead and has white underparts. Very long primary projection.

**Habitat and habits:** Solitary, in open bushy areas, farmland and parks. Feeds mainly on large insects, dropping from a perch or hovering. Rarely impales prey.

**Status:** Passage migrant.

**Abundance:** Scarce.

**Conservation status:** LC/NA.

**Great Grey Shrike*****Lanius excubitor*** Linnaeus, 1758

**Global distribution:** Partially migratory; breeds in C, N and E Europe, C Asia to Mongolia, S Asia, and N Africa; winters from Britain to Kazakhstan and within its S resident range.

**Distribution in AIUla:** All areas except AIUla Oasis.

**Measurements:** L: 24-25 cm;  
Wt: 48-81 g.

**Identification:** Large shrike with light grey upperparts, white underparts, black mask (not extending to forehead), tail, and wings with a white patch on the primaries and edge on the tertials.

**Habitat and habits:** Usually alone or in pairs in prominent perches in open scrubby areas with scattered thorny trees. Feeds mainly on small vertebrates and large arthropods, impaling prey frequently. Nests on bushes or trees.

**Status:** Resident, Passage migrant, Winter visitor.

**Abundance:** Common, Uncommon, Uncommon.

**Conservation status:** LC/LC.

**Woodchat Shrike*****Lanius senator*** Linnaeus, 1758

**Global distribution:** Migratory; breeds throughout the Mediterranean to Caucasus and Iran; winters across Sahel.

**Distribution in AIUla:** Wadi Nakhlah.

**Measurements:** L: 18-19 cm;

Wt: 21-59 g.

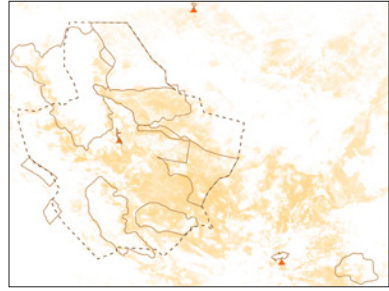
**Identification:** Small-sized, big-headed shrike. Adult has a distinctive rufous cap, black mask and back, and white scapulars and rump. Juvenile is vermiculated pale grey with warm-brown markings on the upperparts, whitish scapulars, and a dark brown tail.

**Habitat and habits:** Usually solitary, found in open areas with trees, cultivation, oases and parks. Feeds mainly on large insects, occasionally small vertebrates, dropping on prey from a perch. Rarely impales prey.

**Status:** Passage migrant.

**Abundance:** Scarce.

**Conservation status:** NT/LC.

**Masked Shrike*****Lanius nubicus*** Lichtenstein, 1823

**Global distribution:** Migratory; breeds from Balkans to Iran; winters across Sahel and SW Arabia.

**Distribution in AIUla:** Harrat Khaybar, AIUla Oasis, Harrat AlZabin, Sharaan.

**Measurements:** L: 17-18,5 cm;

Wt: 14,5-30 g.

**Identification:** Small, short, thin billed, and long, narrow tailed shrike. Male has black-and-white upperparts with white forehead, scapulars, and primaries patch. Underparts are white with orange wash on the sides. Female is duller. Juvenile is grey and vermiculated, with strong primary patch and dark rump (cf. juvenile Woodchat Shrike).

**Habitat and habits:** Solitary, found in open woodland, wadis, parks and cultivation. Feeds mainly on insects, occasionally small vertebrates. Dives on prey from perch, sometimes chases flying insects. Regularly impales prey.

**Status:** Passage migrant.

**Abundance:** Uncommon.

**Conservation status:** LC/LC.

Red-backed Shrike  
*Lanius collurio*

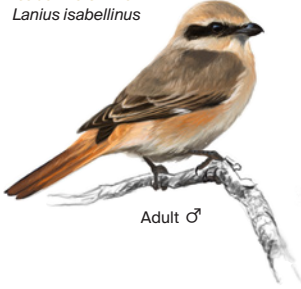


Adult ♂



Juvenile

Isabelline Shrike  
*Lanius isabellinus*



Adult ♂



Juvenile

Lesser Grey Shrike  
*Lanius minor*



Great Grey Shrike  
*Lanius excubitor*



Woodchat Shrike  
*Lanius senator*



Adult



Juvenile

Masked Shrike  
*Lanius nubicus*



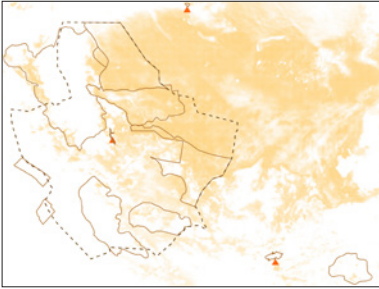
Adult



Juvenile

**Greater Hoopoe-lark*****Alaemon alaudipes***

(Desfontaines, 1789)



**Global distribution:** Resident; occurs throughout N Africa and Arabia to NW India.

**Distribution in AIUia:** AlGharameel, Wadi Nakhlah, Jabal Nahar, Sharaan, Harrat Uwayrid, Harrat Khaybar.

**Measurements:** L: 19-23 cm; Wt: 30-51 g.

**Identification:** Large and slim, pale sandy-coloured lark, with a very long, down-curved bill and long legs. Broad wings with black and white pattern and black tail exposed in flight. Male with more defined head and chest patterns.

**Habitat and habits:** Found solitary or in pairs running through sand in deserts, semi-deserts and dunes. Feeds on the ground, mainly on invertebrates, occasionally lizards, seeds and green material. Digs to extract prey. Nests in hollows on the ground.

**Status:** Resident.

**Abundance:** Common.

**Conservation status:** LC/LC.

**Thick-billed Lark*****Ramphocoris clotbey***

(Bonaparte, 1850)



**Global distribution:** Resident, with some winter dispersal, found in NW Africa and N Arabia.

**Distribution in AIUia:** Harrat Khaybar.

**Measurements:** L: 17-18 cm; Wt: 45-55 g.

**Identification:** Large and bulky lark, with unique, thick, pale bill, short tail, and brown upperparts. Dark cheek with pale centre and chest with dense dark patches. In flight shows dark flight feathers with a white edge, with the same pattern for the tail. Male with more contrasting plumage.

**Habitat and habits:** Found solitary or in small groups in stony deserts and wadis, rocky slopes, lava fields and farmland. Feeds on the ground, mainly on seeds, invertebrates and green material, occasionally lizards. Nests in hollows on the ground.

**Status:** Resident, Winter visitor.

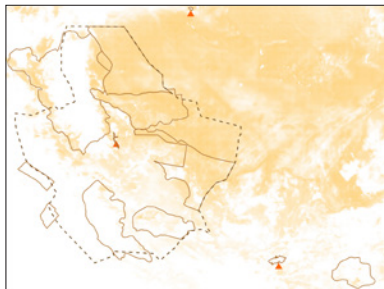
**Abundance:** Rare, Scarce.

**Conservation status:** LC/LC.

## Bar-tailed Lark

### *Ammomanes cinctura*

(Gould, 1839)



**Global distribution:** Resident; occurs throughout N Africa and Arabia to Pakistan.

**Distribution in AIUla:** AlGhameel, Wadi Nakhlah, Harrat Uwayrid, Sharaan, Jabal Nahar.

**Measurements:** L: 14 cm; Wt: 14-23 g.

**Identification:** Small, plain, pale lark, with small rounded head and pinkish bill giving a 'sweet' look, often in upright stance. In flight shows an obvious black terminal band in rufous tail. Voice very helpful to separate from Desert Lark.

**Habitat and habits:** Found alone or in pairs doing short runs in open sandy or gravel areas. Feeds on the ground, mainly on seeds and invertebrates. Nests in small hollows on the ground.

**Status:** Resident.

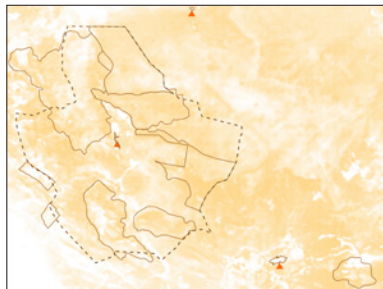
**Abundance:** Common.

**Conservation status:** LC/LC.

## Desert Lark

### *Ammomanes deserti*

(Lichtenstein, 1823)



**Global distribution:** Resident; occurs throughout N Africa, the Horn of Africa, and Arabia to Uzbekistan.

**Distribution in AIUla:** All areas except Tayma.

**Measurements:** L: 15-17 cm; Wt: 20-30 g.

**Identification:** Medium-sized, plain, greyish, robust lark with longer and stronger yellowish bill than Bar-tailed Lark. In flight broader diffuse black terminal band in tail. General colouration varies between ssp.

**Habitat and habits:** Found alone or in pairs, walking or running, in all types of arid areas (rocky, stony, sandy, lava fields, wadis). Feeds in the ground, mainly on seeds and invertebrates. Nests in deep hollows on the ground.

**Status:** Resident.

**Abundance:** Abundant.

**Conservation status:** LC/LC.

**Black-crowned Sparrow-lark**  
***Eremopterix nigriceps***  
 (Gould, 1839)



**Global distribution:** Resident; occurs throughout Sahel to the Horn of Africa, and Arabia to NW India.

**Distribution in AIU/a:** Found outside protected areas, S of Harrat ALZabin.

**Measurements:** L: 10-11 cm;  
 Wt: 12-16 g.

**Identification:** Small sparrow-like lark with a short, heavy bill and sandy-brown streaked upperparts. Adult male has black underparts and crown, and white cheek and forehead. Female has pale underparts, lightly streaked upperparts, and chest. Tail shows black sides in flight.

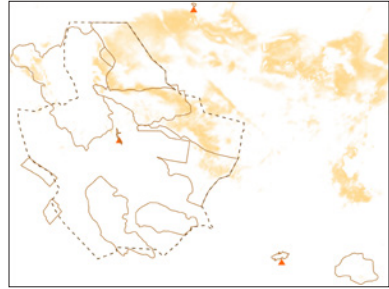
**Habitat and habits:** Found in small flocks in semi-desert, sandy and stony plains, and coastal dunes. Feeds in the ground, on seeds and invertebrates. Nests in small hollows on the ground.

**Status:** Resident.

**Abundance:** Scarce.

**Conservation status:** LC/LC.

**Arabian Lark**  
***Eremalauda eremodites***  
 (Meinertzhagen, 1923)



**Global distribution:** Resident, near endemic to Arabia; occurs mostly in Saudi Arabia, with populations in Jordan, Palestine, S Syria, Kuwait, Yemen and Oman.

**Distribution in AIU/a:** Harrat Uwayrid, ALGharameel, Sharaan.

**Measurements:** L: 14-15 cm; Wt: NA.

**Identification:** Small, sand-coloured lark with large pinkish bill and broad wings. Upperparts heavily streaked, underparts white and plain. Facial pattern displays a distinct black 'mascara tear'. Tail with black sides seen in flight.

**Habitat and habits:** Usually alone or in pairs, in breeding season, and in small groups off-season. Does short runs, stopping abruptly. Found in open flat sandy, gravel or stony semi-desert. Feeds in the ground, on seeds and invertebrates. Nests in small hollows on the ground.

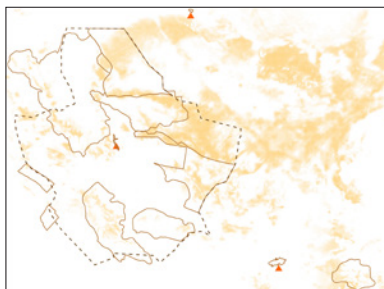
**Status:** Resident.

**Abundance:** Uncommon.

**Conservation status:** LC/LC.

## Mediterranean Short-toed Lark

*Alauda rufescens* (Vieillot, 1820)



**Global distribution:** Partially migratory; breeds in Iberia, N Africa and Levant; winters in Turkey and N Arabia.

**Distribution in AIUla:** Sharaan, Harrat Khaybar.

**Measurements:** L: 13-14 cm;  
Wt: 20-27 g.

**Identification:** Small heavily streaked lark, with short, stubbier bill. White underparts with streaked chest and (black) primary projection (cf. Greater Short-toed Lark). Often raises crown feathers. Dark tail with white edges seen in flight.

**Habitat and habits:** Found alone or in small groups, in open vegetated sandy or gravel plains, and cultivation areas. Does quick runs foraging on invertebrates and seeds, occasionally fruits and bulbs.

**Status:** Passage migrant, Winter visitor.

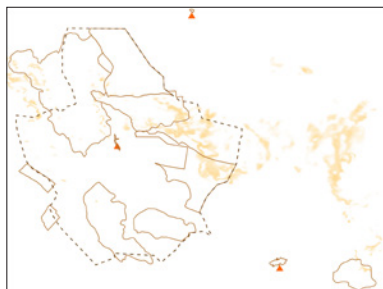
**Abundance:** Uncommon, Scarce.

**Conservation status:** LC/LC.

## Rufous-capped Lark

*Calandrella eremica*

(Reichenow & Peters, 1932)



**Global distribution:** Resident; occurs in SW Arabia and the Horn of Africa.

**Distribution in AIUla:** Harrat Khaybar.

**Measurements:** L: 12,5-13,5 cm;  
Wt: ~ 24 g.

**Identification:** Small lark with a dark, slender bill. Streaked, greyish-brown upperparts and plain, pale underparts with dark patches on the sides of the throat. Characteristic reddish-brown crown, sometimes lifted into a small crest.

**Habitat and habits:** Usually in pairs or small groups, above 1300 m in open stony plateaux, harrats and open short grassland. Feeds on the ground, probably on invertebrates and seeds.

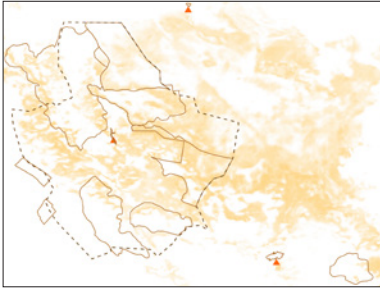
**Status:** Resident.

**Abundance:** Scarce.

**Conservation status:** LC/LC.



**Greater Short-toed Lark**  
***Calandrella brachydactyla***  
 (Leisler, 1814)



**Global distribution:** Partially migratory; breeds across the Mediterranean to Mongolia; winters in N Africa and Sahel, and from Arabia to NW India.

**Distribution in AIU/a:** Harrat Khaybar, Wadi Nakhlah, Harrat AlZabin.

**Measurements:** L: 14-15 cm;  
 Wt: 16-25 g.

**Identification:** Small lark with a stout, pale bill. Sandy-coloured, heavily streaked upperparts, with contrasting median coverts, and plain, white underparts, with dark patches on the sides of the throat. Brown-streaked crown, can be rufous-tinged. Dark tail seen in flight.

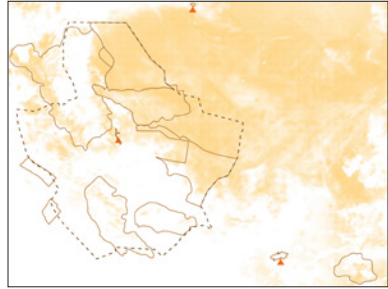
**Habitat and habits:** Usually alone or in small groups, in sandy or stony open areas, semi-desert and cultivation areas. Feeds in the ground, mainly on invertebrates and seeds.

**Status:** Passage migrant, Winter visitor.

**Abundance:** Common, Uncommon.

**Conservation status:** LC/LC.

**Temminck's Lark**  
***Eremophila bilopha***  
 (Temminck, 1823)



**Global distribution:** Resident; occurs in N Africa and N Arabia to Syria.

**Distribution in AIU/a:** AlGhameel, Harrat Uwayrid, Wadi Nakhlah, Harrat Khaybar, Sharaan.

**Measurements:** L: 13-15 cm;  
 Wt: 38-39 g.

**Identification:** Small, elegant lark with thin, dark bill. Characteristic white head with black 'horns', mask and breast band (not connected). Rufous-sandy coloured, streaked upperparts, and plain, white underparts. Dark tail seen in flight. Male with sharper head pattern.

**Habitat and habits:** Usually in pairs or small groups, in open, flat stony or compact sandy areas with sparse vegetation. Feeds in the ground mainly on seeds, occasionally invertebrates and fruits. Nests in deep hollows on the ground.

