



# BIRDS *of* KUWAIT

A COMPREHENSIVE VISUAL GUIDE



KUFPEC

Kuwait Foreign Petroleum Exploration Co. K.S.C.  
A subsidiary of Kuwait Petroleum Corporation





# Birds of Kuwait

A Comprehensive Visual Guide



*His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah*



*His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nowaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah*



*His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah*



*Kuwait Foreign Petroleum Exploration Company (KUFPEC) was established in 1981 as a subsidiary of parent company Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC), to conduct Exploration and Production world-wide. KUFPEC has just celebrated its 30th anniversary and at the end of 2011 was active in 13 countries spread over four continents. International activities are directed from the Head Office in Kuwait and Regional Offices in 5 countries. A program of growth is underway to achieve a production target of 200,000 barrels of oil equivalent per day (boepd) by the year 2020.*



**KUFPEC**

**Kuwait Foreign Petroleum Exploration Co. K.S.C.**  
A subsidiary of Kuwait Petroleum Corporation

**Kuwait Petroleum Corporation  
and subsidiaries**



**مؤسسة البترول الكويتية  
وشركاتها**







# Birds of Kuwait

## A Comprehensive Visual Guide

Edited by  
*Mike Pope & Stamatis Zogaris*

With contributions from  
*AbdulRahman Al-Sirhan & Graham Whitehead*



**KUFPEC**

**Kuwait Foreign Petroleum Exploration Co. K.S.C.**  
A subsidiary of Kuwait Petroleum Corporation



2012



Sabah Al-Ahmad Natural Reserve (VID)



*KUFPEC along with KPC are fully committed to preserving and protecting the environment, both internationally and at home, by abiding to all environmental standards, especially those set by host governments in areas where we operate. We at KUFPEC firmly endorse these aims and what better way to demonstrate this than by providing a complete guide to all the birds found in Kuwait and helping to ensure their survival for generations to come. It is with extreme honor and utter joy that KUFPEC has provided this priceless book to showcase the beauty and diversity of the birdlife that exists here in our beloved Kuwait. It is our responsibility to the community, and our personal duty to safeguard and conserve the fragile habitat that sustains both the resident and migratory birds. This book will be a valuable tool to raise public awareness of the need to protect the birds and their habitat so as to ensure they continue to visit and pass through Kuwait safely and unharmed each year en-route to their breeding grounds. Just as KUFPEC relies on many countries to fulfill its aims, so too the migrating birds are dependent on many countries they pass through for their safety and survival. Kuwait can provide a safe haven during their incredible journey. So it is with this I wish you all a very enjoyable read, and hope one may learn and use the information found in this wonderfully illustrated guide, to fully appreciate our birds of Kuwait.*



Nizar M. Al-Adsani  
Chairman and Managing Director  
of Kuwait Foreign Petroleum  
Exploration Company



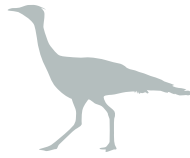


## BIODIVERSITY EAST

*Kuwait is a fascinating crossroads for birds that migrate through Asia, Europe and Africa. Yet until recently, very little was known about its birdlife. Some visitors have painted a bleak and uninspiring picture about the state's natural environment, particularly after the 1990-91 War. This book is proof of both nature's revival after a destructive war and this country's outstanding wildlife riches. Moreover it demonstrates the power of volunteer naturalists to systematically record, document and help promote birdlife. The photography in this book was produced by amateur nature enthusiasts and naturalists – primarily by resident and visiting birders who know Kuwait's nature and the wider region's birds very well. Birders learn the language of nature – learn to identify birds by name, and learn which places are important for birds and biodiversity. Since birds are excellent indicators of the general health of landscapes, if we preserve their populations we will also be helping the environment as a whole.*

*Biodiversity East is an environmental non-governmental organization linking a network of naturalists who care about nature in the Middle East and beyond. It promotes conservation through research, education and ecotourism. Our members have been working for conservation in several Eastern Mediterranean countries and in Arabia for over two decades – working to study sea turtles, birds, fishes, protected areas, and providing policy-relevant consultation, conservation awareness, education, and training services and products. We strive to assist local initiatives to protect wildlife and natural places. This book combines an initiative taken by an industrial corporation that is supported by the volunteer efforts of many citizens and environmental organizations, Biodiversity East and the Kuwait Ornithological Rarities Committee. In a fast changing world, it is up to those of us who respect and enjoy wildlife to take an active role in its study and protection. It is our hope that through this book more people will become deeply interested in birds and biodiversity in Kuwait.*

Nancy Papathanasopoulou, Stamatis Zogaris, Vassiliki Vlami, Aris Vidalis  
Founding Members of Biodiversity East



## KUWAIT ORNITHOLOGICAL RARITIES COMMITTEE

*This book illustrates all the known recorded species of birds that have ever visited Kuwait up until June 2012. It provides a unique compilation of photographs voluntarily contributed by amateur enthusiasts, many of whom regularly monitor and record birdlife in Kuwait. In addition to the hundreds of images of birds, the reader will also find comprehensive notes and descriptions of their habitats, migration patterns, and guidance on how to participate and enjoy the experience of observing wild birds in Kuwait.*

*Kuwaitis have long had a close relationship with wildlife – especially birds. Birds bring the deserts and seas to life. They have been both inspiration and sustenance for humans here for centuries. Recently, Kuwait has become an area of increasing interest in birdlife, especially by foreign visitors. This started through a systematic interest in natural history just a few decades ago. A number of expatriates and Kuwaitis that were working in the petroleum industry formed Kuwait's first amateur wildlife club in 1970, it was known as the Ahmadi Natural History and Field Studies Group, and functioned until the mid 1980s. In 1987 this club transformed into the Kuwait Natural History Group and later, in 1994 developed a special focus on birds, becoming the Kuwait Ornithological Rarities Committee (KORC). Committees such as this focus primarily on organizing the country's official list of recorded birds and systematically validating and confirming/rejecting bird sightings, specifically confirming records of rare birds. Other groups have also worked on birds in Kuwait and some of these are closely associated with governmental research and environmental bodies. Today KORC is a very small organization but with a very big task to scientifically organize bird reporting, validate rarity sightings and produce Kuwait's Annual Bird Report. The numbers of bird species officially recorded in Kuwait has increased from 280 in the mid '90s to 390 in mid-2012. Since more and more people are involved in observing and photographing birds in Kuwait many rarities are being discovered and new information on the status and frequency of occurrence of birds is being compiled every year. This book is dedicated to the small cadre of amateur wildlife enthusiasts who have helped keep KORC alive – working closely together for the study and conservation of this country's birds and their habitats.*

Mike Pope

Chairman of the Kuwait Ornithological Rarities Committee

Sponsor

*Kuwait Foreign Petroleum Exploration Company (KUFPEC)*

Project Supervisor

*Graham Whitehead*

Project Manager

*Nancy Papathanasopoulou*

Editors

*Mike Pope, Stamatis Zogaris*

Contributors

*AbdulRahman Al Sirhan, Graham Whitehead*

Ornithological Review:

*Kuwait Ornithological Rarities Committee, Paschalis Dougalis, Triantaphyllos Akriotis*

Contributing Photographers:

*Ali Alhafez, Aurélien Audevard, Mike Barth, Chris Batty, Oscar Campbell, Christine Canzanella, Dave Clark, Devashish Deb, Pekka Fagel, David Fisher, Brian Foster, Theodoros Gaitanakis, Khaled Al-Ghanem, Rashed Al-Hajji, Trevor Hardaker, Ayuwat Jearwattananok, Meshal Al-Jirweay, Mohammad Al-Kanderi, Ayman Al-Kanderi, Samera Al-Khalifah, Mohammad Khorshed, Chris Lansdell, Vincent Legrand, Daniel Mauras, Khaled Al-Nasrallah, Daniele Occhiato, Tommy Pedersen, Phil Penlington, Nikos Petrou, Gillian Pope, Jaden Pope, Mike Pope, Simon Price, Huw Roberts, Humoud Al-Shaiji, AbdulRahman Al-Sirhan, Lefteris Stavrakas, Abdulmohsen Al-Suraye, Abhishek Varma, Aris Vidalis, Chris Vlachos, Graham Whitehead, Derek Wilby*

Language editing and quality control:

*Emily Green, Albert Oliver, Vassiliki Vlami, Nancy Papathanasopoulou, Aris Vidalis, Graham Whitehead.*

Design and production supervision:

*Aris Vidalis*

Printed and bound by Fotolio Typicon S.A. in Athens, Greece.

Bibliographic Citation:

Pope M. & Zogaris S. (Eds), 2012. *Birds of Kuwait - A Comprehensive Visual Guide*. KUFPEC, Biodiversity East, Cyprus.

ISBN 978-9963-2811-0-7

© 2012 Biodiversity East, Nicosia, Cyprus | [www.bio-e.org](http://www.bio-e.org)

& Kuwait Foreign Petroleum Exploration Company (K.S.C.), Kuwait | [www.kufpec.com](http://www.kufpec.com)

Copyright for the photographs stays with the photographers.

All rights reserved under International, GCC and EU Copyright Conventions.





Greater Flamingos in Sulaibikhat Bay (cc)

# Table of contents

INTRODUCTION	
The lives of wild birds in Kuwait .....	19
Naming birds: Bird taxonomy and identification .....	26
Observing and photographing birds. ....	28
Bird conservation .....	32
Important places for birds in Kuwait .....	38
SPECIES ACCOUNTS	
How to use this guide .....	53
Species accounts .....	54-401
APPENDICES	
Glossary .....	404
Index of scientific names .....	406
Index of common English names .....	407
Index of Arabic names .....	408
Birding code of conduct .....	409
Contributing photographers .....	410
References .....	412
Aknowledgements.....	413



Booted Eagle (MK)





# Birds of Kuwait

## An introduction

*All birds need special places  
to survive and reproduce.  
Some travel great distances  
to enhance their chances of survival.  
Kuwait is extremely important for  
birds, both to many migratory species  
and to resident species of the wider  
Arabian Desert and Gulf coast.*



Long-legged Buzzard (MK)

The State of Kuwait lies at the northwestern end of the Arabian Gulf with the vast arid Arabian peninsula to the southwest and the Mesopotamian delta to the northeast. Though predominantly a desert landscape and relatively tiny in area (about 18,000 km<sup>2</sup>), Kuwait is remarkably rich in birdlife and, as a result, steadily gaining attention and respect from nature enthusiasts and ornithologists. The large number and variety of birds found here can be attributed to Kuwait's unique location at the heart of several important bird migration routes, among them the Eastern Flyway connecting Eurasia and Africa. As migrating birds travel across the region, south in the autumn and north again in the spring, they must cross challenging environments such as deserts, steppes and open seas. Finding suitable habitats for resting and refueling is critical for their survival. Kuwait's available habitat sanctuaries, centrally located as they are in the migration corridor, act as magnets for migrants and vital staging areas for these seasonal mass bird movements.

Indeed, despite being dominated by a flat and stony desert with no rivers or natural lakes, Kuwait's landscape is far from lifeless. Its location at the confluence of three distinct ecoregions –the Arabian Desert, the subtropical Gulf coast and the Mesopotamian Delta– means that on a local scale Kuwait has a variety of biodiversity-rich habitats. Its marine waters and tidal coastlines are some of the Gulf's most biologically productive, being fed by the nutrient-rich

delta plume on the vast tidal estuary of the two great rivers, the Tigris and Euphrates. And unlike other Gulf States, Kuwait has a surprisingly seasonal climate with a distinct cool and often a relatively moist winter period. After ephemeral autumn and winter drizzles, deserts may bloom and depressions temporarily transform to living wetlands, richly inviting for birds. This unique seasonal climate reminds us that Kuwait is also on the fringe of Mesopotamia's Fertile Crescent, where historically the semi-deserts have been important grazing grounds for wildlife and domesticated livestock. Furthermore, despite Kuwait's arid backdrop, sporadic oases have always existed along the coast. But in recent times desalination and sewage treatment facilities have begun providing abundant water for inland agriculture and fueling small artificial wetlands, resulting in an even more extensive network of man-made oases. In this flat, sandy landscape, these oases serve to attract migrant birds and other wildlife. Even in urban areas such as Kuwait City, a relatively recent social drive to "green" the country is resulting in small pockets of congenial habitat for many bird species.

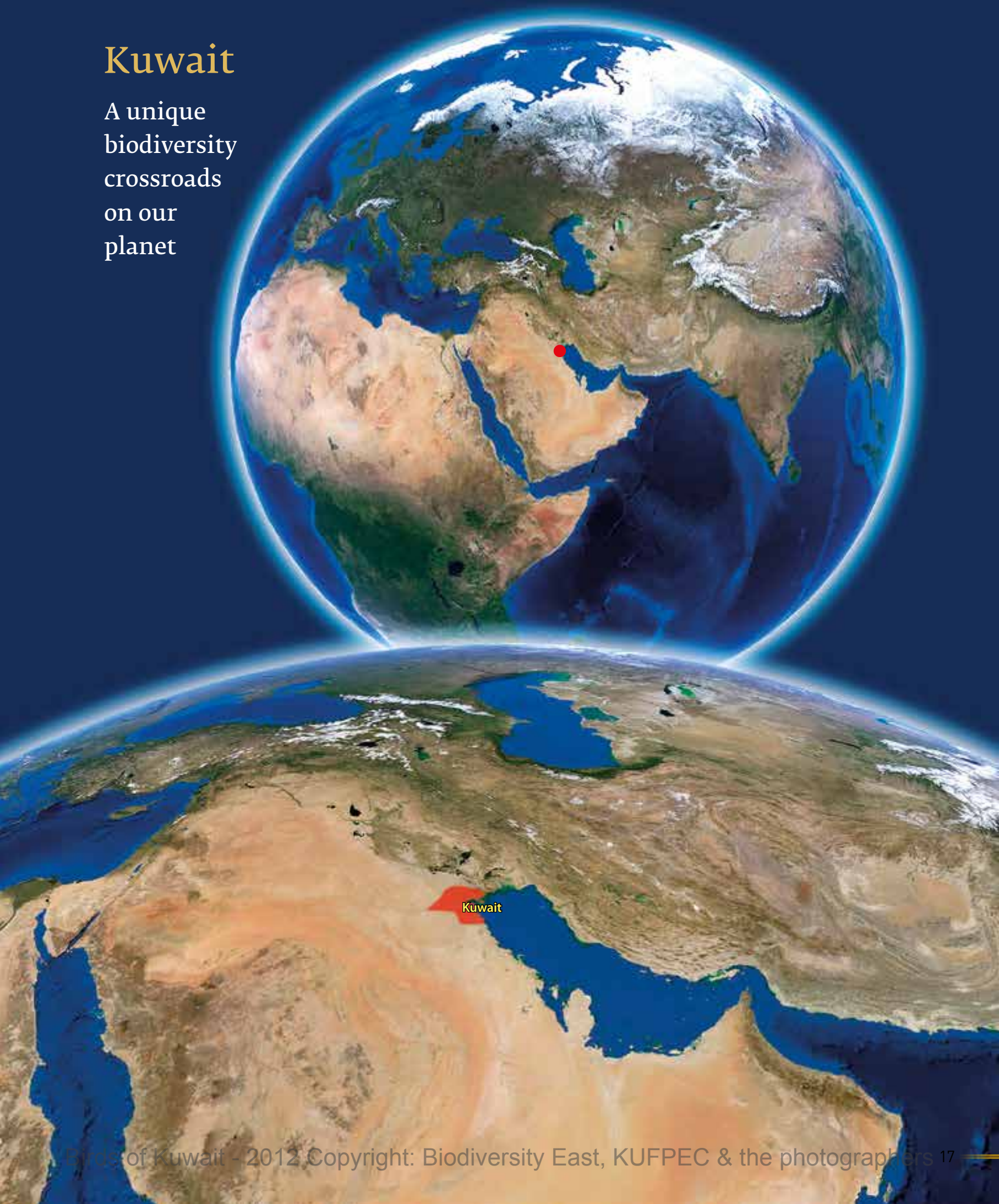
Kuwait is also gaining importance for international ornithology due to recognition of its unique position between three major zoogeographic regions, the Western and Eastern Palearctic and the Afrotropic realms. The Western Palearctic includes all of Europe, parts of the Middle East and North Africa. And although its exact boundaries do not have universal validity, its distinct assemblage of western Eurasian birdlife is widely accepted. This vast region hosts about 1100 species of birds – many of which are transients and vagrants, visiting from surrounding regions of Asia and Africa. Situated at the far eastern boundary of this region, Kuwait has the unusual privilege of seeing avian visitors from adjacent zoogeographic regions. Many species from the Indomalaya and Afrotropic realms also penetrate Kuwait's territory – many of which are seldom seen anywhere else in the Western Palearctic.

In addition to its diverse avifauna, Kuwait's appeal to birders and naturalists includes the fact that its outstanding wildlife habitats can be found conveniently nearby to Kuwait City. Within less than two hours travel by car (or boat) from the city, one can reach any of the country's varied habitats, each capable of offering good birding opportunities. In this book we show photographs of birds in the wild in Kuwait, at areas that are extremely important for their populations but in many cases very close to the urban environment. For example, both the southern and northern shores of Kuwait Bay are globally important sites for flocks of shorebirds and flamingos. Bubiyan Island and the tiny offshore islets off Kuwait's coast host important seabird and waterbird colonies, including one of the world's largest concentrations of nesting Crab-plovers. The nearby

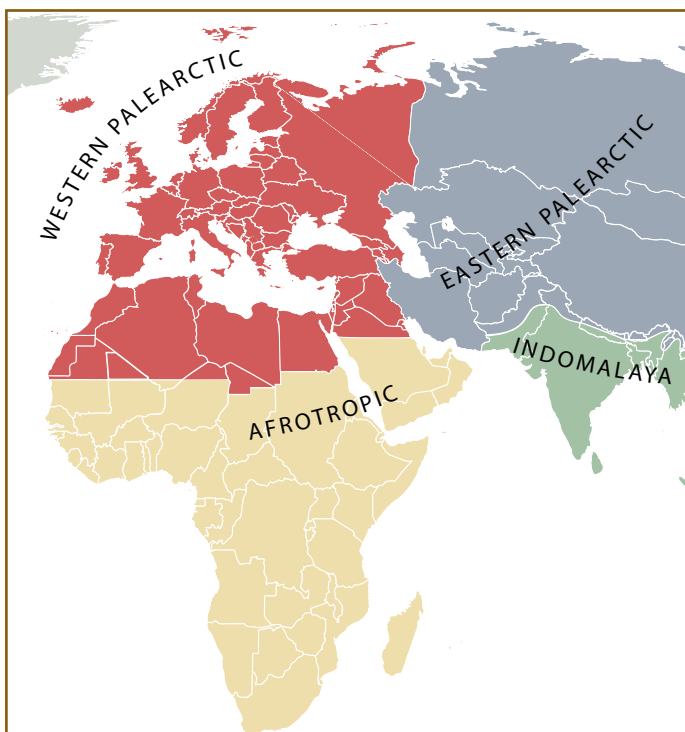


# Kuwait

A unique  
biodiversity  
crossroads  
on our  
planet







#### The Western Palearctic Realm

Kuwait's geographic position lends it many special distinctions. In terms of its biogeography, Kuwait is located at the southeastern corner of the Western Palearctic zoogeographic realm. The Western Palearctic as delineated by ornithologists (Cramp, Simmons and Perrins 1977) is one of Earth's 8 ecozones, covering Europe, Western Asia and North Africa.

#### How many birds?

Despite its small size and relatively harsh climate, **more than 390 bird species and 17 subspecies** have been recorded in Kuwait, representing both the Western and Eastern Palearctic assemblages and rare transients from other regions. These species records have been made by diligent birders and then become part of the official country list after careful documentation –often with photographic proof– of that species' presence in the country. In this book we include a comprehensive account of all species that have been confirmed in Kuwait up to June 2012. Although this is the most comprehensive review of the state's birdlife to date, we are sure that several more species will be recorded in Kuwait in the near future. The **Kuwait Ornithological Rarities Committee (KORC)** has been instrumental in collecting and organizing the country's ornithological information. Efforts are being taken to better coordinate ornithological studies and amateur bird recording in the country.

desert sustains relict wilderness landscapes, complete with beautiful low-lying escarpments that host range-restricted birds unique to the southwest Asian deserts. And right next to Kuwait City are some farms, irrigated fields and tiny artificial wetlands that have become famous sanctuaries for rare migrant birds. The proximity and variety of potential birding sites within easy reach of Kuwait City is attracting a steadily increasing flow of ecotourists, people who visit a country to enjoy its outdoors, particularly during winter and the spring bird migration. For the first time in its history Kuwait is becoming an ecotourist destination for adventurous birders and nature travelers. Here naturalists can easily sample the local biodiversity – while much of the wider Middle Eastern region remains difficult to access for foreign visitors.

#### Still unexplored

Kuwait's birdlife still remains poorly understood. Studies by scientists are limited. Even baseline information on bird populations is remarkably scarce. Compared to birdwatching in Europe, Australia or America, much of the Arabian Peninsula and the inner hinterlands of the Middle East remain very little explored by ornithologists. On the positive side, this sense of "unexplored territory" is intriguing for visitors who are fascinated and motivated by finding rare birds. And it means that, in Kuwait, amateur naturalists can genuinely contribute to baseline natural history knowledge.

Over the last few years Kuwait has become very accessible to visitors and residents seeking to explore wildlife. Gradually more and more is being done to study, promote and monitor its birdlife. Kuwait's unique geography and its wealth of birdlife make it an outstanding area for ornithological study and a fascinating crossroad for monitoring global bird movements. Moreover, establishing credible and reliable records of bird movements will help us better understand the changes brought about by human impact on the Earth – from local scale landscape change to climate change.

At the same time, birds are slowly gaining appreciation as one of the most important elements of Kuwait's Natural Heritage. Certain aspects of birdlife are traditional in Kuwait culture. Kuwaiti people have a long history of respect for the desert wilderness. In the desert, birds were used as a food source and for recreation. Falconry has been practiced for millennia. In the last half-century remarkable changes have taken place in Kuwaiti society that have challenged the knowledge and appreciation of the historic traditions connected with nature. Several Kuwaitis, resident expats and visitors are beginning to revive an interest in natural history and outdoor recreation. The attraction of birds can play an important part in re-connecting local culture with the natural world.



# The lives of wild birds in Kuwait

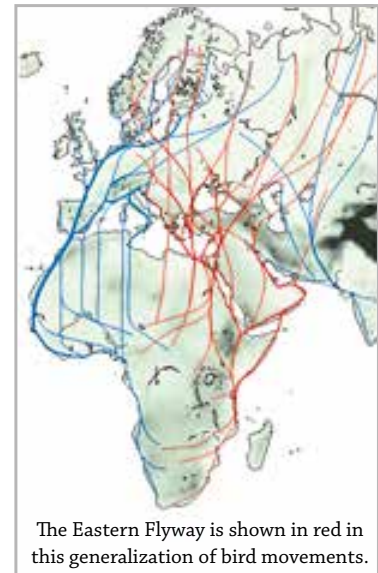
The most prominent feature of Kuwait's birdlife is migration. Several major bird migration routes connecting three continents intersect at the head of the Gulf. This involves movements by long-distance migrants and also by regional migrants some of which actually spend the winter in Kuwait.

## Migration routes

Much remains to be learned about the complete bird migration routes that pass through Kuwait. And this aspect of ornithology is still being actively explored. For many long-distance migrants that breed in northern Eurasia and overwinter in the subtropics the journey is remarkably long and crosses geographical obstacles such as the high ranges of the Caucasus, the Elburz, the Zagros Mountains and the wide expanses of the Black Sea, the Caspian Sea and the Gulf. The Arabian Desert is still another barrier – a sea of sand and rock inhospitable to most migrating birds.

Each bird species may have a different migration route and different movement behaviour, so generalizing about migration pathways is problematic. Pathways may also not

be precise thoroughfares but rather broad fronts. Conventional knowledge from initial observations in Kuwait and the surrounding region show the following two important routes for long-distance migrants that undergo a mass migration to breed in the temperate Eurasia and return to winter in the tropics. First, the Eastern Flyway is an important Central Eurasian migration route that runs east of the Caspian Sea and Elburz Mountains then southwestward through passes in the Zagros across Kuwait and the Arabian Peninsula into eastern and central Africa via the Bab Al-Mandab straits. Many raptors such as eagles, falcons, harriers, and buzzards take this route.



The Eastern Flyway is shown in red in this generalization of bird movements.

Major regional migration movements of birds passing through Kuwait. Specific routes are not yet fully known to scientists.





Another important route passes through Kuwait, coming from Eastern Europe along the Tigris-Euphrates valleys of Turkey and Iraq, across the head of the Gulf eastward along the western edge of the Zagros Mountains to Pakistan and India. Some songbirds take this route. Many birds also come from the Eurasian arctic and tundra to over-winter in the Gulf or other parts of the Indian Ocean shores and pass through Kuwait as well. For many northern birds, the water bodies are not barriers but the Arabian Desert definitely is, so they keep to the coast. Some northern species, even hardy ones such as swans, geese and ducks, may be obliged to travel further south than usual in seasons of severe winter weather. For many of these northern waterfowl the Mesopotamian Delta (including Kuwait Bay) is the southernmost place they're prepared to go. This accounts for the sporadic, rare occurrences of so many colourful waterfowl in some winters. Kuwait is in fact one of the only Arabian countries that regularly gets to see northern birds such as these.

### **Birds in different seasons in Kuwait**

The world of birds is full of change throughout the year. The rhythmical timing of mass population movements occurs twice a year – spring and autumn. Although many aspects about where the birds go or what specifically causes their movements here in Kuwait are still poorly understood, we do know that each season is characterized by specific and often predictably timed movements, arrivals and departures.

One of the key features of migration is the mass movement of very large numbers of birds twice a year. Many smaller birds pass in flocks by night, so they may go unnoticed, especially during the autumn passage. In a nearly flat low-lying desert coast as in Kuwait, places from which to easily witness seasonal mass migration movements are rare. Kuwait has two notable exceptions. Raptors, including vultures, eagles and falcons, concentrate around a migratory “bottleneck” created by the Gulf in general and by Kuwait Bay in particular. These raptors prefer not to fly over the sea because they use warm rising thermals to soar above land. As they move along the Arabian coast they will funnel around Kuwait Bay, often using the Jal Al-Zor escarpment as a northeast-southwest line of flight. In the past huge numbers of Lesser Kestrels would pass along this coast and often over Kuwait City during the spring and autumn migrations. Now although the numbers of this particular species have declined, many other raptors still funnel through this coastal route in flocks or small groups– eagles, buzzards, and harriers among them. During the evening groups of eagles and buzzards may roost on rocky lookouts in the desert.

In addition, migrating and wintering wetland birds often form spectacular flocks as they gather at wetlands, especially on intertidal mudflats. Wetland birds are specialized



species that feed and live exclusively in productive marsh and mudflat habitats. Huge numbers of these birds may congregate, for example at a marshland shoreline during high tide when the mudflats of Kuwait Bay are nearly totally inundated. Flocks of flamingos, waterfowl, gulls, terns and waders, numbering in the thousands at a single site, make up one of Kuwait's most fascinating bird migration spectacles.

### **Spring**

Spring migration begins for most birds in February and continues through to late May. The peak period of bird passage through Kuwait is late March and April. Spring brings a true spectacle of birds to Kuwait, and with most species “dressed” in their breeding plumage, the season is most colourful. Many birds have crossed the vast sea of sand in the Arabian Peninsula and the green patches they find in





Dunlin, turnstone and other waders flock on Kuwait Bay mudflats (PF)

Kuwait may be the first suitable feeding and resting habitat they have encountered north of the bleak desert interior. Most are on their way to the northern temperate landscapes to breed, but spring migrants also include temperate climate Palearctic birds wintering in the Gulf area such as waterfowl, waders, songbirds and raptors.

Although many of the birds that travel north to temperate climates are essentially tropical birds, they make this incredible and relatively hurried journey to the northern temperate summer-green landscapes in order to breed, because there they experience greater likelihood of breeding success. They must arrive by early summer, when daylight periods at the breeding grounds are prolonged and a huge explosion of insect-food is available. Many long-distance migrants actually reach the Arctic Circle to breed during the long arctic summer days of June.

## Autumn

The passage southward is the most prolonged migration season. The returning adult numbers are augmented by the recently-fledged juvenile young (1st year birds) and the passage is unhurried and less predictable than in the spring. The number and variety of birds stopping and gathering in flocks in Kuwait during autumn is perceptibly lower than in spring due to the landscape and climate being less hospitable. The land is parched and very hot throughout this migration period. Autumn passage has actually begun by the first days of July (for many waders for example) and may still be going on in November. The peak movements are usually in August and September. Despite the movement of large numbers of birds, it may come as a surprise that on some days the skies are extremely void of birds. Many species travel during the cooler nighttime and may overfly the country completely





Jahra Pool Reserve, a refuge for migrants, in a sandstorm (MP)

without stopping. However, autumn can be one of the most exciting times to look for rare transient birds or vagrants, those that have strayed off course to find themselves beyond their normal migration range. Unlike spring, in which there are isolated tiny patches of water and scattered greenery during most years, during the autumn birds are hard-pressed to find adequate resting places – so the limited number of small wet oases or even clumps of trees, can become “migrant magnets.” Some of these areas (especially where there is a permanent water source) can be termed “vagrant traps” – nearly every time you visit them they are likely to reveal unusual rare transient birds! Kuwait has built a reputation for hosting some amazing vagrant birds, visiting from far off their normal range – and most are found at these interesting oasis-like locations.

## Winter

The Mesopotamian wetlands of Iran and Iraq and their natural extensions Bubiyan and Kuwait Bay are wintering sites of global significance for migrant birds. So Kuwait itself, situated at the northwestern end of the Gulf, is also extremely important. The northern Gulf acts as a regional refuge for migratory birdlife driven south by the harsh winter weather of the steppes and uplands just to the north. Many birds reach Kuwait in winter that are never seen in any other season, and severe winters are especially interesting times to see birds well to the south of their normal range. This includes large numbers of wintering waders, gulls, herons, waterfowl, raptors and passerines like robin, thrushes, pipits, wagtails and *Hypocolius* as well. During this time vagrants from the wider region, from such unexplored areas such as Iran and Iraq, frequently visit Kuwait in very small numbers. So winter is an excellent time to observe rare transients and vagrants in Kuwait.



Greater Flamingos in Sulaibikhat Bay (MP)



The Purple Swamphen is a rare breeder in the Western Palearctic. A few pairs nest in Kuwait. (CC)

## Summer

Summer in Kuwait is an unusually harsh period; nevertheless a limited number of species are found breeding. In addition some dispersing non-nesting individuals and/or birds from nearby breeding areas that have begun to move on, can be found. Because Kuwait is immediately south of the lower Mesopotamian valley and the Iranian coast, where many bird species breed in riparian habitats and vast marshlands, it is probable that many birds enter this country immediately after breeding. Summer is a difficult period in Kuwait for birds as temperatures soar, conditions are arid and may become even harsher due to hot dry winds and dust storms. Many birds seek refuge where there is water, food and shelter. So the best places to see birds during this time is where they may be nesting, near water and where they can take refuge in the limited number of greener and wetter micro-habitats.