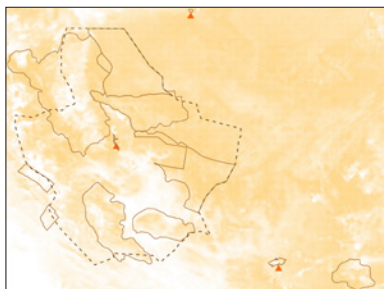
**Status:** Resident, Winter visitor.

**Abundance:** Uncommon, Uncommon.

**Conservation status:** LC/LC.

**Crested Lark**

***Galerida cristata*** (Linnaeus, 1758)



**Global distribution:** Resident; wide distribution range, from W Europe and N Africa to E Asia, through Arabia.

**Distribution in AIUla:** Harrat Uwayrid, AlGhrameel, Harrat AlZabin, Sharaan, Harrat Khaybar, Tayma, Old Khaybar, Wadi Nakhlah.

**Measurements:** L: 17-19 cm;  
Wt: 35-50 g.

**Identification:** Large lark with short tail, long bill, and long spiky crest. Sand-coloured, streaked upperparts, and pale underparts with dark streaked chest. In flight, dark short tail with rusty sides.

**Habitat and habits:** Usually alone or in pairs during the breeding season, and in small groups off-season. Found in open flat stony or compact sandy areas, around villages and towns, and cultivation fields. Feeds in the ground, mainly on invertebrates and seeds. Nests in hollows on the ground.

**Status:** Resident.

**Abundance:** Abundant.

**Conservation status:** LC/LC.

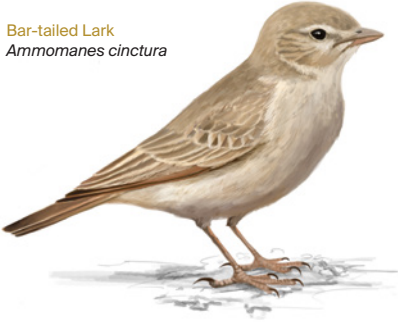
Greater Hoopoe-lark  
*Alaemon alaudipes*



Thick-billed Lark  
*Ramphocoris clotbey*



Bar-tailed Lark  
*Ammomanes cinctura*



Desert Lark  
*Ammomanes deserti*



Black-crowned Sparrow-lark  
*Eremopterix nigriceps*



Arabian Lark  
*Eremalauda eremodites*



Mediterranean Short-toed Lark  
*Alaudala rufescens*



Rufous-capped Lark  
*Calandrella eremica*



Greater Short-toed Lark  
*Calandrella brachydactyla*



Temminck's Lark  
*Eremophila bilopha*



Crested Lark  
*Galerida cristata*



**Northern House Martin**  
*Delichon urbicum* (Linnaeus,  
 1758)



**Global distribution:** Migratory; breeds from N Africa and Europe to C Asia; winters mostly in sub-Saharan Africa, but also in SW Asia.

**Distribution in AIUla:** Found outside protected areas, SW of AIUla.

**Measurements:** L: 13-14cm; WS: 26-29 cm; Wt: 10-23 g.

**Identification:** Small black and white swallow, with a short, forked tail and a pure white rump and underparts, easily visible in flight.

**Habitat and habits:** Feeds on flying insects, near wetlands and other open areas. Has a steady flight, high in the air.

**Status:** Passage migrant.

**Abundance:** Uncommon.

**Conservation status:** LC/LC.

**Red-rumped Swallow**  
*Cecropis daurica* Linnaeus,  
 1771



**Global distribution:** Partially migratory; breeds from S Europe to E Asia; winters in sub-Saharan Africa, S Asia, and N Australia.

**Distribution in AIUla:** Harrat Khaybar.

**Measurements:** L: 17 cm; WS: 32-34 cm; Wt: 19-30 g.

**Identification:** Elegant swallow with long, forked tail resembling the Barn Swallow, but with a rusty-orange rump and collar, with pale head sides. The underparts are finely streaked buff-white, and the vent is black and square-like in shape.

**Habitat and habits:** Feeds on flying insects, near wetlands and cultivation fields. Flies both over low vegetation and high in the air.

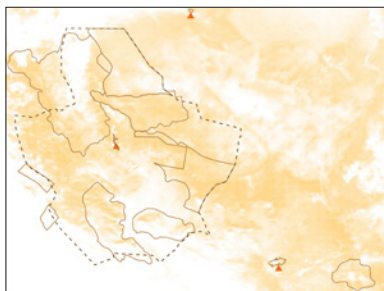
**Status:** Passage migrant.

**Abundance:** Uncommon.

**Conservation status:** LC/LC.

**Barn Swallow**

***Hirundo rustica*** Linnaeus,  
1758



**Global distribution:** Migratory; breeds across Eurasia and N America; winters in sub-Saharan Africa, SE Asia to N Australia, and S America.

**Distribution in AIUla:** All areas except Jabal Shayhoub and Jabal Nahar.

**Measurements:** L: 17-19 cm;  
WS: 32-34 cm; Wt: 16-24 g.

**Identification:** Elegant bluish-black swallow with a long, forked tail and small white dots. Has a rusty-red forehead and throat, separated from the white belly by a dark breast band.

**Habitat and habits:** Feeds on flying insects, near wetlands or cultivation fields. Has a very aerobic, agile flight, with fast turns, close to the ground. Forms large flocks and perches on wires.

**Status:** Passage migrant.

**Abundance:** Common.

**Conservation status:** LC/LC.

**Eurasian Crag Martin**

***Ptyonoprogne rupestris***  
(Scopoli, 1769)



**Global distribution:** Partially migratory; breeds from S Europe to E Asia; winters in W Africa, the Nile Valley and S Asia.

**Distribution in AIUla:** Found outside protected areas, NE of AIUla.

**Measurements:** L: 14-15cm;  
WS: 32-34 cm; Wt: 17-33 g.

**Identification:** Compact square-tailed martin, with distinctive white marks on tail feathers. Shows marked contrast between sooty-black underwing coverts and brown flight feathers. Has black cheeks and faintly streaked chin and throat.

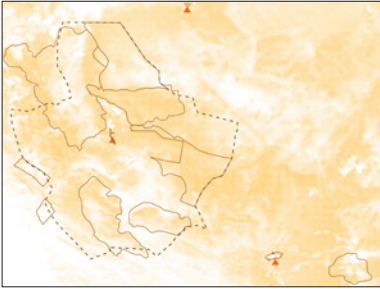
**Habitat and habits:** Hunts flying insects near cliffs and wadis, but also on the surface of water. Has a slow flight, gliding a lot.

**Status:** Passage migrant.

**Abundance:** Scarce.

**Conservation status:** LC/LC.

**Pale Rock Martin**  
*Ptyonoprogne obsoleta*  
 (Cabanis, 1850)



**Global distribution:** Partially migratory; breeds from N Africa to Pakistan; winters in its S resident range.

**Distribution in AIUia:** All areas.

**Measurements:** L: 12-13cm;  
 WS: 32-34 cm; Wt: 16-30 g.

**Identification:** Small martin resembling the Eurasian Crag Martin, but paler, with greyish upperparts and rump, paler undertail coverts, and brown-grey underwing coverts, contrasting less with flight feathers, and carpal area having a darker tone. Paler cheeks and an off-white uniform chin and throat.

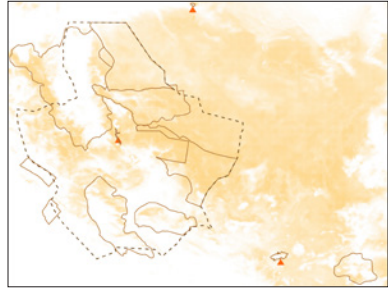
**Habitat and habits:** Hunts flying insects close to cliffs and wadis, but also wetlands. Mostly gliding high in the air, but also closer to ground, feeding over cattle and other insect-rich areas. Nests in cliffs or under man-made tall structures, such as bridges.

**Status:** Resident.

**Abundance:** Abundant.

**Conservation status:** LC/LC.

**Collared Sand Martin**  
*Riparia riparia* (Linnaeus, 1758)



**Global distribution:** Migratory; breeds throughout Eurasia and N America; winters in sub-Saharan Africa, SE Asia, and S America.

**Distribution in AIUia:** Tayma, Wadi Nakhlah, Harrat Khaybar.

**Measurements:** L: 12-13 cm;  
 WS: 26-29cm; Wt: 10-20 g.

**Identification:** Small martin with dull-brown upperparts, white underparts and a distinctive brown breast band. Has dark underwing coverts, and the tail is slightly forked without white spots.

**Habitat and habits:** Feeds on flying insects close to the ground or over water, mostly on wetlands. Has a fast flight, with shallow wing beats.

**Status:** Passage migrant.

**Abundance:** Uncommon.

**Conservation status:** LC/LC.

Northern House Martin  
*Delichon urbicum*



Barn Swallow  
*Hirundo rustica*



Red-rumped Swallow  
*Cecropis daurica*



Eurasian Crag Martin  
*Ptyonoprogne rupestris*



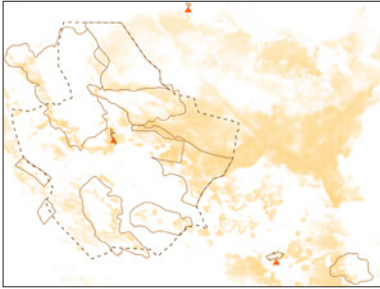
Pale Rock Martin  
*Ptyonoprogne obsoleta*



Collared Sand Martin  
*Riparia riparia*



**White-eared Bulbul**  
*Pycnonotus leucotis* (Gould,  
 1836)



**Global distribution:** Resident; occurs from Arabia to NE India.

**Distribution in AIUla:** Tayma, Jabal Al Ward, AIUla Oasis.

**Measurements:** L: 17,5-19 cm;  
 Wt: 29-35 g.

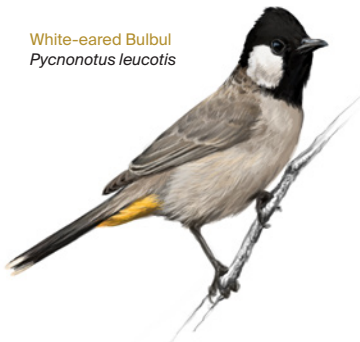
**Identification:** Medium-sized conspicuous pale-grey bulbul, with black head and throat, white cheeks, a long white tipped tail and yellow undertail coverts.

**Habitat and habits:** Found in small groups, mostly around urban and rural areas, including plantations, parks and gardens. Feeds on fruits, buds, nectar and invertebrates. Nests in trees and bushes.

**Status:** Resident.

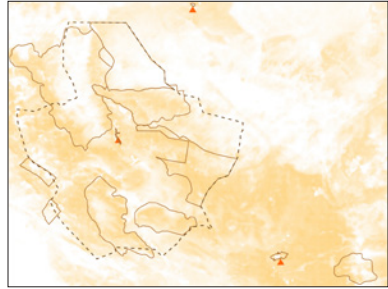
**Abundance:** Locally Abundant.

**Conservation status:** LC/LC.



White-eared Bulbul  
*Pycnonotus leucotis*

**White-spectacled Bulbul**  
*Pycnonotus xanthopygos*  
 (Ehrenberg, 1833)



**Global distribution:** Resident; found across Arabia, through the Levant to S Turkey.

**Distribution in AIUla:** All areas except ALGhameel and Tayma.

**Measurements:** L: 19 cm; Wt: 31-46 g.

**Identification:** Medium-sized conspicuous noisy brown bulbul, with sooty-black head, white eye-ring, long dark tail without white tips, and yellow undertail coverts.

**Habitat and habits:** Can form large groups of more than 20 individuals. Feeds on fruits, seeds and invertebrates, in oases, wadis, woodlands and semi-deserts, as well as sub-urban areas, such as gardens and plantations. Builds cup nests, high on trees and bushes.

**Status:** Resident.

**Abundance:** Abundant.

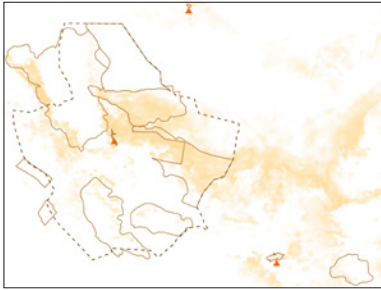
**Conservation status:** LC/LC.



White-spectacled Bulbul  
*Pycnonotus xanthopygos*

## Graceful Prinia

*Prinia gracilis* (Lichtenstein, 1823)<sup>1</sup>



**Global distribution:** Resident; occurs throughout Arabia, Levant, Nile Valley and the Horn of Africa.

**Distribution in AIUla:** AIUla Oasis, Harrat Uwayrid, Tayma, Old Khaybar, Harrat Khaybar.

**Measurements:** L: 11-12,5 cm; Wt: 6,8-8 g.

**Identification:** Tiny, greyish-brown warbler with pale underparts and a disproportionately long, graduated tail, often fanned. Tail feathers tipped black and white. Pale, plain face with red eyes. Breeding male with black bill. Very active and vocal.

**Habitat and habits:** Usually alone or in small groups, in low vegetation on palm groves, oases, cultivation and gardens. Feeds mainly on invertebrates, also plant matter. Nests in low vegetation.

**Status:** Resident.

**Abundance:** Abundant.

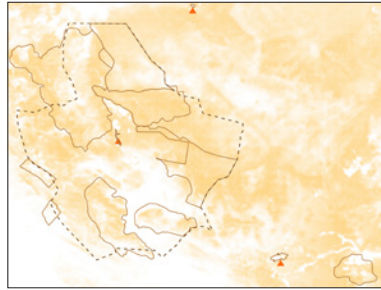
**Conservation status:** LC/LC.



Graceful Prinia  
*Prinia gracilis*

## Streaked Scrub-warbler

*Scotocerca inquieta* (Cretzschmar, 1827)<sup>2</sup>



**Global distribution:** Resident; occurs in N Africa, Middle East and C Asia, and Pakistan.

**Distribution in AIUla:** All areas except Old Khaybar and Tayma.

**Measurements:** L: 10 cm; Wt: 6-10 g.

**Identification:** Tiny, dark-brown warbler, with long legs, prominent black eye stripe, whitish supercilium and dark-streaked crown. Long, upraised, dark tail, regularly fanned. Very active and vocal.

**Habitat and habits:** Found in pairs or family groups in arid rocky wadis, scrubland, and sandy plains with shrubs. Feeds on invertebrates, occasionally seeds. Builds a nest in low vegetation.

**Status:** Resident.

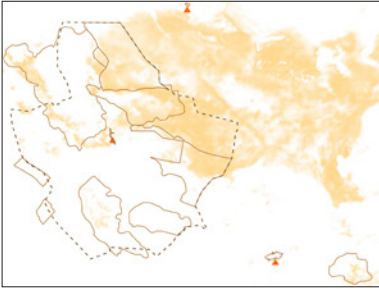
**Abundance:** Abundant.

**Conservation status:** LC/LC.



Streaked Scrub-warbler  
*Scotocerca inquieta*

**Common Reed-warbler**  
***Acrocephalus scirpaceus***  
 (Hermann, 1804)



**Global distribution:** Partially migratory; breeds from W Europe and across the Mediterranean to Kazakhstan and throughout sub-Saharan Africa; winters in sub-Saharan Africa.

**Distribution in AIUla:** AlGharameel, Tayma, AIUla Oasis.

**Measurements:** L: 12-14cm;  
 Wt: 7,5-23,5 g.

**Identification:** Warm-brown warbler, with pointy head, flat forehead and long thin bill. Has a short diffuse cream supercilium and marked dark eye stripe. The rump has a rusty colour, the tail is rounded to square, and has long undertail covers.

**Habitat and habits:** Feeds on insects and arthropods in wetland habitats, particularly on reedbeds.

**Status:** Passage migrant.

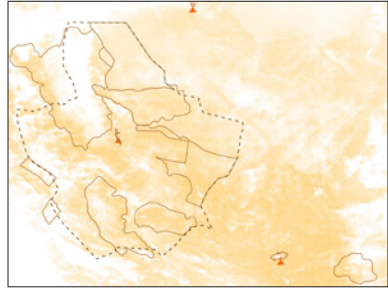
**Abundance:** Scarce.

**Conservation status:** LC/LC.



Common Reed-warbler  
*Acrocephalus scirpaceus*

**Olivaceous Warbler**  
***Iduna pallida*** (Ehrenberg, 1833)



**Global distribution:** Partially migratory; breeds in N Africa and from W Europe to W China; winters in E Africa.

**Distribution in AIUla:** All areas except Wadi Nakhlah, Jabal Al Ward and Jabal Nahar.

**Measurements:** L: 12-14cm; Wt: 8-16 g.

**Identification:** Resembles a Reed Warbler, but paler, with more olive-brown to grey tones. Has a distinct short supercilium, a pale eye-ring and dark lore. The bill is strong, and broad based, with pink lower mandible.