## Breeding

Until recently Kuwait was not thought of as a special place for breeding birds, primarily due to its long arid summers. The limited number of scientific studies of its breeding bird populations has done little to help change this perception. But surprisingly, recent observations prove that an important number of birds do breed regularly in Kuwait – and many of them tend to breed early in the spring whilst some also nest during the scorching early summer. Specific attributes of the following areas show how important Kuwait is for breeding birds:

**The Mesopotamian Delta.** The low lying mud-built islands such as Warba, Bubiyan and many small islets and sand banks in Northeastern Kuwait are largely inaccessible reaches of the Tigris-Euphrates estuarine system. In the past huge numbers of water birds have bred there. Although the large nesting colonies of pelicans and cormo-

rants that once bred no longer exist, the numbers of shore-birds currently breeding are of international significance. This includes one of the world's highest concentrations of Crab-plovers. Other birds that breed in large numbers include herons, egrets, spoonbills, gulls, and terns. Bubiyan still hosts large numbers of Great Cormorants that roost overnight in winter and even flamingo rookeries gather irregularly, but they no longer breed there.

**Offshore islet seabird colonies.** Small islets such as Kubbar and Um Al-Maradim host some of the northern Gulf's largest seabird colonies, particularly of four breeding tern species. These are the northwestern-most coral cays in the Gulf and birds nesting here feed in the waters of the nearby Mesopotamian Delta plume. The sheer numbers of nesting sea birds in the islet colonies produces one of Kuwait's most remarkable bird spectacles.

**Man-made wetland and agricultural habitats.** These artificial wetlands, including reed beds from water treatment plants, are now important sites where many birds that nest nowhere else in the Arabian Peninsula now breed, albeit in very small numbers. The total number of breeding birds in Kuwait's artificial wetlands includes 15 regularly occurring or recent breeders and at least 5 irregularly occurring or past breeders. Twenty-five or more bird species breed in gardens and agricultural habitats also.

**Desert specialist species.** The vast Arabian desert reaches its northern edge in Kuwait. Birds endemic to this desert environment occur here but are usually widely dispersed. Their populations may also fluctuate remarkably depending on precipitation or other regional weather conditions. These desert habitat specialists are extremely interesting because some of them are very rare in the Western Palearctic realm. In total approximately 20 species can be considered desert breeding specialists in Kuwait.





Lesser Crested Terns colony in Kubbar (MP)

Breeding birds in Kuwait



White-cheeked Tern with chick on islet colony (MP)



Slender-billed Gulls breeding on Bubiyan Island (MP)





Bar-tailed Lark feeding chicks (NAS)



Hoopoe Lark on nest (NAS)



Crested Lark carrying food to its nest (NAS)



Bar-tailed Lark nest and eggs (NAS)



Bar-tailed Lark nest and chicks (NAS)





## Naming birds: Bird taxonomy and identification

Humankind has always tried to name animals. In modern times this process is called taxonomy; it is a formal biological classification. Birds are classified according to estimates of the closeness of their ancestral relationships. These estimates are based on anatomy, biochemistry and even on the species' behavioral traits, such as their vocalizations. Birds within a single species will generally look and act in a similar manner and be genetically similar also. However, in some cases birds that look similar may be genetically different, and this is creating much debate and change in their taxonomy and names. As the technology and tools to assess genetic dissimilarities expands, new views of species taxonomy are defined and this is bringing about a wave of name changes. So today it is important to understand the basics of taxonomy and follow the officially designated and updated checklists.

### Taxonomy

Names are important – they are recognizable mental tags we officially give each species. To really know the birds, you must know their names. In a deeper sense, knowledge of the bird names and their relationship within related groups of birds imparts a consciousness of nature's complexity and harmony.

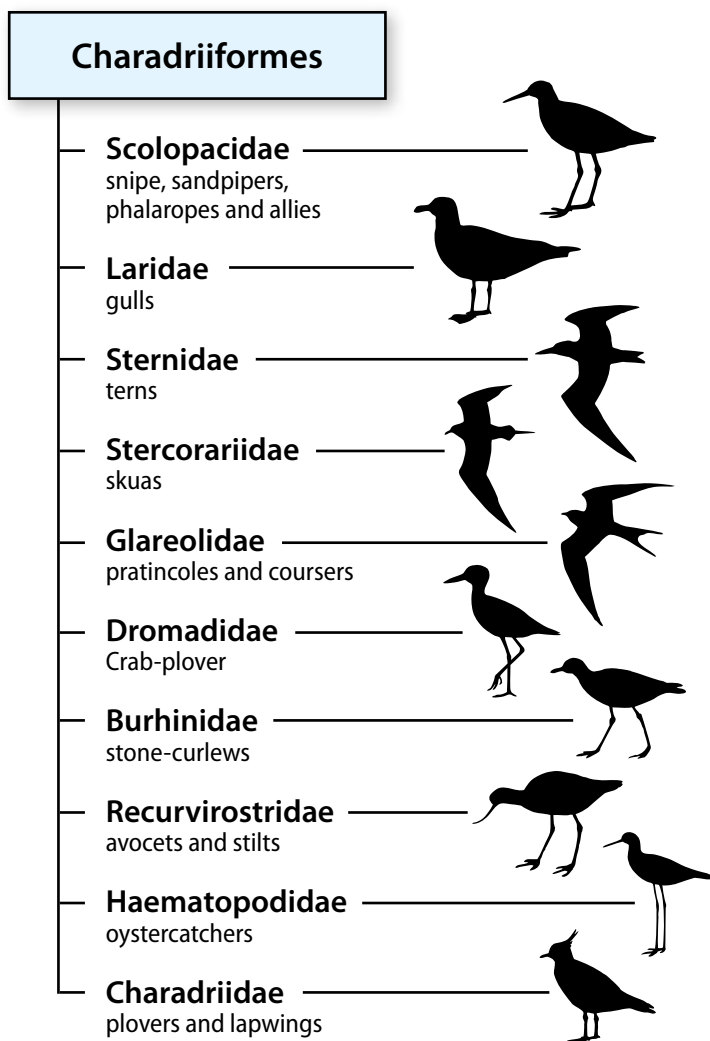
Species are also set in a taxonomic hierarchy –categorized in rank ranging from order, family, genus, to species. Species are the endpoints within this classification hierarchy.

Thus two species of gulls may be closely related and this is shown by the fact that they are placed in the same genus, for example *Larus fuscus* and *Larus cachinnans*. All gulls and terns, constituting several genera (the plural of genus), belong to a single family. In this case it is the gull family, Laridae. This family belongs to a higher grouping, an order, which includes all waders, the Charadriiformes. And finally all the bird orders are under the Class Aves, the birds. For example, the Baltic Gull is scientifically described as follows:

Class:	<b>Aves</b>
Order:	<b>Charadriiformes</b>
Family:	<b>Laridae</b>
Genus:	<b><i>Larus</i></b>
Species:	<b><i>Larus fuscus</i> (Baltic Gull)</b>

### Subspecies

Distinct populations of birds that belong to the same species but differ consistently both in looks and genetic makeup are traditionally called subspecies or 'races'. These local geographic varieties are usually distinct enough to be distinguished in the field. Many taxonomists today are attempting to make nomenclature neat and tidy by slowly doing away with the subspecies taxonomic level, and this is why more name changes are bound to take place in the coming years. As taxonomic research continues, subspe-



Taxonomic divisions to the family level within the order Charadriiformes (the gulls and waders)

cies will either tend to be “split” into distinct species or “lumped” within species, but differentiated as local populations. In birds, subspecies may commonly interbreed and can show an integration of characters where their breeding ranges overlap; yet true species rarely hybridize in the wild. Birders however usually recognize the local geographical variation in bird populations and identify prominent subspecies. They understand that taxonomically a new species may emerge from what is now considered a subspecies!

A subspecies’ scientific name is signified by using three words; for example the nominate form of the Baltic Gull is *Larus fuscus fuscus* (often depicted simply as *Larus fuscus*). Formerly one of its subspecies was called *Larus fuscus heuglini* – this is now called Heuglin’s Gull (*Larus heuglini*) by some authorities since it was recently split by taxonomists into a distinct species. In this book we try to focus on providing authorized birds’ names to the species level; however, we also provide several distinctive subspecies names as well. Nature is inherently diverse, there is a lot of variation and it is not inconsistent to depict some birds at both nominate species and subspecies level.



Very closely related subspecies of Yellow Wagtail (*Motacilla flava*) are identified by the male’s head patterns.

## Changes in names

Recent advances in taxonomic methods and naming conventions have brought sweeping changes in scientific and also in the standardized English names. English names are widely used in the Middle East because many of the birds found here are also found in Europe where modern naming conventions were first established. Here in Kuwait we follow the taxonomy guidelines set by OSME (Ornithological Society of the Middle East, Caucasus and Central Asia). Most modern field guides which assist in field identification also follow these guidelines, and this is very important for standardising names for communication and conservation.

# Observing and photographing birds

Bird watching, or birding as it is more often called, is a hobby known to man since ancient times. In many ways it is similar to hunting, which also involves “finding birds.” In fact, bird-hunting was once called birding; that is, the act of “going for birds.” Modern birding is based on identifying wild birds in the field without catching them, and it is done as a pleasurable pastime by amateurs who use light-weight optical equipment – binoculars, spotting scopes and cameras. There are many levels of involvement in this hobby, ranging from casual photographers to seasoned amateur naturalists and eco-guides. Many birders are accomplished amateur ornithologists, often diligently recording their observations, developing local knowledge and applying it for conservation, scientific monitoring and public awareness.

All one needs to participate in birding is a pair of binoculars and a field guide for identifying the birds. Beyond that, a spotting scope is helpful if one hopes to focus on birds in detail. Birding, like any hobby, involves developing one’s skills.

Birding is also a social activity. The techniques of spotting and identifying wild birds are best passed on as an oral tradition, they are easily taught from person to person. Also, birding is conducive to group travel. Often a trip with a birder or a birding tour can totally change a newcomer’s perception of the natural world. Sometimes an incident in the wild will spark a beginner’s interest and spur on a passion to get involved in studying birds. Seeing a flock of migrating eagles, or enjoying the beauty of a lonely vagrant sunbird, or just listening to the morning chorus over a flooded reed swamp can be etched in one’s memory forever. Most people say that birding brings on a new heightened awareness, as one’s senses and mind open to the natural world.



## Photography and birding

We can arbitrarily define two main types of bird photographers with respect to birding. The first type uses photography as a supplementary means towards understanding, identifying and recording birds. In this case, the photographer is primarily birding, not using his camera to capture the best possible images. He/she always carries binoculars with the camera and often meticulously records lists of birds in a notebook. These birders are more interested in finding, observing and monitoring than getting only outstanding photographs. Photos are often important for documentation. Sometimes he/she may fasten an inexpensive digital camera to the spotting scope and take pictures, a technique called digiscoping. The pictures are good-looking but may not be of high quality.

The second type of bird photographer focuses primarily on the photography, using optimal equipment and seeking the right conditions to make the best possible photographs. Here the birder-photographer enjoys finding birds, but primarily focuses on capturing them in images. Usually this pursuit requires very expensive equipment, and often he/she may not use a spotting scope at all but carry huge telephoto lenses instead. In this case, going birding as a group helps because some birds are spotted by some people and photographed by others.

Photography is not needed for learning to identify birds, but it certainly helps, especially when identifying difficult to separate species or when there is not enough time to observe key identification features. There are many birders who do not use a camera at all simply because they feel that their main objective is searching, identifying and recording birds, not capturing their images. However the advent of digital photography has created a growing inter-





est for birding. In Kuwait, a fairly large number of local residents continually raise the bar in bird photography and in finding new and rare birds. This in turn has led to an increase in web sites full of spectacular local images of birds that reach a bigger audience and showcase to the world what this country has to offer on the southeastern extremity of the Western Palearctic.

### Basic rules of field identification

As the title of this book implies, bird recognition is primarily visual, and historically the distinction between different species has been by recognition of different diagnostic physiological differences, such as size, shape, form, plumage and colour, plus visual non-plumage variations in features such as the beak, the eyes, legs and feet. Some distinguishing features can be so subtle that only detailed measurements or examination of captured specimens can truly differentiate between species. No doubt as DNA bio-molecular examination becomes more widely used, new species and local population variation will become better recognized, further challenging field identification.

Whilst the task of distinguishing between different species may seem daunting at first to the beginner, nevertheless one soon becomes familiar with the more common birds and then it becomes an exciting challenge to find the more uncommon ones. What can also seem very confusing at first is the ability of birds of the same species to appear so very different in different seasons or at different life stages. Like many in the human race, birds also like to “dress” or display themselves appropriately for different occasions throughout the year. They achieve this amazing feat by moulting their plumage (losing and growing new feathers) twice a year. For example, it is generally the male of the species that is tasked with attracting a mate during the breeding season. His strategy for doing so is to put on his most colourful plumage as the breeding season approaches. This visual display also seems to serve the purpose of helping him challenge other males in territorial claims on the breeding grounds. The spring migration is therefore the most colourful time for male birds; they can appear quite differently in autumn and winter. For the females, recently fledged juveniles and immature birds on the other hand, it is more fashionable to be dressed in drab plumage, often shades of brown and grey. This of course has practical applications, as the female has to spend more time hidden on the nest, whilst laying and incubating eggs, staying camouflaged from predators. Similarly it is an advantage for inexperienced juveniles not to advertise their presence and stay reasonably camouflaged, until they become more proficient at avoiding predators. So for these reasons adult males, adult females, juveniles, immature birds such as first year males and wintering birds, will appear visually quite different, depending on the time of year and stage of their moults.



Birders in action at Zour Port (MP)

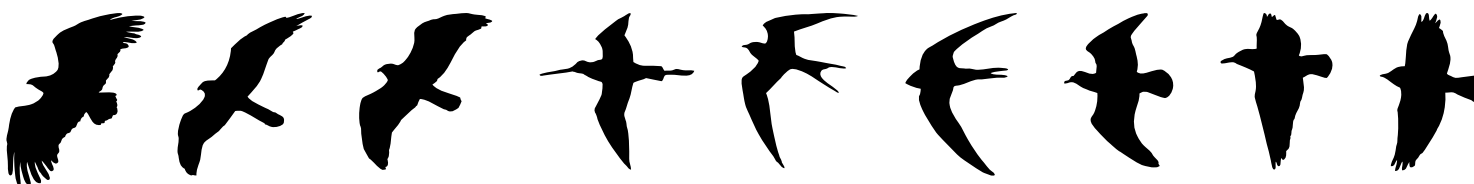
Birders use binoculars and spotting scopes to observe birds and to carefully study them. Identifying birds is a challenge, like a game, it can even be slightly athletic, even competitive. Some people are better versed at this because they spend a lot of time studying identification in detail. Others don't invest so much time but enjoy just the experience of watching. The secret to identifying birds is to learn the names of the birds and to have as clear a mental image as possible of each species. This is obtained through studying birds in guide books and other media, and through experience in the field. This “game” of bird identification has some simple rules:

**Learn the common birds.** There is no substitute to getting to know thoroughly the common birds. First learn their names. Learn to recognize the common birds by utilizing species-specific distinctions or “field marks”. Check plumage details and their general behavior characteristics or “jizz” (G.I.S.S. = general impression, size and shape). Sometimes common birds come in various forms or morphs (see Steppe Buzzard, for example). Once one knows a common species well, he/she can move on to distinguishing less common ones.

**Learn to see details.** Even if you've seen a bird before, don't just ignore it and try to find others. Spend time studying its plumage, look at it thoroughly as if it was the last specimen on the planet. By learning to enjoy studying each bird's plumage and its field marks a birder begins to master identification skills.



(GP)



**Consider the bird's shape.** The bird silhouette is probably the most important clue to bird identification. Silhouette refers to the relative size and shape of the bird. This structure is more important than the bird's plumage colour in identification. With experience a birder can identify birds

flying far away just from their silhouette shape.

**Avoid common pitfalls.** Learn the more confusing identification problems on commonly encountered birds in your area. Again this takes homework with the field guides – at home. Also, realize that some individuals within a species will sometimes differ; so note any aberration in plumage. Careful unbiased observation is the key to successful identification. Sometimes some individuals cannot be identified with certainty, this is perfectly fine! It's obviously much better to note that an unidentified species resembled something, or could possibly have been something, than to erroneously record a species without absolute certainty.

**Learn to hear birds.** Many birds have very distinctive calls and songs. Learning their songs can assist greatly in finding and remembering the birds. Memorizing some calls and songs can bring a new comprehension of what's out there, without actually having seen the birds themselves. Many birders find birds and identify birds solely through their sounds and calls. This is called "birding by ear." You can easily find recordings of most birds on the Internet that can help you in this process.

**Always keep notes.** If an experience in nature is worth living, it is worth recording. The easiest notes are lists –birders love to keep lists of birds! Keep a list of all the birds you see on each outing; it's like keeping a daily log book (a journal or diary). Also, try drawing birds. It really helps in learning to identify them.

**You'll make mistakes; learn from them.** Identification mistakes are really common. Sometimes making a mistake can be embarrassing, birds can fool you! Don't let difficulties worry you; especially in the beginning, learning birds can be a challenge. For some people the experience of learning and re-learning is the most positive aspect of becoming a birder.

**Consider birding ethics.** Birding is a form of passive outdoor recreation that is inquisitive and brings people to places most would not otherwise go. Respect the welfare of birds (do not disturb them) and of people; and become an ambassador for birding. A code of conduct for birding is given in the appendix of this book (p. 409).

### What is a vagrant?

A bird is considered a vagrant if it strays far outside its expected range. A key criterion in defining a vagrant is the distance from its normal breeding, wintering, and migratory distribution. Usually a species that is just barely outside its normal range is not considered a vagrant. In the Gulf States, establishing what is or not a vagrant is sometimes difficult, since so little is known about many birds' normal distribution within the wider region.

Moreover not everyone agrees on the use of the term vagrant with regard to irregularly occurring species. To be fair, it's important to track the history of occurrence of a species in the wider regional level rather than base the notion of vagrancy on recent occurrence records solely within the country. Also in desert and semi-arid biomes it is common for bird populations to fluctuate in such a manner that they may be absent from a certain locality for many years, even decades. Furthermore certain "rare" species on the decline may be currently absent or extremely rare transients to the country because their regional populations are very low and localized - but that does not mean they are true "vagrants" from somewhere far-off. In this book the term "extremely rare vagrant" is arbitrarily used primarily for birds that have been recorded less than 5 times in this country. Although irregularly occurring species that have occurred only a few times (i.e. 6-15 records) are also noted as vagrants, they could in fact be rare transients to the country. These "vagrant" species may include endangered species that are in decline in the wider region. As our knowledge of the bird's frequency of occurrence grows, many so-called vagrants may actually be re-defined as rare or scarce transients.

### Documenting rare birds

Many of Kuwait's birds are rare because they occur here as vagrants or they have a very restricted global range and/or have very small global populations. Some parts of Ku-



wait remain poorly explored, having extremely restricted access controlled by the Military, Coast Guard and Police. Other areas of farmland and industry also have restricted access. Nonetheless, the list of the country's birds has been rising, as birders monitor the country in more systematic ways and explore more areas in-depth. Birders today often document rarities with a camera, or after finding a bird they can call a helpful photographer in. If you do see a rare bird – one that is listed as a vagrant in this book- do the following to record it for the **Kuwait Ornithological Rarities Committee (KORC)**:

- If possible, take a picture without disturbing or displacing the bird.
- Take meticulous notes of the find and fill in and submit a Rarity Form to KORC.
- Talk to a KORC Committee Member or resident birder about the sighting immediately, so that the news is spread and others can see the bird.

### The best times to observe birds in Kuwait

Birding can be interesting throughout the year in Kuwait, but especially so from September to May (June to August being uncomfortably hot). The period of spring migration, peaking from mid-March to early May, is without a doubt the most impressive time to see birds. The quantity and eastern flavor of the migration is characteristic of the eastern frontier of the Western Palearctic. During spring, autumn and mid-winter, it is relatively easy to see a large variety of the birds displayed in this book, without venturing far from Kuwait City.



Photographing and observing birds up-close requires attention to timing, patience and determination.



# Bird conservation

The northern Gulf's natural environment and birdlife have undergone remarkable changes during the last few decades. Many species are now much rarer in Kuwait and the surrounding region. Some species that used to breed in Kuwait's portion of the Mesopotamian Delta such as pelicans and rare waterfowl have become extirpated – they no longer breed here. The numbers of raptors such as falcons and eagles has plummeted, as has their quarry which has been overhunted by humans. Uncontrolled shooting of migratory birds is still surprisingly widespread and frequent in Kuwait. This is augmented by trapping to supply the illegal bird trade. Also the wider landscape has changed remarkably, especially as urbanization and development has sprawled along the coastal zone. Large reclamation development projects including land-fill and dredging have altered the coast. And finally, the mighty Tigris-Euphrates system that feeds Kuwait's waters has been degraded by many recent hydroelectric dams and extensive wetland drainage upstream. In Kuwait today, there is almost no protection of wildlife habitat outside the few protected reserves. Often apathy to enforcement of environmental laws creates incredible pressures on birds and the natural environment in general.

At the same time, some environmental changes have brought unintended positive changes for wildlife. The blooming of the desert through the creation of artificial water sources and irrigated agriculture has provided birds with important food resources; several species have made attempts at colonizing or re-colonizing Kuwait's territory. New bird populations from the surrounding region, perhaps directly from the nearby Mesopotamian valley or the inland desert, are establishing populations in Kuwait.

A surprising number of water birds now breed in Kuwait's small artificial wetland sites – since these tiny oases structurally resemble wetland features found in the nearby Mesopotamian Delta.

If resources and conditions for wildlife can be strategically engineered into landscape planning – and if the birds can be protected from the fierce pressure of shooting – many populations can make a comeback. Actions for conservation need to be well-thought out and adapted to local conditions; and scientific monitoring is critically important for developing conservation strategies. Protecting birds means protecting Kuwait's natural heritage. Specific actions are needed at three levels: protecting species, protecting places and protecting biodiversity within the wider environment.

## Protecting species

There is little doubt that shooting (often called hunting) and other forms of illegal persecution are important contributory causes for the decline of many bird species' populations both in Kuwait and the wider Middle East.

Therefore we make the following recommendations:

- More conservation-relevant ornithological research is needed. Kuwait should create an assessment of threatened species at the local state level. This concerns the creation of a local scientific Red List similar to the IUCN global threatened species designations; most countries have such a list already. This local assessment will help support the implementation of a national biodiversity strategy.
- Existing species protection and shooting laws need to be reformed, strengthened and enforced.

This wounded flamingo was fortunate to survive a shooting but it was left with a disabled leg. (VID)





## Globally threatened species designations

Officially designated globally threatened species includes “all full species categorized at the global level as Critically Endangered, Endangered or Vulnerable.” These are species generally accepted as threatened with extinction!

Threatened species categories are the following:

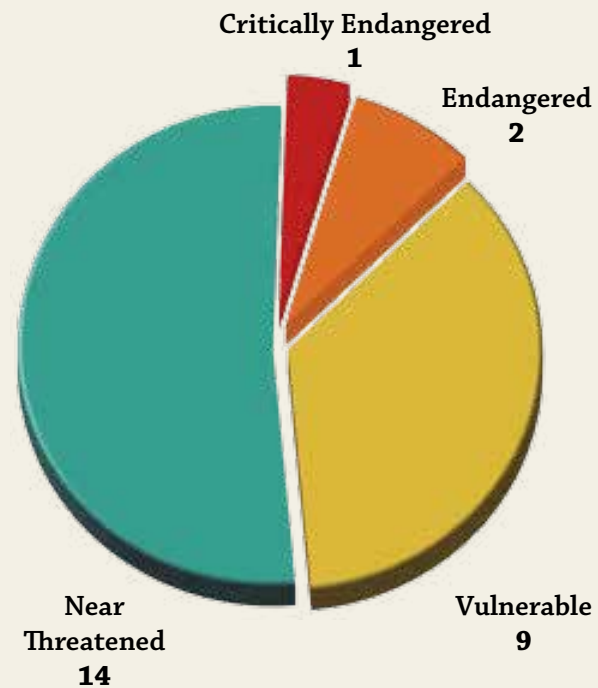
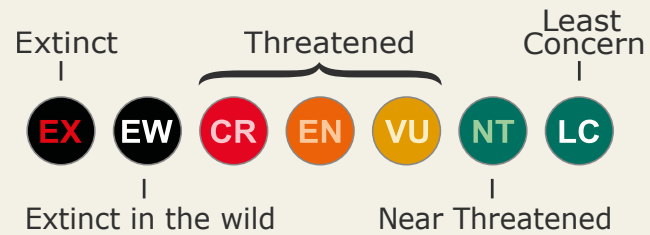
- **Critically Endangered (CR):** species facing an extremely high risk of extinction in the wild in the immediate future.
- **Endangered (EN):** species that are not “Critically Endangered” but are facing a very high risk of extinction in the wild in the near future.
- **Vulnerable (VU):** species facing a high risk of extinction in the wild in the medium-term future.

The term “Near Threatened” is also used to inform of species that are on the brink of being in the globally threatened category.

For each threat category, specific criteria are used to classify species in one of the three categories mentioned above:

- Declining population
- Small population, vulnerable to decline or fluctuations
- Very restricted distribution
- Quantitative analyses showing vulnerability to future declines (e.g. Population Viability Analysis)

Data on threatened species are globally compiled and maintained by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) in their Red List of Threatened Animals. Generally, the information presented in the current IUCN Red List represents an accumulation of knowledge derived from previously published Red Lists. Assessments represent the judgment of individual Specialist Group members based on available information. Oftentimes information quality and quantity is poor. In order to ensure greater accuracy and transparency in the assessment listing process, a peer review system of Red List Evaluators has been initiated. As a result, some species that have been formally assessed as vulnerable or even higher for example have been recently down-listed – the process is dynamic. In this book 26 species of birds are listed as Threatened and Near-Threatened and the international assessment code is shown next to each species in our species account.



CR Sociable Lapwing	NT Sooty Shearwater
EN Egyptian Vulture	NT Ferruginous Duck
EN Basra Reed Warbler	NT Lesser Flamingo
VU Marbled Duck	NT Cinereous Vulture
VU Dalmatian Pelican	NT Pallid Harrier
VU Socotra Cormorant	NT Red-footed Falcon
VU Lappet-faced Vulture	NT Sooty Falcon
VU Greater Spotted Eagle	NT Great Snipe
VU Eastern Imperial Eagle	NT Black-tailed Godwit
VU Saker Falcon	NT Eurasian Curlew
VU Macqueen's Bustard	NT Black-winged Pratincole
VU Great Knot	NT European Roller
	NT Semi-collared Flycatcher
	NT Eastern Cinereous Bunting

- Hunting must be monitored. Tighter controls must be implemented until sustainable use of the resource is assured. A “precautionary principle” approach should be applied to regulate the legally hunted species and species-management plans must be developed.
- The disturbance hunting/shooting causes must be better assessed. Shooting or poaching not only causes the death of individual birds it also creates important disturbance pressures that displace bird populations. This kind of disturbance can do much damage to small populations of wintering, migrating or breeding birds that have specialized needs and require specific habitat areas (i.e. small freshwater wetlands).
- Organized law enforcement, such as anti-poaching campaigns and education, is critical in order to stem criminal poaching. Combating poaching is difficult in societies where shooting migrant birds for “target practice” is traditionally tolerated. Hunting and conservation can co-exist if the dynamics of nature’s bounty is appreciated and respected. Someone who shoots illegally must not be considered a hunter. Criminal shooting disgraces hunting!
- An alternative to shooting and hunting is natural history recreation such as birding and nature photography. These activities, if better promoted, will enhance society’s appreciation for threatened and protected bird species.

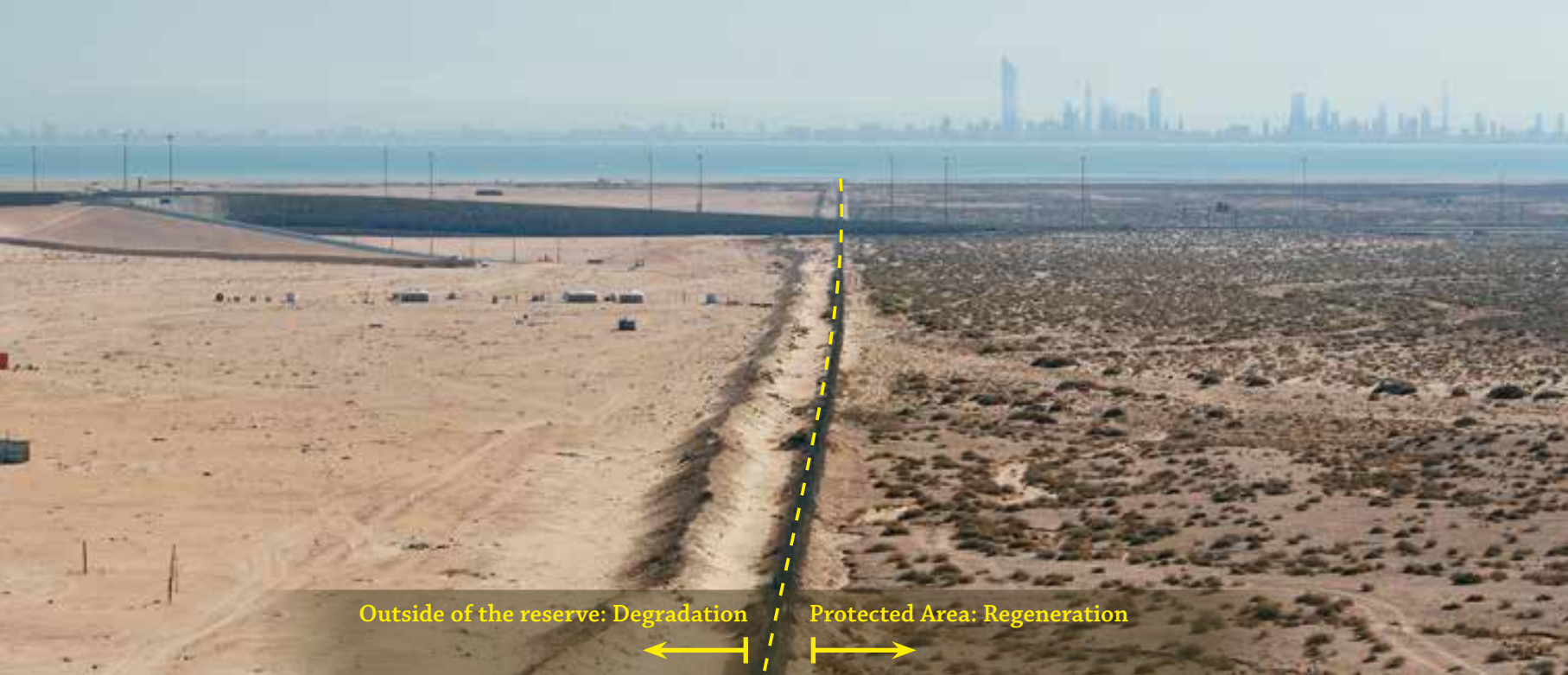
### Are non-indigenous species aliens?

Wild birds have a natural range or geographic distribution that is strictly defined. Sometimes humans, intentionally or accidentally introduce captive birds into a new and unfamiliar territory. These non-indigenous species are variously called exotics or aliens. Climatic factors, competition or predation usually defeat these introduced species. But some may thrive, often at the expense of native species or with the cost of creating artificial bird communities. These alien species also can spread diseases to native wild birds. In Kuwait recently the number of introduced species, including many pet birds, has been climbing – some have become naturalized since they have found conditions similar to their natural subtropical or tropical homes. Sadly this artificial enriching is not good for the natural composition of birds in our region and most people don’t understand the potential damage being done when a pet bird escapes.

### Protecting places

Birds have figured as important indicators for the legislative protection of official protected areas. Many protected areas throughout the world have been first identified as “Important Bird Areas” (IBAs). In 1994, BirdLife International’s inventory of “Important Bird Areas in the Middle East” showed that some areas in Kuwait are extremely valuable at the international level for bird conservation. This inventory included eight sites in Kuwait; although at the time there was even greater scarcity of ornithological information than presently, and this led to a bias towards including better explored areas. The designations and delineations of Important Bird Areas need to be updated. Remarkably important sites such as Bubiyan were not included in the initial survey of IBAs due to lack of information. But nonetheless the initial IBA list, along with other recent initiatives shows that certain areas are already scientifically assessed as being of outstanding global importance for conservation. Therefore we make the following recommendations:

- A re-assessment, identification and delineation of Important Bird Areas is needed in Kuwait. The last IBA survey was in 1994, therefore a review is long overdue because available information at the time was scant.
- A hierarchical network of protected areas should be organized and protection strategies prioritized accordingly. Also steps must be taken to designate and protect yet more sites of local importance – even very small protected areas, such as ponds and agricultural land, are critically important for migratory birds.
- International conventions must be used to designate and promote the global importance of Kuwait’s natural environment for wildlife. An obvious example concerns two potential designations as protected Ramsar sites: parts of Bubiyan/Warba along with Kuwait Bay. These areas certainly qualify as Wetlands of International Importance under the criteria of the Ramsar Convention for the Protection of Wetlands.
- Guarding protected areas against poaching requires special training of rangers and other staff. A specific commitment to anti-poaching will show measurable amelioration of the current heavy shooting pressure.
- Site protection must go hand-in-hand with education and awareness. Access to protected reserves by visitors and nationals should be welcomed in most cases, except where the welfare of endangered wildlife is at stake. Strategic visitor management plans must be developed and implemented because uncontrolled visitation may cause disturbance and displacement of bird populations.
- There is a real need for wildlife watching and nature interpretation facilities in protected areas (paths, viewing towers, visitor centers etc.).



Effective fencing in Sabah Al-Ahmad Natural Reserve protects vegetation from overgrazing. (GW)

Kuwaiti authorities have shown sincere interest in creating protected areas and protected-area planning has begun. Specific commitment is necessary in this direction to see the officially proposed protected area system come to fruition.

### Protecting the wider environment

Birds are excellent indicators of the health of entire landscapes. In turn they require healthy habitats for their survival. Protecting birds requires the protection of the wider environment. Some desert birds for example may have declined due to increased climatic aridity and desertification caused by human activities in this fragile habitat and this issue cannot be dealt with solely by protecting birds in isolated reserves. Similar problems concern marine birds and raptors – they need to feed on widely dispersed food sources over large areas. Nature conservation policies must be integrated into all policies governing use of the wider environment.

Therefore we recommend the following:

- Planning regulations and environmental impact assessment should be used more widely to minimize the impact of new developments. All new development projects should not be approved without an EIA (Environmental Impact Assessment) and an EMP (Environment Management Plan) that provide measures for minimizing damage but more importantly provide ongoing management plans to preserve open spaces and wildlife habitats. Wherever development plans are put into effect, specific environmental objectives should be incorporated to protect wildlife resources. Mitigation and restoration measures should be implemented when natural or artificial wildlife habitats are degraded by development.
- Tighter and more effective enforcement of regulations are needed to reduce pollution and damage to the integrity of important wildlife habitats. This includes the

impact of outdoor recreation such as off-road vehicles and free camping. Kuwait has a pressing problem with off-road vehicle driving. This largely unintentional recreation pressure is converting the living desert into a trampled wasteland!

- Overgrazing by domestic livestock should be better controlled. Many recently fenced areas are seeing a remarkable regeneration of natural habitats.
- Litter management: seas, shorelines and desert areas are often strewn with discarded litter and waste. Seabirds (and boat propellers) can become entangled with discarded fishing line, hooks, nets and other refuse. Similarly land birds can get ensnared in rubbish. A campaign to advocate “take your litter home or to the garbage can” is overdue.
- The impacts of power-lines or other artificial structures in the desert or on islands may not be adequately interpreted or appreciated. Many of these structures may kill hundreds of migratory birds each year. Special impact studies are often warranted, especially if these structures are built near protected areas or in places with regular mass migration movements of birds. Putting power-lines underground is low-cost in desert areas.
- Agriculture, water use, fisheries and land-use regulations must be expanded to avoid environmental damage from existing activities. Making micro-habitats available for birds can be promoted at the broader landscape scale. Even in urban areas and on agricultural land, water and cover for birds can be managed through green-space developments.
- Information about biodiversity in the wider environment must be disseminated by scientific organizations. Citizen groups should become aware and involved to promote and foster awareness. Most important of all, education should have a greater natural history and wildlife focus. This promotion for the appreciation of Kuwait’s natural heritage must begin in schools and the wider media.





Spanish Sparrow



Golden Oriole

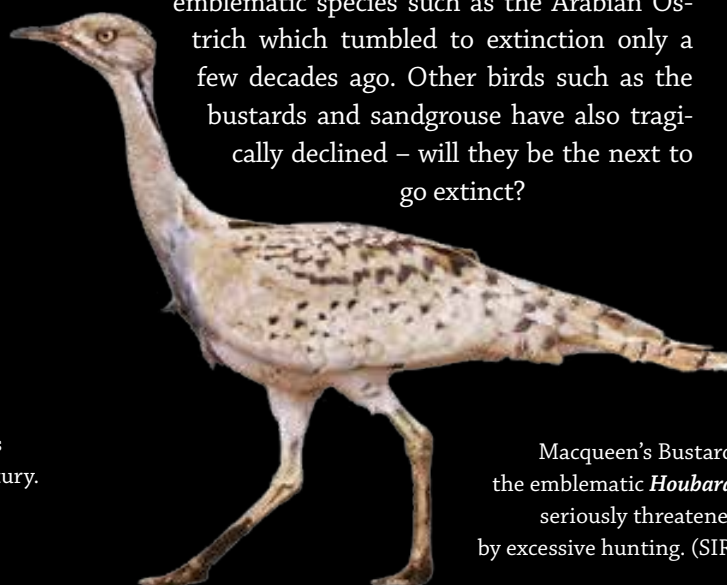


19th century artist's impression depicting ostrich hunters (engraving by G. Pearson, 1877). It was the use of fast off-road vehicles and guns that actually brought the species to extinction in the Arabian Peninsula in the mid 20th century.

## SHOT TO EXTINCTION

In Kuwait birds are often shot and killed for target practice, for trophies or as delicacies. This is inherently wrong and especially damaging to populations during spring migration. In spring, birds are flying to their breeding grounds. The birds that have survived this far into their travels deserve to continue on during this critical time in their life cycle. Shooting also disturbs and displaces bird populations and disrupts staging and roosting sites. Indiscriminate shooting and poaching are currently a severe problem in Kuwait, even within certain protected areas.

Shooting and persecution by humans is one reason many birds are so rare. Shooting is responsible for the local extinction of certain birds. This concerns some emblematic species such as the Arabian Ostrich which tumbled to extinction only a few decades ago. Other birds such as the bustards and sandgrouse have also tragically declined – will they be the next to go extinct?



Macqueen's Bustard, the emblematic *Houbara*, seriously threatened by excessive hunting. (SIR)





European Bee-eater



Blue-cheeked Bee-eater



Common Kestrel



Common Kestrel



European Roller



Cinereous Vulture





Salmiya, Kuwait City (VID)

## Important places for birds in Kuwait

A conservationist once remarked that a bird is 5% bones, blood and feathers; the other 95% is place! So identifying the places that are important for birds is critical for birders but also for nature conservation. And birders often become ardent conservationists because they learn to appreciate the habitats required for the survival of birds. Despite the small size of the State of Kuwait, there are many places to find interesting habitats for birds. This brief guide provides a selection of the most important places to observe birds in Kuwait, but it cannot do justice to the variety of distinct areas and habitats that exist. Sometimes even parks and gardens, lone strands of trees, a water-collection point, a pond or desert rock outcrop can support fascinating birds. Although this guide gives some information about sites of interest where birds can be found, it is by no means a comprehensive list.

The Green Island, Kuwait City (VID)



### Kuwait City

Greenery in the city and the foreshore may attract interesting birds at anytime, but especially during spring and autumn migration. Like most big cities, planning has not paid special attention to wildlife habitats and the usual city denizens dominate: Feral pigeon, Laughing and Collard Dove, House Sparrow, Common Mynah and White-eared Bulbul. To see a greater variety of species, try to explore the shoreline, for example Sharq Harbour is an excellent location to see gulls, terns and herons. In winter and spring one of the most interesting birds here is the Great Black-headed Gull and the big flocks of Great Cormorants. Sometimes rarities show up also, such as the Mediterranean Gull. One of the better places to see birds in the city is Green Island. This artificial peninsula is located just south of the Kuwait Towers on Gulf Road. There is public access and, as the gardens are continually watered, they offer refuge to tired migrants and wintering birds.

This is probably the best place in Kuwait to find naturalized Red-vented Bulbuls; although outnumbered by White-cheeked Bulbuls, they can be seen quite easily. Green Island hosts a thriving winter roost of *Hypocolius* – sometimes up to 120 birds! This remarkable Middle Eastern specialty roosts in the trees adjacent to the entrance gate; the birds fly off into Kuwait City each morning, an hour or so after sunrise, to feed for the day, and return in small groups just before nightfall. Early mornings in this park may provide surprises; migrating Indian Roller and Pallid Scops Owl, as well as various warblers and thrushes have been seen. The foreshore here can be good for sighting herons, egrets, waders, terns and gulls.





Constant centre-pivot irrigation produces wetland-like conditions attracting many birds. (VID)

### Abdaly Farms

This is a fairly large agricultural area near to the Iraqi border, lying to the east of Route 80 to Basra. Birds from Iraq and Iran can sometimes be found here – and some of them are extreme rarities in the Western Palearctic. Abdaly was the only regular site for Afghan Babbler in Western Eurasia – this species has bred successfully here since 2007, with small groups usually encountered in the scattered scrub near the farms. This area is also the most reliable site for Red-wattled Lapwing in Kuwait, mainly in winter and early spring, when flocks of up to 15 can sometimes be seen. Abdaly is also one of the better areas to search for Shikra, a hawk from the Eastern Palearctic that looks surprisingly similar to a Eurasian Sparrowhawk. The whole area is worth exploring for birds. Kuwait's first Asian Koel, also a first for the Western Palearctic, was spotted here in February 2009. Obviously because many of the farm areas are private, access is best sought through one of the resident Kuwaiti birders.

### Ras Subiya and the north shores of Kuwait Bay

Ras Subiya is a peninsula on the northernmost part of Kuwait Bay, on the road to the first great bridge over to Bubiyan Island. Driving up to the bridge is as far as most visitors can go because currently access to Bubiyan is restricted. This is perhaps why this impressive structure over the river-like tidal inlet of Subiya Khor was nicknamed “the bridge to nowhere.” Another landmark here is the huge Subiya Power Station. A small enclosed area of bushes surrounding a farm beyond the Power Plant is often worth searching for birds during migration and in winter. There have been several sightings of Shikra here, and an Eversmann's Redstart was found in December 2006. Nearby, the scattered tamarisk bushes by the Subiya Power Station entrance hosted the first Purple Sunbirds known to visit the Western Palearctic

in January 2008. The surrounding area of extensive sabkha, saltmarshes and sandbars south of the Power Station is interesting in winter and during migration. In winter, flocks of Lesser Short-toed Larks are also usually present. Flamingos, herons, waders, gulls and terns are present during most of the year. The intertidal mudflats along the shore here are seemingly vast and they continue on south and south-westwards along the shores of Kuwait Bay.

### Sulaibiya Pivot Fields

Pivot fields are remarkable artificial agricultural systems that have helped make the desert bloom. These are also called “circle irrigation” or “center-pivot irrigation” systems, where sprinkler crop irrigation equipment actually rotates on wheels around a central pivot. The sprinklers irrigate continuously and often there is a surplus of water in some fields, with water creating artificial wet-grassland conditions and periodically flooded ditches and pools. Even populations of Green Toads flourish on the wet ground. The result is a large area of bright green short wet turf, alfalfa

The Farm Pond, Sulaibiya Pivot Fields (VID)



and other crops and a green landscape on the semi-desert soils. Furthermore this particular area of pivot fields also has many banks of Tamarisk and *Casuarina* wind-breaks, small range land areas for the large camel herds and a huge artificial pond. The fact that it hosts such a variety of habitat and is fenced-in makes it an outstanding location for a large variety of birds. This is a reliable site for wintering raptors – Spotted, Steppe and Eastern Imperial Eagles, Long-legged Buzzard and harriers. By driving along the tracks traversing the fields, large flocks of Water Pipits and Skylarks can be searched through for rare pipits and the Oriental Skylark. Exotic attractions such as Indian Roller are often spotted here and White-throated and occasionally Pied Kingfisher are seen near the pond. The extensive pivot-irrigated fields are surprisingly good for all sorts of waterbirds, including flocks of Northern Lapwings, sandpipers, and egrets on passage. Caspian Plover can sometimes be found on passage, and the critically endangered Sociable Plover have been recorded here several times. Kuwait's first Little Whimbrel was found here in December 2007. Although not a protected area, this unique farm is strictly private – access is through the guarded entrance gate with pre-authorised permission. This location offers Kuwait's most extensive area of green field habitat creating a unique otherworldly environment for Kuwait and a true refuge for birds. Unfortunately, shooters know this and other migratory hot-spots well and will often drive by, outside the fenced-in agricultural lands, and shoot at birds from their cars.

### **Southern Kuwait Bay**

The whole of the southern and especially the southwestern shores of Kuwait Bay is a phenomenal place for birds, perhaps Kuwait's most famous area for observing the most populous gatherings of waterbirds in the country. Nearly any time of the year you can see thousands of waders, waterfowl, gulls and terns here, especially on an incoming tide. Up to 3000 Greater Flamingos and 500 Crab-plovers overwinter alongside Broad-billed and Terek Sandpipers, Lesser and Greater Sand Plovers, Kentish and Ringed Plovers, and a variety of gulls – including Steppe, Caspian, Armenian, Heuglin's and Great Black-headed Gulls. Terns come in great variety also: Swift, Lesser Crested, Gull-billed, Caspian, Sandwich and White-cheeked Terns are often present during spring and summer. On the west side of the bay, the high tide roost at Doha Spit is best for observing sheer numbers and variety of wetland bird species, predominantly waders from Little Stints to Eurasian Curlews. It is important that visitors do not disturb the flocks during this time; birders should view the birds from your car to avoid displacing the feeding and roosting flocks. Just west of Sulaibikhat, there are small outflows of effluent that attract gulls, terns, sandpipers and egrets. Sulaibikhat Nature Reserve (gated, with permit ac-

cess required), just north of the Ministry of Health, has a viewing platform that overlooks the bay. It also has a small, reed-fringed pool (often dry) and scrub that attracts migrants. Afghan Babblers have systematic also been recorded here, although not as frequently as at Abdaly. Kuwait Bay is most famous for its Flamingos, which often can be seen next to the city's fringe. Sightings include Kuwait's first (2007) and second (2010) Lesser Flamingo. The flamingo flocks are best viewed from the Maternity Hospital parking at Sulaibikhat. Further east and nearer to the City Center, Shuwaikh Port offers good photographic opportunities for large gulls and more waders. Without a doubt, Kuwait Bay hosts wetlands of international significance for birds, but this area has not yet been designated as a wetland of international importance. Much of the area is recognized and designated as an internationally Important Bird Area since 1994, including specific delineations for Dawhat Kazima (16.6 km<sup>2</sup>), Ad-Doha Nature Reserve (4.5 km<sup>2</sup>) and a large area of Sulaibikhat Bay (48.5 km<sup>2</sup>). All who have seen the bird concentrations say that Kuwait Bay should become designated as Kuwait's first Wetland of International Significance under the Ramsar Convention and we can only hope this will be promoted in the near future.

### **Jahra East Outfall**

This sewage and drainage outfall, with its extensive reed bed, forms the largest reed swamp habitat in Kuwait. It is located immediately inland near the southwest shore of Kuwait Bay. This has traditionally been the place to see the Basra Reed Warbler, a unique regional and summer breeding specialty, along with many other reed birds, a few of which also breed in summer. The wetlands here traditionally have also seen huge flocks of migrating Yellow Wagtails and Red-throated Pipits, along with sporadic visits by Asian Buff-bellied Pipit. However, recent development pressures have dried out and impacted much of the reed bed and bird sightings are vastly reduced. Sadly much of the site is slated for housing and other developments. Nevertheless, this site is still worth visiting to search for migrants, and the foreshore on an incoming tide hosts similar spectacular wetland bird concentrations as elsewhere on the southern shores of Kuwait Bay.

### **Sabah Al-Ahmad Natural Reserve – Jal Az-Zor**

This 320 km<sup>2</sup> protected area was formerly acclaimed as Kuwait's first National Park. It is definitely one of the country's most intriguing nature reserves and is very well protected. The reserve includes sweeping landscapes of desert and steppe grassland, gently undulating gravel flats and rocky scarp ravines, located near the western shore of Kuwait Bay. The reserve spans on both sides of the road





Escarpment ridge on Jal Az-Zor (MP)



Scarp wadi in Sabah Al-Ahmad Natural Reserve (MP)





Traditional irrigated agriculture at Jahra Farms (VID)

going north to Subiya, but access is strictly by prior arrangement and with a permit; and visitors normally need to be accompanied by a resident Kuwaiti or local birder. The reserve's western section is dominated by the Jal Az-Zor escarpment rising to 116 m elevation, which is intersected by open canyon-like scarp wadis. These rocky habitats are favoured by Mourning Wheatear and the much rarer Red-tailed Wheatear; and on rare occasions Hume's and White-crowned Wheatears in winter, as well as Mongolian Finch. Other more typical and common birds are Asian Desert Warbler, Mauryan Shrike and Trumpeter Finch. Dunn's Larks and Black-crowned Sparrow-Larks breed annually on the adjacent steppe-like desert plateau, whilst small numbers of Macqueen's Bustards are usually seen in winter each year. Flocks of Caspian Plovers are regularly seen in early spring while on migration. The Reserve has two significant wetlands: an artificially flooded playa basin and a small artificial pond at Tulha. The artificial shallow lake created in the Umm Al-Rimman basin has obviously not become stabilized as a natural feature yet but it does resemble an extensive wetland and could be attractive to wildlife in the future. Common and Demoiselle Cranes, as well as many migrating raptors are now stopping at the newly flooded basin to quench their thirst. Tulha is a tiny artificial pool fed with brackish water pumped from a deep borehole; it is especially attractive for birds. In fact Tulha acts like a "migrant magnet" since it has bushes and trees providing cover around the small pool in the middle of the otherwise barren sandy gravel plain. Tulha is often a good place to search for migrant warblers including the Basra Reed Warbler. Also Pale Rockfinch and Yellow-throated Sparrows

can be seen amongst the commoner species such as White-throated and Rufous Bush Robins, Rock Thrush, Eastern Orphee Warbler, Lesser and Common Whitethroats and Semi-collared Flycatcher. Kuwait's first Lappet-faced Vulture and a few Crested Honey Buzzards have been observed here in recent years as well as Grey-necked, Rock and Little Bunting; an Eversmann's Redstart was found in November 2010 and in March 2012 the second record of Radde's Accentor was made. Even the few trees at Tulha sometimes host many Scops Owls and the rarer Pallid Scops Owl.

The diversity of habitats in this reserve is unique for Kuwait and includes a few tiny green spots, such as grassy playa meadows and semi-desert fringes that fill with *Gynandris* irises in spring. What is particularly interesting to note is that the reserve has been fenced for a number of years, restricting access to grazers (sheep, goats and camels) and a diverse natural flora is re-establishing itself which in turn attracts insects, birds, mammals and reptiles. This is a sure sign that the desert is capable of regenerating itself with a little help provided by low cost fencing and some management to maintain the fencing and prevent indiscriminate grazing and poaching. This is in marked contrast to so much of Kuwait that has become a barren wasteland due to overgrazing and excessive trampling by off-road vehicles. Setting aside additional fenced reserves to protect more areas from domesticated livestock, along with re-introducing native grazing ungulates, would enable the desert to regenerate into a living landscape once again.

### Jahra Farms

An area of private traditional commercial and subsistence farms in the centre of Jahra town. Access into this area should be made primarily through resident guides so as not to disturb local farmers. Tall groves of date palms, vegetable gardens and shallow cisterns with water provide for a truly authentic oasis scene. The cool waters and patchy agricultural lands attract many birds especially on migration and in winter. Interesting birds to note here are Hypocolius and a naturalized population of Bank Mynah. White-throated Kingfishers breed here and may hunt the Green Toads in the irrigation ditches. Although quite small, this area has regularly hosted Shikra, Rufous Turtle Dove, Indian Roller, Black-throated Thrush and Semi-collared Flycatcher, as well as all three Western Palearctic records of Ashy Drongo – a vagrant from the Indomalaya realm. Other notable records from this site have been Great Snipe, Dusky Warbler, Red-wing and Eastern Bonelli's Warbler. This place is obviously important because of its lush vegetation and the oasis waters. The traditional irrigation ditches and cisterns depend on a steady supply of cool clear well-water and since this area is actually on the urban edge of Jahra town, the quality and quantity of these waters is vulnerable to change.





Shallow artificial ponds and reed beds at Jahra Pool Reserve (VID)

### Jahra Pool Reserve

This area represents one of the richest and best-studied small wetlands for birds in Kuwait. It is located just north of Jahra town and accessed north-east off Route 80. Access is by permit and guards are posted at the official entrance point. This fenced nature reserve features a number of shallow pools surrounded by extensive *Phragmites* reed beds, salt marshes, scattered tamarisk thickets and sandy sabkha flats. Although this is Kuwait's largest inland marsh, the pools are totally man-made and fed by effluent from Jahra, including treated sewage water. The water levels fluctuate from year to year. A scientific scheme for wetland wildlife management needs to be implemented. Obviously this area is important for marsh birds, including breeding Basra Reed, Clamorous Reed and Moustached Warblers. While flooded, the pools are important for ducks and even geese during severe winters; Kuwait's first Red-headed Pochards were found here in the last days of December 2011. Bailon's, Spotted and Little Crakes can show well on the reed edges, together with Purple Swampphen and Eurasian Coot and, occasionally, Red-wattled Lapwing, while the first confirmed breeding of White-tailed Lapwing for Kuwait occurred here in 2010.

The area is also excellent for raptors and the undeveloped surrounding area of flat land is important for many harrier and eagle species. Jahra Pool is one of Kuwait's best areas to find vagrants and it has been relatively well studied. Rarities over the years have included African Darter, Sooty Falcon, Spur-winged Lapwing and Long-tailed Skua. Kuwait's first Masked Wagtail and Pied Stonechat were also

found here in spring 2011. There is no doubt that this area hosts a variety of distinctive habitats with extremely easy wildlife viewing.

There are three small lookout towers with views of the surrounding vast sandy sabkha, the shallow sea and the Jal Az-Zor escarpment in the background. Because Jahra Pool is so easily accessible to the public its protection, promotion and management is an utmost priority for biodiversity conservation and education in Kuwait. An important problem here is development of the surrounding lands (and coastal wetland areas) outside the fenced area. Originally covering only 0.7 km<sup>2</sup>, the reserve is definitely not large enough to protect the rich birdlife it attracts. Plans are being implemented to expand the reserve to approximately 20 km<sup>2</sup> in 2012. However, despite it being a designated protected area and Important Bird Area, the fences are frequently violated by intruding shooters who unfortunately kill and displace birds from this, one of their most important haunts.

### Kabd – Sulaibiya Agricultural Research Station

This agricultural research center comprises un-grazed, vegetated semi-desert, and is strictly controlled through the Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research (KISR), with access by permit only. It is one of Kuwait's most important known sites for larks during influx years, including desert specialties such as Bar-tailed, Dunn's, Hoopoe and Black-crowned Sparrow-Larks. Egyptian Nightjar is suspected of breeding here and Pharaoh Eagle Owl has been seen too.





Failaka island (VID)

### Failaka Island

This is an island just off the Delta plume of the vast Mesopotamian estuary. It is flat and much of its small settlement was badly damaged during the 1990/91 War. Despite a coordinated clean-up and build-up there are many ruins on the island; however these also include ancient relics from the time of Alexander the Great, when the island was known by its Greek name, Ikaros. The island is of interest for the birder and visitor who has a bit of time to spend exploring. In the gardens of ruined houses many migrants can be found; these may include Red-breasted Flycatcher and other passerines that give a distinctive eastern flavor to bird passage here. Outside the town, Graceful Prinia has recently colonized and is breeding. The beaches near the harbours hold many Great Black-headed Gulls and other gulls and terns in winter. Extensive tidal flats around the

island host a variety of waders on passage. Whilst on board the Salmiya to Failaka ferry, various terns and gulls plus Arctic Skua and Pomarine Skua can be seen in spring and autumn. So a trip to Failaka offers a bit of sea watching, however the island itself is not well monitored for birds.

### Kubbar Island and the southern coral islets

Unlike Failaka and the islands and muddy islets further north, which are directly influenced by the turbid Delta waters, the tiny islets to the south of Kuwait are subtropical coral cays. They are surrounded by beautiful azure waters but they are rarely visited by birders. Of these, Kubbar is the most accessible from Kuwait City and also probably the most significant for seabirds. Kubbar hosts one of Kuwait's most spectacular breeding seabird colonies, with thousands

Coast Guard station at Qaru island (VID)





of breeding terns nesting in and around the Suaeda scrub during the summer months. Approximately 500 Lesser Crested, 4000 Bridled and 3000 White-cheeked Terns, and a few Swift Terns were on the island in June 2010. This tiny islet is a designated Important Bird Area and proposals for conservation have been forwarded. Sadly the colony's protection is poorly enforced and disturbance and willful killing by visitors has been frequently observed. Access is via private charter boat, and visitors must obviously avoid disturbance to the seabird colonies. Another island, further south is Um Al-Maradim, near the latitude of the Saudi border. This also hosts breeding terns and attracts quite a variety of migrants during spring passage. Further out at sea is tiny Qaru which just like the former islet has a military/coast guard force stationed there, obviously restricting access. These southern islets have visiting Socotra Cormorants during the summer and during migration unusual vagrants are possible. Although poorly explored for their birds, these islets are Kuwait's most important areas for nesting Sea Turtles, including both Hawksbill Turtle (*Eretmochelys imbricate*) and Green Turtle (*Chelonia mydas*).

### Wafra Farms

This large area of private, traditional farms is located near the border with Saudi Arabia, in southern Kuwait. The extensive farm habitat here is similar to that of Abdaly in the north. Greenery and orchard-like environments next to the desert attract both migrants and desert birds to this extensive oasis-like environment. Black-crowned Sparrow-Lark and White-eared Bulbul breed here annually. Although very little birding has been done here, the discovery of an Evermann's Redstart in January 2011 and a second Masked Wagtail illustrates the potential of this extensive area on the southern Kuwait border.

### Abraq Al Khabari

This small farm lies at the northern edge of the Ad-Dib-dibbah gravel desert plain, which extends south into Saudi Arabia. At an elevation of 235 m, this isolated and private oasis in the western desert has a slightly more continental climate than the coast and is extensively green, due to irrigation being pumped from a deep well. Compared to the surrounding open desert the farm has a variety of green micro-habitats, high Tamarisk windbreaks, a small area of scrub and sparsely vegetated hummock dunes, the irrigated fields and their watered margins, and a farm pond. This location is a proven "vagrant-trap" since it acts as a true habitat islet in a sea of flat desert. It has an exceptional record for attracting extreme rarities such as Indian Pond Heron, Forest Wagtail, Radde's Accentor, Hume's Leaf Warbler, Rustic and Little Bunting, Black Scrub Robin, Crested Honey Buzzard, Dusky Warbler, and the first record of Ara-



Traditional irrigation at Al Abraq (VID)

bian Golden Sparrow that is still under review by KORC – all recent firsts for Kuwait's avifauna. Despite its isolation, this area is frequently monitored by visiting birders and is one of Kuwait's designated Important Bird Areas, although the designated area covers only 1.3 km<sup>2</sup>. Although it lies next to the extensive Wadi Al Batin protected area it is not currently under state protection. Unfortunately shooting is very frequently observed around the farmland, despite the fact that most of it is fenced and private land. Wounded and dead birds with gunshot wounds, including rare species, are often encountered, the inevitable result of indiscriminate shooting.

Drought resistant trees planted on hummock dunes at Al Abraq (VID)







Artificial islets and canals at Sabah Al-Ahmad Sea City

### Zour Port and the Khiran Area

Zour Port is a private, fenced oil terminal with permit access only. Along the beach there are tropical-looking off-shore sand bars attracting hundreds of roosting terns, including Swift, Lesser Crested, White-cheeked and Bridled Terns. Several Great Black-headed Gulls and other large “white-headed” gulls are also usually present. Kuwait’s only recorded Lesser Frigatebird was seen here in April 2008. This is one of the best sites in Kuwait for Socotra Cormorant and, from late March through the summer, this Arabian specialty species is regularly seen along this stretch of southern Kuwait coastline. The coast between Zour Port and Fahaheel is also worth exploring, as it provides an alternative to search for Swift, Lesser Crested and Bridled Terns (with access less-restricted than Zour Port).