**Habitat and habits:** Found on dense trees, scrub or gardens, where it feeds on insects, spiders and occasionally fruits.

**Status:** Passage migrant, Breeding migrant.

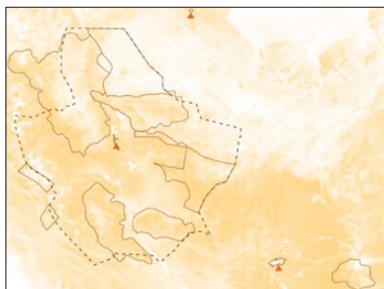
**Abundance:** Uncommon, Scarce.

**Conservation status:** LC/LC.



Olivaceous Warbler  
*Iduna pallida*

**Willow Warbler**  
***Phylloscopus trochilus***  
 (Linnaeus, 1758)



**Global distribution:** Migratory; breeds from W Europe to Siberia; winters in sub-Saharan Africa.

**Distribution in AIUla:** Harrat Khaybar, Wadi Nakhlah, Harrat AlZabin, Jabal Nahar, Harrat Uwayrid, AlUla Oasis, Jabal Al Ward.

**Measurements:** L: 11-12,5 cm; Wt: 6-15 g.

**Identification:** Medium-sized leaf warbler, with olive-brown upperparts and a yellow wash on throat and breasts, with a distinct white to yellow supercilium. Resembles the Common Chiffchaff, but generally more slender and elongated shape, with longer wings and a large primary projection. Leg colour is pale-brown to pinkish.

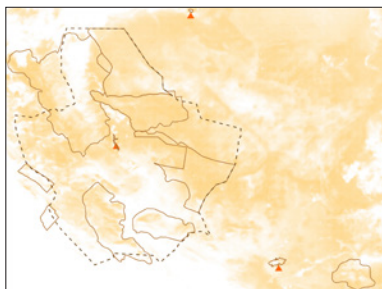
**Habitat and habits:** Found foraging on trees and bushes, often in acacias, as well as parks and gardens. Feeds mainly on small insects, including their eggs and larvae, and spiders. Can consume seeds, berries and other plant material in Autumn.

**Status:** Passage migrant.

**Abundance:** Common.

**Conservation status:** LC/NE.

**Common Chiffchaff**  
***Phylloscopus collybita***  
 (Vieillot, 1817)



**Global distribution:** Partially migratory; breeds from W Europe to the Caspian Sea; winters from S Europe to N Africa and Arabia.

**Distribution in AIUla:** All areas.

**Measurements:** L: 11-12 cm; Wt: 6-12 g.

**Identification:** Small olive-brown leaf warbler, very similar to the Willow Warbler, but paler in colour, with less yellow and shorter supercilium. Legs are black and have a shorter primary projection. Characteristic fast-like behaviour, flicking the wings and tail when foraging.

**Habitat and habits:** Found foraging on trees and bushes, often in acacias, as well as parks and gardens. Feeds mainly on small insects, including their eggs and larvae, and spiders. Can consume seeds, berries and other plant material in Autumn.

**Status:** Passage migrant, Winter visitor.

**Abundance:** Common, Abundant.

**Conservation status:** LC/NE.

**Siberian Chiffchaff**  
*Phylloscopus tristis* Blyth,  
 1843



**Global distribution:** Migratory; breeds in Siberia; winters from S Arabia to N India.

**Distribution in AIUia:** Harrat Uwayrid.

**Measurements:** L: 11-12 cm; Wt: 6-12 g.

**Identification:** Small brown-buff leaf warbler, resembling Common Chiffchaff, but paler, lacking yellow except for bend of wing and underwing. Thin, distinct off-white to buff supercilium.

**Habitat and habits:** Found in gardens and vegetated areas with trees and undergrowth. Diet is unknown, but likely resembles Common Chiffchaff's.

**Status:** Winter visitor.

**Abundance:** Uncommon.

**Conservation status:** LC/NE.

**Yellow-browed Warbler**  
*Phylloscopus inornatus*  
 (Blyth, 1842)



**Global distribution:** Migratory; breeds from Russia to Korea; winters from E to SE Asia and Taiwan.

**Distribution in AIUia:** Harrat Uwayrid, Jabal Al Ward.

**Measurements:** L: 10-11 cm; Wt: 4-9 g.

**Identification:** Small, slim warbler with bright olive-green upperparts, long well-defined yellow supercilium and (usually) two distinct wing-bars. Strong contrast on tertials, edged yellowish-white. Legs olive brown to pinkish.

**Habitat and habits:** Forages on small invertebrates in vegetated areas. May occur in plantations, gardens, and parks.

**Status:** Vagrant.

**Abundance:** Rare.

**Conservation status:** LC/NE.



Willow Warbler  
*Phylloscopus trochilus*



Common Chiffchaff  
*Phylloscopus collybita*

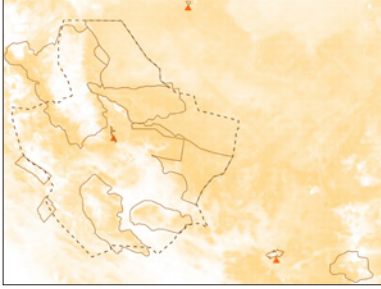


Siberian Chiffchaff  
*Phylloscopus tristis*



Yellow-browed Warbler  
*Phylloscopus inornatus*

**Eurasian Blackcap**  
*Sylvia atricapilla* (Linnaeus,  
 1758)



**Global distribution:** Partially migratory; breeds in NW Africa and across Europe to N Iran; winters around the Mediterranean and W and E Africa.

**Distribution in AIUia:** All areas except Jabal Al Ward, Jabal Shayhoub, Sharaan, Jabal Nahar.

**Measurements:** L: 13,5-15 cm;  
 Wt: 8,5-31 g.

**Identification:** Medium-sized and bulky, grey-brown warbler, with a distinctive small cap, black in male and warm-brown in female. Lacks white in outer tail feathers. Grey bill and legs.

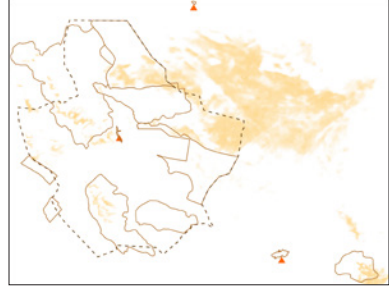
**Habitat and habits:** Found alone or in small groups in vegetated areas, such as parks and gardens, but also in wadis with dense vegetation. Feeds on fruits, berries and insects mostly on tree canopies.

**Status:** Passage migrant.

**Abundance:** Common.

**Conservation status:** LC/LC.

**Garden Warbler**  
*Sylvia borin* (Boddaert, 1783)



**Global distribution:** Migratory; breeds from Europe to Kazakhstan; winters in sub-Saharan Africa.

**Distribution in AIUia:** Harrat Khaybar, ALGhameel.

**Measurements:** L: 13-14,5 cm;  
 Wt: 16-22 g.

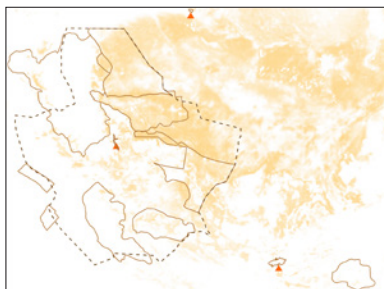
**Identification:** Medium grey-brown warbler, with no distinctive features. Has discreet greyish on sides of neck. The bill is rather thick and bluish-grey. Legs are strong and grey. Lacks white on outer tail feathers.

**Habitat and habits:** Found alone or in pairs, in vegetated areas with thick bushes. Feeds among the foliage mostly on insects, but also on berries, pollen and nectar.

**Status:** Passage migrant.

**Abundance:** Uncommon.

**Conservation status:** LC/NA.

**Asian Desert Warbler*****Curruca nana*** Ehrenberg, 1833

**Global distribution:** Migratory; breeds from C to E Asia; winters along the Red Sea coast, through Arabia to NW India.

**Distribution in AIUla:** Wadi Nakhlah, Jabal Nahar, AlGharameel, Sharaan, Harrat AlZabin.

**Measurements:** L: 11,5-12,5 cm;

Wt: 7-11 g.

**Identification:** Small pale-brown warbler, with rusty-brown tail, rump and tertial feathers. Central tail feathers have dark shafts, and outer tail feathers have white tips, giving a tri-coloured appearance to the tail. The bill is thin and light, and has a pale eye-ring. Iris and legs are yellowish.

**Habitat and habits:** Found in alone or in small groups, following around wheatears, in arid areas with sparse vegetation, such as desert, semi-desert, hillsides, and plains. Feeds on insects, seeds and berries taken near or from the ground.

**Status:** Passage migrant, Winter visitor.

**Abundance:** Scarce, Common.

**Conservation status:** LC/NE.

**Arabian Warbler*****Curruca leucomelaena***

Ehrenberg, 1833



**Global distribution:** Resident; occurs around the Red Sea, S Arabia and the Horn of Africa.

**Distribution in AIUla:** AIUla Oasis, Jabal Shayhoub, Harrat AlZabin, Jabal Al Ward, Harrat Uwayrid, Harrat Khaybar.

**Measurements:** L: 14,5-16 cm;

Wt: 11-16,5 g.

**Identification:** Large robust brownish-grey warbler, with a black head, white throat and pale underparts. Tail is long and black, with pale edges and white tips on outer feathers. Dark iris with white eye-ring and black legs. Female is paler.

**Habitat and habits:** Feeds usually in pairs, on insects and other arthropods, but also berries, in arid areas with thick acacia scrub, such as semi-deserts and wadis. Builds cup nests on dense bushes and trees.

**Status:** Resident.

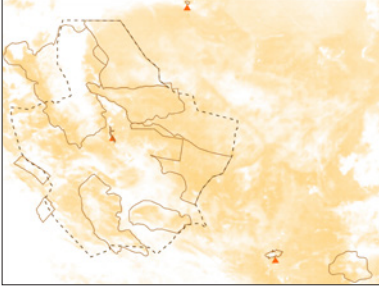
**Abundance:** Common.

**Conservation status:** LC/LC.



**Lesser Whitethroat**

***Curruca curruca*** (Linnaeus, 1758)



**Global distribution:** Migratory; breeds from E Europe to E Asia; winters from Sahel, through Arabia to S Asia.

**Distribution in AIUla:** All areas except Jabal Al Ward.

**Measurements:** L: 12,5-14 cm;

Wt: 9,5-18 g.

**Identification:** Small greyish-brown warbler, with a grey crown, dark ear-coverts, and white throat, contrasting with cream-white breast. Has dark legs and tail, with white tips on outer tail feathers.

**Habitat and habits:** Found in small groups in vegetated areas with trees and dense undergrowth, often acacia or tamarisk. Feeds on insects and other arthropods, found among vegetation and occasionally on the ground.

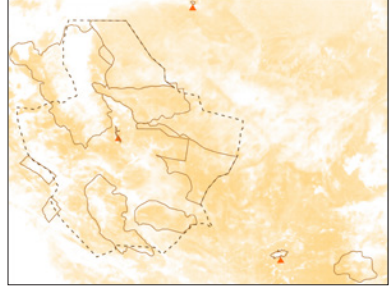
**Status:** Passage migrant, Winter visitor.

**Abundance:** Common, Common.

**Conservation status:** LC/LC.

**Menetries's Warbler**

***Curruca mystacea*** (Ménétries, 1832)



**Global distribution:** Migratory; breeds from E Turkey and the Levant to Asia; winters from NE Africa to S Iran.

**Distribution in AIUla:** All areas except AIUla Oasis, Jabal Al Ward and Old Khaybar.

**Measurements:** L: 12-13 cm;

Wt: 7-11,5 g.

**Identification:** Small warbler resembling the Sardinian Warbler, with shorter tail, black alula, pinkish legs, and a dark bill with pink base. Male has a dull-black cap and ear-coverts that fade into grey-brown upperparts, a light moustache stripe, contrasting with pinkish underparts and red eye-ring. Female has sandy brown uniform head and back, cream underparts and whitish eye-ring.

**Habitat and habits:** Quiet behaviour, but flicks tail vigorously while foraging on arthropods, fruits and berries, searched for between the vegetation or on the ground. Found in pairs in low scrub.

**Status:** Passage migrant, Winter visitor.

**Abundance:** Common, Common.

**Conservation status:** LC/LC.

**Sardinian Warbler*****Curruca melanocephala***

(Gmelin, 1789)



**Global distribution:** Partially migratory; breeds across the Mediterranean; winters throughout N Africa and W Arabia.

**Distribution in AIUla:** Harrat Uwayrid, AlGharameel, Wadi Nakhlah.

**Measurements:** L: 13-14 cm; Wt: 12-25 g.

**Identification:** Medium-sized large headed warbler, with white throat, red eye-ring, and long dark tail with white tips on outer tail feathers. Has brown legs and dark bill with bluish base of lower mandible. Male has a glossy black head, contrasting with ash-grey mantle and flanks. Female has grey head, dark-brown upperparts, and cream flanks.

**Habitat and habits:** Forages alone or in small groups, looking for invertebrates, fruits and berries, in dry open scrub with low trees, wadis, gardens and agricultural areas.

**Status:** Passage migrant, Winter visitor.

**Abundance:** Scarce, Scarce.

**Conservation status:** LC/LC.

**Subalpine Warbler*****Curruca cantillans*** (Pallas,

1764)



**Global distribution:** Migratory; breeds in the Mediterranean; winters in Sahel.

**Distribution in AIUla:** AIUla Oasis, Jabal Nahar, Wadi Nakhlah.

**Measurements:** L: 12-13,5 cm; Wt: 7-16 g.

**Identification:** Small slender yellowish legged warbler, with thin bill and a distinctive moustachial white stripe. Dark brownish short tail with white tips on outer feathers. Male has bluish grey upperparts and head, brick-red throat and breast, and a red eye-ring. Female much duller, with browner upperparts, a greyish-brown head, and a pale eye-ring outside a thin red orbital ring.

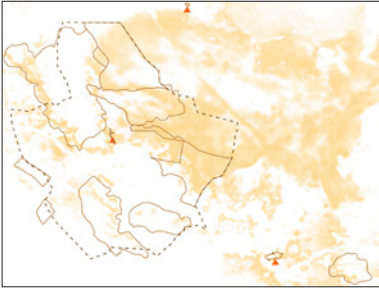
**Habitat and habits:** Found alone or in small groups, in prickly scrub and thickets. Forages among the vegetation, flicking its wings and cocking the tail while picking invertebrates, berries, and seeds.

**Status:** Passage migrant.

**Abundance:** Scarce.

**Conservation status:** LC/NE.

**Common Whitethroat**  
***Curruca communis*** (Latham,  
 1787)



**Global distribution:** Migratory; breeds from Europe and NE Africa to Mongolia; winters in sub-Saharan Africa.

**Distribution in AIUa:** Wadi Nakhlah, Old Khaybar, Harrat Khaybar.

**Measurements:** L: 13-15 cm;  
 Wt: 14-17 g.

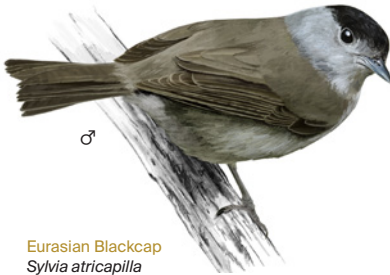
**Identification:** Medium- sized sturdy warbler, with grey to olive brown upperparts and white throat contrasting with a pinkish breast. Resembles the Lesser Whitethroat, but with rufous edges to wing feathers, strong yellow-brown legs, and light ear-coverts. Tail is rather long and dark, with white tips on outer feathers. Female is duller, with more brown tones, especially on head and face.

**Habitat and habits:** Found in open country with scattered bushes, acacia scrub or near wetlands, gardens, and hedges. Forages mostly inside the bushes on insects, fruits, and berries, but also on the ground and chasing flying insects.