Just to the south, and with less restricted access than Zour Port, Khiran sand-spit can also hold good numbers of roosting terns at low tide, whilst Socotra Cormorant is also recorded here each summer together with Bridled Terns and often very good sightings of Indo-Pacific Humpback Dolphins very close to the shore. Khiran used to be an extensive wetland area of seemingly vast saltflats and sabkha surrounding the tidal inlets, known locally as khors. The desert areas around Khiran have also hosted rare wheat-eaters in the form of Red-tailed and Kurdistan. In the surrounding area little rocky outcrops exist; a record of Pharaoh Eagle Owl was made here in 2010.

In Khiran, the developers of Sabah Al-Ahmad Sea City have created extensive waterways by excavating inland lagoons and forming artificial islets in previously environmentally impoverished sabkha salt flats. From a pre-construction count of 142 marine biota, to over 1000 species to date, the waters of Sabah Al-Ahmad Sea City are providing a rich ecosystem. These artificially enhanced sites are classified as some of the most environmentally diverse along Kuwait’s southern coastline. The introduction of the Grey Mangrove (*Avicennia marina*) in this area has provided a unique marine environment and ideal nursery grounds for marine species. Mangroves grow just south of the border in Saudi Arabia near the species’ northern range distribution.

The new seaside mangrove thickets and reconstructed islets and wetlands attract many species that have naturally colonized the ideal intertidal and marine conditions including sea grasses and corals. At the muddy islets on either side of the Khiran resort area moderate numbers of migrant and wintering waders can be found. Caspian plover and Cream-coloured Courser are frequently seen here and Kentish Plover breeds on isolated beaches. On the tiny islets in the main estuary near Kirhan harbour, newly planted habitat attracts passerine migrants in both spring and autumn.

### Areas that are practically off-limits to the public

Some of the best sites to see birds are off-limits for the visitor; but nevertheless they are important wildlife areas in need of conservation measures. Very few observations have been made in these areas due to the extremely restricted access that is controlled by the military. This is sometimes beneficial because certain areas are fenced resulting in vegetational regeneration and limited access prevents human disturbance to wildlife.

### Bubiyan and Warba Islands – Mesopotamian Delta

Kuwait owns an important part of the Mesopotamian Delta – an ecosystem of vast flat muddy islands and river-like tidal channels, in the northeast corner of the country sandwiched between Kuwait’s mainland, Iraq and Iran. Bubiyan is a remarkable deltaic island covering an area of 863 km<sup>2</sup>. The landscape here is almost totally flat and the waters are a sediment laden and cloudy brown in colour. Tidal mudflats, sabkha and salt flats seem endless. Yet these waters and sediments are fed from the Tigris and Euphrates rivers that pour into the Gulf via the Shat al Arab channel. The result is a wetland wilderness rich in wildlife, definitely one of the most amazing natural treasures in the country. In terms of its birdlife this is an internationally important area for breeding Crab-plover, holding one of the world’s largest colonies; 1500 active nest holes were recorded here in April 2004. Bubiyan also hosts breeding populations of Swift and Lesser



Crested Terns, Slender-billed Gulls and important colonies of hundreds of herons, egrets, spoonbills and other waterbirds. In the past flamingos and pelicans nested here but they may have been displaced by human persecution – these colonies are extremely sensitive to disturbance.

Bubiyan, Warba and the surrounding delta area is one of the least researched wildlife habitats in the northern Gulf since it is near the notorious tri-border area, for a long time considered a kind of no-man's land. Being understudied, important wildlife discoveries can still be made. For example, reports of up to 19 Great Knots in both the winter periods of 2004 suggest that this rare species may occur with some regularity. As Warba and much of northern Bubiyan are within a military area they have not been surveyed frequently and as a result are poorly understood in ornithological terms. As recently as 1994, Bird Life International did not include this area in its first inventory of Important Bird Areas because of the "scarcity of information." Although records are sparse it is obviously an internationally important area for wildlife – not just for birds, but also for estuarine fishes, crustaceans, sea snakes, sea turtles, sharks and dolphins. Part of Bubiyan is being developed into a port facility and new bridges have been built in the southwestern part of the island, perhaps its status as virtual no-man's land will change in the near future and it is hoped that legislation will protect and set aside large conservation areas here. Initial reports state that it is worthy of global recognition as a Wetland of International Importance within the Ramsar Convention.

### Wadi Al Batin

This is an arid shallow valley filled with alluvial sediment, re-worked aeolian sands and scattered rock outcrops in Kuwait's western desert – on the Saudi and Iraqi frontiers. The wadi is a relic of the watercourse that once ephemerally flowed along the length of the border and is now a subtle gully feature in a vast near-flat desert. This area is representative of the northeastern Arabian desert wilderness and sustains an assortment of birds that are scarce over the more disturbed ground within much of Kuwait. Pharaoh Eagle Owl and Lilith Owl breed on the rocky outcrops on the wadi's valley sides. In winter and spring desert bird specialties such as Desert Lark, Bar-tailed Lark, Temminck's Lark and Trumpeter Finch are often found and probably breed in most years. Other true desert rarities, such as Thick-billed Lark, Pale Rockfinch and sandgrouse are sometimes observed. Much of this area has also been proposed as a protected area and it is Kuwait's largest designated Important Bird Area (covering an area of 575 km<sup>2</sup>). However, this area is definitely one of the least visited and one of the most poorly monitored areas for birds in the country.



Desert camp at Jal Az-Zor (MP)

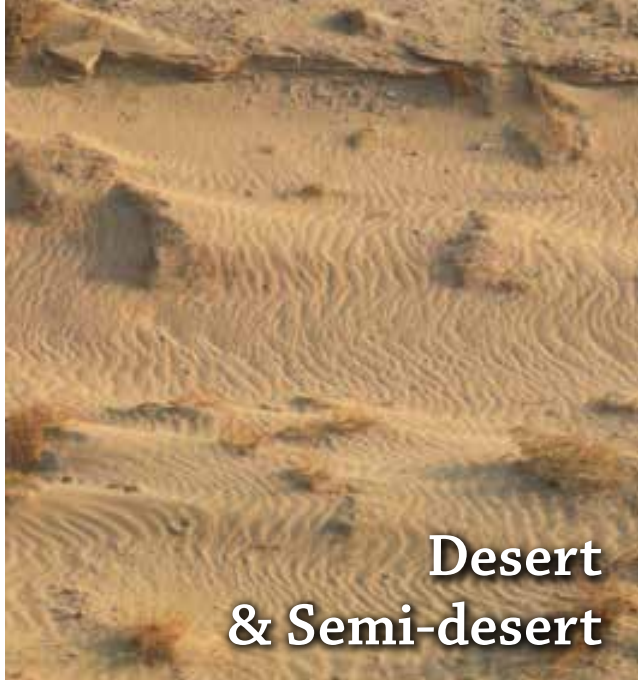
### De-militarized Zone Kuwait-Iraq border

This is an extensive area of desert, semi-desert and steppe adjacent to the northern Iraq Border, west of Abdaly. Kuwait shares a 240 km long-border with Iraq on the north and northwest of the country. A de-militarized zone (DMZ) was declared after the 1990 Gulf War, with a width of five kilometres inside Kuwait and ten inside Iraq. The DMZ is protected with a trench of three to five meters in depth and an electric fence running along the border, with a paved road running between both man-made features. In the immediate years after the war this area became an important refuge for many desert-dwelling wildlife species. In most winters Macqueen's Bustard, Spotted Sandgrouse, Pintailed Sandgrouse, Black-bellied Sandgrouse and Stone-curlew are present. A part of this area is now hunted and because of poor control of hunters, many of these birds have been shot and displaced and their numbers have seriously declined. A proposal for a protected area in the DMZ has been developed but not enacted.

Salt marshes and vast mudflats at Bubiyan (VID)







**Desert  
& Semi-desert**

Most of Kuwait is desert and semi-desert – often flat or gently undulating. Low-lying geological features such as wadis, escarpments and rock outcrops are often hives of activity for wildlife, providing shelter, cover, and breeding sites. Some coastal and northern parts of the country have a semi-desert character, with steppe grasslands flourishing during the wet season. Although true wilderness areas are limited and mostly on the borders, a few areas stand out. Inland, Kuwait's desert rises gently into a vast plateau reaching an elevation of about 300 meters near the Saudi Arabian border.

**3, 7, 10, 14, 17, 18**



**Farmland  
& Settlements**

A new kind of oasis in the desert is artificially-irrigated farmland. In some cases the sheer size and variety of the greenery here is remarkable – huge pivot fields and fruit-tree orchards, often include “woodland-like” windbreaks and other tree plantations. Irrigated farmland has expanded as have settlements.

Kuwait City, the country's largest conurbation has many parks and green spaces, especially along the shoreline.

These green spaces attract many migratory birds.

**1, 2, 3, 4, 8, 10, 13, 14**

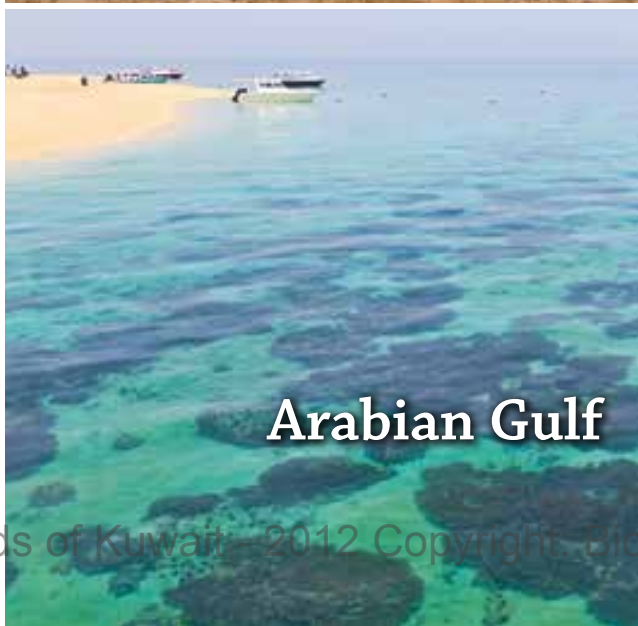


**Wetlands**

Any place wet enough to develop distinctive wetland vegetation, be it marine, brackish or freshwater is really a bonanza for wildlife in a desert land. Even artificial wetland features become oases – these include small farm ponds, sewage outfalls and wastewater treatment areas. Marine tidal wetland areas and saltmarshes in the Mesopotamian Delta –of which Bubiyan and Kuwait Bay are part– create vast wildlife habitat areas in Kuwait.

Kuwait Bay alone hosts some of the most extensive mudflats in the entire Arabian Gulf.

**3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 15, 16**



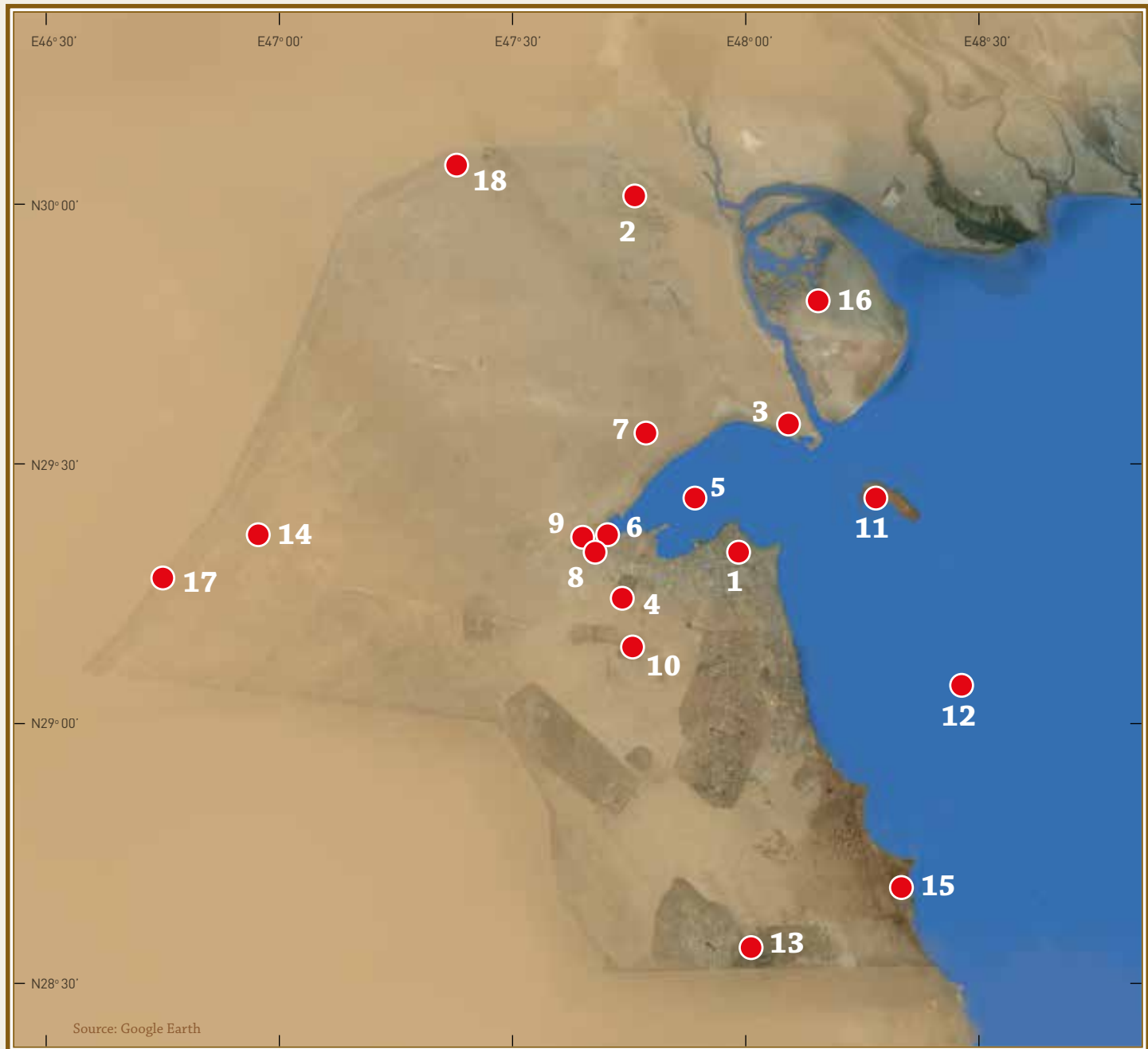
**Arabian Gulf**

The Arabian Gulf is a subtropical arm of the Indian Ocean. Kuwait's waters lie on the western edge of the rather shallow Mesopotamian Shelf. A tidal range of 2 to 3 meters along these shores creates remarkable intertidal zones. The anticlockwise flow of the Gulf's currents favors Kuwait by carrying nutrients from the vast tidal estuary of the Tigris-Euphrates-Karun rivers, resulting in a remarkably bountiful sea and shoreline environment. Important coral reefs and some tiny offshore islets and sandbars complete this diverse marine kaleidoscope.

**1, 5, 11, 12, 15**



# Important places for birds in Kuwait



- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>1</b> Kuwait City                                   | <b>10</b> Kabd – Sulaibiya Agricultural Research Station |
| <b>2</b> Abdaly Farms                                  | <b>11</b> Failaka Island                                 |
| <b>3</b> Ras Subiya and the north shores of Kuwait Bay | <b>12</b> Kubbar Island and the southern coral islets    |
| <b>4</b> Sulaibiya Pivot Fields                        | <b>13</b> Wafra Farms                                    |
| <b>5</b> Southern Kuwait Bay                           | <b>14</b> Abraq Al Khabari                               |
| <b>6</b> Jahra East Outfall                            | <b>15</b> Zour Port and the Khiran Area                  |
| <b>7</b> Sabah Al-Ahmad Natural Reserve – Jal Az-Zor   | <b>16</b> Bubiyan and Warba Islands – Mesopotamian Delta |
| <b>8</b> Jahra Farms                                   | <b>17</b> Wadi Al Batin                                  |
| <b>9</b> Jahra Pool Reserve                            | <b>18</b> De-militarized Zone Kuwait-Iraq border         |



Macqueen's Bustard (MP)







# Birds of Kuwait

## Species accounts

*390 species and 17 subspecies  
are presented in this guide.  
This includes all birds confirmed  
in Kuwait and a few introduced  
species with naturalized  
self-sustaining populations.*

**All bird species shown in this book have been officially recorded in Kuwait and ratified by the Kuwait Ornithological Rarities Committee (KORC).**

The inclusion of birds into this list is part of a detailed confirmation process and is subject to review by experts. This work draws on past records published by George Gregory (Gregory 2005); the Kuwait List (Gregory 2008) and the late Charles Pilcher's Kuwait database (Al Sirhan 2012).

Only in recent years through the digital photography revolution have many birders started carrying cameras with their binoculars and have now been recording birds in pixels with quality images improving from year to year. Every effort was made to obtain images taken in Kuwait for all species. When images of some of these rarities are missing we have chosen to supplement them with top quality photographs taken elsewhere in the wider region. Although a small percentage of all photographs in this book are taken abroad we clearly state where these photographs have been taken in the caption next to the photographers initials on each photograph. We hope that in a future edition of this book these photos can be replaced with photos taken solely in Kuwait!

All photographs have captions on them, and when the plumage is not of an adult bird distinctions are also given (Juvenile, Immature etc), placed before the photographers initials. A note about each of the 43 contributing photographers who contributed to this book is found in the appendix on pages 410-411.

Efforts were made to select photographs that show the characteristic identification features of the birds as well as some birds in action images, such as in flight mode. Occasionally a photograph of perhaps not

the highest quality is included because some vagrants are extremely difficult to photograph since they have been spotted only a few times in Kuwait.

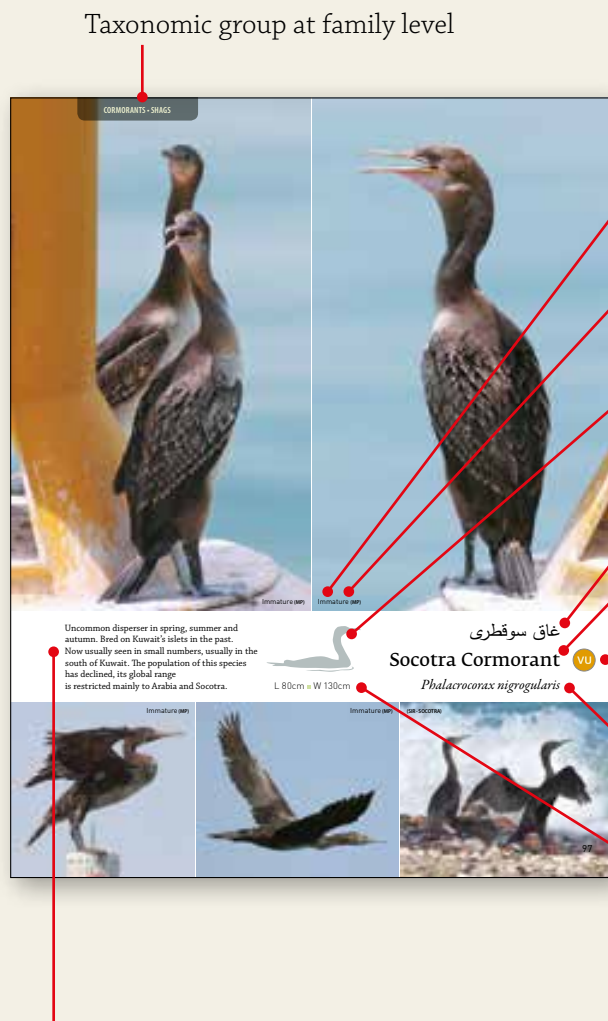
The present count of species recorded in Kuwait up until June 2012 is 390 species and 17 subspecies. This includes all birds confirmed in apparently natural state in Kuwait and a few introduced species that have become naturalized with self-sustaining breeding populations. Escaped pet birds or other irregularly occurring non-indigenous species that are not part of the genuine avifauna are not included. A few extirpated or extinct birds, such as the Arabian Ostrich (*Struthio camelus syriacus*) are not included. The species selection almost exactly follows the current KORC annotated list designations. The list also includes subspecies following the Regional List compiled by the Ornithological Society of the Middle East (OSME).

Of the birds included in this book, 17 are subspecies of other species that have already been recorded as valid species-level taxa in Kuwait. Some of these subspecies' taxonomy is currently being revised and changes in species status may alter the subspecies status. Already some of these subspecies taxa (such as Heuglin's and Steppe Gulls) are considered valid species by some authorities, but these are maintained as subspecies in this book.

With only a few exceptions, the arrangement of the birds follows a taxonomic order (OSME Taxonomic sequence based on Howard and Moore 3rd Edition 2003). The standardized English names (English names based on those recommended by IOC) follow the OSME list and the Arabic names follow AbdulRahman Al Sirhan's website (<http://birdsofkuwait.com>).



# How to use this guide



Taxonomic group at family level

Bird's plumage details (juvenile, male/female, summer/ winter).  
If no details are given, the bird pictured is a typical adult.

Photographer's codified initials (see p. 410).

**Country of origin is mentioned only  
for photographs taken outside Kuwait.**

Characteristic silhouette of the species

Arabic name used in Kuwait (as in the official KORC list)

Common English name

IUCN Global Conservation status (see p. 33)

**NT** Near Threatened

**VU** Vulnerable

**EN** Endangered

**CR** Critically Endangered

Scientific name (usually binomial name given for valid species;  
trinomial name used only for certain distinctive subspecies)

Adult bird's **maximum** dimensions in centimetres:  
open wingspan (W) and bill-tip to tail tip length (L)

A brief description giving important ornithological details. Often reference is made to the highest documented daily count of birds seen in Kuwait, in order to give an indication of abundance and time of occurrence. Remarks on habitat, localities where the species is observed in Kuwait, and important identification or conservation distinctions are often included. It should be noted that the first lines of text represent the species' frequency of occurrence in Kuwait as is known in mid-2012. This is given in coded terminology as follows:

**Abundant:** Occurs annually in very large numbers

**Very common:** Occurs annually in large numbers

**Common:** Occurs annually in moderate numbers

**Uncommon:** Occurs annually in small numbers

**Scarce:** Occurs annually in very small numbers or is very hard to locate.

**Rare:** Does not occur or is not recorded annually but has occurred more than 15 times in total.

**Vagrant:** Has occurred less than 15 times in total (birds that have occurred less than 5 times are termed "extremely rare vagrants"). It should be noted that some birds may actually occur more frequently but have so far gone undetected due to poor monitoring in some parts of Kuwait's territory.

**Irregular:** Occurs, not necessarily every year, in variable

numbers. This may include dispersers that fly over after breeding in other regions or nearby countries.

**Migrant:** Passage through Kuwait in spring and autumn (Note: bird migration in autumn is prolonged, usually lasting from late June to November).

**Summer Visitor:** Occurs in Kuwait during the early summer after spring migration has ended and stays in Kuwait for some time. This may include migrants that may breed in Kuwait regularly or irregularly.

**Resident:** Occurs in Kuwait all year round, this may include populations that are partially migratory also.

**Breeds:** Breeds regularly in Kuwait every year.

**Has Bred:** Has bred in the past but there is no sign or confirmation of breeding in recent years



Juvenile (GHA)

السماني

## Common Quail

*Coturnix coturnix*

L 17cm ■ W 33cm

Common passage migrant and scarce summer visitor. Has bred in localized farmland areas where its characteristic song can sometimes be heard. It is heavily hunted in Kuwait's deserts often through the use of song recordings at night.



Female (HAJ)



(SIR)



(SHA)





(SIR)

Rare winter visitor; not recorded annually, and usually in small numbers. Has been observed at inland wetlands and mudflat areas along the coast from November to March. Population movements are influenced by severe winter weather.



L 84cm ■ W 168cm

الإوز الرمادي الشرقي

## Eastern Greylag Goose

*Anser anser rubrirostris*

(MP)

(SIR)







Juveniles (MP)

الإوز الأغر الكبير

## Greater White-fronted Goose

*Anser albifrons*

L 78cm ■ W 160cm

Extremely rare vagrant during late autumn and winter. According to local hunters, the species may be a more frequent visitor. Although usually found on coastal marshes, it has even been recorded on a quiet golf course.



Juvenile (MP)



Juvenile (PF)



Juvenile (PF)





Juvenile (LS-GREECE)



(DO-ITALY)

Extremely rare vagrant. A single immature bird was found at Jahra Pool in November 1997. This bird is the commonest of the three swan species in the Western Palearctic; all may very rarely occur well south of their normal wintering areas due to severe winters.



L 160cm ■ W 230cm

التم الأخرس

## Mute Swan

*Cygnus olor*

Extremely rare vagrant. A northern bird far from its usual wintering area. It has only been recorded once in the country, at Kuwait Bay in mid January 1997.



L 58cm ■ W 82cm

البلقشة حمراء الصدر

## Red-breasted Merganser

*Mergus serrator*

Female (DO-ITALY)



Male (DO-ITALY)



Male (DO-ITALY)





(MK)

الشهران الشائع

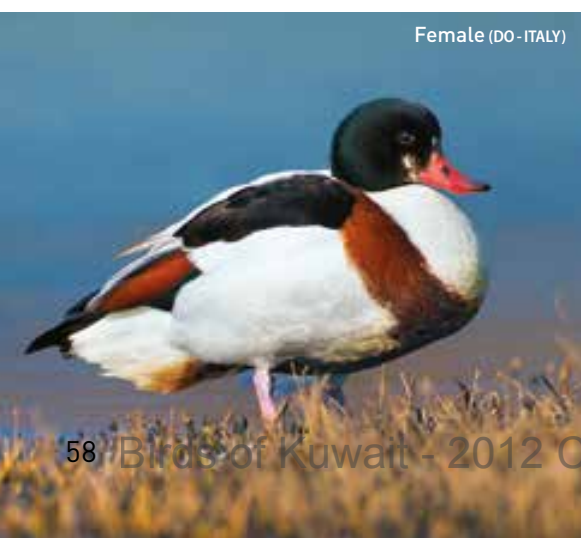
## Common Shelduck

*Tadorna tadorna*

L 65cm ■ W 120cm

Common winter visitor and uncommon passage migrant. Up to 300 individuals recorded in January and early March at Kuwait Bay. Much smaller flocks are also sometimes seen on the Gulf coast. A goose-like duck of the estuarine mudflats.

Female (DO - ITALY)



Male (DO - ITALY)



(SIR)

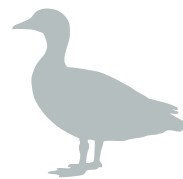






Male (DO-ITALY)

Rare winter visitor and uncommon passage migrant. In Kuwait small numbers of this species are recorded mostly along Kuwait Bay. A goose-like duck that is quite terrestrial in its behavior and may exhibit dispersive or nomadic movements.



L 70cm ■ W 135cm

الشهرمان الأحمر  
**Ruddy Shelduck**  
*Tadorna ferruginea*



Female (LS-GREECE)

(DO-ITALY)







Male (DO-ITALY)

## البط السماري Gadwall

*Anas strepera*



L 56cm ■ W 90cm

Uncommon passage migrant and scarce winter visitor. This duck usually prefers inland ponds and pools but it is often seen in Jahra Bay, where a maximum count of 450 was recorded in mid January 1997.



Male and female (MP)



Female (DO-ITALY)





Male &amp; female (MP)

Uncommon passage migrant, scarce winter visitor and rare summer visitor. Up to 150 observed at North Doha Reserve in early December 2007. This widespread species is the ancestor of the domestic duck.



L 60cm ■ W 95cm

البركة

Mallard

*Anas platyrhynchos*

Female (DO-ITALY)



Male (MP)



Male (DO-ITALY)







Female (KHA)

أبومجرف

## Northern Shoveler

*Anas clypeata*



L 52cm ■ W 82cm

Common passage migrant and common winter visitor. Often in inland waters and inlets of Kuwait Bay.

Up to 160 individuals recorded in early December 1992. Its distinctive broad bill is used to sieve through eutrophic waters.

Male &amp; female (GW)



Female (KHA)



Male (SP)







Male (SIR)

Common passage migrant and winter visitor. Up to 150 individuals have been recorded; often seen at Jahra Bay and vicinity. This elegant, long-necked duck usually feeds in deeper water than its relatives.



L 62cm ■ W 87cm

## البلبول الشائع Northern Pintail

*Anas acuta*

Female (MP)

Male (DO-ITALY)

Female (SP)







Female (SIR)

الحذف الصيفي

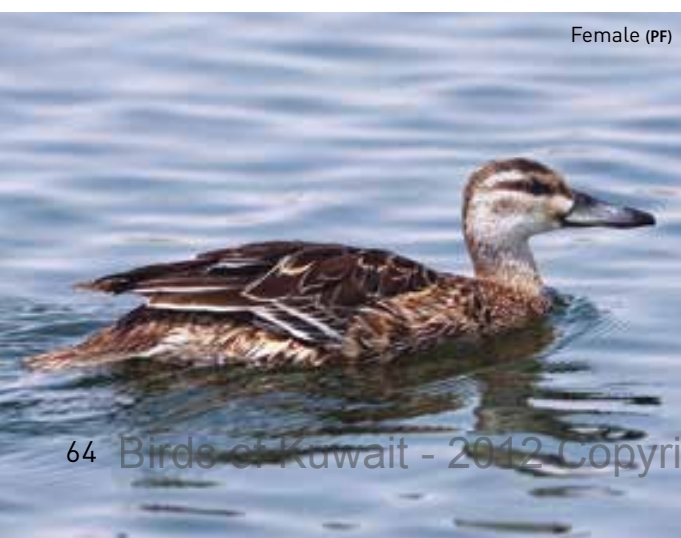
## Garganey

*Anas querquedula*

L 41cm ■ W 67cm

Common passage migrant, rare summer visitor. Up to 120 individuals recorded in September 1992.

An unusual long-distance migrant that winters well south of our deserts, in Africa and southern Asia.



Female (PF)



Female (MP)



Male (DO-ITALY)





Female (SIR)

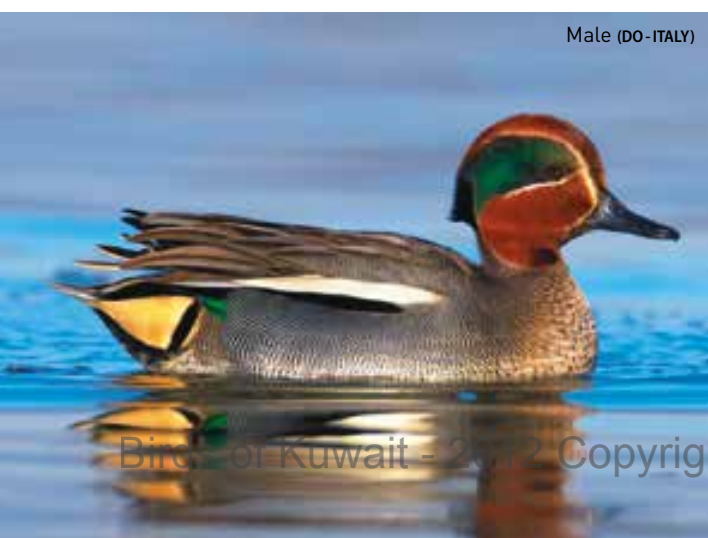
Common passage migrant, common winter visitor and rare summer visitor. One of the smallest ducks, often in small inland waters and in the shallows of Kuwait Bay; up to 750 individuals recorded in early December 2007.



L 38cm ■ W 59cm

## الحذف الشتوي Eurasian Teal

*Anas crecca*



Male (DO-ITALY)



Female (MP)



Female (MP)





(GHA)

الحذف الرخامي

VU

## Marbled Duck

*Marmaronetta angustirostris*

L 42cm ■ W 70cm

Extremely rare vagrant. Has declined throughout its sporadic Asian and Mediterranean range. Many populations have become extirpated, primarily due to habitat loss and hunting. Recently populations have been confirmed breeding in the Basra marshes of southern Iraq.

البط كستنائي الرأس

## Common Pochard

*Aythya ferina*

L 49cm ■ W 75cm

Scarce passage migrant and scarce winter visitor. This otherwise widespread northern duck is seen only in very small numbers in Kuwait.



Male (DO-ITALY)



Female (DO-ITALY)





Male (DO-ITALY)

Uncommon passage migrant and uncommon winter visitor. Usually feeds on mudflats and also in quiet inland waters. Up to 350 were recorded in mid January 1997.



L 50cm ■ W 85cm

البط الصواري

## Eurasian Wigeon

*Anas penelope*



Immature female (DO-ITALY)



Female (DO-ITALY)





Males &amp; females (MK)

البط أحمر العرف

## Red-crested Pochard

*Netta rufina*

L 56cm ■ W 88cm

Extremely rare vagrant first recorded in late December 2011. This rare species has a very sporadic distribution in the region, but recently small populations were discovered in the Southern Marshes of Iraq.



(MP)



(MK)



(MP)





Male (DO - ITALY)

Vagrant, mainly in winter. Usually seen in well-vegetated pools. The species has declined during the last 50 years but small populations breed in the Southern Marshes of Iraq, just beyond the Kuwait Border.



L 42cm ■ W 67cm

البط الكستنائي

Ferruginous Duck

NT

*Aythya nyroca*



Female with Little Grebe (SIR)



Female (DO - ITALY)



Male (LS - GREECE)





Male (GHA)

## الحذف المقنزع Tufted Duck

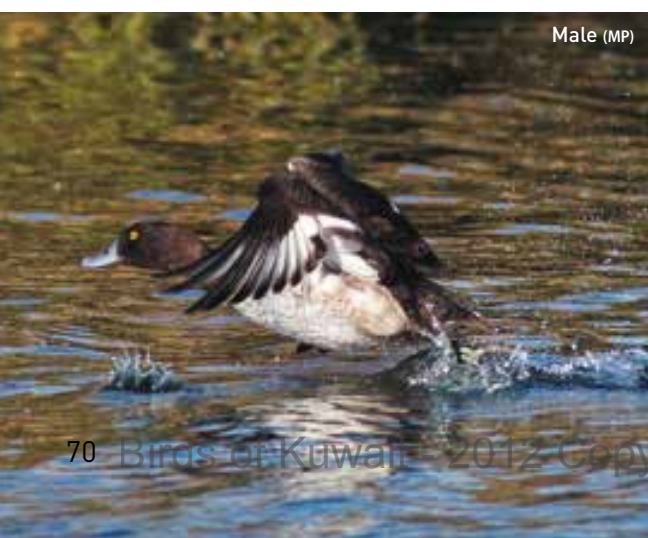
*Aythya fuligula*



L 47cm ■ W 72cm

Rare passage migrant and rare winter visitor. An infrequent visitor from the north visiting small pools and Jahra Bay.

Up to 30 were seen in mid March 1986.



Male (MP)



Female (SP)



Male (MP)





(OC - UAE)



(HW - UAE)

Extremely rare vagrant.  
A long distance travelling seabird.  
A flock of 25 were observed in mid May 1957 near Shuaiba. The species may occur more frequently, since Kuwait's seas are poorly monitored.



L 32cm ■ W 70cm

## جلم الماء الفارسي Persian Shearwater

*Puffinus persicus*

Extremely rare vagrant. A unique discovery was made of one individual photographed on route to Kubbar Island in mid May 2009, which is the first record for Kuwait and the northern part of the Gulf. A very scarce and poorly known visitor to the Arabian pelagic waters.



L 51cm ■ W 106cm

## جلم الماء الفاحم Sooty Shearwater

*Puffinus griseus*



(SHA)



(OC - UAE)





Breeding plumage (MP)

## الغطاس الصغير Little Grebe

*Tachybaptus ruficollis*



L 27cm ■ W 43cm

Scarce resident, passage migrant and winter visitor. Breeds locally in inland waters such as at Jahra Pool Reserve. A widespread bird using a variety of wetland types and coastal habitats in Kuwait.



Winter (MP)



Juvenile (GHA)



Summer (HAJ)





Breeding plumage (DO-ITALY)

Rare passage migrant and winter visitor. Very small numbers observed nearly every year from December to March in Kuwait Bay, nearby pools, and in the Gulf.



L 49cm ■ W 88cm

## الغطاس المتوج الكبير Great Crested Grebe

*Podiceps cristatus*



Winter (SIR)



Winter (DO-ITALY)



Breeding plumage (NP-BULGARIA)

## الغطاس أحمر الرقبة Red-necked Grebe

*Podiceps grisegena*



L 45cm ■ W 81cm

Extremely rare vagrant.  
Well south of its normal wintering range.  
Only one record of a deceased bird  
on the coast in late October 2010,  
at Jahra East Outfall.

## الغطاس المعرف Horned Grebe

*Podiceps auritus*



L 35cm ■ W 62cm

Extremely rare vagrant.  
Kuwait is far to the south of its normal  
wintering range. Only one record  
for the country, at Jahra Pool Reserve  
in early November 1988.



Breeding plumage (NP-FINLAND)





Winter (SIR)

Uncommon passage migrant and uncommon winter visitor. The most numerous and most widespread grebe in Kuwait, sometimes forming rafts of a dozen or more; maximum of 53 recorded in mid February 1999.



L 31cm ■ W 58cm

الغطاس أسود الرقبة

## Black-necked Grebe

*Podiceps nigricollis*



Winter (MP)



Breeding plumage (NP-BULGARIA)



Winter (SIR)





(MP)

النحام الكبير

## Greater Flamingo

*Phoenicopterus roseus*



L 130cm ■ W 155cm

Very common winter visitor and disperser in all seasons. An irregular breeder on Bubiyan. Largest flocks at Sulaibikhat and Jahra Bays with up to 3000 recorded in early February 2008.



(CC)



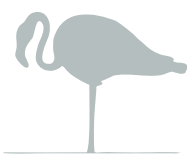
Juveniles (SIR)





Among Greater Flamingos (SIR)

Extremely rare vagrant. An unusual wanderer from Africa and/or sporadic southern Asian colonies. Observed on only two occasions in December 2007 and January 2010 at Sulaibikhat Bay, in the company of the Greater Flamingo flock.



L 85cm ■ W 130cm

النحام الصغير

## Lesser Flamingo

NT

*Phoeniconaias minor*

(PF)



(MP)



(OC-OMAN)



(OC-OMAN)

رئيس البحر

## Red-billed Tropicbird

*Phaethon aethereus*

L 48cm ■ W 105cm

Extremely rare vagrant. The region's only tropicbird. Since seabird watching is rarely practiced in Kuwait this species could be a more frequent visitor. It breeds in the southern part of the Gulf.

الفرقاط الصغير

## Lesser Frigatebird

*Fregata ariel*

L 75cm ■ W 185cm

Extremely rare vagrant. Very similar to the Great Frigatebird which is rarely recorded in southern Arabia. This is a wandering pelagic species, rarely reaching the Gulf. Kuwait's only record is one at Port Zour in mid April 2008.

Female (TH-SOUTH AFRICA)



Female (TH-SOUTH AFRICA)







(MP)

Rare visitor, mostly in autumn and spring. The species has been recorded more frequently in recent years; normally only single birds are sighted. Not restricted to wetlands; also seen inland such as at Sabah Al-Ahmad Natural Reserve .



L 95cm ■ W 150cm

## القلق الأسود

## Black Stork

*Ciconia nigra*



(PP - SOUTH AFRICA)



Immature (DO - EGYPT)



(KAN)

القلق الأبيض الغربي

## Western White Stork

*Ciconia ciconia*

L 100cm ■ W 170cm

Scarce passage migrant. Most storks migrate well to the west of Kuwait and usually small numbers are recorded here.

On rare occasions a displaced flock will visit; a maximum record of 65 seen in early April 1957.



(GW)



(MP)



(KAN)





(VID - GREECE)

Extremely rare vagrant. Formerly this large Ibis was widespread in the Middle East and was venerated by the Ancient Egyptians. Small native populations exist in Iraq and Iran; It has also been introduced in the southern Gulf.



L 80cm ■ W 112cm

الأنوق المقدس  
**African Sacred Ibis**  
*Threskiornis aethiopicus*



(HAJ)

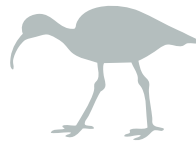


(HAJ)



(GHA)

الأنوق اللامع  
Glossy Ibis  
*Plegadis falcinellus*



L 65cm ■ W 90cm

Uncommon passage migrant  
and rare winter visitor.  
Usually seen in small numbers  
in Kuwait's wetlands, but sometimes  
in migratory flocks; maximum  
of 80 in late August 2007.



(MP)



(HAJ)



(CC)





Colony on Bubiyan (MP)

Common resident, breeds on Bubiyan and Warba Islands. Small numbers forage frequently in shallow eutrophic bays, but most are concentrated at Bubiyan during the nesting season. Up to 200 recorded in mid May 2002; and 75 breeding pairs on Bubiyan in 2004.



L 85cm ■ W 120cm

أبو ملعقة

## Eurasian Spoonbill

*Platalea leucorodia*



(HAJ)

(MP)







*Botaurus stellaris*



Scarce passage migrant and rare winter visitor.  
A cryptic denizen of reed swamps and often  
on agricultural lands in Kuwait.  
Usually solitary but sometimes migrating  
in small groups. The species has declined  
in many parts of its range.







Male (CC)

Uncommon passage migrant and scarce summer visitor which does breed in Kuwait. A reed swamp bird, it can actually breed successfully in very small undisturbed reed beds, where it can be detected by its characteristic croaking song.



L 35cm ■ W 55cm

## الواق الصغير Little Bittern *Ixobrychus minutus*



Juvenile (SIR)



(PF)



Female (SIR)





(MK)

الواق الأخضر الصغير

## Black-crowned Night Heron

*Nycticorax nycticorax*



L 60cm ■ W 110cm

Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor; rare summer visitor.

Has bred in local reed beds.

This bird is much more active at early dawn and dusk and could easily go unnoticed.



(MP)



(MP)



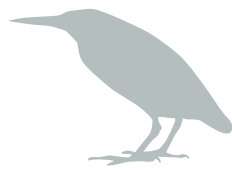
Immature (SP)





(GHA)

Extremely rare vagrant. First recorded in late July 2011 at Sulaibikhat Bay. Resident in the southern part of the Gulf where this small opportunistic heron is found in a variety of coastal and freshwater habitats.



L 43cm ■ W 60cm

## البلشون أخضر الظهر Striated Heron

*Butorides striata*



(MP - UAE)



Immature (MP - UAE)





Breeding plumage (MP)

البلشون الذهبي

## Squacco Heron

*Ardeola ralloides*

L 45cm ■ W 85cm

Uncommon passage migrant, scarce summer visitor. Widespread heron frequently seen in ditches and marshy fringe habitats. Migrates in small flocks, with up to 60 seen in mid September 1981.



Immature autumn (CC)



(MP)



(MK)





Autumn (SIR)

Extremely rare vagrant.  
A single bird was found in the  
desert oasis of Al-Abraq in early  
November 2009. An unusual wanderer  
from East Asia closely resembling  
the Squacco Heron.



L 45cm ■ W 85cm

## البلشون الذهبي الهندي Indian Pond Heron

*Ardeola grayii*



(SIR)



(SIR)





(MP)

أبو قردان الغربي  
**Western Cattle Egret**  
*Bubulcus ibis*



L 50cm ■ W 85cm

Uncommon passage migrant and winter visitor. Dispersing birds found singly or in groups (max. 200) often on farmland and a variety of human-made grassy areas and wetlands. Breeds across the border in Iraq.



(MP)



(HAJ)



(KAN)





Nest on Bubiyan (MP)

Very common winter visitor, common passage migrant and resident. Breeds on Bubiyan and its vicinity; about 150 breeding pairs on Bubiyan in 2004. A widespread coastal and wetland fish-eating bird; up to 650 birds recorded on mudflats in Kuwait Bay.



L 95cm ■ W 185cm

البلشون الرمادي

**Grey Heron**

*Ardea cinerea*



(CC)



(SP)



(MK)





Immature (SIR)

البلشون الأرجواني  
**Purple Heron**  
*Ardea purpurea*



L 80cm ■ W 135cm

Uncommon passage migrant. Rare summer and winter visitor. A reed-swamp heron, often seen in migrating flights, with up to 138 recorded in mid April 2008. Many Palearctic populations have declined primarily due to the draining of marshes.



(SUR)



(PF)



(MK)





(MP)

Uncommon passage migrant and winter visitor. One of the largest of the fish-eating coastal herons, its Western Palearctic population has been increasing as protected breeding colonies have expanded.



L 95cm ■ W 155cm

## البلشون الأبيض الغربي Western Great Egret

*Ardea alba*

(PF)



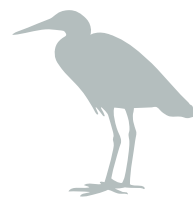
(SIR)



(CC)

الغرنوق الأبيض الصغير  
Little Egret

*Egretta garzetta*



L 60cm ■ W 90cm

Uncommon passage migrant and winter visitor. Elegant marsh bird, very similar to Indian Reef Heron but less often on the coast. Usually seen singly or in small groups; up to 20 in late August 1999.



(MP)



(HAJ)



(MP)





White morph (SP)

Very common resident. Kuwait's most widespread heron; has nested in large colonies on Warba and Bubiyan, on shipwrecks and even on Kubbar island. Recently 900 breeding adults were recorded on Bubiyan. Comes in two distinct colour forms.



L 60cm ■ W 90cm

## الغرنوق الأسود الهندي Indian Reef Heron

*Egretta gularis schistacea*



White morph (SIR)



Immature dark morph (HAJ)



Dark morph (MP)



Immature (MP)

الغاق الكبير

## Great Cormorant

*Phalacrocorax carbo*

L 90cm ■ W 140cm

Very common winter visitor, common passage migrant and rare summer visitor.

Recently this species has seen a remarkable population increase. Up to 13600 were observed in late January 2007 in Kuwait Bay.



(MP)



(MP)





Immature (MP)



Immature (MP)

Uncommon disperser in spring, summer and autumn. Bred on Kuwait's islets in the past. Now usually seen in small numbers, usually in the south of Kuwait. The population of this species has declined, its global range is restricted mainly to Arabia and Socotra.



L 80cm ■ W 130cm

غاق سوقطري

Socotra Cormorant

VU

*Phalacrocorax nigrogularis*



Immature (MP)



Immature (MP)



(SIR - SOCOTRA)





Summer (SIR)

## البجعة البيضاء الكبيرة Great White Pelican

*Pelecanus onocrotalus*



L 175cm ■ W 300cm

Rare disperser in all seasons in very small numbers. Has bred on Bubiyan with last recorded nesting in 1923. Many breeding colonies have declined; nesting birds are very vulnerable to human disturbance.

## البجعة الكدراء Dalmatian Pelican

VU

*Pelecanus crispus*



L 180cm ■ W 345cm

Vagrant. Small populations exist in nearby Iran. This is the world's largest pelican, decades ago it had declined close to extinction. A population comeback has occurred in response to conservation measures.



Immature (NAS)



(VID - GREECE)



Breeding plumage (LS - GREECE)





Immature (MP)



Immature (SIR)

Extremely rare vagrant. A very small cormorant of pools and marshes with Kuwait's first record in December 2010. Many populations drastically declined in the past; now some are making a comeback. The species breeds in southern Iraq.



L 55cm ■ W 90cm

الغاق القزم

## Pygmy Cormorant

*Microcarbo pygmeus*

Extremely rare vagrant. The first reliable record is of two at Jahra East Outfall in late September 2009. Breeds in Iraq's Southern Marshes and may have been more common in the past in the Mesopotamian Delta.



L 95cm ■ W 125cm

الزقة

## African Darter

*Anhinga melanogaster rufa*

(HAJ)



(HAJ)



(SIR)

العقاب النسارية الغربية

## Western Osprey

*Pandion haliaetus*

L 61cm ■ W 165cm

Scarce passage migrant and rare winter visitor. Usually seen singly along the coast and in inland waters. A very specialized raptor that feeds almost exclusively on fish.



Immature (SP)



(PF)



(MK)





(MK)

Scarce passage migrant seen in small numbers; usually in spring and early autumn. The main migration movement of this species is well to the west of the Gulf. Often difficult to distinguish from Crested Honey Buzzard.



L 55cm ■ W 150cm

عقاب العسل الحوامة

## European Honey Buzzard

*Pernis apivorus*

(MK)



(NAS)



(MK)



Aberrant plumage - possibly a hybrid (MK)

عقاب العسل المقنزة

## Crested Honey Buzzard

*Pernis ptilorhynchus*



L 65cm ■ W 160cm

Scarce autumn and spring passage migrant, and very rarely seen in winter. This species originates from Eastern Asia and like its European counterpart it is a specialized raptor feeding mainly on wasps and bees.



Dark morph (MP)



Dark morph (MK)



(MP)





Rare autumn and spring passage migrant. Often hunts in agricultural land and wetlands where it may prey on small mammals, birds, insects and reptiles.



L 33cm ■ W 76cm

الزرق

## Black-winged Kite

*Elanus caeruleus*



(SIR)



(MP)



(SIR)



(MP)

الحدأة الشائعة

## Black Kite

*Milvus migrans*

L 65cm ■ W 150cm

Common passage migrant and scarce winter visitor. One of Afro-Eurasia's most widespread raptors, often foraging close to humans, even in cities and rubbish tips. Up to 150 Kites winter regularly at the dump in Sulaibiya.



Juvenile (SIR)



Juvenile (MP)



Juvenile (MP)





(PF)

Extremely rare vagrant. Recorded only once at Kuwait Bay and Jahra Pool in winter 2009. The region's largest eagle, it has declined both in range and population, especially in the southern part of its distribution.



L 90cm ■ W 250cm

## العقاب بيضاء الذيل White-tailed Eagle

*Haliaeetus albicilla*



Immature (PF)



Immature (SIR)



Immature (SP)



Juvenile (PF)

الرخمة الشائعة

EN

## Egyptian Vulture

*Neophron percnopterus*

L 62cm ■ W 155cm

Scarce passage migrant. A small vulture whose global populations have experienced a dramatic decline in the last few years. The association of the vulture as a symbol of royalty in Egyptian culture led to the use of the name “Pharaoh’s Chicken” for the species.



(SIR - YEMEN)



(MP)



Immature (MK)





(GHA)

Scarce passage migrant. Sometimes seen in small groups of up to 5 individuals in late autumn and winter. Has declined dramatically due to carrion poisoning and indiscriminate shooting. One of the most majestic soaring birds in deserts and rocky hills.



L 105cm ■ W 270cm

النسر الشائع

## Eurasian Griffon Vulture

*Gyps fulvus*

(PF)



(PF)



(NP - GREECE)

النسر الأسود

NT

## Cinereous Vulture

*Aegypius monachus*



L 105cm ■ W 295cm

Rare passage migrant. Also known as the Black Vulture; one of the largest Old World vultures. Like nearly all vultures in the region this species has declined primarily due to poisoning of carcasses and shooting.



Immature with Steppe Eagles (PF)



Immature (NAS)



Immatures (NAS)





(MP)

(MP)

Extremely rare vagrant. One at Sabah Al-Ahmad Natural Reserve in mid April 2008. The species has declined in its very restricted range in the Arabian Peninsula. It is the largest vulture in Africa, typically scavenging in savannahs and deserts.



L 105cm ■ W 290cm

النسر الأصلع

Lappet-faced Vulture

*Torgos tracheliotos*

Immature (SIR)



Immature (MP)





(MP)

(MP)

عقاب الحيات

## Short-toed Snake Eagle

*Circaetus gallicus*

L 73cm ■ W 180cm

Uncommon passage migrant  
and rare winter visitor.  
Up to 14 observed on migration  
in mid October 1989.

A medium-sized eagle that feeds  
mostly on snakes and other reptiles.



(GW)

Juvenile (PF)



(MK)







Immature (MP)

Uncommon passage migrant; scarce winter visitor and rare summer visitor. A species closely associated with reed beds and wetlands but also observed in farmlands and various open habitats on migration.



L 55cm ■ W 130cm

مرزة البطائح الغربية

## Western Marsh Harrier

*Circus aeruginosus*

Male (MK)



Immature (SIR)



Male (MP)





Male (MK)

## مرزة الدجاج Hen Harrier

*Circus cyaneus*



L 56cm ■ W 120cm

Rare passage migrant and winter visitor. Like other harriers, this species may use a variety of habitats on migration but is often attracted to agricultural land and wetlands to find its prey.



Male (MP)



Immature (SIR)



Female (SIR)





Male (MP)

Common passage migrant and scarce winter visitor. A declining threatened species. Kuwait is an important area on its migration pathway and many birds are commonly seen in spring and autumn; up to 35 recorded in late September 2004.



L 48cm ■ W 117cm

المرزة الباهتة

Pallid Harrier



*Circus macrourus*



Juvenile (SIR)



Male (MP)



Male (MP)





Immature (MP)

أبو شودة

## Montagu's Harrier

*Circus pygargus*



L 46cm ■ W 115cm

Uncommon passage migrant. A species usually seen migrating singly, often in both desert and farm habitats in Kuwait. The bulk of this small raptor's migration movement is west of the Gulf.



Male (MK)



Male (PF)



Male (HAJ)





(PF)

Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor. An Eastern Asian species with a restricted range in the Western Palearctic, it is considered a specialty species in Kuwait. Shikra refers to “hunter” in the Hindi language.



L 35cm ■ W 65cm

## الببيدق Shikra

*Accipiter badius*



Immature (MK)



Immature (PF)



(MP)





Male (CV-GREECE)

الباشق الشرقي

## Levant Sparrowhawk

*Accipiter brevipes*



L 39cm ■ W 75cm

Rare passage migrant and winter visitor. This species' long pointed wings give it more of a falcon-like appearance as compared to other accipitrine hawks.



Female (CB-ARMENIA)

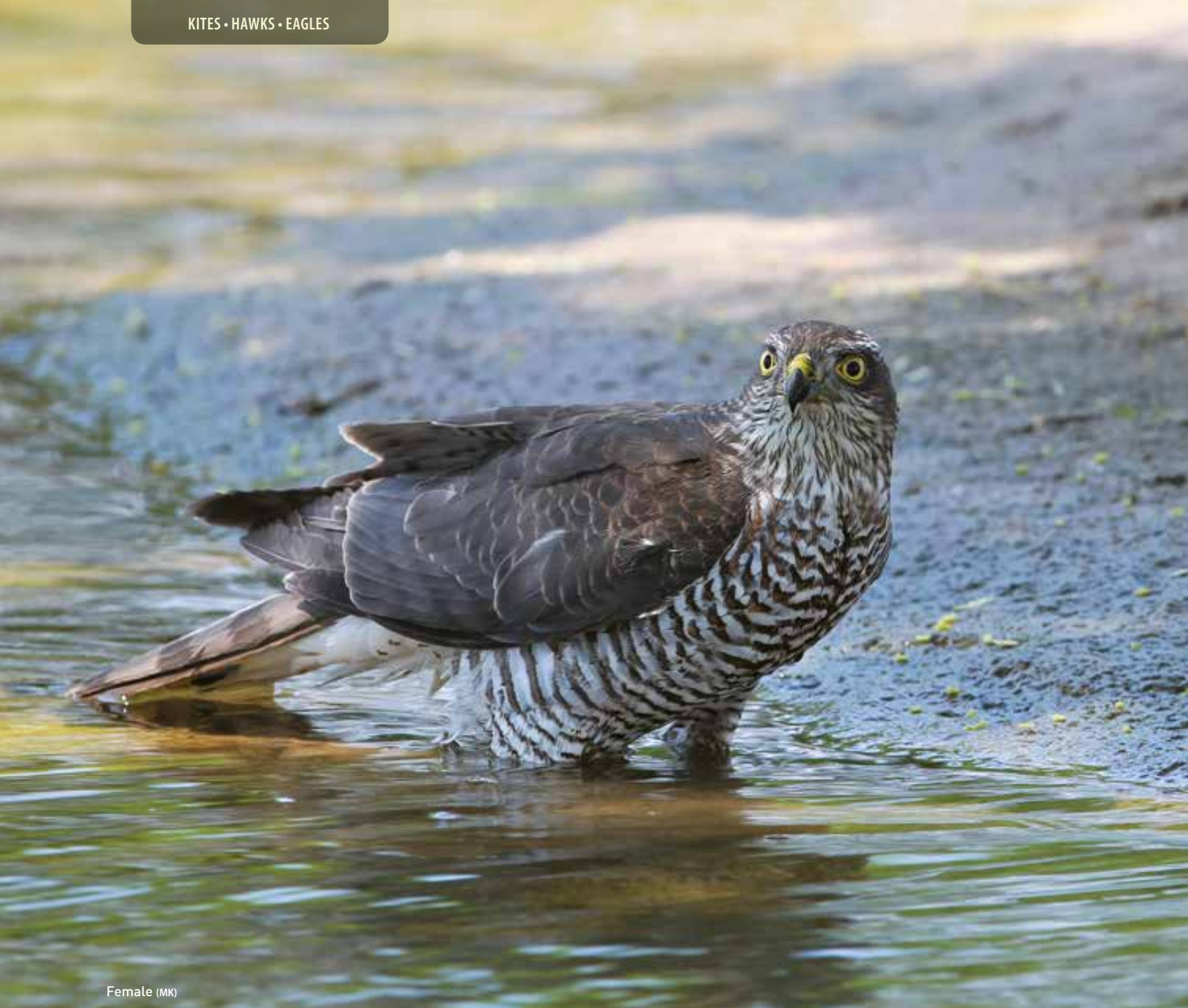


Juvenile (PF)



Immature male (CV-GREECE)





Female (MK)

Uncommon passage migrant and winter visitor. The most frequently seen accipitrine hawk in Kuwait. Up to 29 were recorded on migration in mid April 2006.



L 40cm ■ W 80cm

الباشق

## Eurasian Sparrowhawk

*Accipiter nisus*



Female (MP)



Juvenile (SP)



Male (MK)





Breeding (NP - FINLAND)

البازي

## Northern Goshawk

*Accipiter gentilis*

L 60cm ■ W 125cm

Rare passage migrant and winter visitor. The largest of the accipitrine hawks is usually seen singly in a variety of habitat types. It often seeks refuge in dense tree foliage and uses the element of surprise to catch prey.

Juvenile (MP)



Juvenile (MP)



Juvenile (MP)







(MP)

Common passage migrant and scarce winter visitor. Kuwait's commonest *Buteo* hawk. During migration large flocks are often recorded, sometimes with up to 2000 together in late September.



L 48cm ■ W 118cm

عقاب السهول

## Steppe Buzzard

*Buteo buteo vulpinus*

(MK)



(MP)



(MP)



السقاوة

## Long-legged Buzzard

*Buteo rufinus*



L 66cm ■ W 155cm

Scarce passage migrant and uncommon winter visitor. Variable in appearance similar to the Steppe Buzzard in having three colour morphs: pale, rufous or dark.

Usually larger and more eagle-like than the Steppe Buzzard.







(MA)

Rare passage migrant. A medium-sized eagle, closely related to the Greater Spotted Eagle. Often hunts for rodents, amphibians and birds on agricultural land. Its main migration route is in the Eastern Mediterranean, well to the west of the Gulf.



L 62cm ■ W 165cm

العقاب المنقطة الصغيرة

## Lesser Spotted Eagle

*Aquila pomarina*

(HAJ)



(DO - EGYPT)



Immature (DO-OMAN)



Juvenile (MP)

العقاب المنقطة الكبيرة

VU

## Greater Spotted Eagle

*Aquila clanga*

L 65cm ■ W 180cm

Common winter visitor and uncommon passage migrant. A rather large eagle associated with farmland and wetlands in its wintering quarters. Often migrates within large flocks of Steppe Eagles on passage.



Immature (PF)



(MP)

Pale morph (*fulvensens*) (MP)





Juvenile (MK)

Very common passage migrant but scarce during winter. The most abundant of Kuwait's large eagles; up to 2000 birds have been observed on migration in September when it is regularly seen in desert areas.



L 75cm ■ W 210cm

## عقاب البادية Steppe Eagle *Aquila nipalensis*



(MK)

Juvenile (PF)





Immature (right) with Greater Spotted Eagle (SIR)

ملك العقبان الشرقي

VU

## Eastern Imperial Eagle

*Aquila heliaca*

L 83cm ■ W 210cm

Uncommon passage migrant and winter visitor. During autumn migration, groups of up to 12 birds have been recorded on passage together. Although a threatened species, it often relies on humans by using agricultural land to hunt for food during winter.

Immature (PF)



Winter (SIR)



Immature (SIR)







Immature (NP-GREECE)

Vagrant, recorded primarily in early spring but also in the autumn. This powerful and elegant eagle is one of the world's most widespread raptors, yet it is also vulnerable to poisoning because it will feed on carrion especially during winter.



L 78cm ■ W 230cm

## العقاب الذهبية Golden Eagle *Aquila chrysaetos*



(NAS)



Immature (NP-GREECE)



(MA)





Immatures (MK)

عقاب بونلي

## Bonelli's Eagle

*Aquila fasciatus*

L 70cm ■ W 165cm

Rare disperser in autumn, winter and spring. Although this species has a fairly extensive breeding distribution, its populations have drastically declined. Since it will attack chicken fowl, it is vulnerable to persecution by farmers.



Immature (SIR)



Immature (HAJ)



Immature (MP)





Pale morph (SIR)

Scarce passage migrant. The smallest eagle in the region, it is the size of a Steppe Buzzard. It has two main colour forms: pale and dark morphs. Will migrate singly or in small groups; up to seven have been observed together on passage in the autumn.