**Status:** Passage migrant.

**Abundance:** Uncommon.

**Conservation status:** LC/NA.



Eurasian Blackcap  
*Sylvia atricapilla*



Asian Desert Warbler  
*Curruca nana*



Garden Warbler  
*Sylvia borin*

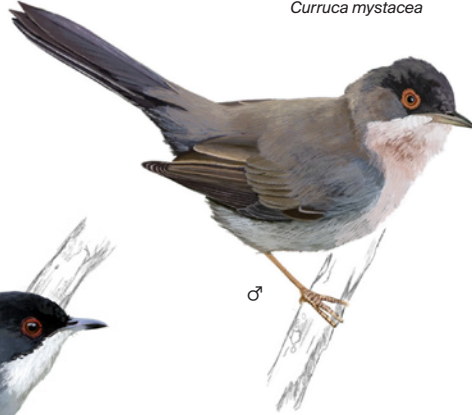


Arabian Warbler  
*Curruca leucomelaena*

Lesser Whitethroat  
*Curruca curruca*



Menetries's Warbler  
*Curruca mystacea*



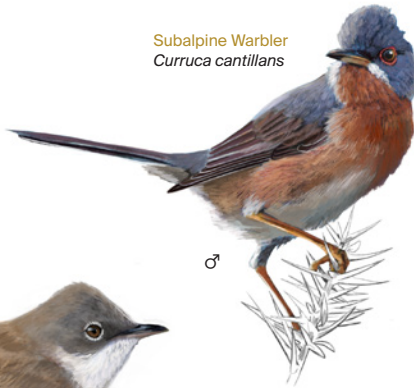
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Sardinian Warbler  
*Curruca melanocephala*

Subalpine Warbler  
*Curruca cantillans*



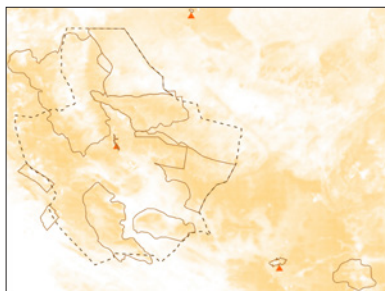
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Common Whitethroat  
*Curruca communis*

**Arabian Babbler**  
***Argya squamiceps***  
(Cretzschmar, 1827)<sup>1</sup>



**Global distribution:** Resident; near endemic to Arabia, occurs throughout S and W Arabia, reaching the Levant.

**Distribution in AIUia:** All areas except AlGhameel and Tayma.

**Measurements:** L: 26-29 cm;  
Wt: 64-83 g.

**Identification:** Large, long tailed, brownish babbler, lightly streaked from head to mantle and breast. Has yellow legs and dark bill with yellowish base.

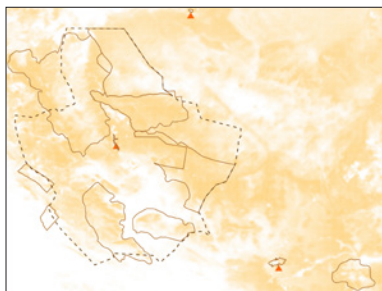
**Habitat and habits:** Lives in large social groups, in dry scrub areas, wadis, acacia woodland, and near water sources. Feeds on the ground on invertebrates including insects, spiders and scorpions, but also small lizards and snakes, and plant material, moving confidently in constant vocal contact with the group. Has a cooperative breeding system, with helpers and one main pair that build the nest in trees or bushes.

**Status:** Resident.

**Abundance:** Abundant.

**Conservation status:** LC/LC.

**Tristram's Starling**  
***Onychognathus tristramii***  
(Sclater, 1858)<sup>2</sup>



**Global distribution:** Resident; near endemic to Arabia, occurs throughout S and W Arabia, reaching the Levant.

**Distribution in AIUia:** All areas except Harrat Khaybar and Tayma.

**Measurements:** L: 25 cm; Wt: 115-131 g.

**Identification:** Large glossy-black starling, with clear rusty-orange primaries. Female has a grey head, with dark streaks on nape and throat.

**Habitat and habits:** Found in small family groups to large noisy flocks of dozens of individuals, in rocky hills, deserts and near plantations or urban settlements. Feeds mostly on fruits and invertebrates, but also human household scrapes, and is known to perch on large wild and domestic mammals to pluck ticks. Nests in rock crevices or cliff edges.

**Status:** Resident.

**Abundance:** Abundant.

**Conservation status:** LC/LC.

**Common Myna**  
***Acridotheres tristis***  
 (Linnaeus, 1766)



**Global distribution:** Resident; native from S Asia; introduced worldwide, from Africa to Arabia and Australia.

**Distribution in AIUla:** Old Khaybar.

**Measurements:** L: 23-26 cm;  
 Wt: 82-143 g.

**Identification:** Bold gregarious dark-brown myna, with a glossy black head and bright-yellow legs, bill and bare patch under eye. Shows a large white patch on primaries in flight, as well as on outer tail feathers.

**Habitat and habits:** Feeds on invertebrates and small vertebrates on the ground, as well seeds, fruits, and human scrapes. Found alone or in small groups, in the coast, around urban areas, like parks, gardens, and roadsides. Nests in cavities in manmade structures.

**Status:** Resident (Introduced).

**Abundance:** Scarce.

**Conservation status:** LC/NA.

Tristram's Starling  
*Onychognathus tristramii*



Arabian Babbler  
*Argya squamiceps*



Common Myna  
*Acridotheres tristis*



## Song Thrush

*Turdus philomelos* Brehm,  
1831



**Global distribution:** Partially migratory; breeds from W Europe to Mongolia; winters around the Mediterranean and from NE Africa to Iran.

**Distribution in AIUia:** Found outside protected areas, between Sharaan and Wadi Nakhlah.

**Measurements:** L: 20-23 cm;  
Wt: 50-107 g.

**Identification:** Compact, short-tailed thrush, with pale brown upperparts, white underparts with dense regular dark spots and often buff flanks and breast. Has pinkish legs, dark bill with light base, and rusty-brown underwings, visible in flight.

**Habitat and habits:** Found on densely vegetated areas with undergrowth. Forages on the ground among leaf litter, looking for invertebrates, fruits and berries, occasionally small vertebrates. Characteristic behaviour of opening snails on frequently used rocks, leaving a trace of broken shells around it.

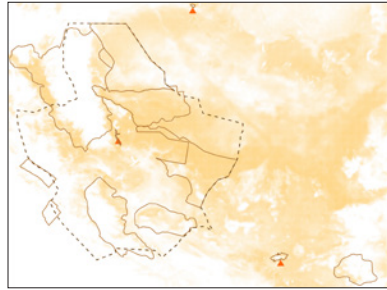
**Status:** Passage migrant, Winter visitor.

**Abundance:** Scarce, Scarce.

**Conservation status:** LC/NE.

## Rufous-tailed Scrub-robin

*Cercotrichas galactotes*  
(Temminck, 1820)



**Global distribution:** Partially migratory; breeds across Sahel to the Horn of Africa and the Mediterranean to C and S Asia; winters in its S resident range.

**Distribution in AIUia:** Tayma, Old Khaybar.

**Measurements:** L: 15-17 cm;  
Wt: 20-28 g.

**Identification:** Resembling a nightingale in shape and size, has a rufous rump and tail, tipped black and white. Distinctive facial markings, including a white supercilium and dark eye stripe.

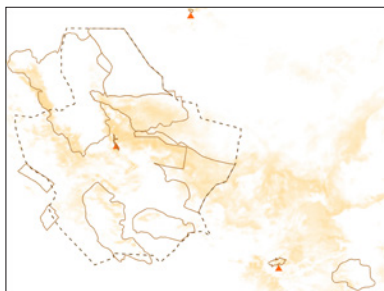
**Habitat and habits:** Breeds in well vegetated areas, including date groves and cultivated land areas. Additionally, on migration can be found in drier areas. Feeds on invertebrates on the ground, and occasionally seeds and berries.

**Status:** Passage migrant, Breeding migrant.

**Abundance:** Scarce, Scarce.

**Conservation status:** LC/LC.

**Black Scrub-robin**  
***Cercotrichas podobe*** (Müller,  
 1776)



**Global distribution:** Partially migratory; breeds across Sahel and S and W Arabia and S Levant Palestine; winters in E Africa.

**Distribution in AIUla:** AIUla Oasis, Old Khaybar, Tayma, Harrat Uwayrid, Harrat AlZabin.

**Measurements:** L: 18-20 cm;  
 Wt: 24-27 g.

**Identification:** Distinctive medium-sized black bird with a long tail tipped white, often held up fanned.

**Habitat and habits:** Very conspicuous bird, found in dry scrubland, well vegetated wadis, and most commonly in oases and plantations. Feeds on invertebrates on the ground, and sings on exposed perches.

**Status:** Resident.

**Abundance:** Abundant.

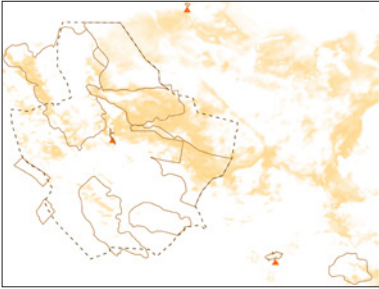
**Conservation status:** LC/LC.



Song Thrush  
*Turdus philomelos*





**Spotted Flycatcher*****Muscicapa striata*** (Pallas, 1764)

**Global distribution:** Migratory; breeds from N Africa and W Europe to Mongolia; winters in sub-Saharan Africa.

**Distribution in AIUla:** Harrat Khaybar, Wadi Nakhlah, Old Khaybar, Harrat Uwayrid.

**Measurements:** L: 14-15 cm; Wt: 11-22 g.

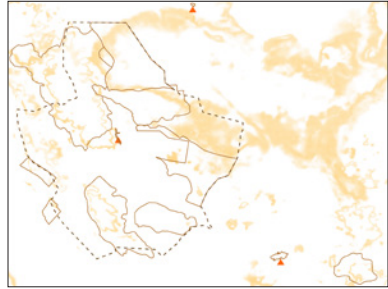
**Identification:** Brownish-grey long winged flycatcher, finely streaked from forehead to nape, and from throat to breast and flanks. Has long dark bill and short black legs.

**Habitat and habits:** Found in open scrublands, parks and gardens, perching exposed on trees and tall bushes, with an upright posture, looking for prey. Has a fast and agile flight adapted for hunting flying insects.

**Status:** Passage migrant.

**Abundance:** Uncommon.

**Conservation status:** LC/LC.

**Bluethroat*****Luscinia svecica*** (Linnaeus, 1758)

**Global distribution:** Migratory; breeds from N Eurasia to Alaska; winters from Sahel to S Asia and the Mediterranean basin.

**Distribution in AIUla:** AIUla Oasis, Tayma.

**Measurements:** L: 13-15 cm; Wt: 12-25 g.

**Identification:** Medium brown thrush-like passerine with long legs. All plumages have a white supercilium and rufous in the base of tail and outer tail feathers, as well as a black terminal band. Breeding males have the characteristic blue throat and breast, while females and non-breeding males have less but blue in variable extents.

**Habitat and habits:** Found in reedbeds and other wetlands. Feeds mostly on invertebrates, and some fruits and seeds that it searches for in the ground.

**Status:** Passage migrant, Winter visitor.

**Abundance:** Scarce, Scarce.

**Conservation status:** LC/NE.

**Thrush Nightingale*****Luscinia luscinia*** (Linnaeus, 1758)**Global distribution:** Migratory; breeds from N and Europe to WC Asia; winters in SE Africa.**Distribution in AIUa:** Harrat Khaybar.**Measurements:** L: 16-17 cm;

Wt: 14-37 g.

**Identification:** Very discretet/secretive, medium olivaceous brown thrush-like passerine. Has a rusty-red tail, diffusely mottled breast and subtle white eye-ring and throat.**Habitat and habits:** Found in densely vegetated areas, such as scrub and dense undergrowth, often near water. Feeds on the ground, among leaf litter, where it searches for invertebrates, also consuming fruits and berries.**Status:** Passage migrant.**Abundance:** Scarce.**Conservation status:** LC/NA.

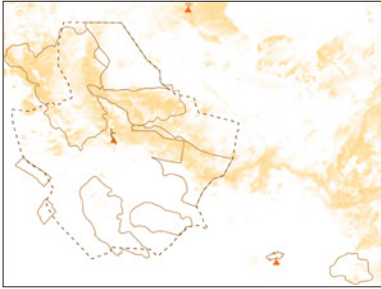
Bluethroat  
*Luscinia svecica*

Spotted Flycatcher  
*Muscicapa striata*



Thrush Nightingale  
*Luscinia luscinia*

**Black Redstart**  
***Phoenicurus ochruros***  
 (Gmelin, 1774)



**Global distribution:** Partially migratory; breeds from W Europe and W Africa to China; winters from S Europe and N Africa to SE Asia.

**Distribution in AlUla:** AlUla Oasis, Harrat Uwayrid, Sharaan, Wadi Nakhlah, AlGharameel.

**Measurements:** L: 14-15 cm; Wt: 12-20 g.

**Identification:** Medium passerine with distinctive red-rufous tail, resembling Common Redstart. Male has darker upperparts and a higher extent of black on underparts, lacking a pure white forehead. Female has greyish upperparts and belly, with buffish undertail feathers.

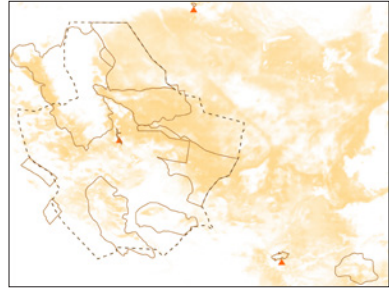
**Habitat and habits:** Widespread, being found from rocky wadis to other vegetated areas, such as gardens and cultivated land. Feeds mostly on invertebrates caught on the ground.

**Status:** Passage migrant, Winter visitor.

**Abundance:** Scarce, Scarce.

**Conservation status:** LC/NT.

**Common Redstart**  
***Phoenicurus phoenicurus***  
 (Linnaeus, 1758)



**Global distribution:** Migratory; breeds from W Europe and N Africa to Asia; winters from W Africa to S Arabia.

**Distribution in AlUla:** Sharaan, Wadi Nakhlah, Old Khaybar, Harrat Khaybar, Harrat Uwayrid, AlUla Oasis.

**Measurements:** L: 13-15 cm; Wt: 11-23 g.

**Identification:** Medium slim passerine with distinctive vibrating red-rufous tail and outer tail feathers, central tail feathers being black. Male has greyish upperparts, a black face and throat with a white forehead, and orange breast and belly. Female is paler than male, with plain brown upperparts and face, a subtle white eye-ring, and buff-white underparts.

**Habitat and habits:** Found perched in trees and bushes, in gardens, plantations, oases, wadis and even scrubby areas. Descends briefly to the ground to hunt for invertebrates, which are eaten when perched.

**Status:** Passage migrant.

**Abundance:** Uncommon.

**Conservation status:** LC/NT.

## Blue Rock-thrush *Monticola solitarius*

(Linnaeus, 1758)



**Global distribution:** Partially migratory; breeds from N Africa and W Europe to E Asia; winters from E Africa to SE Asia.

**Distribution in AIUla:** Wadi Nakhlah, Harrat Uwayrid, AlGhameel, Sharaan.

**Measurements:** L: 20-23 cm;  
Wt: 37-70 g.

**Identification:** Large blue thrush-like flycatcher, with a long bill and tail. Male is dull blue, with dark wings. Female is dark-brown, with barring on underparts, some with blue tinge on upperparts.

**Habitat and habits:** Found alone or in small groups in rocky deserts and mountains. Feeds mostly on the ground, dropping on invertebrates and small vertebrates from a raised perch, but can also pick from vegetation and flycatch. Also feeds on fruits and seeds.

**Status:** Passage migrant, Winter visitor.

**Abundance:** Scarce, Scarce.

**Conservation status:** LC/LC.



Black Redstart  
*Phoenicurus ochruros*



Common Redstart  
*Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

Blue Rock-thrush  
*Monticola solitarius*



**Whinchat**  
***Saxicola rubetra***  
 (Linnaeus, 1758)



**Global distribution:** Migratory; breeds from Europe to W Siberia; winters from W to E Africa.

**Distribution in AIUla:** Harrat Khaybar.

**Measurements:** L: 12-14 cm;

Wt: 13-26 g.

**Identification:** Short-tailed upright chat, with black legs and white sides to the base of the tail. Male has a buff-streaked blackish face, a distinct white supercilium and narrow white stripe between the blackish cheeks and the orange throat. Female has a paler throat and brown cheeks, always with a buffy supercilium.