L 53cm ■ W 130cm

السبر

## Booted Eagle

*Aquila pennata*

Dark morph (MK)



Pale morph (MP)



Dark morph (MP)





Male (VID)

العويسق

## Lesser Kestrel

*Falco naumanni*



L 33cm ■ W 74cm

Common passage migrant; rare disperser in winter and summer. Migrates in small flocks. The indiscriminate use of pesticides is thought to have contributed to dramatic population declines in this insectivorous raptor. Often shot by some Kuwaiti hunters.



Male (HAJ)



Female (MP)



Female (left) &amp; Male (right) (MP)





Male (SIR)

Uncommon passage migrant and winter visitor; also a scarce resident and local breeder. One of the most widespread small falcons; feeds on a variety of prey including rodents, reptiles, birds and large insects.



L 38cm ■ W 78cm

العوسق

## Common Kestrel

*Falco tinnunculus*



Male (SIR)



Male (MP)



Female (SIR)





Male (PF)



Female (OC-UAE)

البزيق الشائع

NT

## Red-footed Falcon

*Falco vespertinus*

L 30cm ■ W 73cm

Extremely rare vagrant; only single birds recorded in spring in Kuwait. A small, slender raptor in which the male and female vary considerably in appearance. The species' main passage route is well to the west of the Gulf, on route to its wintering grounds in Africa.

البزيق الشرقي

## Amur Falcon

*Falco amurensis*

L 32cm ■ W 75cm

Extremely rare vagrant. This species breeds in south-eastern Siberia and northern China but undergoes a remarkable overseas migration to south-eastern Africa, usually bypassing the Western Palearctic.



Female (MK)



Female (HAJ)



(MP)

Vagrant, primarily in spring and autumn.  
A migrating falcon, wintering in eastern  
Africa and south to Madagascar.  
In summer it breeds on cliffs, rocky  
islets and desert mountains mostly  
in north-eastern Africa and Arabia.



L 38cm ■ W 85cm

## الصقر الأسخم

## Sooty Falcon

NT

*Falco concolor*

(MP)



(MP)



(DO-EGYPT)





Immature male (MK)

اليؤيؤ

## Merlin

*Falco columbarius*



L 30cm ■ W 65cm

Rare passage migrant and winter visitor. The region's smallest falcon often hunts birds up to the size of a pigeon. During migration and winter it will utilize almost any habitat, even hunting shorebirds on mudflats.



Female (SIR)



Male (DW - UAE)



Immature male (SIR)





(PF)

Uncommon passage migrant. Often hunts small birds, insects, and even bats, over wetlands and tree-stands. Will often hunt at dawn and dusk, its slim silhouette often resembling a huge swift. While on migration, it may move in small groups.



L 36cm ■ W 92cm

الكوبج

## Eurasian Hobby

*Falco subbuteo*



(MK)



(MP)



(MP)





(NP - GREECE)

صقر الغزال

## Lanner Falcon

*Falco biarmicus*

L 52cm ■ W 115cm

Rare disperser in autumn, winter and spring. Usually inhabits desert and other open habitats, where it hunts by horizontal pursuit. A localized and declining species, often targeted by the illegal falconry trade.

(NP - GREECE)





(MP)



(HAJ)

Rare passage migrant and winter visitor.  
Now a declining species and often  
a victim of nest-robbing for falconry.  
Highly prized in the Gulf and often  
smuggled from Pakistan and Iran  
for falconry in Gulf states.



L 55cm ■ W 125cm

الصقر الحر  
**Saker Falcon**   
*Falco cherrug*



Immature (NP-GREECE)



(MK)





Immature (LS - GREECE)

الشاهين

## Peregrine Falcon

*Falco peregrinus*



L 52cm ■ W 120cm

Scarce disperser throughout the year, perhaps a rare resident. Renowned as the fastest of birds. A global decline occurred in many populations from 1950 to 1970 due to pesticide poisoning.

Many populations have recovered but the species is still collected illegally for falconry.



Immature (MK)



Immature (HAJ)



(HAJ)

Extremely rare vagrant on passage and in winter. A slender desert-adapted falcon; often difficult to distinguish from the Peregrine. Although it is smaller than the Peregrine it also exhibits dazzling aerial mastery and speed.



L 45cm ■ W 100cm

الصقر المغربي

## Barbary Falcon

*Falco peregrinus peleginoides*



Immature (HW - UAE)



Immature (HW - UAE)



(DC - UAE)



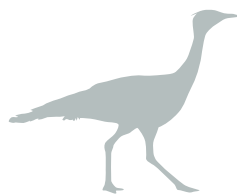


(HAJ)

الحبارى الشرقية

vU

## Macqueen's Bustard

*Chlamydotis macqueenii*

L 65cm ■ W 170cm

Irregular winter visitor in very small numbers. Formerly a resident breeder that was fairly common up until the 1950's. It has seen a dramatic population decline primarily due to overhunting across the region.



(MP)



(SP)



(MP)





(MP)

Uncommon passage migrant,  
winter visitor, and resident.  
Has bred in semi-artificial reed  
beds at several sites in Kuwait.  
This cryptic bird has  
a unique shrill song.



L 28cm ■ W 45cm

مرعة الماء  
**Water Rail**  
*Rallus aquaticus*



(MP)



(SP)



(MP)

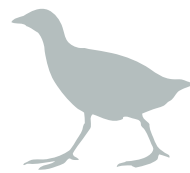




(MP)

(SIR)

مرعة البر  
**Corncrake**  
*Crex crex*



L 30cm ■ W 53cm

Uncommon passage migrant and rare winter visitor. The only crane in our region that does not normally require wetlands on passage. It is widespread in Kuwait but is rarely seen. Often it is flushed from cover and in flight one may notice its long dangling legs.



(MP)



(MK)



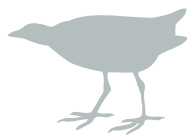
(HAJ)





Male (PF)

Uncommon passage migrant and locally breeding resident; rare winter visitor. A very small reed swamp bird, often detected due to the male's loud accelerating croaking song. May use extremely small wetlands to rest on migration.



L 20cm ■ W 39cm

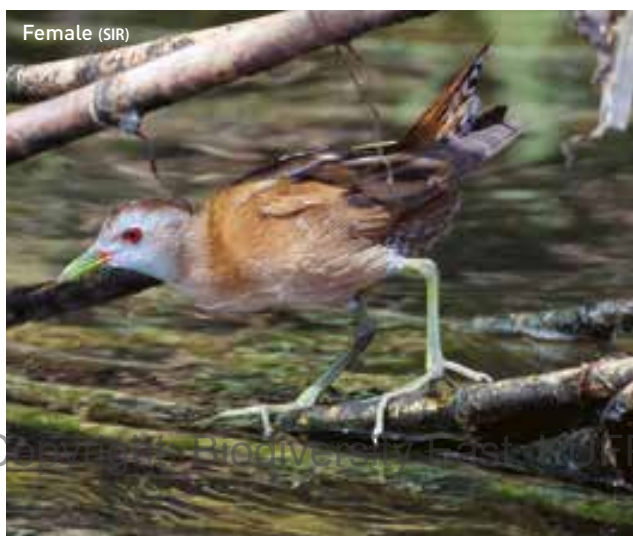
مرعة رمادية البطن

Little Crane

*Porzana parva*



Male (MP)



Female (SIR)



Juvenile (MP)

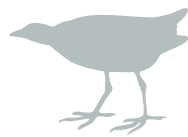




(SIR)

المرعة الصغيرة

## Baillon's Crake

*Porzana pusilla*

L 19cm ■ W 37cm

Scarce passage migrant. Like its relative the Little Crake, it usually maintains a very secretive existence. When water levels are low, sometimes these toy-like birds may come out of the reeds to forage, often being extremely tame.



(PF)



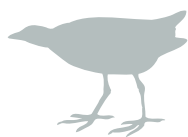
Juvenile (MP)





Immature winter (GW)

Uncommon passage migrant and locally breeding resident; rare winter visitor. Usually a very secretive marsh bird which also seems to be regularly breeding in Kuwait's few local reed swamps.



L 24cm ■ W 42cm

المرعة الرقطاء  
**Spotted Crake**  
*Porzana porzana*



Breeding plumage (HAJ)



Spotted Crake and immature Moorhen (right) (MP)





(MP)

دجاجة السلطان

## Purple Swampphen

*Porphyrio porphyrio*



L 50cm ■ W 100cm

A scarce resident, localized breeder in a few reed swamps. A spectacular rooster-like bird.

It requires flooded reed beds and is very susceptible to human disturbance. In many parts of its range it has declined due to indiscriminate shooting and habitat loss.



(MK)



(KHA)



(SIR)





(MP)

Uncommon breeding resident; scarce passage migrant and winter visitor. An adaptable marsh bird often even taking up residence in artificial sewage plant reeds and farm ponds. One of the most widespread fowl-like freshwater marsh denizens.



L 35cm ■ W 55cm

دجاجة الماء

## Common Moorhen

*Gallinula chloropus*


Fledgling (GHA)



(HAJ)



Immature (MP)





(GHA)

الغراء

## Eurasian Coot

*Fulica atra*

L 38cm ■ W 80cm

Uncommon passage migrant and winter visitor;  
scarce summer visitor and localized breeder.  
During the non-breeding period this bird  
will often be seen away from reed beds,  
in marine bays and a variety of other  
habitats often with other waterfowl.



(HAJ)



(MP)



(MP)





(SHA)

Vagrant. A strikingly beautiful and very rare crane. It is sometimes seen in winter, and sadly also shot by hunters. Sometimes migrating flocks are observed in flight; 100 observed at Al Abra q in mid September 1996.



L 100cm ■ W 180cm

الرهو

## Demoiselle Crane

*Anthropoides virgo*



(MP)



(SHA)





(PF)

الكركي

## Common Crane

*Grus grus*

L 119cm ■ W 222cm

Vagrant. Most often recorded in winter and on autumn passage. Migrate in flocks, but numbers are usually small in Kuwait; 35 birds were recorded in mid September 2009 at Jahra East Outfall. They may be attracted to small areas of water to roost and rest even in the desert.



(SIR)

(NAS)

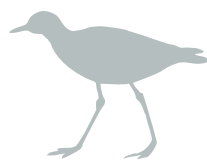






(HAJ)

Uncommon passage migrant and rare winter visitor. Indications of possible breeding have been suggested in the past. It utilizes a variety of semi-arid and coastal habitats and is often difficult to spot due to its camouflage and crepuscular behaviour.



L 42cm ■ W 81cm

الكروان

## Eurasian Stone-curlew

*Burhinus oedichnemus*


(SIR)



(SIR)



(MP)



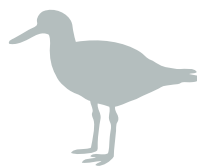


Summer (GHA)

آكل المحار

## Eurasian Oystercatcher

*Haematopus ostralegus*



L 43cm ■ W 83cm

Common passage migrant; uncommon winter and summer visitor. Familiar and easily identified coastal wader throughout its wide range. Sometimes forms wintering and migrant flocks; up to 250 at Doha in Kuwait Bay in early September 1993.



(MP)



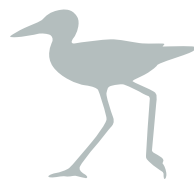
Winter (MP)





(MK)

Very common summer visitor and common resident on Kuwait's coastal mudflats. Over 3000 breeding adults recorded on Bubiyan in 2004. This extraordinary tropical shorebird has a tunnel-nesting habit unique among waders.



L 39cm ■ W 77cm

زقزاق السرطان  
Crab-plover  
*Dromas ardeola*



Juvenile (MK)



Adult feeding juvenile (MP)



(HAJ)





Female (SP)

الكرسوع

## Black-winged Stilt

*Himantopus himantopus*



L 37cm ■ W 75cm

Common passage migrant and scarce winter visitor. Uncommon during the summer and a localized breeder. Migrant and post-breeding flocks of these elegant waders have been recorded in many of Kuwait's wetlands; up to 390 in late August 1999.



Juvenile (GW)



Fledgling (SHA)



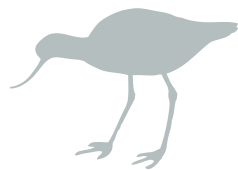
Male (MP)





(SHA)

Uncommon passage migrant but common winter visitor. Another elegant bird of muddy coasts that may gather to roost in flocks during high tide; up to 210 recorded in early February 2008.



L 44cm ■ W 79cm

النكات

## Pied Avocet

*Recurvirostra avosetta*


(SIR)



Female (HAJ)





Winter (MK)

الزقزاق الشامي

## Northern Lapwing

*Vanellus vanellus*

L 30cm ■ W 76cm

Common winter visitor but scarce passage migrant. One of the birds that has clearly benefited from expanding irrigated fields in Kuwait. Often seen on open grassland, agricultural fields and wetlands in winter; a flock of 383 recorded in early January 2009.



Winter (HAJ)



(MP)



(SIR)





(MK)

Vagrant; most often observed in winter, autumn and early spring. Breeds in the southern Tigris-Euphrates valley. Usually found at or near fresh and saline wetlands, as well as on irrigated farmland.



L 26cm ■ W 75cm

## الزقزاق ذو الجناح الناتئ Spur-winged Lapwing

*Vanellus spinosus*



(GHA)



(MK)





(GW)

الزقزاق الهندي

## Red-wattled Lapwing

*Vanellus indicus*

L 33cm ■ W 80cm

Uncommon resident and disperser in all seasons. Breeds locally in small numbers near waterside habitats. An eastern Asian element of the fauna, penetrating into the Western Palearctic via the Gulf and Tigris-Euphrates valley.



Juvenile (SIR-UAE)



(MP-UAE)



(MP)





Winter (SIR)



Autumn (SIR)

Vagrant. Observed in autumn, winter and spring passage in Kuwait, often on open farmland and waterside habitats. The most endangered wader visiting Kuwait, whose numbers are in decline. Its breeding areas are primarily in Kazakhstan and southern Russia and its populations and movements are still poorly monitored.



L 29cm ■ W 70cm

الزقزاق الأنيس  
**Sociable Lapwing**   
*Vanellus gregarius*



(MP)



(PF)





(GW)

الزقزاق أبيض الذيل

## White-tailed Lapwing

*Vanellus leucurus*



L 28cm ■ W 70cm

Uncommon passage migrant; has bred. Usually seen in wetlands in small numbers.

Up to 61 observed together in late February 1999. One of the most elegant and long-legged of the lapwings, often found close to water.



(SP)



(GHA)



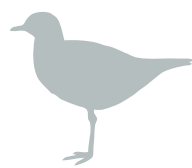
Fledgling (SHA)





Breeding plumage (MP)

Scare winter visitor. Occurring almost annually in recent years in irrigated agricultural fields. Usually recorded in the company of Northern Lapwings in late autumn and winter.



L 28cm ■ W 71cm

## الزقزاق الأوربي

## Eurasian Golden Plover

*Pluvialis apricaria*



Winter (SIR)



Adult/immature winter with Northern Lapwing (GHA)

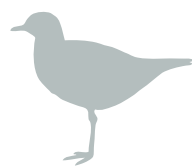




Non - breeding autumn (HAJ)

الزقزاق الباسيفيكي

## Pacific Golden Plover

*Pluvialis fulva*

L 24cm ■ W 66cm

Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor in small numbers. Often seen on open irrigated farmland or on the coast. An amazing long-distance migrant breeding in the Siberian and Alaskan arctic and wintering in the Indo-Pacific tropics.



Spring (VID-OMAN)



Juvenile (OC-UAE)





Spring (SIR)

Common winter visitor, uncommon passage migrant and scarce summer visitor. Up to 1000 individuals recorded in late April 2007 in Kuwait Bay. A cosmopolitan plover partial to mudflats.



L 29cm ■ W 77cm

الزقزاق الرمادي  
**Grey Plover**  
*Pluvialis squatarola*



Winter (MP)



Juvenile (SIR)



Spring (SP)

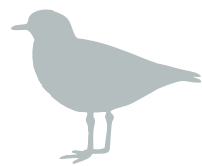




Spring (GHA)

الزقزاق المطوق الشائع

## Common Ringed Plover

*Charadrius hiaticula*

L 19cm ■ W 52cm

Common passage migrant and winter visitor; rare summer visitor. One of the most widespread migrating Palearctic plovers, frequently using muddy shorelines and even small inland wetlands.



Non - breeding (MP)



Non - breeding (SIR)



Juvenile (SP)





Spring (SIR)

Uncommon passage migrant, scarce summer and winter visitor. Frequently observed in small groups or with other plovers and waders in inland micro-wetlands and muddy shores along the coast.



L 15cm ■ W 45cm

## الزقزاق المطوق الصغير

### Little Ringed Plover

*Charadrius dubius*



Autumn immature (SIR)



Autumn immature (MP)



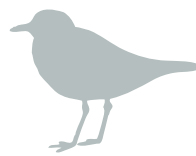
Breeding plumage (MP)





Female with fledgling (MK)

الزقزاق الاسكندراني  
**Kentish Plover**  
*Charadrius alexandrinus*



L 16cm ■ W 44cm

Very common resident and breeder on coastal sandy and muddy shores and wetlands. The species may have declined in Kuwait as a breeder due to increased building development and disturbance of its beachside habitats.

Male non - breeding (PF)



Male breeding (SIR)



Female at nest (HAJ)







Breeding plumage (GHA)

Common passage migrant, winter and summer visitor. Up to 3000 recorded at Doha, Kuwait Bay in mid January 2008. In non-breeding plumage it may be difficult to distinguish from Greater Sand Plover.



L 20cm ■ W 51cm

## زقزاق الرمل الصغير

### Lesser Sand Plover

*Charadrius atrifrons*



Female summer (SIR)



Breeding plumage (MP)





Breeding plumage (DO)

زقزاق الرمل الكبير

## Greater Sand Plover

*Charadrius leschenaultii*

L 24cm ■ W 56cm

Common passage migrant and winter visitor; uncommon summer visitor. Has bred at Sabah Al-Salem reed bed in May 2000. Although this species nests in wetlands of southern Asian deserts it winters and stages on coastal wetlands and shorelines; flocks of hundreds sometimes observed in Kuwait Bay.

Non - breeding (MP)



Female summer (SIR)



Juvenile (SIR)

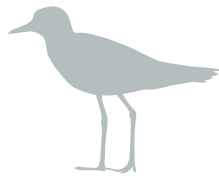






Breeding plumage (KAN)

Uncommon passage migrant, usually more common during spring migration. Up to 168 counted in mid March 2007. This beautifully plumaged wader is often shot on migration even in the desert where it may stop for short periods near farms or tiny pools.



L 19cm ■ W 58cm

## الزقزاق القزويني

### Caspian Plover

*Charadrius asiaticus*



Juvenile (SIR)



Breeding plumage (SHA)



Female (MP)





Immature winter (GHA)

الزقزاق الأغبر

## Eurasian Dotterel

*Charadrius morinellus*

L 21cm ■ W 60cm

Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor.  
Has been observed on open farmlands  
in winter and in open desert.  
This bird is unique among the plovers  
as the female has brighter  
plumage than the male.

دجاجة الأرض

## Eurasian Woodcock

*Scolopax rusticola*

L 34cm ■ W 58cm

Rare winter visitor, usually recorded  
in very small numbers in plantations  
and farmland in Kuwait. This is  
a woodland bird and its variable  
southerly movements are often  
provoked by severe winter weather.



(OC - UAE)





(SIR)

Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor.  
Up to 10 have been recorded at one  
location in early October 1992.  
The smallest of the true snipes; usually  
displaying extremely cryptic behavior  
in marshes and flooded agricultural lands.



L 18cm ■ W 40cm

الشنقب الصغير

Jack Snipe

*Lymnocryptes minimus*

(MP)



(MP)



(SIR)



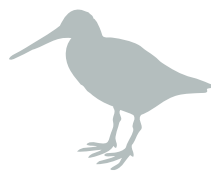


(SIR)

الشنقب الكبير

NT

## Great Snipe

*Gallinago media*

L 28cm ■ W 49cm

Rare passage migrant infrequently seen in irrigated farms during spring migration. A declining species.

Specific plumage and behavior distinctions make this species quite different from the Common Snipe; its flight is usually more like that of a large sandpiper than of a snipe.



(HAJ)



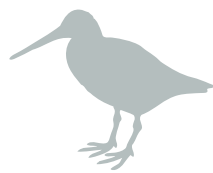
(HAJ)





(PF)

Common passage migrant and uncommon winter visitor. Often seen in marshy wetlands and flooded farmland. Its escape flight is a distinctive zig-zag ascent to the sky.



L 26cm ■ W 45cm

الشنقب الشائع

## Common Snipe

*Gallinago gallinago*

(MP)



(SIR)



(MK)





Summer (SIR)

بقويقة سلطانية

NT

## Black-tailed Godwit

*Limosa limosa*

L 42cm ■ W 77cm

Uncommon passage migrant usually in small numbers; rare winter and scarce summer visitor. On passage favours muddy coasts, inland wetlands and flooded farmland. Its numbers have declined rapidly in parts of its range owing to changes in agricultural practices and wetland drainage.

Autumn (MP)



Non - breeding (SIR)



Non - breeding (MP)







Breeding plumage (SR)

Common passage migrant.  
Uncommon winter and summer visitor.  
Up to 2000 recorded in mid April 1999  
in Sulaibikhat Bay. An estuarine  
species, preferring mudflats  
during staging and overwintering.



L 38cm ■ W 75cm

بقويقة مخططة الذيل  
**Bar-tailed Godwit**  
*Limosa lapponica*



Non - breeding (MP)



(MP)





With Northern Lapwings and Common Starlings (MP)

## كروان الماء الصغير Little Curlew

*Numenius minutus*



L 31cm ■ W 57cm

Extremely rare vagrant recorded once in Kuwait on irrigated pivot field habitat. The world's tiniest curlew; a little-known species with a small global population.

It breeds in Siberia and usually winters in Australasia.



(SIR)



(MP)



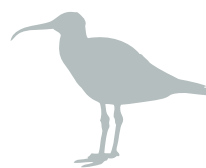
(MP)





(SIR)

Common passage migrant, rare winter and summer visitor. A widespread wader, staging and wintering in coastal mudflats and other muddy shores. Slightly similar to the nearly extinct Slender-billed Curlew, which was thought to have occurred in Kuwait in the past.



L 41cm ■ W 83cm

## كروان الغيط Whimbrel

*Numenius phaeopus*



(MP)

(SP)





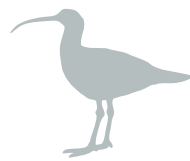


(SIR)

كروان الماء الكبير

NT

## Eurasian Curlew

*Numenius arquata*

L 55cm ■ W 90cm

Very common winter visitor, common passage migrant and summer visitor. Up to 1500 recorded in Kuwait Bay in early April 1999. It's population has declined in recent years; threatened by development of roosting sites, mudflat degradation and human disturbance.



(SIR)



(MP)



(SIR)





Breeding plumage (MK)

Scarce passage migrant and rare winter visitor in small numbers. A bird usually seen during migration at wetlands, rain pools and flooded farmlands. This large wader has the most dramatic plumage changes in the genus *Tringa*.



L 30cm ■ W 64cm

## الطيئوى حمراء الساق الرقطاء Spotted Redshank

*Tringa erythropus*



Non - breeding (SIR)



Non - breeding (MP)



(HAJ)





Breeding plumage (MP)

الطيّطوى حمراء الساق الشائعة

## Common Redshank

*Tringa totanus*

L 28cm ■ W 62cm

Very common passage migrant and winter visitor, but also a scarce summer visitor. In Kuwait it is usually seen on coastal mudflats, but sometimes in inland wetlands also. Forms flocks in coastal mudflats; up to 1000 recorded in late January 2005 in Kuwait Bay.

(MP)



Winter (SIR)



Non - breeding (GHA)

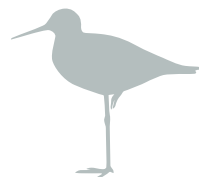






Spring (GW)

Common passage migrant, uncommon winter visitor and scarce summer visitor. A very delicate long-legged sandpiper, in some ways resembling a miniature Greenshank. Usually found in fresh and brackish muddy waters. Up to 63 recorded in late March 2000 at Sulaibikhat Bay.



L 23cm ■ W 57cm

طيّطوى البطّاح  
**Marsh Sandpiper**  
*Tringa stagnatilis*



Autumn (SIR)



(MP)



(MP)





Winter (SIR)

الطيئوى خضراء الساق

## Common Greenshank

*Tringa nebularia*

L 32cm ■ W 69cm

Common passage migrant, uncommon winter visitor. A bird of mudflats and muddy shorelines, even in inland pools. Up to 80 recorded in mid March 1966 in Kuwait Bay. The largest of the Palearctic *Tringa* sandpipers.



(SIR)



Breeding plumage (MP)



Winter (CC)





Autumn (MP)

Uncommon passage migrant and winter visitor in small numbers. Usually frequents inland freshwater wetlands, even very small ones, outside the breeding season. Southward autumn migration for this and some other *Tringa* species begins very early, in early July.



L 23cm ■ W 59cm

النسناسة

## Green Sandpiper

*Tringa ochropus*

Spring (SIR)



Summer (MP)





Spring (CC)

طيئوى الغيط

## Wood Sandpiper

*Tringa glareola*

L 20cm ■ W 56cm

Common passage migrant, rare winter visitor and scarce summer visitor. One of the most abundant and widespread Palearctic breeding *Tringa* sandpipers, usually preferring inland waters, often on farmland puddles and small wetlands. Highest daily count of 482 recorded in early May 2005.



(MP)



(MP)



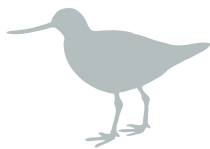
(GHA)





(MP)

Common passage migrant and winter visitor, scarce summer visitor. In Kuwait it nearly always occurs at coastal waters. Up to 1000 have been recorded in early February 1964. A charismatic wader breeding in northern Asia and wintering mainly on muddy shores on tropical coasts.



L 23cm ■ W 58cm

## طيّطوى الرمل Terek Sandpiper

*Xenus cinereus*

Non - breeding (MP)



(MP)



(MP)





Spring (SIR)

الطيّطوى الشائعة

## Common Sandpiper

*Actitis hypoleucos*

L 20cm ■ W 40cm

Uncommon passage migrant, scarce winter and summer visitor. A familiar widespread species using a variety of wetland and shoreline habitats. Usually forages singly or in small parties; up to 100 were recorded in mid April 1959.



(MP)



Non - breeding (MP)



(MP)





(SP)

Common passage migrant, uncommon winter and scarce summer visitor. In Kuwait it nearly always occurs on the coast. Up to 1000 recorded at Doha, Kuwait Bay in late April 2007. One of the most distinctive and widespread arctic-breeding waders.



L 23cm ■ W 53cm

قنبرة الماء

## Ruddy Turnstone

*Arenaria interpres*

Breeding plumage (MP)

Juvenile (SIR)





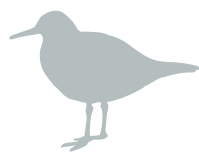


Non - breeding (OC - UAE)

الطيّوى الكبيرة

VU

## Great Knot

*Calidris tenuirostris*

L 27cm ■ W 55cm

Uncommon winter visitor. Winters on extensive deltaic mudflats; 19 recorded in late March 2004 on Bubiyan Island. A poorly known east Asian species, whose recent rapid population decline is attributed to the destruction of its non-breeding stopover wetlands.

الطيّوى الشمالية

## Red Knot

*Calidris canutus*

L 24cm ■ W 50cm

Extremely rare vagrant. A typical high-arctic breeder and long distance migrant wintering in widely scattered coastal mudflat localities usually in large concentrations. It presumably bypasses our region and occurs only irregularly.



Breeding plumage (MK)



(MP)



(MP)





Juvenile (GHA)

Common passage migrant and winter visitor; scarce summer visitor. Hundreds gather in many areas of Kuwait Bay. A high-arctic breeder faithful to its coastal mudflat migration stopover and wintering sites.



L 20cm ■ W 40cm

المدروان

## Sanderling

*Calidris alba*

Breeding plumage (MP)

(SP)

(MP)





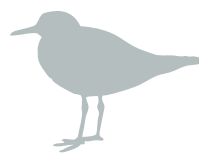


Summer (MP)

الطيئوى الصغيرة الشائعة

## Little Stint

*Calidris minuta*



L 13cm ■ W 30cm

Very common passage migrant, common winter and summer visitor. Up to 2000 recorded in Kuwait Bay in early April 2008. One of the most abundant small waders of the Western Palearctic.



Summer (SIR)



Autumn (MP)



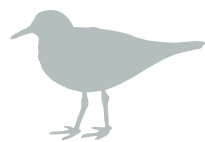
Winter (SIR)





Autumn (SIR)

Uncommon passage migrant and winter visitor, usually in small numbers. Up to 32 recorded in early March 1987. This is a distinctive small *Calidris* sandpiper usually preferring inland muddy pools with marshy fringes or agricultural fields.



L 13cm ■ W 30cm

الطيّطوى الصغيرة الرمادية

## Temminck's Stint

*Calidris temminckii*

Early autumn (MP)



Early autumn (SIR)



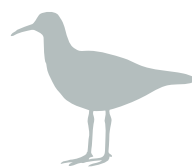
Early autumn (MP)





Non-breeding plumage (SIR)

الطيّطوى داكنة الصدر  
**Pectoral Sandpiper**  
*Clalidris melanotos*



L 21cm ■ W 42cm

Extremely rare vagrant. This bird breeds in Northern Siberia and Arctic North America while most populations overwinter in South America. First recorded in early October 2011 at Sulaibiya Pivot Fields, a bird accidentally straying far off familiar ground.



(MP)



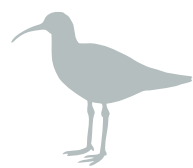
(PF)





Spring (MP)

Common passage migrant and summer visitor. Up to 2000 recorded in late April 2007. An elegant wader of the open mudflats, often foraging in deeper water than other *Calidris* sandpipers.



L 19cm ■ W 40cm

## كروان الماء الأحمر

### Curlew Sandpiper

*Calidris ferruginea*



(SIR)



Breeding plumage (PF)



Non - breeding plumage (SIR)

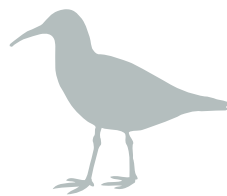




Early autumn migrating flock (SIR)

الطيّطوى الداكنة

Dunlin

*Calidris alpina*

L 18cm ■ W 38cm

The commonest wintering wader in Kuwait. Common passage migrant and uncommon summer visitor. Up to 10 000 recorded in late January 2007. A well-known circumpolar breeder and long-distance migrant.



Breeding plumage (MP)



Breeding plumage (MP)



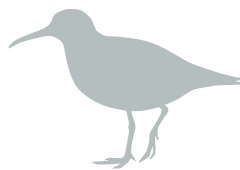
Winter (CC)





Early autumn (GHA)

Uncommon winter visitor and passage migrant. Up to 500 recorded in late April 2005. A globally rather scarce and elusive sandpiper. In Kuwait it frequents coastal areas and inland pools.



L 17cm ■ W 35cm

## الطيئوى عريضة المنقار Broad-billed Sandpiper

*Limicola falcinellus*



Breeding plumage (MP)



(SIR)



(SIR)



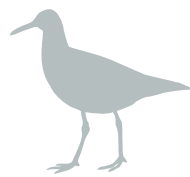


Male (MK)

النفاش المشاكس

Ruff

*Philomachus pugnax*



L 28cm ■ W 56cm

Uncommon passage migrant,  
rare winter and summer visitor.  
Up to 154 in late April 2006.  
Often recorded in open  
agricultural land but also  
on coastal fresh wetlands.



Male breeding plumage (SIR)



Female spring (MP)



(MP)





Spring (GHA)

Uncommon passage migrant, rare summer visitor. Up to 120 at Jahra East Outfall recorded in mid April 2009. In Kuwait often observed in both fresh and salt water habitats.



L 18cm ■ W 36cm

الطيئوى حمراء الرقبة

## Red-necked Phalarope

*Phalaropus lobatus*

Non - breeding plumage (MP)



Spring (MP)



Immature (SIR)





Breeding plumage (MP)

الطيّطوى الرمادية

## Grey Phalarope

*Phalaropus fulicarius*

L 21cm ■ W 42cm

Extremely rare vagrant in both spring and autumn. Very much a marine wader, normally found at sea in the non-breeding season, except when driven by storms to inland waters.



Breeding plumage (MP)



(MK)



Non - breeding plumage (PF)





(SIR)

Common disperser in spring, summer and autumn. Local breeder, which has bred at remote coastal areas such as Bubiyan Island. Generally found in pairs or small groups; 161 recorded in mid July 1956 at Kuwait Bay.



L 24cm ■ W 54cm

الدراج

## Cream-coloured Courser

*Cursorius cursor*

(MP)



Juvenile (HAJ)



(SP)





(MP)

أبو اليسر الشائع  
**Collared Pratincole**  
*Glareola pratincola*



L 25cm ■ W 63cm

Common passage migrant  
 and scarce summer visitor.  
 Often found near inland waters,  
 farmland and coastal wetlands.  
 Migrates in flocks; 129 were  
 seen in mid April 2008.



(MP)



(PF)





(SIR)

Extremely rare vagrant.  
Kuwait's first record concerns  
one bird at Sulaibiya Pivot Fields  
in late March 2008. This species  
is the eastern equivalent  
of the Collard Pratincole.



L 23cm ■ W 63cm

أبو اليسر الشرقي  
**Oriental Pratincole**  
*Glareola maldivarum*



Immature (TP - UAE)



Immature (TP - UAE)



Immature (TP - UAE)



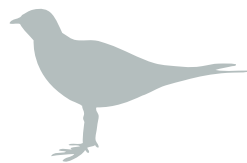


(SIR)

أبو اليسر أسود الجناح

NT

## Black-winged Pratincole

*Glareola nordmanni*

L 24cm ■ W 64cm

Uncommon passage migrant.  
Up to 600 were recorded at Sabah  
Al-Ahmad Natural Reserve in  
mid April 2009. Some populations  
have declined but the species  
is poorly monitored.



(MP)



(KHA)



Immature (SIR)





Breeding plumage (DF - UK)



Immature (DF - UK)



Immature (DF - UK)

Extremely rare vagrant. A single bird off Mina Saud in mid March 1991 is the only record for Kuwait. An unusual sighting so far off this northern bird's range. Care should be taken in distinguishing immature plumaged birds from the Little Gull.



L 44cm ■ W 108cm

## النورس أسود الرجلين Black-legged Kittiwake

*Rissa tridactyla*

Vagrant. Seen sporadically along the coast in winter and during autumn and spring migration periods. This is the region's smallest gull, having a characteristic tern-like flight.



L 27cm ■ W 77cm

## النورس الصغير Little Gull

*Hydrocoloeus minutus*

Immature winter (BF)



Immature winter (BF)





Winter (MP)

## النورس دقيق المنقار Slender-billed Gull

*Chroicocephalus genei*



L 44cm ■ W 110cm

Abundant passage migrant, common resident and breeder. One of Kuwait's most abundant gulls, this species is partial to eutrophic wetland waters.

Spring and autumn flocks have reached 20000 birds in Kuwait Bay.



Nesting colony (NAS)



Breeding plumage (SIR)



Juveniles (GHA)





Winter (MP)

Abundant passage migrant and winter visitor; scarce summer visitor. One of Eurasia's most widespread gulls; often in close contact with humans. Up to 5000 individuals have been observed in Kuwait Bay.



L 44cm ■ W 105cm

## النورس أسود الرأس Common Black-headed Gull

*Chroicocephalus ridibundus*



Immature (GHA)



Winter (SIR)

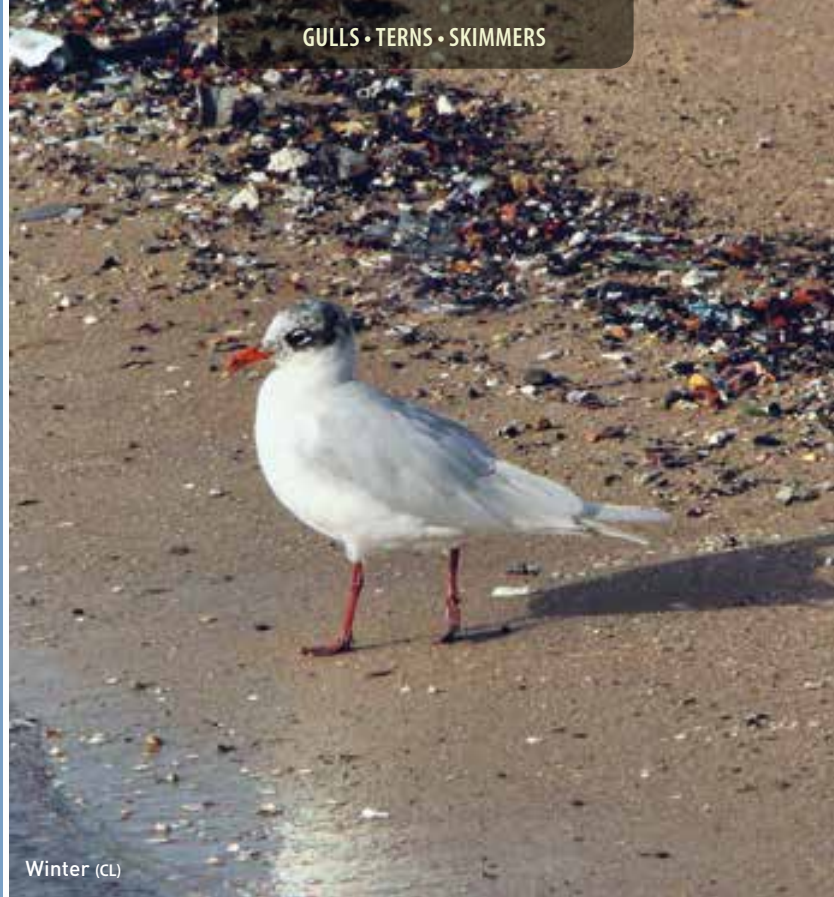


Spring (MP)





Breeding plumage (NP-GREECE)



Winter (CL)

## نورس البحر الأبيض المتوسط Mediterranean Gull

*Larus melanocephalus*



L 38cm ■ W 105cm

Vagrant during winter and spring passage.  
An elegant bird breeding in wetlands  
in the Mediterranean and Caspian Seas;  
very rarely reaching the Gulf.  
It forages along the coast and at sea  
during the non-breeding season.

## نورس فرانكلين Franklin's Gull

*Leucophaeus pipixcan*



L 36cm ■ W 93cm

Extremely rare vagrant. A single bird was located  
in southern Kuwait Bay in early June 2012;  
the first ever for the state. This species normally  
nests in northern North America and overwinters  
in South America, while it is an accidental  
visitor in Eurasia, the Orient and Africa.

Summer (HAJ)

Summer (HAJ)







Breeding plumage (MP)

Common winter visitor; uncommon passage migrant. A large gull breeding in Central Asia, often gathering in bays and harbours such as at Failaka, Sharq and Fahaheel in winter. Up to 541 recorded at Doha, Kuwait Bay, in mid March 2001.



L 61cm ■ W 170cm

نورس السمك

## Great Black-headed Gull

*Larus ichthyaetus*

Winter (PF)



(PF)



Immature winter with Slender-billed Gulls (MP)





Immature (PF)

النورس الشائع

## Common Gull

*Larus canus*

L 44cm ■ W 125cm

Scarce winter visitor in small numbers. Usually single birds are seen along the coast in winter and early spring passage, often with other gulls and terns.

Winter (DO)



Immature (PF)



Breeding plumage (NP - FINLAND)







Early spring (DO)

Very common winter visitor and passage migrant. Kuwait's most abundant wintering large gull. Widespread from October to March; some young birds may stay longer and some arrive by August. Up to 700 have been recorded at Zour Port in late October 2000.



L 65cm ■ W 150cm

النورس القوقازي  
Caspian Gull  
*Larus cachinnans*



(SIR)



(DO)



Autumn (SIR)

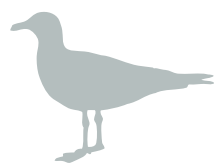




(SIR)

النورس الأرمني

## Armenian Gull

*Larus armenicus*

L 60cm ■ W 140cm

Scarce winter visitor.  
Difficult to distinguish from the  
more common Caspian Gull, to which  
this species is closely related.  
A coastal bird; up to 20 counted  
along the coast in mid December 2007.



(SIR)



Juvenile (SIR)



Spring (SIR)





(HAJ)

Common winter visitor and passage migrant. Formerly lumped within a similar looking species-complex known as Lesser Black-backed Gull, now split into different species; often difficult to distinguish in the field.



L 53cm ■ W 127cm

النورس البلطقي

Baltic Gull

*Larus fuscus*

(SIR)

With other wintering gulls (SIR)





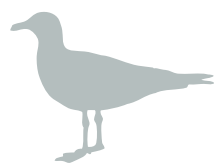


Winter (DO)

نورس هوجلن

## Heuglin's Gull

*Larus fuscus heuglini*



L 65cm ■ W 150cm

Common winter visitor and passage migrant. Close relative of the Baltic Gull. The immature birds, all brownish-grey coloured, are especially difficult to distinguish in the field.



(SIR)



Spring (MP)



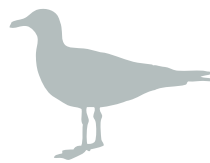
Juvenile (SIR)





Spring (DO)

Common winter visitor and passage migrant. A relative of the Baltic Gull; the adult's back is lighter coloured, although darker than the Caspian Gull. Fortunately gulls often flock together and comparisons can be made when they sit side-by-side.



L 65cm ■ W 150cm

نورس السهول

## Steppe Gull

*Larus fuscus barabensis*

(SIR)



(SIR)



(SIR)





Breeding plumage (MP)

## الخرشنة نورسية المنقار Gull-billed Tern

*Gelochelidon nilotica*



L 38cm ■ W 100cm

Very common summer visitor and common resident. Breeds on Warba and Bubiyan; about 1600 breeding adults recorded in late March on Bubiyan in 2004. Although usually coastal, this tern can also be found foraging inland.



(SIR)



(MP)



Winter (SIR)





(MP)

Common resident; breeds.  
Nests in colonies of up to 250 pairs,  
usually on Bubiyan and Warba  
but has also nested on Kubbar  
in the past. This is the largest tern,  
a characteristic coastal species.



L 53cm ■ W 135cm

الخرشنة القزوينية  
**Caspian Tern**  
*Hydroprogne caspia*



Non - breeding plumage (SIR)



(SP)



Immature (SIR)





Nesting colony with Lesser Crested Terns (MP)

## الخرشنة المتوجة الكبيرة Swift Tern

*Sterna bergii*



L 46cm ■ W 105cm

Common summer visitor, uncommon resident; breeds. In Kuwait it nests in colonies of up to 300 pairs, usually on Bubiyan, Auha and Kubbar islands. A large, widespread tropical tern. Related to Lesser Crested it was formerly called Greater Crested Tern.



(MP)



(SIR)



(MP)





Nesting colony (MP)

Common summer visitor and uncommon resident; breeding colonies of a few hundred exist or have existed on Bubiyan, Warba, Um Al-Maradim and Kubbar. Large numbers are seen even away from the colonies after they disperse; up to 450 at Zour Port mid August 2000.



L 41cm ■ W 92cm

## الخرشنة المتوجة الصغيرة Lesser Crested Tern

*Sterna bengalensis*



Juvenile (MP)



(HAJ)



(MP)





Breeding plumage (MP)

خرشنة الساندويش

## Sandwich Tern

*Sterna sandvicensis*



L 41cm ■ W 105cm

Uncommon passage migrant and winter visitor. Scarce summer visitor. Widespread along the outer coast in winter, sometimes out at sea. Up to 200 recorded in late January 2007.



(MP)



Winter (MP)





Breeding plumage (SIR)

Common passage migrant and summer visitor; rare winter visitor. There is a chance this tiny tern may breed in Kuwait's part of the Mesopotamian Delta. Care must be taken not to confuse it with the very similar Saunder's Tern that is not yet confirmed to visit Kuwait.



L 24cm ■ W 55cm

الخرشنة الصغيرة

Little Tern

*Sternula albifrons*

(MP)



(MP)



(MP)





(MP)

الخرشنة الملجمة

## Bridled Tern

*Onychoprion anaethetus*

L 37cm ■ W 76cm

Very common summer visitor. Breeds on Kuwait's offshore islets. On Kubbar 2200 pairs recorded in mid May 2003, forming one of Kuwait's most remarkable bird spectacles. Sadly this and other colonies have been frequently disturbed by people who visit the islets during summer.



(SIR)



(PF)



Juvenile (MP)





(SIR)

Uncommon passage migrant. This typical “river tern” breeds in the Mesopotamian Delta but has not been confirmed breeding within Kuwaiti territory. Usually seen in small numbers; up to 30 recorded in late May 1986.



L 35cm ■ W 80cm

الخرشنة الشائعة  
Common Tern  
*Sterna hirundo*



(SIR)



(SIR)



Juvenile (SIR)





Breeding plumage (MP)

الخرشنة بيضاء الخد

## White-cheeked Tern

*Sterna repressa*

L 33cm ■ W 75cm

Very common summer visitor. Breeds on Warba, Bubiyan, Auha, Um Al-Maradim and Kubbar. Up to 2000 pairs at Kubbar in mid May 2003. Similar, but slightly smaller than the Common Tern and much more widespread in marine areas.



With fledgling (HAJ)



Immature (SIR)



On nest (SIR)





(SIR)

Vagrant, usually seen on spring passage. A world-record long-distance migrant breeding in the Arctic and wintering as far south as the Antarctic waters. Otherwise, very similar-looking to the Common Tern.



L 38cm ■ W 80cm

الخرشنة القطبية

Arctic Tern

*Sterna paradisaea*

(SIR)



Immature (SIR)





(MP)

الخرشنة المشورية

## Whiskered Tern

*Chlidonias hybrida*

L 25cm ■ W 73cm

Uncommon passage migrant; scarce winter visitor. Unlike other terns, these are mostly attracted to vegetated wetlands; members of the *Chlidonias* genus are known as “marsh terns”.



(MP)



(SIR)

Moulting summer (SIR)







(MK)

Uncommon passage migrant; scarce summer visitor. Breeds in very small numbers in the Jahra Bay outfall marshes. Migrates in large numbers along the coast; up to 2300 were seen in late April 2006. One of the most strikingly plumaged of the marsh terns.



L 22cm ■ W 65cm

## الخرشنة بيضاء الجناح White-winged Tern

*Chlidonias leucopterus*



Moulting early autumn (MP)



Immature (MP)



Winter (MP)





(MP)



Autumn (SIR)



Breeding plumage adult with two Little Terns and a White-winged Tern (SIR)

الخرشنة السوداء

## Black Tern

*Chlidonias niger*

L 23cm ■ W 66cm

Vagrant. Mainly seen singly in spring or autumn passage, but sporadically in winter. This species' populations migrate well to the west of Kuwait, rarely reaching its territory. In non-breeding or transitional plumages it can be confused with other marsh terns.

الكركر الشمالي

## Pomarine Skua

*Stercorarius pomarinus*

L 56cm ■ W 125cm

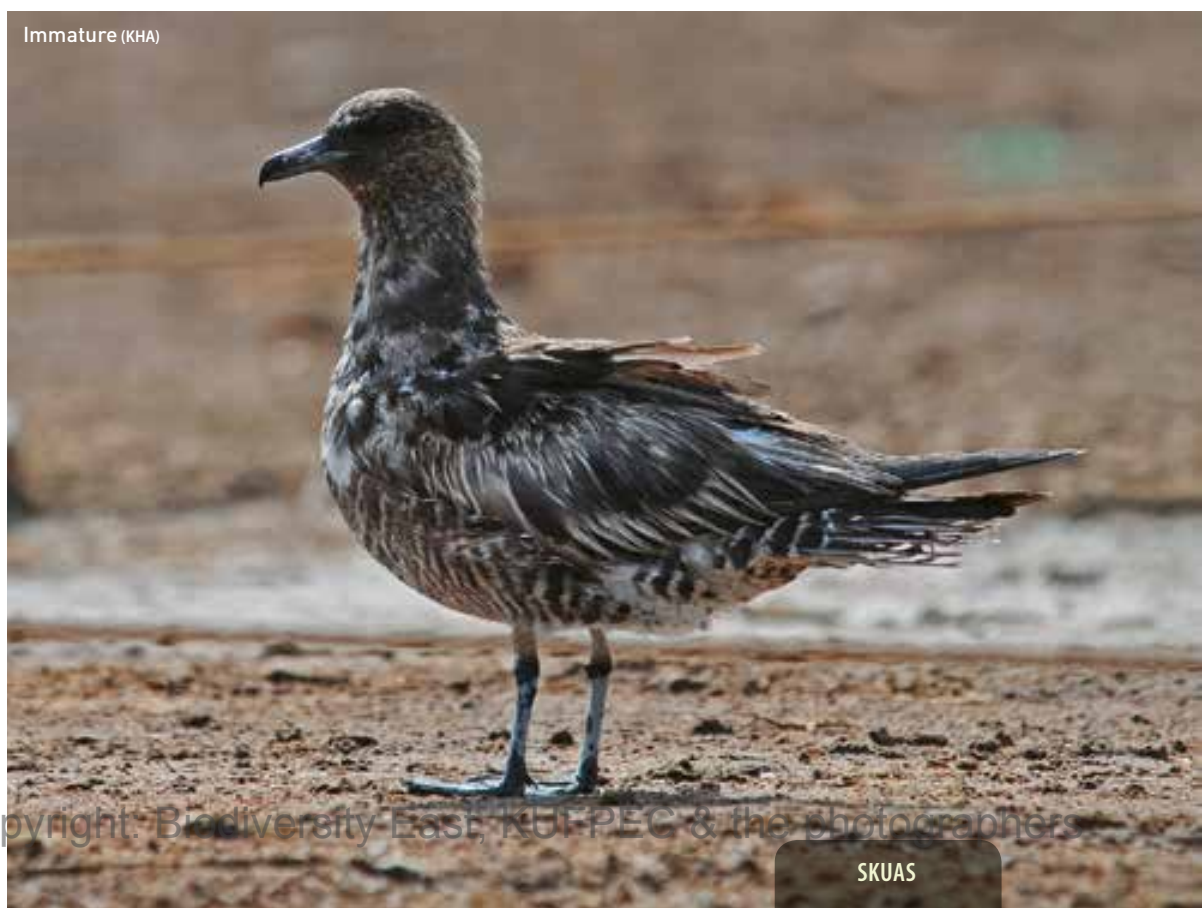
Uncommon passage migrant, scarce winter visitor and rare summer visitor. An aggressive parasitic bird in the non-breeding season, often near flocks of gulls. Sometimes seen from the ferry to Failaka.



Immature (KHA)



(HW - UAE)



Immature (KHA)





Immature (MB-UAE)



(MP)



(MP)

Uncommon passage migrant, scarce winter visitor and rare summer visitor. Probably more common offshore, where birds are rarely monitored. Like its relatives this bird will parasitize on seabirds, skillfully harrying them in the air so they will drop or disgorge their prey.



L 46cm ■ W 117cm

الكركر القطبي

Arctic Skua

*Stercorarius parasiticus*

Extremely rare vagrant. A seabird wandering far from its arctic breeding grounds. Usually seen as single birds during spring passage. Very little is known about this species' movements but it will fly overland during passage.



L 52cm ■ W 111cm

الكركر طويل الذيل

Long-tailed Skua

*Stercorarius longicaudus*



(MK)



Immature (HW-UAE)



Immature (HW-UAE)





Male (SIR)



(NAS)



Female (NAS)

الغطاطة

## Pin-tailed Sandgrouse

*Pterocles alchata*

L 35cm ■ W 60cm

Irregular winter visitor and passage migrant; rare summer visitor. Formerly a common breeding bird in Kuwait, prized by hunters, numbers visiting now in decline; up to 900 recorded in early April 1968. A desert bird that will fly great distances to obtain water.

الكدرية الشائعة

## Chestnut-bellied Sandgrouse

*Pterocles exustus*

L 32cm ■ W 50cm

Extremely rare vagrant. A major Western Palearctic rarity probably accidentally occurring this far north in the Gulf area. Nearly all records are from birds which have been shot by hunters.



Female (KHA)



Male (OC-OMAN)



Male (SIR)





Male (MP-OMAN)



(MP-OMAN)



Female (MP)

Irregular winter and passage migrant; rare summer visitor, has bred in Kuwait. Many nested along with Pin-tailed Sandgrouse after the Iraqi Invasion in the Demilitarized Zone, but since poorly regulated hunting has resumed their numbers have dwindled.



L 32cm ■ W 59cm

## الكدرية غبراء الجناح Spotted Sandgrouse

*Pterocles senegallus*

Rare winter visitor. The heaviest and most distinctive sandgrouse, familiar to many Kuwaiti hunters. Although not seen every year in Kuwait, most sightings refer to birds shot by hunters. Populations have declined in some parts of its range.



L 35cm ■ W 60cm

## الكدرية بيضاء الجناح Black-bellied Sandgrouse

*Pterocles orientalis*

Immature/female (HAJ)







(SIR)

القمري

## European Turtle Dove

*Streptopelia turtur*

L 28cm ■ W 53cm

Common passage migrant and rare winter visitor; has bred in Kuwait. A fast flying dove, usually seen on passage in flocks. Up to 480 at Ahmadi farms in late April 1958. Considered a prized bird for shooters, numbers have declined, probably due to over-hunting.



(MP)

Juvenile (SIR)







(MP)

Vagrant, usually recorded on passage in autumn but sometimes also in spring. A species from East Asia, very similar looking to the European Turtle dove from which it is difficult to distinguish in the field. Observed near cultivations, sometimes even in wetlands.



L 35cm ■ W 60cm

القمرى الشرقى

## Rufous Turtle Dove

*Streptopelia orientalis meena*



(MP)



(MP)





(SUR)

حمام أخضر الرقبة

## Stock Dove

*Columba oenas*

L 34cm ■ W 69cm

Vagrant. Single birds seen mostly in autumn but also in winter, especially in farm irrigated grassy field habitats with many trees.

الورشان

## Common Wood Pigeon

*Columba palumbus*

L 42cm ■ W 80cm

Scarce disperser in spring and autumn. A large woodland bird attracted to oases and farmland. Sometimes seen in small flocks; up to 48 recorded in late October 2007.



(MK)



(SIR)



(MP)

Abundant resident. Hundreds nest in cities and farms; often also kept in dovecots. Domesticated descendent of the Rock Dove. Although no true wild Rock Doves have been confirmed in Kuwait, feral birds are also found away from cities or farms.



L 34cm ■ W 70cm

## الحمام الدوري Feral Pigeon

*Columba livia (forma domestica)*

Scarce resident and disperser in spring and autumn. Localized breeder in some farms and towns. Although a common cage bird, this species exists in Southwest Arabia and is expanding its range. Kuwait's birds are most probably of captive origin.



L 30cm ■ W 50cm

## الفاخنة الأفريقية African Collared Dove

*Streptopelia risoria*

(SIR - YEMEN)

(VL - EGYPT)







(MP)

الفاخنة الشائعة

## Eurasian Collared Dove

*Streptopelia decaocto*

L 33cm ■ W 55cm

Common resident. First recorded in Kuwait in 1960, this dove explosively expanded its range through much of Western Eurasia, including Arabia. Now it thrives in most farms and cities in Kuwait. Often in flocks in winter, up to 800 recorded in mid January 2007.



(MP)



(SIR)



(MP)





(ALH)

Abundant resident. This species' range is expanding. First recorded in Kuwait in the mid 1970s, it is now the second most abundant breeding resident bird. Flocks of up to 300 have been frequently recorded. It is usually found wherever trees, buildings and farmland exist, even on some islands.



L 27cm ■ W 45cm

الدبسي

## Laughing Dove

*Spilopelia senegalensis*



Juvenile (MP)



(MK)



(SIR)





Female (MP)

الحمام

## Namaqua Dove

*Oena capensis*



L 28cm ■ W 33cm

Uncommon resident and scarce disperser in spring and autumn; breeds in Kuwait. Another recently established resident.

As with other doves it exploits trees and farmland which have been expanding, providing new habitats.



Male (MK)



Juveniles (SP)





(MP)



(PF)

Common winter visitor and uncommon resident; breeds in Kuwait. This parrot has native populations in Iran, but birds in the northern Gulf originate from escaped pets. In Kuwait establishment has occurred in the early 1990s. Birds gather in Kuwait City and its suburbs in winter, with a maximum count of 250.



L 42cm ■ W 48cm

البراكيت الأخضر

## Rose-ringed Parakeet

*Psittacula krameri*

Extremely rare vagrant. An eastern Asian bird first recorded in Kuwait in late February 2009 at Abdaly, near the Iraq border. Koels have great potential in colonizing new areas, they were among the pioneer birds to colonize the volcanic island of Krakatoa.



L 43cm

الكول الآسيوي

## Asian Koel

*Eudynamys scolopaceus*

(SIR)





الوقواق المنقط الكبير  
**Great Spotted Cuckoo**  
*Clamator glandarius*



L 40cm ■ W 66cm

Rare passage migrant seen primarily in spring in oases and plantations. This exotic looking cuckoo lays its eggs in corvid nests, with nearest breeding areas being in Iran. Young birds and adults are seasoned wanderers and can show up quite far away from their breeding areas.







Male (MK)

Uncommon passage migrant usually in spring. A widespread forest bird of temperate Eurasia, migrating to tropical Africa. Will rest during migration on any tree in a variety of habitats, even in the city. Occurs in two colour morphs. In flight it resembles a rather clumsy accipitrine hawk.



L 34cm ■ W 65cm

الوقواق الشائع

## Common Cuckoo

*Cuculus canorus*



Female rufous morph (MK)



Male (SIR)



Immature (SIR)





(SIR)

الهامة

## Western Barn Owl

*Tyto alba*

L 35cm ■ W 89cm

Scarce disperser in all seasons; has bred in Kuwait.

During its breeding period this is a very secretive owl, despite the fact that it will nest in irrigation wells and old disused buildings often within urban areas. This owl often hunts for rodents on agricultural land.



(NAS)

(SIR)







(MP)



(MP)

Extremely rare vagrant. Identified only recently in Kuwait, both at desert locations and in urban parks and gardens. Easily confused with the very similar Eurasian Scops Owl, but more often found in winter and its soft dove-like hooting song is diagnostic.



L 21cm ■ W 55cm

الثبج الباهت

Pallid Scops Owl

*Otus brucei*



(MP)



(MP)





(MP)



(KHA)

الثبج الأوري

## Eurasian Scops Owl

*Otus scops*

L 20cm ■ W 54cm

Uncommon passage migrant.  
A very small migrant owl that is strictly nocturnal, roosting in dense foliage by day.  
It is widespread throughout Kuwait on spring and autumn passage wherever trees are present.



(MP)



(PF)



(SIR)





(MP)

Scarce resident; breeds in Kuwait. Considered the “eagle-of-the-night”, this owl is now rare because its sensitive breeding sites are often disturbed by man. It breeds in wilderness areas such as near Kuwait’s border with Iraq. It hunts fairly large birds and mammals strictly under the cover of darkness.



L 50cm ■ W 160cm

البوهة

## Pharaoh Eagle Owl

*Bubo ascalaphus*


(SIR - SAUDI ARABIA)



(SIR - SAUDI ARABIA)





(NAS)



At nest hole (PF)

## البومة الصغيرة Lilith Owllet

*Athene noctua lilith*



L 22cm ■ W 50cm

Uncommon resident, breeds in Kuwait. Found in Jal Az-Zor escarpment, where it breeds in very small numbers. This bird also breeds in rocky desert areas in rock crevices often near cliffs. Unlike other owls, it may often be active by day. In Kuwait it feeds on insects, birds, reptiles and rodents.

## البومة طويلة الأذنين Long-eared Owl

*Asio otus*



L 36cm ■ W 95cm

Extremely rare vagrant. A woodland owl that visits Kuwait irregularly in winter. It will hide in dense foliage where it remains undetected due to its perfect camouflage. An extremely secretive nocturnal species that can easily go unnoticed.



(GHA)





(SIR)

Rare winter visitor. An owl that lives in open areas; not requiring trees. Unlike other owls, this species will hunt during daylight making its presence obvious to hunters. Unfortunately these owls have been frequently shot by hunters at various locations in Kuwait.



L 38cm ■ W 102cm

## البومة قصيرة الأذنين Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus*



(HAJ)



(MK)



(MP)





(GW)

السبد الأوري

## Eurasian Nightjar

*Caprimulgus europaeus*

L 28cm ■ W 60cm

Uncommon passage migrant.  
A strictly nocturnal bird that rests  
during the day on trees or in leaf litter  
on the ground in perfect camouflage.  
It hunts insects during the night  
in a hawk-like flight.



(MK)



(MK)



(SIR)





(HAJ)

Uncommon passage migrant and summer visitor; rare winter visitor. Widespread in Kuwait and may even breed at certain localities. It often hunts insects at night over desert, farmland and especially at wetlands, even at the tiniest ponds.



L 26cm ■ W 68cm

السبد المصري  
**Egyptian Nightjar**  
*Caprimulgus aegyptius*



(MP)



(MP)





(MP)



(HAJ)

سمامة الألب

## Alpine Swift

*Tachymarptis melba*

L 22cm ■ W 60cm

Scarce passage migrant. It occurs in low numbers, mainly during spring, in Kuwait. Travels very long distances to find places with rich aerial insect populations to feed on. This is the largest swift in the region.

السمامة الشائعة

## Common Swift

*Apus apus*

L 17cm ■ W 48cm

Uncommon passage migrant; rare winter visitor. Passes through Kuwait in fairly large numbers primarily in spring; often flocks of over 200 have been recorded. Care is sometimes needed to distinguish this species from Pallid Swift.