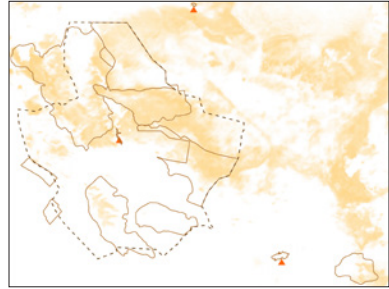
**Habitat and habits:** Open areas with low bushes, on top of which it perches to scan for small flying insects.

**Status:** Passage migrant.

**Abundance:** Scarce.

**Conservation status:** LC/NE.

**Common Stonechat/  
 Siberian Stonechat**  
***Saxicola torquatus***  
 (Linnaeus, 1766)



**Global distribution:** Partially migratory; breeds in sub-Saharan Africa and from NW Africa and W Europe to E Asia; winters in N Africa to SE Asia, including Arabia.

**Distribution in AIUla:** Wadi Nakhlah, AlGharameel, Tayma, Harrat Uwayrid, Sharaan, Harrat Khaybar.

**Measurements:** L: 13 cm; Wt: 13-17 g.

**Identification:** Short-tailed chat, resembling the Whinchat, but with larger rounded head and no supercilium. Male has a full black head and throat, white neck patch and orange belly, black wings, and a large white wing panel. Female is paler, with buff-streaked upperparts, dark-brown head and throat, and rufous-orange upper breast.

**Habitat and habits:** Found in open flat moist areas, such as gardens or cultivated land, perched in low vegetation looking for prey. Feeds on the ground mostly on invertebrates, seed, and can occasionally hunt small vertebrates.

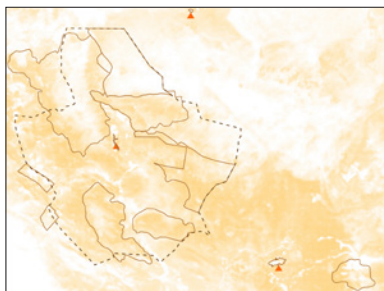
**Status:** Passage migrant, Winter visitor.

**Abundance:** Uncommon, Uncommon.

**Conservation status:** LC/LC.

**Blackstart*****Oenanthe melanura***

(Temminck, 1824)



**Global distribution:** Resident; occurs across Sahel to the Red Sea coast and Horn of Africa, Egypt and W Arabia.

**Distribution in AIUla:** All areas except AlGhrameel, and Tayma.

**Measurements:** L: 14 cm; Wt: 13-18 g.

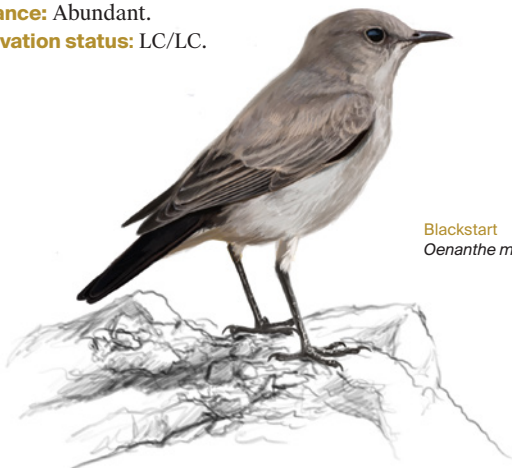
**Identification:** Small and slender ash-grey wheatear with distinctive black tail often lowered and spread.

**Habitat and habits:** Found often on trees in wadis and arid, rocky areas with shrubbery and acacias. Feeds mainly on invertebrates captured on the ground or at flight. Nests in rock crevices.

**Status:** Resident.

**Abundance:** Abundant.

**Conservation status:** LC/LC.



Blackstart  
*Oenanthe melanura*



♂

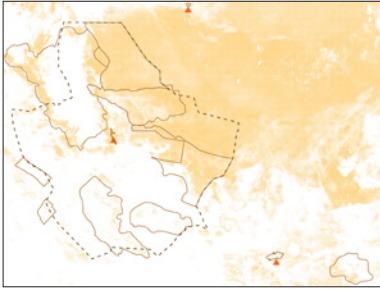
Whinchat  
*Saxicola rubetra*



Common Stonechat  
*Saxicola torquatus*

♂

**Northern Wheatear**  
***Oenanthe oenanthe***  
 (Linnaeus, 1758)



**Global distribution:** Migratory; breeds across Eurasia to Greenland, Alaska and Canada; winters throughout Sahel and E Africa.

**Distribution in AIUla:** Wadi Nakhlah, AlGharameel, Harrat Khaybar, Sharaan.

**Measurements:** L: 14,5-15,5 cm;  
 Wt: 18-33 g.

**Identification:** Medium-sized wheatear with relatively short tail and long legs. Breeding male with grey crown and back, white supercilium, black mask, orangey throat, and dark wings. In autumn colours are duller and back is brownish. Female is brownish with less contrasts, fainter supercilium and no black mask. Tail and rump are white with black terminal band (thinner than Isabelline) and central line (black 'T').

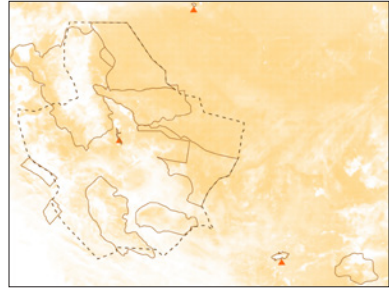
**Habitat and habits:** In migration found in open rocky and stony areas, sparsely vegetated, cultivation and stubble fields. Feeds mainly on invertebrates hunted on the ground, occasionally consuming berries.

**Status:** Passage migrant.

**Abundance:** Common.

**Conservation status:** LC/LC.

**Isabelline Wheatear**  
***Oenanthe isabellina***  
 (Temminck, 1829)



**Global distribution:** Migratory; breeds from Bulgaria to Mongolia; winters throughout Sahel and E Africa, Arabia to NW India.

**Distribution in AIUla:** AlGharameel, Wadi Nakhlah, Harrat Uwayrid, Harrat Khaybar, Sharaan, Jabal Nahar, Harrat AlZabin.

**Measurements:** L: 16-17 cm;  
 Wt: 21-39 g.

**Identification:** Large sandy-pale wheatear with long legs and a typical upright stance. Wings are pale brown, contrasting with a black alula. Supercilium whitest before the eye (opposite in immature Northern Wheatear). Black lores in male, browner in female. White tail with broad black terminal band and central line (black 'T').

**Habitat and habits:** Open semi-desert, steppe, arid mountains, and cultivation fields. Feeds mainly on invertebrates dropping on the prey from a perch.

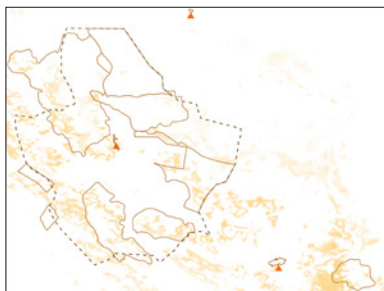
**Status:** Passage migrant, Winter visitor.

**Abundance:** Common, Common.

**Conservation status:** LC/LC.

**Kurdish Wheatear*****Oenanthe xanthopyrna***

(Hemprich &amp; Ehrenberg, 1833)



**Global distribution:** Migratory; breeds from SE Turkey to SW Iran; winters in E Egypt (Nile Valley and E Desert) and W Saudi Arabia.

**Distribution in AIUla:** Harrat AlZabin, Jabal Nahar, Jabal Al Ward.

**Measurements:** L: 14-15 cm; Wt: 18-29 g.

**Identification:** Medium-sized wheatear with long, slim bill. Male has white supercilium, black bib connecting to black wings, grey upperparts, and orangey-rufous rump and vent. Tail is white with a broad black terminal band and central line. Female is duller in colouration lacking black bib.

**Habitat and habits:** Found in rocky desert, hills, boulder fields and rocky wadis. Feeds mainly on invertebrates, occasionally consuming lizards, seeds and berries.

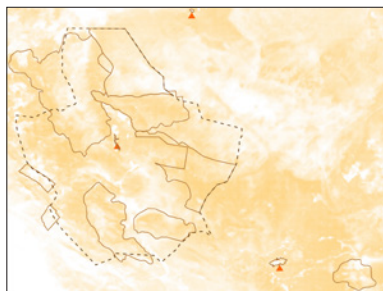
**Status:** Passage migrant, Winter visitor.

**Abundance:** Rare, Rare.

**Conservation status:** LC/LC.

**White-crowned Wheatear*****Oenanthe leucopyga*** (Brehm,

1855)



**Global distribution:** Resident; occurs across N Africa to E Arabia.

**Distribution in AIUla:** All areas except Tayma.

**Measurements:** L: 17 cm; Wt: 23-39 g.

**Identification:** Large wheatear, predominantly black, with long legs and an upright and robust stance. White rump and tail with a black central line. Adult with white crown.

**Habitat and habits:** Found in arid environments, such as rocky deserts, boulder slopes, cliffs, dry wadis, and lava fields. Often found near human settlements. Feeds mainly on invertebrates dropping on the prey from a perch. Occasionally lizards, seeds and berries. Nests in rock crevices.

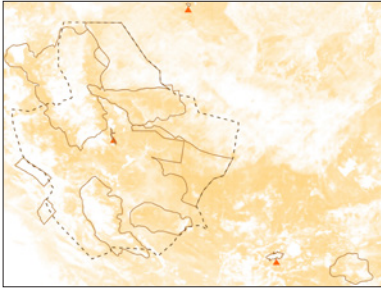
**Status:** Resident.

**Abundance:** Abundant.

**Conservation status:** LC/LC.



**Hooded Wheatear**  
***Oenanthe monacha***  
 (Temminck, 1825)



**Global distribution:** Resident; found from E Egypt to SW Pakistan, occurring sparsely throughout Arabia.

**Distribution in AIUla:** Harrat AlZabin, Harrat Khaybar, Harrat Uwayrid, Jabal Nahar, AlGharameel, Sharaan.

**Measurements:** L: 18 cm; Wt: 18-23 g.

**Identification:** Large and slender wheatear with long, slim bill, wings and tail, but short legs, often in crouched posture. Adult male is black and white, with white crown and underparts, extending to the centre of the chest, and white rump and tail with a black central line. Female is pale grey-brown with darker wings and rusty tail and rump.

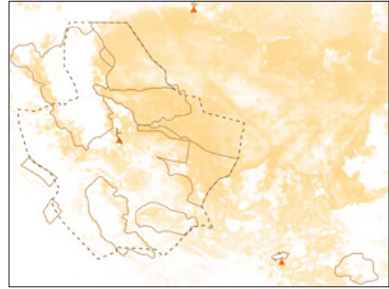
**Habitat and habits:** Found in desolate desert wadis, rocky ravines, gorges, arid hillsides, dry riverbeds, often with boulders, and in areas too harsh for other wheatears. Feeds mainly on invertebrates, often taking flying insects after long chases in the air. Nests in rock crevices.

**Status:** Resident.

**Abundance:** Uncommon.

**Conservation status:** LC/LC.

**Mourning Wheatear**  
***Oenanthe lugens***  
 (Lichtenstein, 1823)



**Global distribution:** Partially migratory; breeds in N and E Africa and from Arabia to Syria and Iran; winters in Arabia.

**Distribution in AIUla:** All areas except Harrat Khaybar, Old Khaybar and Tayma.

**Measurements:** L: 14-16 cm; Wt: 19-25 g.

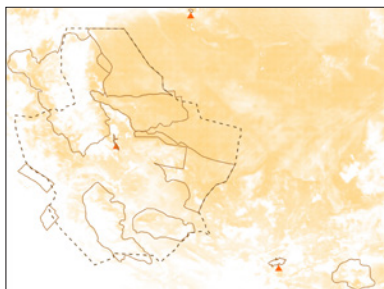
**Identification:** Black and white wheatear with rusty undertail coverts. White underparts extending up to black throat, white crown. In flight, shows a whitish panel on flight-feathers. Tail features a uniformly black terminal band and central line.

**Habitat and habits:** Found in barren slopes, semi-deserts, sandstone canyons and outcrops. Feeds mainly on invertebrates captured on the ground or at flight. Nests in rock crevices.

**Status:** Resident, Winter visitor.

**Abundance:** Uncommon, Common.

**Conservation status:** LC/LC.

**Desert Wheatear*****Oenanthe deserti*** (Temminck, 1825)

**Global distribution:** Partially migratory; breeds from NW Africa to Mongolia; winters across Sahel and Arabia to NW India.

**Distribution in AIUla:** Harrat AlZabin, Harrat Uwayrid, Wadi Nakhlah, Jabal Nahar, Harrat Khaybar, AlGharameel, Sharaan.

**Measurements:** L: 14-15 cm;

Wt: 15-34 g.

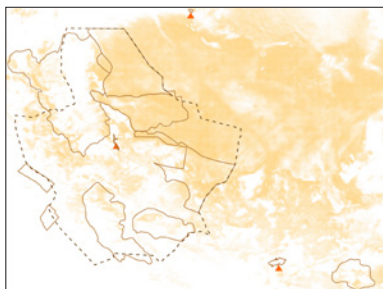
**Identification:** Compact, short neck and tail, sandy coloured wheatear. Male with distinctive black face and wings, connected at throat level (cf. Black-eared Wheatear) and white supercilium and scapulars. Female with paler sandy colours, lacking black face. Tail is black with a contrasting white rump. Regular tail flicking.

**Habitat and habits:** Prefers open habitats like shrubby deserts, barren stony areas, and lava fields. Feeds on invertebrates hunted on the ground, occasionally consuming seeds.

**Status:** Passage migrant, Winter visitor.

**Abundance:** Common, Common.

**Conservation status:** LC/LC.

**Black-eared Wheatear*****Oenanthe hispanica*** (Linnaeus, 1758)

**Global distribution:** Migratory; breeds across the Mediterranean to Iran; winters throughout Sahel. Ssp occurring in the region is the eastern *O. h. melanoleuca*.

**Distribution in AIUla:** AlGharameel, Harrat Khaybar.

**Measurements:** L: 13,5-15,5 cm;

Wt: 12-21 g.

**Identification:** Small and slim wheatear with a long tail. Adult male is whitish, tinged ochre, with black wings and mask (black not connected), and black or pale throat. Female and immature with greyish-brown upperparts and duller version of the male's pattern. Rump and tail white with central black line and uneven terminal band, broader on the edges.

**Habitat and habits:** Found in open areas, sparsely vegetated, stony slopes, and large parks. Feeds mainly on invertebrates dropping on the prey from a high perch. Occasionally consumes seeds and berries.

**Status:** Passage migrant.

**Abundance:** Scarce.

**Conservation status:** LC/LC.

**Pied Wheatear**  
***Oenanthe pleschanka***  
 (Lepechin, 1770)



**Global distribution:** Migratory; breeds from E Romania to N China; winters in SW Arabia and E Africa.

**Distribution in AIUia:** Harrat Khaybar.

**Measurements:** L: 14,5-16 cm;  
 Wt: 16-22 g.

**Identification:** Slim wheatear with long tail. Very similar to the Black-eared Wheatear with same tail pattern. Male with black or pale throat, but have a black back, and the black on the face connects to the wings. Female very similar to the female of Black-eared Wheatear, but darker.

**Habitat and habits:** Found in arid rocky desolate semi-desert, boulder fields, and rocky wadis, as well as greener areas like scrubland, plantations and pivot-irrigated fields. Feeds mainly on invertebrates, dropping onto prey from a perch, occasionally consuming berries and fruit.

**Status:** Passage migrant.

**Abundance:** Scarce.

**Conservation status:** LC/NE.

Northern Wheatear  
*Oenanthe oenanthe*



Isabelline Wheatear  
*Oenanthe isabellina*



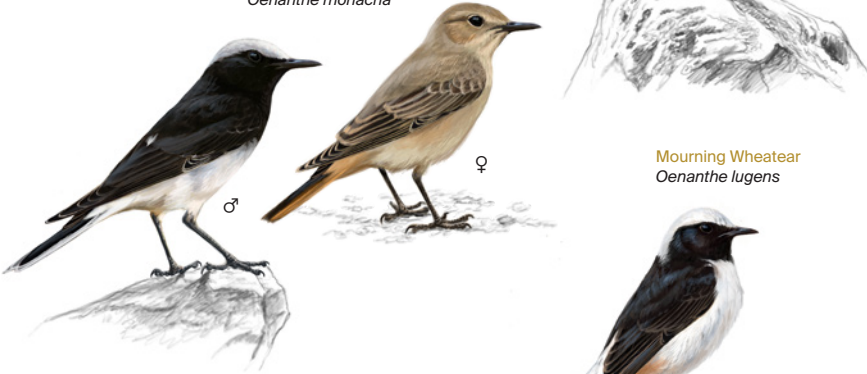
Kurdish Wheatear  
*Oenanthe xanthopyrna*



White-crowned Wheatear  
*Oenanthe leucopyga*



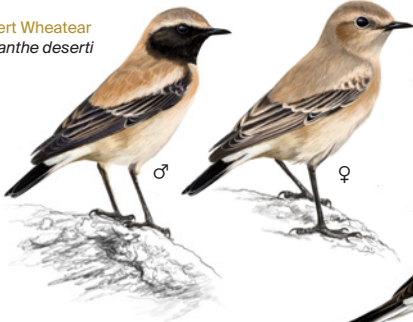
Hooded Wheatear  
*Oenanthe monacha*



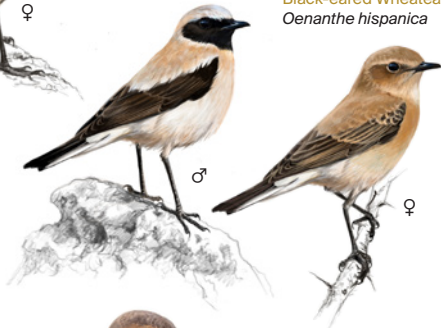
Mourning Wheatear  
*Oenanthe lugens*



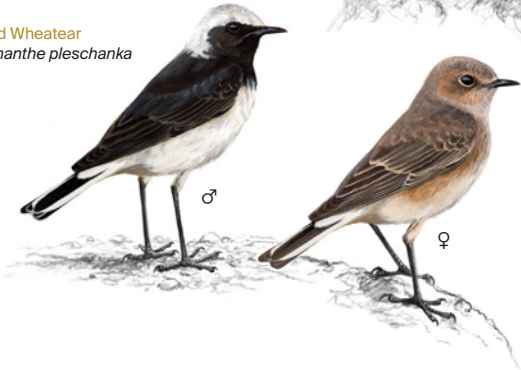
Desert Wheatear  
*Oenanthe deserti*



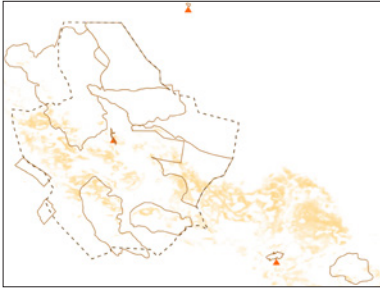
Black-eared Wheatear  
*Oenanthe hispanica*



Pied Wheatear  
*Oenanthe pleschanka*



**Nile Valley Sunbird**  
*Hedydipna metallica*  
 (Lichtenstein, 1823)



**Global distribution:** Resident, with some winter dispersion. Occurs in SW Arabia and NE Africa.

**Distribution in AIUia:** Wadi Nakhlah.

**Measurements:** L: M 17 cm, F 9 cm; Wt: 7-8 g.

**Identification:** Small sunbird with a relatively short bill. Breeding male is unmistakable with green glossy upperparts, black breast with purple glossy reflection, yellow belly, and extremely long thin tail. Female has greyish-brown upperparts, pale yellow underparts and supercilium, a short tail, and a whitish throat.

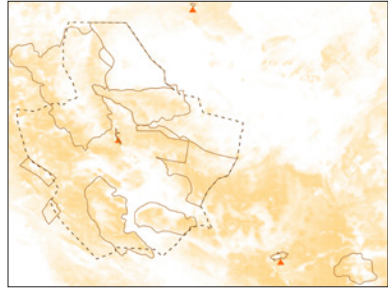
**Habitat and habits:** Typically found in pairs during the breeding season or in groups off-season, in dry scrubland, wadis, oases and gardens, moving nervously among the vegetation. Feeds primarily on nectar and insects through leaf-gleaning. Makes an oval nest suspended from a branch.

**Status:** Winter visitor.

**Abundance:** Scarce.

**Conservation status:** LC/LC.

**Palestine Sunbird**  
*Cinnyris osea* Bonaparte, 1856



**Global distribution:** Resident; occurs in S Levant and throughout W and S Arabia, and small pockets in Africa.

**Distribution in AIUia:** All areas except Sharaan, AlGharameel, Harrat Khaybar and Tayma.

**Measurements:** L: 8-10 cm; Wt: 7-8 g.

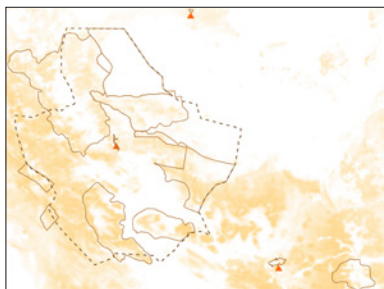
**Identification:** Tiny, compact sunbird with a typical long, down-curved bill (shorter than the Arabian Sunbird) and a regularly, nervously-flicked short tail. Male is dark, reflecting metallic shades of blue, purple and green in the right light. Female is grey with a paler chest and a black tail.

**Habitat and habits:** Found in savanna-like acacia areas, wadis, oases, plantations and gardens. Forages singly or in pairs, mostly on nectar by perching or hovering on flowers, also fruits, seeds and invertebrates. Nests suspended on trees or bushes.

**Status:** Resident.

**Abundance:** Abundant.

**Conservation status:** LC/LC.

**Arabian Sunbird*****Cinnyris hellmayri*** (Neumann, 1904)

**Global distribution:** Resident; endemic to Arabia, found throughout W and S Arabia.

**Distribution in AIUla:** AIUla Oasis, Wadi Nakhlah, Harrat AlZabin, Jabal Shayhoub, Jabal Al Ward, Harrat Uwayrid.

**Measurements:** L: 12-13 cm; Wt: 7-12 g.

**Identification:** Medium-sized sunbird with a long, down-curved bill and a slow flicking of the broader tail (compared to the Palestine Sunbird). Adult male is dark with metallic green and blue tones on head, back and chest, and a broad reddish breast band. Female is dark sooty grey, with a pale supercilium and vermiculated underparts.

**Habitat and habits:** Usually found in pairs in steep-sided wadis or on hillsides, dry savanna scrub, orchards, plantations, and in parks and gardens. Feeds on nectar, fruits and insects caught in the air. Nest shaped like a bottle suspended in trees or bushes.

**Status:** Resident.

**Abundance:** Uncommon.

**Conservation status:** LC/LC.

Nile Valley Sunbird  
*Hedydipna metallica*

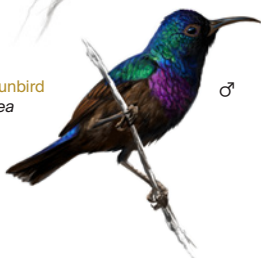


♂



♀

Palestine Sunbird  
*Cinnyris osea*

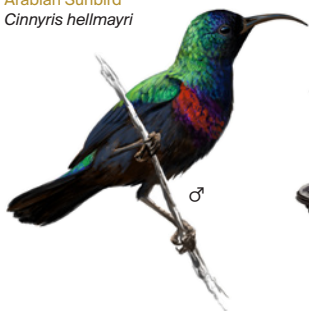


♂



♀

Arabian Sunbird  
*Cinnyris hellmayri*



♂



♀

### Rüppell's Weaver

*Ploceus galbula* Rüppell,  
1840<sup>1</sup>



**Global distribution:** Resident; occurs in SW Arabia and NE Africa.

**Distribution in AIUla:** AIUla Oasis.

**Measurements:** L: 14 cm; Wt: M 20-29 g, F 16-21 g.

**Identification:** Breeding male is yellow with dark face and bill, red eye and olive-green streaked back. Female is olive-brown with a yellow washed throat and chest, with dark eyes, and pale bill and underparts. Non-breeding male similar to female, but with red eyes and olive-green upperparts.

**Habitat and habits:** Found in crops, savanna-like acacia areas, wadis and gardens. Feeds on seeds, foraging in small groups with mixed species. Gregarious, makes basket-like nests hanging in groups from a tree. The only native weaver in the region.

**Status:** Resident.

**Abundance:** Scarce.

**Conservation status:** LC/LC.

### African Silverbill

*Euodice cantans* (Gmelin,  
1789)<sup>2</sup>



**Global distribution:** Resident; found in SW Arabia, throughout Sahel and scattered through E Africa.

**Distribution in AIUla:** AIUla Oasis, Old Khaybar.

**Measurements:** L: 11 cm; Wt: 10-14 g.

**Identification:** Small, compact finch with a thick, short, conical silver bill and a long tail. Brown vermiculated upperparts and cream-coloured underparts. Dark wings, rump, tail and upper tail coverts.

**Habitat and habits:** Found in small flocks in grassland, scrub, cultivation, palm groves, oases and gardens. Feeds mainly on seeds in the ground or perching from plants. Occasionally consumes invertebrates. Nests in bushes or trees.

**Status:** Resident.

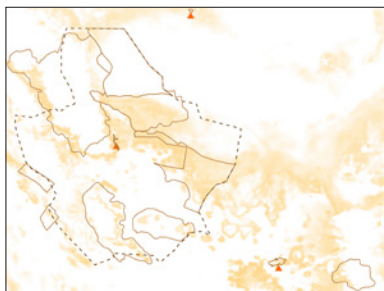
**Abundance:** Common.

**Conservation status:** LC/LC.

## Hypocolius

### *Hypocolius ampelinus*

Bonaparte, 1850



**Global distribution:** Migratory; breeds from E Iraq to W Afghanistan; winters in Arabia and along the coast of SE Iran to NW India.

**Distribution in AIUla:** AIUla Oasis, Old Khaybar.

**Measurements:** L: 23 cm; Wt: 48-57 g.

**Identification:** Slim, long tailed, medium-sized pale grey bird with a short bill. Male has a black mask and black primaries with white tips giving the appearance of a black-and-white 'hand' in flight. Tail is tipped black, broader in males.

**Habitat and habits:** Found in trees usually in small flocks (10-20 ind.), mainly in oases, palm groves, groves and gardens. Feeds on berries and fruits, occasionally consuming insects.

**Status:** Passage migrant, Winter visitor.

**Abundance:** Scarce, Scarce.

**Conservation status:** LC/LC.

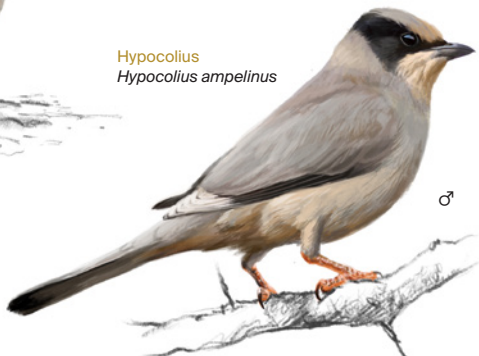
African Silverbill  
*Euodice cantans*



Rüppell's Weaver  
*Ploceus galbula*



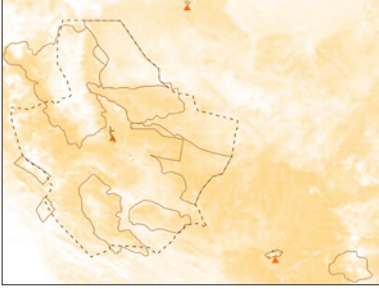
Hypocolius  
*Hypocolius ampelinus*





**House Sparrow**

***Passer domesticus*** (Linnaeus, 1758)



**Global distribution:** Resident; found throughout much of the Palearctic, the Middle East and S Asia. Introduced in many other parts of the world.

**Distribution in ALUia:** All areas.

**Measurements:** L: 15-17 cm;

Wt: 27-29 g.

**Identification:** Brown upperparts heavily black-streaked and pale grey underparts. Male with grey crown, white wing-bar, black bill, bib and lores.

**Habitat and habits:** Found in flocks associated with human presence, in towns, villages, campsites and farmland. Feeds in the ground on seeds, fruits, berries, invertebrates, and human food scraps. Nests in holes, bases of larger birds' nests, bushes and trees.

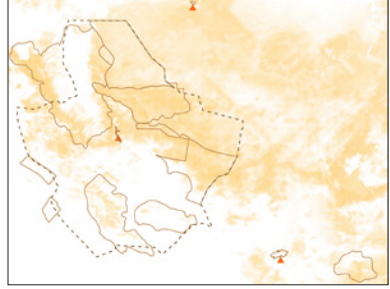
**Status:** Resident.

**Abundance:** Abundant.

**Conservation status:** LC/LC.

**Spanish Sparrow**

***Passer hispaniolensis*** (Temminck, 1820)



**Global distribution:** Partially migratory; breeds scatteredly from Iberia and NW Africa to NW China; winters in N Africa, Arabia and S Asia.

**Distribution in ALUia:** ALUia Oasis, Wadi Nakhlah, Harrat Khaybar, Harrat Uwayrid, AlGharameel, Tayma.

**Measurements:** L: 15-16 cm;

Wt: 22-38 g.

**Identification:** Same size as the House Sparrow. Male differs from male House Sparrow by displaying a rufous-brown crown, white supercilium and cheek, and heavily dark spotted from chest to flanks. Female identical to female House Sparrow.

**Habitat and habits:** Found in flocks in farmland, open cultivated areas, oases, date groves, reedbeds and wadis. Feeds in the ground mainly on seeds, also berries and invertebrates. Nests often colonially in bases of larger birds' nests, holes in buildings, bushes and trees.

**Status:** Resident, Winter visitor.

**Abundance:** Scarce, Common.

**Conservation status:** LC/LC.

**Pale Sparrow**  
***Carpospiza brachydactyla***  
 (Bonaparte, 1850)



**Global distribution:** Migratory; breeds from SE Turkey to SE Turkmenistan and S into Arabia; winters in W Saudi Arabia and NE Africa.

**Distribution in AIUla:** Harrat Khaybar.

**Measurements:** L: 14-15 cm;

Wt: 21-25 g.

**Identification:** Elongated, featureless, pale-brown sparrow, with long triangular-shaped wings. Features a pale supercilium and two pale wing bars, and white tail tip.

**Habitat and habits:** Gregarious outside breeding season, found in rocky and scrubby areas, semi-deserts, and open cultivated land. Feeds on the ground mainly on seeds, plants and invertebrates. Nests in trees or bushes.

**Status:** Passage migrant, Winter visitor, Breeding migrant.

**Abundance:** Uncommon, Uncommon, Uncommon.

**Conservation status:** LC/LC.

House Sparrow  
*Passer domesticus*



Spanish Sparrow  
*Passer hispaniolensis*

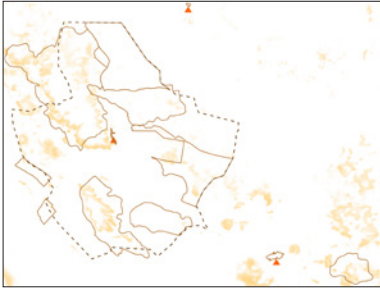


Pale Sparrow  
*Carpospiza brachydactyla*



**Tree Pipit**

***Anthus trivialis*** (Linnaeus, 1758)



**Global distribution:** Migratory; breeds from W Europe to E Russia; winters in sub-Saharan Africa and India.

**Distribution in AIUla:** AIUla Oasis.

**Measurements:** L: 14-15 cm;

Wt: 15-39 g.

**Identification:** Small, elongated and heavily streaked pipit, with a strong bill with pinkish base, pink legs, warm yellowish breast and flanks and white belly. Streaks on the underparts, bold in the chest and finer in the flanks.

**Habitat and habits:** Found mainly in wet and green areas, such as crops, plantations, oases, gardens and parks. Usually in small groups, perching on trees and bushes, or feeding in the ground on invertebrates, sometimes seeds and berries.

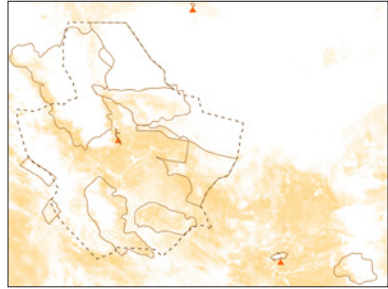
**Status:** Passage migrant.

**Abundance:** Uncommon.

**Conservation status:** LC/NE.

**Red-throated Pipit**

***Anthus cervinus*** (Pallas, 1811)



**Global distribution:** Migratory; breeds across the Eurasian Arctic to W Alaska; winters in the Mediterranean, Nile Valley, N Arabia, sub-Saharan Africa and parts of SE Asia.

**Distribution in AIUla:** Found outside protected areas, in AIUla's city gardens.

**Measurements:** L: 14-15 cm;

Wt: 16-29 g.

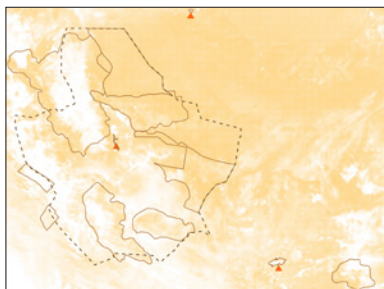
**Identification:** Small pipit with thin bill, with yellowish base and pale underparts. Adult in breeding plumage with unique reddish face, throat and upper chest. Male redder than female. In immature and non-breeding adult note broad streaks on the flanks, white stripes on the back and boldly streaked rump.

**Habitat and habits:** Found usually in small groups in crops, grassland, lawns in parks and gardens, and near water. Forages on the ground mainly on invertebrates, occasionally seeds.

**Status:** Passage migrant.

**Abundance:** Common.

**Conservation status:** LC/NE.

**Tawny Pipit*****Anthus campestris*** (Linnaeus, 1758)

**Global distribution:** Migratory; breeds from W Europe and NW Africa to Mongolia; winters across Sahel and Horn of Africa, Nile Valley, Arabia and S Asia.

**Distribution in AIUla:** Wadi Nakhlah, AlGharameel, Harrat Khaybar, Sharaan, Harrat AlZabin.

**Measurements:** L: 17 cm; Wt: 17-32 g.

**Identification:** Large and slender pipit, with sandy brown upperparts, pale yellowish underparts, long bill, and long legs. Displays long supercilium, dark lores, almost unstreaked breast and back, contrasting greater coverts and white tail edges. Immature is more streaked.

**Habitat and habits:** Found usually in small groups in vegetated sandy regions, crops, and lawns in parks. Forages on the ground mainly on invertebrates, occasionally lizards and seeds.

**Status:** Passage migrant, Winter visitor.

**Abundance:** Common, Common.

**Conservation status:** LC/LC.



Tree Pipit  
*Anthus trivialis*

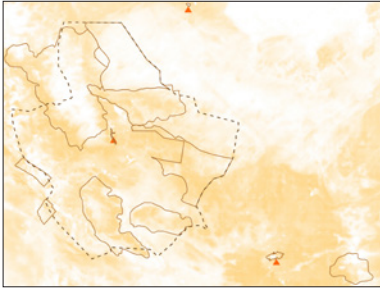
Red-throated Pipit  
*Anthus cervinus*



Tawny Pipit  
*Anthus campestris*



**Western Yellow Wagtail/  
Black-headed Wagtail**  
*Motacilla flava* Linnaeus, 1758



**Global distribution:** Migratory; breeds across Europe and most of Asia; winters in sub-Saharan Africa, India and parts of Arabia.

**Distribution in AIUia:** Old Khaybar, Harrat Khaybar, Wadi Nakhlah.

**Measurements:** L: 17 cm; Wt: 11-26 g.

**Identification:** Wagtail with shorter tail, greenish to olive-brown upperparts, extensively yellow underparts, and dark legs. Head colour varies from black, to grey and yellow, depending on the sex, age and ssp. Female is always paler than male.

**Habitat and habits:** Found in damp habitats, with low vegetation, such as croplands, irrigated fields, and reeds. Forages alone or in small groups, occasionally in larger groups during migration, on invertebrates and plant material.

**Status:** Passage migrant.

**Abundance:** Uncommon.

**Conservation status:** LC/NE.

**Grey Wagtail**  
*Motacilla cinerea* Tunstall,  
1771



**Global distribution:** Partially migratory; breeds in Europe and N Asia; winters around the Mediterranean, and from E Africa to SE Asia.

**Distribution in AIUia:** Old Khaybar.

**Measurements:** L: 17-20 cm;

Wt: 14-22 g.

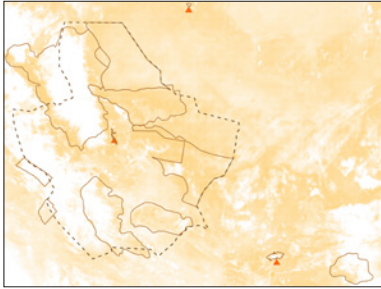
**Identification:** Elegant long-tailed wagtail, with blue-grey upperparts and black wings. Bright yellow vent and green-yellow rump in all plumages, with short pinkish legs. Breeding male has mostly yellow underparts, black bib, white supercilium and submoustachial stripes.

**Habitat and habits:** Found usually alone, exclusively near running water, such as mountain streams, but also fountains and irrigation ditches. Feeds mostly on riverine insects, but also snails and crustaceans, wagging its long tail.

**Status:** Passage migrant.

**Abundance:** Scarce.

**Conservation status:** LC/NT.

**White Wagtail*****Motacilla alba*** Linnaeus, 1758

**Global distribution:** Partially migratory; breeds across Eurasia; winters from Africa to SE Asia.

**Distribution in AIUla:** AIUla Oasis, Wadi Nakhlah, Sharaan, Harrat Khaybar, AlGharameel, Harrat Uwayrid, Jabal Nahar.

**Measurements:** L: 17-18 cm;  
Wt: 18-25 g.

**Identification:** Black and white wagtail, with grey upperparts, white face and underparts, black collar or bib, and dark legs.

**Habitat and habits:** Found in open habitats, often near water, such as gardens, fields and farmland, but also on the side of roads. Looks for insects on the ground, with characteristic tail wagging movement.

**Status:** Passage migrant, Winter visitor.

**Abundance:** Common, Common.

**Conservation status:** LC/NE.

Western Yellow Wagtail/  
Black-headed Wagtail  
*Motacilla flava*



*spp. feldegg*

Grey Wagtail  
*Motacilla cinerea*



White Wagtail  
*Motacilla alba*



**Common Rosefinch**  
***Carpodacus erythrinus***  
 (Pallas, 1770)



**Global distribution:** Migratory; breeds from W Europe to E Asia and the Russian Far East; winters from India to S China.

**Distribution in AIUa:** Harrat Khaybar.

**Measurements:** L: 13-15 cm;  
 Wt: 19-33 g.

**Identification:** Small finch with a short, stout grey bill. Male is unmistakable with a distinctive red head, chest and rump, and brown eye-mask. Female and juvenile are streaked olive-brown with two wing-bars.

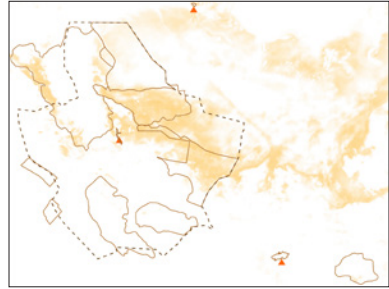
**Habitat and habits:** Usually found alone in trees or scrub, feeding on seeds, berries and fruits, but can also forage on the ground.

**Status:** Passage migrant.

**Abundance:** Rare.

**Conservation status:** LC/NA.

**Sinai Rosefinch**  
***Carpodacus synoicus***  
 (Temminck, 1825)



**Global distribution:** Resident; occurs from the Sinai Peninsula to NW Arabia.

**Distribution in AIUa:** All areas except Jabal Shayhoub, Harrat Khaybar, Old Khaybar and Tayma.

**Measurements:** L: 13-15,5 cm;  
 Wt: 17-24 g.

**Identification:** Resembles the Common Rosefinch, but with plainer plumage, slenderer and with a more conical bill. Male has a crimson head, pink back and underparts. Female is plain light-brown.

**Habitat and habits:** In pairs in breeding season, and in family groups during winter, on cliffs, including sandstone, arid rocky areas, and desert plains.

Feeds on seeds, buds and leaves. Nests on cliffs, occasionally on the ground.

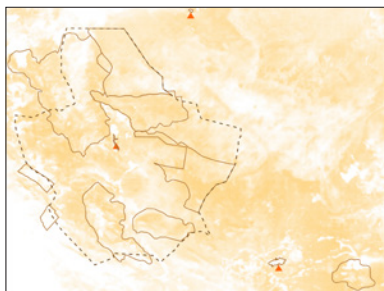
**Status:** Resident.

**Abundance:** Abundant.

**Conservation status:** LC/LC.

## Trumpeter Finch *Bucanetes githagineus*

(Lichtenstein, 1823)



**Global distribution:** Resident; occurs from N Africa to Pakistan.

**Distribution in AIUla:** All areas e. Old Khaybar and Tayma.

**Measurements:** L: 13-15 cm;  
Wt: 16-25 g.

**Identification:** Small and stocky pale finch with a large head, long wings and a strong heavy bill, orange in male, pale in female. Breeding male has a grey head and pinked-tinged underparts, wings, rump and tail. Female and juvenile are duller, with juvenile lacking any pink.

**Habitat and habits:** Gregarious, found in rocky plains and hillsides with scattered vegetation, wadis, harrats and semi-desert. Feeds on seeds, seedlings, berries, and invertebrates on the ground. Nests on the ground or on crevices in rocks.

**Status:** Resident.

**Abundance:** Abundant.

**Conservation status:** LC/LC.



♂

Common Rosefinch  
*Carpodacus erythrinus*



♂

Sinai Rosefinch  
*Carpodacus synoicus*



♀

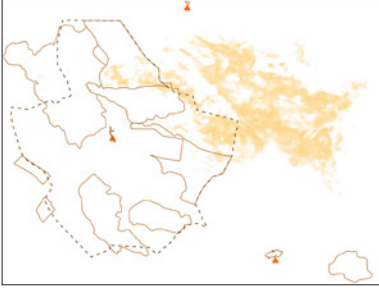


♂

Trumpeter Finch  
*Bucanetes githagineus*



**Desert Finch**  
***Rhodospiza obsoleta***  
 (Lichtenstein, 1823)



**Global distribution:** Partially migratory; breeds patchily in C and N Arabia, to Turkey and N China; migratory populations breed in Kazakhstan and winter in Afghanistan.

**Distribution in AIU/a:** Tayma.

**Measurements:** L: 15 cm; Wt: 17-28 g.

**Identification:** Pale sandy-brown finch with short, pointy bill, black-and-white tail, and striking pink, white and black wing pattern, duller in female. Male has a black bill and lores, pale in female.

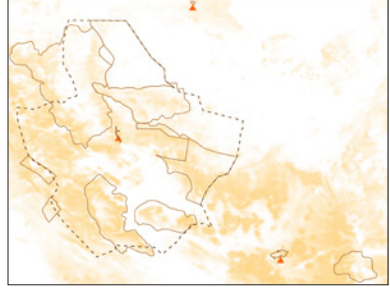
**Habitat and habits:** Found in pairs or small flocks, in orchards, pivot-irrigated fields, plantations and adjacent open arid scrubland, and towns. Feeds on seeds, seedlings, buds and insects. Nests in trees or bushes.

**Status:** Resident.

**Abundance:** Scarce.

**Conservation status:** LC/LC.

**Arabian Serin**  
***Crithagra rothschildi*** (Ogilvie-Grant, 1902)



**Global distribution:** Resident and endemic; found across W Arabia.

**Distribution in AIU/a:** All areas except Sharaan, AlGharameel, Harrat Khaybar and Tayma.

**Measurements:** L: 11-12 cm; Wt: 14 g.

**Identification:** Small, delicate and rather featureless grey-brown finch, with pale throat and underparts blurrily streaked, and olive-coloured rump, conspicuous in flight.

**Habitat and habits:** Found in pairs or small groups, in vegetation of arid rocky mountains, hillsides and wadis, oases and plantations. Feeds in the ground or on vegetation, on seeds, buds and fruits. Nests in trees or bushes.

**Status:** Resident.

**Abundance:** Abundant.

**Conservation status:** LC/LC.

**Corn Bunting*****Emberiza calandra*** Linnaeus,  
1758**Distribution in AIUla:** Sharaan.**Measurements:** L: 17-19 cm;

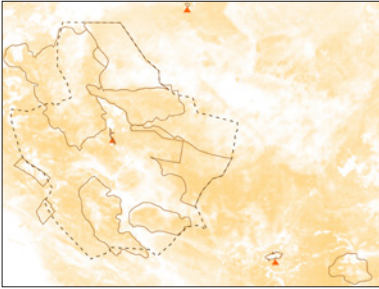
Wt: 32-67 g.

**Identification:** Large, bulky and rather featureless sandy-brown bunting, with a heavy pinkish bill and legs. Pale, dark streaked underparts.**Habitat and habits:** Found alone or in small groups, in open country with scattered bushes, farmland and grassland. Feeds in the ground, mainly on seeds, also invertebrates.**Status:** Winter visitor.**Abundance:** Scarce.**Conservation status:** LC/LC.**Global distribution:** Partially migratory; breeds from W Europe and NW Africa to Asia, with scattered populations in Arabia; winters in N Africa, N and E Arabia and Iran.Arabian Serin  
*Crithagra rothschildi*Desert Finch  
*Rhodospiza obsoleta*

♂

Corn Bunting  
*Emberiza calandra*

**Striolated Bunting**  
***Emberiza striolata***  
 (Lichtenstein, 1823)



**Global distribution:** Resident; occurs patchily in NE Africa, Sinai, Palestine and Jordan, throughout W and S Arabia, and S Iran to Pakistan.

**Distribution in AIU/a:** All areas except AlGhameel, Old Khaybar and Tayma.

**Measurements:** L: 12-13 cm;  
 Wt: 12-16 g.

**Identification:** Small bunting with rufous wings, sandy-brown body, black and grey-white striped face, and a grey streaked neck. Bicoloured bill, with dark upper mandible and orangey lower mandible. Female and juvenile duller.

**Habitat and habits:** Found in pairs or small flocks, in oases, rocky wadis and hillsides with scarce vegetation, and plantations. Feeds in the ground or in vegetation on seeds, and occasionally fruits and insects. Nests in crevices on cliffs and walls.

**Status:** Resident.

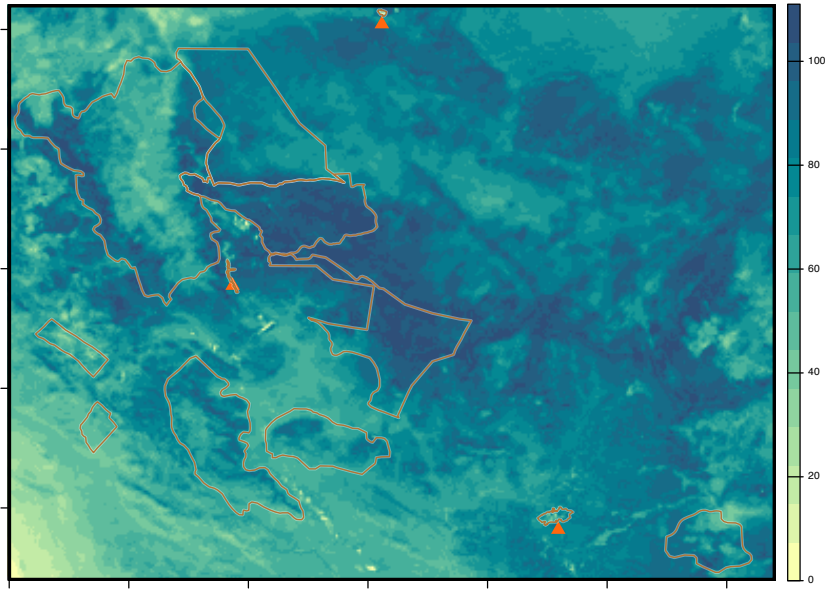
**Abundance:** Abundant.

**Conservation status:** LC/LC.



# 9. Important Bird Areas

The most important areas for birds, according to the distribution of species richness, are located in Sharaan, Wadi Nakhlah, the western and eastern slopes of Harrat Uwayrid and Harrat AlZabin (**Figure 25**).



**Figure 25** Distribution of bird species richness in the AIUla region. The legend on the right indicates the number of species.

# 10. Checklist of the Birds of AIUla

Bird Species			Conservation Status by IUCN	
Family / Common name	Latin name	Status	Global	Regional
<b>Struthionidae</b>				
Common Ostrich	<i>Struthio camelus</i>	RESI	LC	RE
<b>Phasianidae</b>				
Chukar	<i>Alectoris chukar</i>	RESI	LC	LC
Arabian Partridge	<i>Alectoris melanocephala</i>	RESI	LC	LC
Sand Partridge	<i>Ammoperdix heyi</i>	RESI	LC	LC
Common Quail	<i>Coturnix coturnix</i>	PAMI, WIVI	LC	LC
<b>Columbidae</b>				
Rock Dove	<i>Columba livia</i>	RESI	LC	LC
Namaqua Dove	<i>Oena capensis</i>	RESI	LC	LC
Laughing Dove	<i>Spilopelia senegalensis</i>	RESI	LC	LC
Eurasian Collared-dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>	RESI	LC	LC
African Collared-dove	<i>Streptopelia roseogrisea</i>	BRMI, WIVI	LC	LC
European Turtle-dove	<i>Streptopelia turtur</i>	BRMI, PAMI	VU	LC
<b>Pteroclididae</b>				
Lichtenstein's Sandgrouse	<i>Pterocles lichtensteinii</i>	RESI	LC	LC
<b>Caprimulgidae</b>				
European Nightjar	<i>Caprimulgus europaeus</i>	PAMI	LC	NA
Egyptian Nightjar	<i>Caprimulgus aegyptius</i>	PAMI	LC	LC
Nubian Nightjar	<i>Caprimulgus nubicus</i>	RESI	LC	LC
<b>Apodidae</b>				
Alpine Swift	<i>Tachymarptis melba</i>	BRMI, PAMI	LC	LC
Common Swift	<i>Apus apus</i>	PAMI	LC	LC
Pallid Swift	<i>Apus pallidus</i>	BRMI, PAMI	LC	LC
<b>Cuculidae</b>				
Great Spotted Cuckoo	<i>Clamator glandarius</i>	PAMI	LC	NT

Family / Common name	Latin name	Status	Global	Regional
<b>Rallidae</b>				
Common Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>	RESI, PAMI, WIVI	LC	LC
<b>Ciconiidae</b>				
White Stork	<i>Ciconia ciconia</i>	PAMI	LC	NT
Black Stork	<i>Ciconia nigra</i>	PAMI	LC	NE
<b>Ardeidae</b>				
Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>	PAMI, WIVI	LC	NT
Purple Heron	<i>Ardea purpurea</i>	PAMI, WIVI	LC	NT
Squacco Heron	<i>Ardeola ralloides</i>	PAMI, WIVI	LC	LC
Cattle Egret	<i>Bubulcus ibis</i>	PAMI, WIVI	LC	LC
Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>	PAMI, WIVI	LC	LC
Black-crowned Night-heron	<i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>	PAMI, WIVI	LC	LC
<b>Charadriidae</b>				
Spur-winged Lapwing	<i>Vanellus spinosus</i>	RESI	LC	LC
<b>Glareolidae</b>				
Cream-coloured Courser	<i>Cursorius cursor</i>	RESI, PAMI, WIVI	LC	LC
<b>Strigidae</b>				
Little Owl	<i>Athene noctua</i>	RESI	LC	LC
Pallid Scops-owl	<i>Otus brucei</i>	WIVI	LC	LC
Desert Tawny Owl	<i>Strix hadorami</i>	RESI	LC	LC
Pharaoh Eagle-owl	<i>Bubo ascalaphus</i>	RESI	LC	LC
<b>Tytonidae</b>				
Common Barn-owl	<i>Tyto alba</i>	RESI	LC	LC
<b>Elanidae</b>				
Black-winged Kite	<i>Elanus caeruleus</i>	WIVI	LC	VU
<b>Acciptridae</b>				
European Honey-buzzard	<i>Pernis apivorus</i>	PAMI	LC	NE
Oriental Honey-buzzard	<i>Pernis ptilorhynchus</i>	PAMI, WIVI	LC	NA
Egyptian Vulture	<i>Neophron percnopterus</i>	RESI, PAMI, WIVI	EN	VU
Griffon Vulture	<i>Gyps fulvus</i>	RESI, PAMI, WIVI	LC	EN
Cinereous Vulture	<i>Aegypius monachus</i>	WIVI	NT	NE
Lappet-faced Vulture	<i>Torgos tracheliotos</i>	RESI	EN	VU

Family / Common name	Latin name	Status	Global	Regional
Greater Spotted Eagle	<i>Clanga clanga</i>	PAMI, WIVI	VU	NE
Steppe Eagle	<i>Aquila nipalensis</i>	PAMI, WIVI	EN	NE
Eastern Imperial Eagle	<i>Aquila heliaca</i>	WIVI	VU	NE
Golden Eagle	<i>Aquila chrysaetos</i>	RESI	LC	EN
Verreaux's Eagle	<i>Aquila verreauxii</i>	RESI	LC	EN
Bonelli's Eagle	<i>Aquila fasciata</i>	RESI	LC	LC
Short-toed Snake-eagle	<i>Circaetus gallicus</i>	BRMI, PAMI, WIVI	LC	VU
Booted Eagle	<i>Hieraaetus pennatus</i>	PAMI	LC	NE
Western Marsh-harrier	<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>	PAMI, WIVI	LC	NT
Pallid Harrier	<i>Circus macrourus</i>	PAMI, WIVI	NT	NE
Montagu's Harrier	<i>Circus pygargus</i>	PAMI	LC	NE
Shikra	<i>Accipiter badius</i>	PAMI	LC	LC
Levant Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter brevipes</i>	PAMI	LC	NE
Eurasian Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>	PAMI, WIVI	LC	NE
Black Kite	<i>Milvus migrans</i>	PAMI, WIVI	LC	LC
Steppe/Common Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>	PAMI	LC	LC
Long-legged Buzzard	<i>Buteo rufinus</i>	RESI, PAMI, WIVI	LC	LC
<b>Upupidae</b>				
Common Hoopoe	<i>Upupa epops</i>	RESI, PAMI	LC	LC
<b>Alcedinidae</b>				
Common Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>	PAMI, WIVI	LC	NT
White-breasted Kingfisher	<i>Halcyon smyrnensis</i>	WIVI	LC	LC
<b>Meropidae</b>				
Arabian Green Bee-eater	<i>Merops cyanophrys</i>	RESI	LC	LC
Blue-cheeked Bee-eater	<i>Merops persicus</i>	PAMI	LC	LC
European Bee-eater	<i>Merops apiaster</i>	PAMI	LC	LC
<b>Coraciidae</b>				
European Roller	<i>Coracias garrulus</i>	PAMI	LC	NT
<b>Picidae</b>				
Eurasian Wryneck	<i>Jynx torquilla</i>	PAMI	LC	NA
Arabian Woodpecker	<i>Dendropicos doraе</i>	RESI	NT	VU
<b>Falconidae</b>				
Common Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	RESI, PAMI, WIVI	LC	LC

Family / Common name	Latin name	Status	Global	Regional
Sooty Falcon	<i>Falco concolor</i>	BRMI, PAMI	VU	EN
Eurasian Hobby	<i>Falco subbuteo</i>	PAMI	LC	NA
Peregrine Falcon/Barbary Falcon	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>	RESI, PAMI, WIVI	LC	VU
<b>Psittacidae</b>				
Rose-ringed Parakeet	<i>Alexandrinus krameri</i>	RESI (INT)	LC	NA
Alexandrine Parakeet	<i>Palaeornis eupatria</i>	RESI (INT)	NT	NA
<b>Oriolidae</b>				
Eurasian Golden Oriole	<i>Oriolus oriolus</i>	PAMI	LC	LC
<b>Corvidae</b>				
Brown-necked Raven	<i>Corvus ruficollis</i>	RESI	LC	LC
Fan-tailed Raven	<i>Corvus rhipidurus</i>	RESI	LC	LC
<b>Laniidae</b>				
Red-backed Shrike	<i>Lanius collurio</i>	PAMI	LC	NA
Isabelline Shrike	<i>Lanius isabellinus</i>	PAMI, WIVI	LC	NE
Lesser Grey Shrike	<i>Lanius minor</i>	PAMI	LC	NA
Great Grey Shrike	<i>Lanius excubitor</i>	RESI, PAMI, WIVI	LC	LC
Woodchat Shrike	<i>Lanius senator</i>	PAMI	NT	LC
Masked Shrike	<i>Lanius nubicus</i>	PAMI	LC	LC
<b>Alaudidae</b>				
Greater Hoopoe-lark	<i>Alaemon alaudipes</i>	RESI	LC	LC
Thick-billed Lark	<i>Ramphocoris clotbey</i>	RESI, WIVI	LC	LC
Bar-tailed Lark	<i>Ammomanes cinctura</i>	RESI	LC	LC
Desert Lark	<i>Ammomanes deserti</i>	RESI	LC	LC
Black-crowned Sparrow-lark	<i>Eremopterix nigriceps</i>	RESI	LC	LC
Arabian Lark	<i>Eremalauda eremodites</i>	RESI	LC	LC
Mediterranean Short-toed Lark	<i>Alaudala rufescens</i>	PAMI, WIVI	LC	LC
Rufous-capped Lark	<i>Calandrella eremica</i>	RESI	LC	LC
Greater Short-toed Lark	<i>Calandrella brachydactyla</i>	PAMI, WIVI	LC	LC
Temminck's Lark	<i>Eremophila bilopha</i>	RESI, WIVI	LC	LC
Crested Lark	<i>Galerida cristata</i>	RESI	LC	LC
<b>Hirundinidae</b>				
Northern House Martin	<i>Delichon urbicum</i>	PAMI	LC	LC
Red-rumped Swallow	<i>Cecropis daurica</i>	PAMI	LC	LC



Family / Common name	Latin name	Status	Global	Regional
Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	PAMI	LC	LC
Eurasian Crag Martin	<i>Ptyonoprogne rupestris</i>	PAMI	LC	LC
Pale Rock Martin	<i>Ptyonoprogne obsoleta</i>	RESI	LC	LC
Collared Sand Martin	<i>Riparia riparia</i>	PAMI	LC	LC
<b>Pycnonotidae</b>				
White-eared Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus leucotis</i>	RESI	LC	LC
White-spectacled Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus xanthopygos</i>	RESI	LC	LC
<b>Cisticolidae</b>				
Graceful Prinia	<i>Prinia gracilis</i>	RESI	LC	LC
<b>Scotocercidae</b>				
Streaked Scrub-warbler	<i>Scotocerca inquieta</i>	RESI	LC	LC
<b>Acrocephalidae</b>				
Common Reed-warbler	<i>Acrocephalus scirpaceus</i>	PAMI	LC	LC
Olivaceous Warbler	<i>Iduna pallida</i>	PAMI, BRMI	LC	LC
<b>Phylloscopidae</b>				
Willow Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus trochilus</i>	PAMI	LC	NE
Common Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>	PAMI, WIVI	LC	NE
Siberian Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus tristis</i>	WIVI	LC	NE
Yellow-browed Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus inornatus</i>	VAGR	LC	NE
<b>Sylviidae</b>				
Eurasian Blackcap	<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>	PAMI	LC	LC
Garden Warbler	<i>Sylvia borin</i>	PAMI	LC	NA
Asian Desert Warbler	<i>Curruca nana</i>	PAMI, WIVI	LC	NE
Arabian Warbler	<i>Curruca leucomelaena</i>	RESI	LC	LC
Lesser Whitethroat	<i>Curruca curruca</i>	PAMI, WIVI	LC	LC
Menetries's Warbler	<i>Curruca mystacea</i>	PAMI, WIVI	LC	LC
Sardinian Warbler	<i>Curruca melanocephala</i>	PAMI, WIVI	LC	LC
Subalpine Warbler	<i>Curruca cantillans</i>	PAMI	LC	NE
Common Whitethroat	<i>Curruca communis</i>	PAMI	LC	NA
<b>Leiotrichidae</b>				
Arabian Babbler	<i>Argya squamiceps</i>	RESI	LC	LC
<b>Sturnidae</b>				
Tristram's Starling	<i>Onychognathus tristramii</i>	RESI	LC	LC
Common Myna	<i>Acridotheres tristis</i>	RESI (INT)	LC	NA

Family / Common name	Latin name	Status	Global	Regional
<b>Turdidae</b>				
Song Thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>	PAMI, WIVI	LC	NE
<b>Muscicapidae</b>				
Rufous-tailed Scrub-robin	<i>Cercotrichas galactotes</i>	PAMI, BRMI	LC	LC
Black Scrub-robin	<i>Cercotrichas podobe</i>	RESI	LC	LC
Spotted Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa striata</i>	PAMI	LC	LC
Bluethroat	<i>Luscinia svecica</i>	PAMI, WIVI	LC	NE
Thrush Nightingale	<i>Luscinia luscinia</i>	PAMI	LC	NA
Black Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus ochruros</i>	PAMI, WIVI	LC	NT
Common Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus phoenicurus</i>	PAMI	LC	NT
Blue Rock-thrush	<i>Monticola solitarius</i>	PAMI, WIVI	LC	LC
Whinchat	<i>Saxicola rubetra</i>	PAMI	LC	NE
Common Stonechat /Siberian Stonechat	<i>Saxicola torquatus</i>	PAMI, WIVI	LC	LC
Blackstart	<i>Oenanthe melanura</i>	RESI	LC	LC
Northern Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe oenanthe</i>	PAMI	LC	LC
Isabelline Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe isabellina</i>	PAMI, WIVI	LC	LC
Kurdish Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe xanthopyrna</i>	PAMI, WIVI	LC	LC
White-crowned Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe leucopyga</i>	RESI	LC	LC
Hooded Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe monacha</i>	RESI	LC	LC
Mourning Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe lugens</i>	RESI, WIVI	LC	LC
Desert Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe deserti</i>	PAMI, WIVI	LC	LC
Black-eared Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe hispanica</i>	PAMI	LC	LC
Pied Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe pleschanka</i>	PAMI	LC	NE
<b>Nectariniidae</b>				
Nile Valley Sunbird	<i>Hedydipna metallica</i>	WIVI	LC	LC
Palestine Sunbird	<i>Cinnyris osea</i>	RESI	LC	LC
Arabian Sunbird	<i>Cinnyris hellmayri</i>	RESI	LC	LC
<b>Ploceidae</b>				
Rüppell's Weaver	<i>Ploceus galbula</i>	RESI	LC	LC
<b>Estrildidae</b>				
African Silverbill	<i>Euodice cantans</i>	RESI	LC	LC
<b>Hypocoliidae</b>				
Hypocolius	<i>Hypocolius ampelinus</i>	PAMI, WIVI	LC	LC

Family / Common name	Latin name	Status	Global	Regional
<b>Passeridae</b>				
House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	RESI	LC	LC
Spanish Sparrow	<i>Passer hispaniolensis</i>	RESI, WIVI	LC	LC
Pale Sparrow	<i>Carpospiza brachydactyla</i>	PAMI, WIVI, BRMI	LC	LC
<b>Motacillidae</b>				
Tree Pipit	<i>Anthus trivialis</i>	PAMI	LC	NE
Red-throated Pipit	<i>Anthus cervinus</i>	PAMI	LC	NE
Tawny Pipit	<i>Anthus campestris</i>	PAMI, WIVI	LC	LC
Western Yellow Wagtail /Black-headed Wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava</i>	PAMI	LC	NE
Grey Wagtail	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>	PAMI	LC	NT
White Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>	PAMI, WIVI	LC	NE
<b>Fringillidae</b>				
Common Rosefinch	<i>Carpodacus erythrinus</i>	PAMI	LC	NA
Sinai Rosefinch	<i>Carpodacus synoicus</i>	RESI	LC	LC
Trumpeter Finch	<i>Bucanetes githagineus</i>	RESI	LC	LC
Desert Finch	<i>Rhodospiza obsoleta</i>	RESI	LC	LC
Arabian Serin	<i>Crithagra rothschildi</i>	RESI	LC	LC
<b>Emberizidae</b>				
Corn Bunting	<i>Emberiza calandra</i>	WIVI	LC	LC
Striolated Bunting	<i>Emberiza striolata</i>	RESI	LC	LC

Migratory status: RESI – Resident; BRMI – Breeding migrant; WIVI – Winter visitor;  
PAMI – Passage migrant; VAGR – Vagrant.

IUCN threat status: species of conservation concern globally and regionally.

Status: RE – Regionally Extinct; EN – Endangered; VU – Vulnerable; NT – Near Threatened;  
LC – Least Concern; DD – Data Deficient; NE – Not Evaluated; NA – Not Applicable.

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