(MP)



(MP)



(MP)





(HAJ)



(HAJ)

Rare disperser in autumn, winter and spring. An infrequent visitor; usually attracted to insect-rich wetlands and farmland. The region's smallest swift; sometimes in flocks of other swifts or swallows.



L 12cm ■ W 35cm

## السمامة الصغيرة Little Swift

*Apus affinis*

Common passage migrant and winter visitor; breeds in Kuwait. The most abundant and widespread swift in the country, nesting even within the centre of Kuwait City. Large flocks are often attracted to wetlands; up to 520 recorded in mid January 2007.



L 17cm ■ W 46cm

## السمامة الباهتة Pallid Swift

*Apus pallidus*

(MP)

Drinking water (MP)



(SIR)







(PF)

الشقراق الهندي  
**Indian Roller**  
*Coracias benghalensis*



L 30cm ■ W 70cm

Scarce disperser in autumn, winter and spring. A tropical Asian specialty that nests as far north as Iraq. Dispersing birds arrive in Kuwait in small numbers and may be found in open habitats, including farms and city parks.



(MP)



(HAJ)



(SIR)





(SIR)

Uncommon passage migrant and scarce summer visitor. Evidence for breeding exists even for Kuwait, but most birds are transient visitors. During migration, small flocks can be seen. Sadly this species is heavily targeted by local shooters.



L 32cm ■ W 73cm

الشقراق الأوربي

European Roller

NT

*Coracias garrulus*

(MK)



(MK)



(GHA)





(MK)

القرلي أبيض الصدر

## White-throated Kingfisher

*Halcyon smyrnensis*



L 28cm ■ W 43cm

Uncommon winter visitor, scarce resident; breeds in Kuwait. One of our most exotic-looking native birds, and our largest kingfisher. Although it lives in wetlands, it is often found on agricultural land also. Sadly, being a large noticeable bird it is often shot by hunters.



(MP)



(MK)



(MP)





Female (MK)

Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor. A brilliantly-coloured small bird that usually sits quietly overlooking the water. It is usually seen along the coast, even in sewage outfalls where schools of tiny fish gather.



L 17cm ■ W 26cm

القرلي الشائع

## Common Kingfisher

*Alcedo atthis*

Male (SIR)



(MK)



(SIR)





(KAN)

خاطف ظله

## Pied Kingfisher

*Ceryle rudis*


L 26cm ■ W 47cm

Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor.

A large unmistakable black and white kingfisher seen in very small numbers along the coast and at pools, even recorded on Failaka. Often seen hovering over the water during its hunt for fish.



(MK)



Female (SIR)



(MK)





(MP)

Common passage migrant. Often the first tropical migrant to arrive in spring. Widespread during both spring and autumn migration in Kuwait; often seen in small flocks. This bird's flight is an explosive almost butterfly-like display.



L 28cm ■ W 46cm

الهدد

## Eurasian Hoopoe

*Upupa epops*

(GW)



(CC)



(MP)





Breeding plumage (SIR)

القارية زرقاء الخدين

## Blue-cheeked Bee-eater

*Merops persicus*

L 31cm ■ W 49cm

Abundant passage migrant; rare summer visitor, has bred in Kuwait. Widespread and often in flocks during spring and autumn migration; locally small breeding colonies have been established. Very beneficial species to farmers because it will feed on locusts and other insects.



Juvenile (MP)



(SP)



Juvenile (MP)





(SIR)

Abundant passage migrant; rare winter visitor. Prefers wetlands and agricultural land where it hunts insects in flight. Huge flocks, sometimes with over 1000 birds, pass over Kuwait. Noticeable due to their penetrating calls. Hundreds are senselessly killed each year by local shooters.



L 29cm ■ W 49cm

القارية الأوربية

European Bee-eater

*Merops apiaster*

Immature autumn moulting (MP)



(MP)



(MK)







(SIR)

اللواء

## Eurasian Wryneck

*Jynx torquilla*



L 17cm

Uncommon passage migrant; rare winter visitor. Not a typical woodpecker in that its colouring makes it totally camouflaged.

Although seldom seen, it is widespread wherever trees and bushes exist during its passage through Kuwait.



(GHA)



(CC)



(MK)





Male breeding plumage (MK)

Very common passage migrant; rare winter and summer visitor. Most birds pass in spring. The species used to be abundant in the past and remarkable numbers used to fly through Kuwait; over 1000 recorded in mid May 1966.



L 18cm

## الصرد احمر الظهر Red-backed Shrike

*Lanius collurio*



Male (MP)



Female (MK)



Male (HAJ)





Male (MP)

الصدرد أحمر الذيل  
Daurian Shrike  
*Lanius isabellinus*



L 18cm

Common passage migrant and winter visitor. Widespread in Kuwait's deserts and farms, this sandy-coloured shrike is easily spotted perching on the top of bushes or fences.



Female winter (SIR)



Female winter (MP)



Male (GW)





Male breeding plumage (MP)

Common passage migrant and rare winter visitor. Formerly considered a race of Daurian Shrike; distinguished from it by its darker rufous/grey colours and white underparts. One of Kuwait's Asian specialty birds.



L 18cm

## صرد تركستان الأكحل Turkestan Shrike

*Lanius phoenicuroides*



Immature (SIR)



Male (HAJ)



Immature (SIR)





Male autumn (SIR)

الصرذ طويل الذيل

## Long-tailed Shrike

*Lanius schach*

L 24cm

Extremely rare vagrant. An Eastern Palearctic species rarely travelling to the north end of the Gulf. Kuwait's first birds were recorded in early October 2004 and on several dates from October 2007 to mid April 2008.



(MP)



(MP)





(MK)

Uncommon passage migrant  
and rare summer visitor.  
Usually seen in small numbers  
or loose flocks on passage.  
Exceptionally, larger groups are  
recorded; up to 60 in early May 2008.



L 20cm

## الصرد الرمادي الصغير Lesser Grey Shrike

*Lanius minor*

(HAJ)



Breeding plumage (MP)



Juvenile (SIR)





Winter (VID)

صرد الوادي الجنوبي

## Mauryan Grey Shrike

*Lanius lahotra*



L 25cm

Uncommon passage migrant and winter visitor. Formerly considered a race of the Steppe Grey Shrike *Lanius (meridionalis) pallidirostris*. This pale grey desert shrike is fairly easy to spot in some desert oases in winter.



(SIR)



(HAJ)



Immature winter (MP)





Winter (SIR)

Extremely rare vagrant.  
A resident of the Arabian hinterland  
only recently recorded in Kuwait.  
Careful observation is needed  
to distinguish it from the more  
common Mauryan Shrike.



L 25cm

## الصرد الرمادي العربي Arabian Grey Shrike

*Lanius aucheri*



Immature winter (SIR - SAUDI ARABIA)



(OC - UAE)



(SIR)





Immature (MK)

الدغناش الشامي

## Woodchat Shrike

*Lanius senator*

L 18cm

Uncommon passage migrant; has bred in Kuwait. This is a characteristic Mediterranean shrike. In 2004 a pair nested on an acacia in Sabah Al-Ahmad Natural Reserve, the first breeding occurrence for the species in Kuwait and Arabia.



Male (MP)



Male (HAJ)



Juvenile (SIR)





Male (GHA)

Common passage migrant,  
rare winter and summer visitor.  
An elegant shrike that is rather  
elusive, and more partial to trees,  
bushes and greenery than  
most of the other shrikes.



L 18cm

## الدغناش القطبي Masked Shrike

*Lanius nubicus*



Juvenile (SIR)



Male (MP)



Female (HAJ)





Sub-adult male / female (SIR)

الصفاري

## Eurasian Golden Oriole

*Oriolus oriolus*

L 24cm

Common passage migrant; rare summer visitor; has bred in Kuwait. One of the more beautiful tropical birds to fly north for breeding in temperate woodlands. During nesting it is extremely secretive save for its exotic flute-like song.



Male (PF)



Juvenile (SIR)





(SIR)

Extremely rare vagrant. A remarkable accidental visitor from southern Asia; usually found in dense plantations such as palm groves and farms. It has been observed only twice in Kuwait, for the first time in 2010.



L 29cm

الدرونجو الرمادي

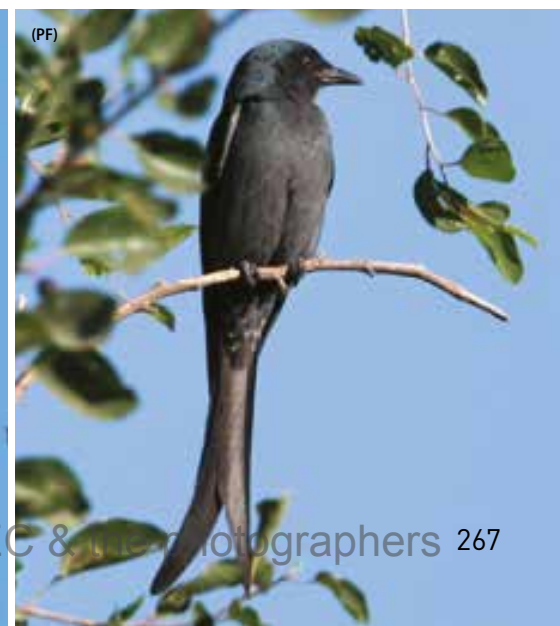
Ashy Drongo

*Dicrurus leucophaeus*

(MP)



(MP)



(PF)





(MP)

الغراب الدوري  
House Crow  
*Corvus splendens*



L 43cm

Uncommon resident and scarce disperser in all seasons; breeds in Kuwait. A non-indigenous species from southern Asia. It is assumed birds in Kuwait arrived aboard ships, as has occurred in many other Arabian ports. Numbers are still low in Kuwait.



(MP)



(SIR)





(VID - UK)



(MP)

Extremely rare vagrant.  
An accidental visitor from further north  
reported only twice in Kuwait.  
Perhaps isolated birds may sometimes  
move this far south due to severe  
winter weather in Iran and Iraq.



L 46cm

الغداف

Rook

*Corvus frugilegus*

Scarce disperser in winter and spring; has  
bred in Kuwait. This is one of the most  
widespread corvids in Arabia yet it is now  
rarely seen in Kuwait. Birds recorded here  
are presumably desert wanderers  
from neighbouring countries.



L 50cm

الغراب بني الرقبة

Brown-necked Raven

*Corvus ruficollis*

(SIR)



(HAJ)





Male (MP)

الجاثم المبرقع

**Hypocolius**

*Hypocolius ampelinus*



L 23cm

Uncommon passage migrant and winter visitor. An eastern specialty nesting as far north as Iraq. Although breeding has not been recorded in Kuwait, flocks of birds frequent various locations; a roost exists at Green Island in Kuwait City.



Male (MP)



Male (MP)



Male and female (MP)





(NP - GREECE)

Extremely rare vagrant. One individual spotted on Gulf Road in Kuwait City in early September 2009, is the first record of this species in Kuwait. Probably an accidental visitor, its normal range reaches southern Iran.



L 14cm

## القرقف الحزين Sombre Tit

*Poecile lugubris*

Extremely rare vagrant.  
One of Eurasia's most widespread birds.  
First observed in Kuwait on Green Island, Kuwait City, in mid April 2006.  
Its normal range reaches the Zagros Mountains of Iran.



L 14cm

## القرقف الكبير Great Tit

*Parus major*

(NP - CYPRUS)





Male (MP)

القرقف المقنع

## Eurasian Penduline Tit

*Remiz pendulinus*

L 11cm

Uncommon winter visitor. It is usually forced south by severe weather. Some birds may linger into spring. This bird prefers reed beds and riparian areas, but may be found in small flocks or family groups when on passage.

Female (MK)



Male (PF)



Male (MP)







Male (MP)

Common resident; breeds in Kuwait.  
Widespread in Kuwait's deserts.  
One of the desert's most charismatic  
larks. During breeding it performs  
a remarkable song flight. Its distinctive  
plumage is best seen when in flight.



L 18cm

المكاء

## Greater Hoopoe-Lark

*Alaemon alaudipes*



Juvenile summer (MP)



(GW)





Male spring (DO-TUNISIA)

القبرة عريضة المنقار  
Thick-billed Lark

*Ramphocoris clotbey*



L 17cm

Vagrant but has bred in Kuwait. Nearly all observations recorded in winter and early spring. This species may frequent areas that are off-limits near Kuwait's borders, such as Wadi Al-Batin. Surprisingly few records confirmed in recent years.

القبرة سوداء الصدر  
Calandra Lark

*Melanocorypha calandra*



L 20cm

Vagrant. This is a bird of steppe and grassland, and Kuwait is just beyond its normal distribution. Care is needed to distinguish it from the nearly identical Bimaculated Lark.



(HAJ)



(NP - GREECE)





(SIR)

Uncommon passage migrant and winter visitor; rare summer visitor, it has bred in Kuwait. Mostly observed in spring, sometimes in very large numbers; it may sporadically breed this far south perhaps during exceptional years when the spring desert is in bloom.



L 16cm

## القبرة قصيرة الذيل Bimaculated Lark

*Melanocorypha bimaculata*

Uncommon resident; has bred in Kuwait. Although typical of the flat desert, this species seems to have a sporadic presence in Kuwait, perhaps its population density is very low. Generally, larks of the desert disperse widely and may not easily be seen or heard.



L 15cm

## القبرة الصحراوية Desert Lark

*Ammomanes deserti*



(SIR - SAUDI ARABIA)



(SIR)





(MP)

الحمرة سوداء الذيل  
Bar-tailed Lark

*Ammomanes cinctura*



L 13cm

Uncommon resident; breeds in Kuwait. This lark is more commonly observed than its close relative, the very similar but larger Desert Lark. A nondescript bird of the flat desert landscape.



(MP)



(MP)





Migrating flock in autumn (MP)

Abundant passage migrant; common summer and winter visitor; breeds in Kuwait. This is a lark of the steppes and dry agricultural areas. In Kuwait it is usually seen migrating in flocks; up to 3000 counted in mid March 2000.



L 14cm

## القبرة قصيرة الإصبع الكبيرة Greater Short-toed Lark

*Calandrella brachydactyla*



(MP)



(MP)





(SIR)

القبرة قصيرة الإصبع الصغيرة  
Lesser Short-toed Lark

*Calandrella rufescens*



L 13cm

Very common passage migrant and winter visitor; uncommon summer visitor, breeds in Kuwait. A typical lark of the Asian steppes; also nesting here in small numbers where land is not degraded by overgrazing.



(MP)



(MP)





(MP)

Uncommon resident; breeds in Kuwait.  
An inconspicuous desert species that  
may even be more widespread,  
but is seldom observed.  
Sometimes recorded in small flocks;  
up to 15 seen in late March 2008.



L 14cm

الحمرة عريضة المنقار

Dunn's Lark

*Eremalauda dunni*

(MP)



(SIR)





(SIR)

القبرة الشائعة

## Crested Lark

*Galerida cristata*

L 17cm

Very common resident; breeds in Kuwait. One of our most widespread roadside birds. Its clear whistling song is characteristic of the desert fringe, coasts and agricultural land.



(MP)



(MP)



(HAJ)





Male (MK)

Uncommon resident; breeds in Kuwait. Adult male is the most distinctive small desert lark. Often difficult to see in the arid emptiness of the desert. In some years breeding numbers may boom: up to 100 breeding pairs observed in summer 2006.



L 12cm

القبرة سوداء التاج

## Black-crowned Sparrow-Lark

*Eremopterix nigriceps*

Female/immature male (MP)



Female/immature male (SIR)

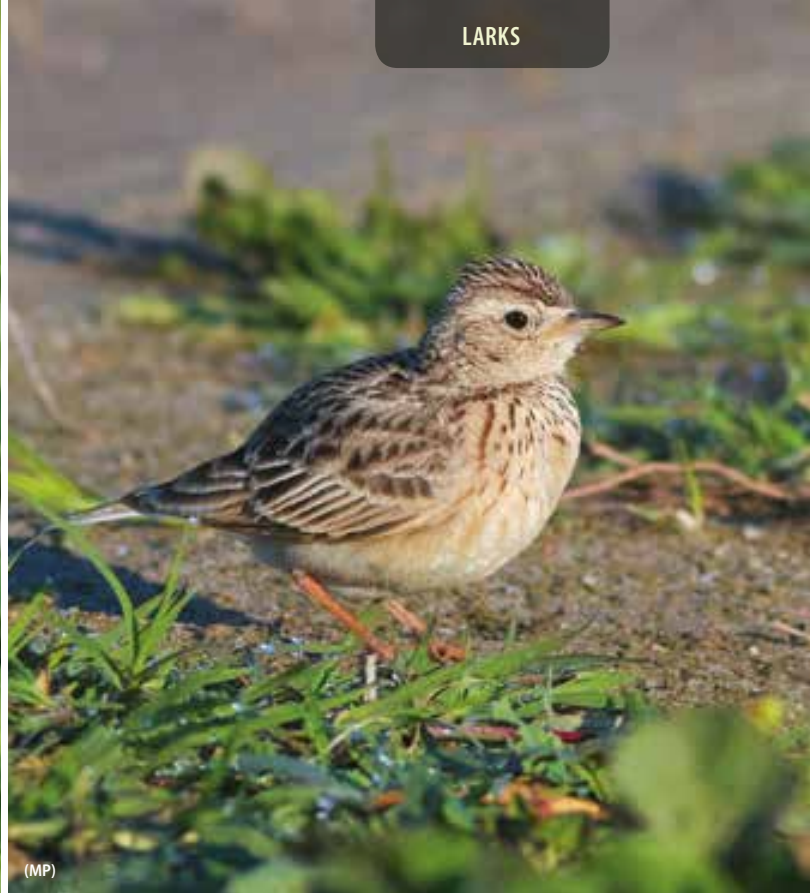


Male (SIR)





(SIR)



(MP)

قبرة الحقول الصغيرة  
Oriental Skylark

*Alauda gulgula*



L 16cm

Scarce disperser in autumn, winter and spring. Remarkably similar to Eurasian Skylark save for a distinctive buzzing call, short primary wing projection, and warmer colouration. This bird occurs in very small numbers and is less shy than Eurasian Skylark.

قبرة الحقول الشائعة  
Eurasian Skylark

*Alauda arvensis*



L 18cm

Uncommon passage migrant, winter and early spring visitor. Locally this bird forms large winter flocks in areas with grassy fields in farms and open deserts. It is widespread in Kuwait and influxes may take place in severe weather; up to 2000 recorded in mid December 2007.



(SIR)



(MP)





(MP)



(PF)

Rare passage migrant and winter visitor. A lark of the mountains and hills overwintering in the lowlands. During hard winters it will visit various localities in Kuwait, always in low numbers.



L 15cm

## قبرة الغابات Wood Lark

*Lullula arborea*

Uncommon disperser in autumn, winter and spring; breeds in Kuwait. A bird of the open flat desolate desert. Sometimes observed in small flocks; up to 22 seen together in mid March 2001.



L 14cm

## الحمرة المقرنة الشرقية Temminck's Lark

*Eremophila bilopha*

Male (MP)







(CC)

البلبل أبيض الخدين

## White-eared Bulbul

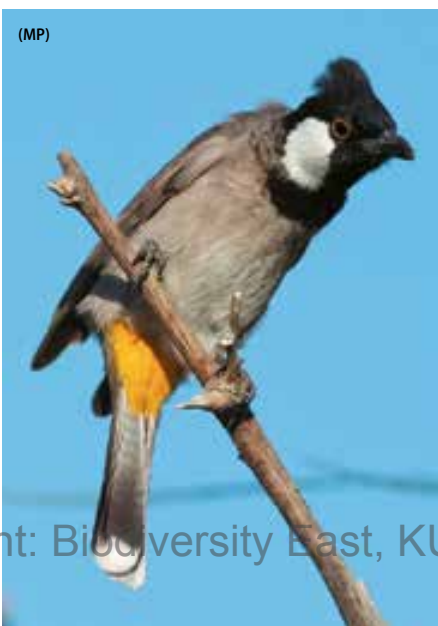
*Pycnonotus leucogenys leucotis*

L 18cm

Very common resident; breeds in Kuwait. Said to be absent from Kuwait before the mid 1950s; although the species is native to Iraq and Iran. It is widely introduced by man in many parts of Arabia. Currently a widespread garden and urban bird.



(MP)



(MP)



(HAJ)





(CC)

Uncommon resident; breeds in Kuwait.  
Non-indigenous to Kuwait and first  
recorded in the country in 1981.  
It has since spread to various urban  
and agricultural areas maintaining  
small local naturalized populations.



L 22cm

## البلبل أحمر العجز Red-vented Bulbul

*Pycnonotus cafer*



Juvenile (PF)



(MP)



(MP - BAHRAIN)





(MP)

خطاف الرمال

## Sand Martin

*Riparia riparia*

L 12cm

Very common passage migrant; uncommon summer and winter visitor. This bird is often attracted to water, but it can be seen migrating in large flocks in many parts of Kuwait.



(SIR)



(MP)



Juvenile (GHA)





(SIR)

Abundant passage migrant, common winter and summer visitor. Although not been confirmed nesting in Kuwait, individuals may be seen throughout the year. Huge flocks pass through Kuwait, with up to 10000 recorded at one location in late April 2008.



L 16cm

## الخطاف الشائع Barn Swallow

*Hirundo rustica*



(SIR)



Juvenile (SP)



(MP)





(PF)



(PF)



(NP - GREECE)

خطاف الجبال

## Eurasian Crag Martin

*Ptyonoprogne rupestris*

L 14cm

Scarce passage migrant and rare winter visitor. Unlike other swallows and martins this one is usually found far away from human habitation. Observed alone or in small groups; in Kuwait, often along the coast.

خطاف الصخور

## Pale Crag Martin

*Ptyonoprogne fuligula obsoleta*

L 13cm

Vagrant, although it is a resident breeder in most parts of Arabia. Most sightings are in winter and early spring. Smaller and paler than its Eurasian counterpart; careful observation is needed to discern the species' subtle field mark distinctions.



(OC - UAE)

(SIR - SAUDI ARABIA)

(SIR - SAUDI ARABIA)







(MP)



(MP)



(SIR)

Very common passage migrant; uncommon winter visitor, rare summer visitor. One of Eurasia's commonest urban and farmland birds. In Kuwait, often seen migrating in large flocks mixed with other swallows and martins. It often forages over wetlands.



L 12cm

## خطاف المدن الشائع Common House Martin

*Delichon urbicum*

Common passage migrant. A beautiful and elegant swallow, usually seen in small numbers among its relatives. Often forages on tiny air-borne insects above water and agricultural land.



L 17cm

## الخطاف أحمر العجز Red-rumped Swallow

*Cecropis daurica*



(MP)



Male (HAJ)



Male (MP)





(MK)

الدخلة رمادية الأذن  
Cetti's Warbler

*Cettia cetti*



L 13cm

Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor. This skulking warbler prefers vegetation thickets, reed beds and humid conditions. It has a characteristic song, an explosive chattering outburst that is easy to remember once heard.



(MK)



(MP)



(HAJ)





(MP)

Abundant passage migrant;  
rare winter and summer visitor.  
This long-distance migrant passes  
through the country in very large  
numbers, where it can be seen  
on bushes and trees anywhere.



L 11cm

دخلة الصفصاف

## Willow Warbler

*Phylloscopus trochilus*

(MP)



(HAJ)



(GHA)





(MK)

الدخلة الشائعة

## Common Chiffchaff

*Phylloscopus collybita*

L 11cm

Abundant passage migrant and common winter visitor. The most widespread and abundant leaf warbler in Kuwait.

Often migrates in large numbers; sometimes "grounded" by severe weather; up to 500 counted in mid April 1989.



(MP)



(MK)



(MP)





(PF)

Rare winter visitor. May be easily overlooked among the many wintering Chiffchaffs. Distinguished from the Common Chiffchaff by more drab brown-and-white colours, different head markings and call.



L 11cm

دخلة الجبال

## Mountain Chiffchaff

*Phylloscopus sindianus*



(MP)



(SIR)





(SHA)



(HAJ)

دخلة الغابات

## Wood Warbler

*Phylloscopus sibilatrix*

L 13cm

Scarce passage migrant. A rather large brightly coloured leaf warbler that occurs in low numbers in Kuwait. As all leaf warblers it is fond of clusters of trees and bushes, often in farms and plantations.

دخلة بونلي الشرقية

## Eastern Bonelli's Warbler

*Phylloscopus orientalis*

L 12cm

Extremely rare vagrant. May occur as an accidental wanderer from further west. Only one record in Kuwait from Jahra Farm in mid August 2008.



(MP)



(SIR)





(SIR)



(PF)

Extremely rare vagrant, usually observed in late autumn and winter. Remarkably similar to Yellow-browed Warbler, but generally more plainly marked, often paler or greyer.



L 10cm

## دخلة أوراق هيوم Hume's Leaf Warbler

*Phylloscopus humei*

Rare passage migrant and winter visitor. A very small agile warbler, often flicking its wings when searching in the foliage. Very similar to Hume's Leaf Warbler but with more contrastingly coloured plumage and a different call.



L 10cm

## الدخلة صفراء الحاجب Yellow-browed Warbler

*Phylloscopus inornatus*

(MK)







(DF - VIETNAM)



(PF)



(DF - VIETNAM)

الدخلة القاتمة

## Dusky Warbler

*Phylloscopus fuscatus*

L 11cm

Extremely rare vagrant, usually in the autumn or winter. This skulking dark brown warbler may be under-recorded, but if seen well it is quite distinctive: one should look for a long supercilium and reddish legs.

الدخلة الخضرا

## Green Warbler

*Phylloscopus nitidus*

L 11cm

Rare passage migrant. A small leaf warbler that is difficult to identify in the field; recently split into species status from the Greenish Warbler *Phylloscopus trochiloides*, which it greatly resembles.



(DO - TURKEY)





(GHA)

Common passage migrant and summer breeder. Kuwait is one of the few places in the world to find this range restricted species. A bird usually confined to reed beds, where it is located through its frog-like song.



L 15cm

دخلة القصب البصرية

Basra Reed Warbler

EN

*Acrocephalus griseldis*



Juvenile (MP)



(SIR)



(MP)





Capturing a gecko (CC)

دخلة القصب الكبيرة  
Great Reed Warbler  
*Acrocephalus arundinaceus*



L 19cm

Common passage migrant and scarce summer visitor; has bred. A widespread reed bird, identified by its large size and stout bill. In Kuwait it is sometimes difficult to separate from its relative the Indian Reed Warbler, although its song is slightly different.



(MP)



(MP)



(SIR)





(SIR)

Uncommon passage migrant; scarce resident. This *Acrocephalus* is extremely difficult to distinguish from its close relatives; extra care is needed, including good photographs to confirm observations.



L 18cm

دخلة القصب الهندية

## Indian Reed Warbler

*Acrocephalus (stentoreus) brunnescens*



(PF)



(SIR)



Juvenile (MP)





Winter (MK)

الدخلة المشورية

## Moustached Warbler

*Acrocephalus melanopogon*



L 13cm

Uncommon passage migrant and resident; breeds in Kuwait. A very distinctive *Acrocephalus* warbler with a dark cap which, like the others, is partial to marshes and reed beds. Its characteristic very hard “tak” call is often heard before the bird is seen in the reeds.



(MP)



(PF)



(PF)





(MK)

Common passage migrant. The scratchy song of this marsh bird may be heard in any bush during spring passage. As the similar Moustached Warbler it is usually attracted to marshes. Sometimes it migrates in groups; up to 50 seen in mid May 1966.



L 13cm

دخلة البردي

Sedge Warbler

*Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*



(SP)



(MK)



(MP)





(MP)

دخلة القصب الأوربية

## Eurasian Reed Warbler

*Acrocephalus scirpaceus*



L 13cm

Rare passage migrant. Nominate race of Reed Warbler (*Acrocephalus scirpaceus scirpaceus*); more common further west.

Almost impossible to distinguish in the field from the local race, Caspian Reed Warbler.



(SIR)



(MP)





(SIR)

Very common passage migrant and common summer visitor; breeds in Kuwait. A race of the Eurasian Reed Warbler but greyer than the Eurasian, very similar to Blyth's Reed and Marsh warblers, from which it is nearly impossible to distinguish in the field.



L 13cm

دخلة القصب القزوينية

## Caspian Reed Warbler

*Acrocephalus scirpaceus fuscus*



(SIR)



(SIR)



(MP)





(MP)

دخلة البطاح

## Marsh Warbler

*Acrocephalus palustris*



L 13cm

Common passage migrant. One of the commonest *Acrocephalus* on passage, its size and reddish legs distinguish it from Caspian Reed Warbler (but very difficult to identify in the field from other similar sized reed warblers). Has markedly different song, which is more melodious and full of mimicry.



(HAJ)



(SIR)



(SIR)





(DO - FINLAND)

Extremely rare vagrant. It has been seen twice in Kuwait in summer, during bird ringing operations. Extremely difficult to distinguish from Reed and Marsh Warblers in the field, unless its distinctive song is heard.



L 13cm

دخلة الشجر  
Blyth's Reed Warbler  
*Acrocephalus dumetorum*

Extremely rare vagrant. One record in early September 2006 at Sabah Al-Ahmad Natural Reserve is the first confirmation of this bird in Kuwait. This bird has similarities to Olivaceous and Sykes's warbler.



L 12cm

الدخلة المستحذية  
Booted Warbler  
*Iduna caligata*



(SIR)



(SIR)





(PF)



(MP)

دخلة سايكس

## Sykes's Warbler

*Iduna rama*



L 12cm

Scarce passage migrant. Formerly considered a race of the Booted Warbler due to similar appearance. Identification in the field requires prolonged observation, attention to details or a good rendition of the bird's song.

دخلة شجر الزيتون

## Olive-tree Warbler

*Hippolais olivetorum*



L 16cm

Extremely rare vagrant. A single confirmed record is from a dead bird found in mid September 1972. This large warbler is restricted to the Eastern Mediterranean, and occurs as an accidental transient this far east.



(NP - GREECE)



(DO - TURKEY)





(SIR)

Common passage migrant and uncommon summer visitor; breeds in Kuwait. This species seems to have profited from the spread of plantations, gardens and farms; it is currently breeding widely, even in urban areas. Tail bobbing is often observed in this species.



L 13cm

دخلة الزيتون الشرقية

Eastern Olivaceous Warbler

*Iduna pallida*



(MP)



(MP)





(GHA)

دخلة الوديان

## Upcher's Warbler

*Hippolais languida*



L 14.5cm

Uncommon passage migrant; common summer visitor. Between Olivaceous and Olive-tree Warblers in size, has the habit of fanning and swinging its tail from side-to-side like a shrike. They are seen in groups of 10-20 in summer, suggesting early dispersal from nearby breeding grounds.



(MP)



(SIR)





Autumn (SIR)

Scarce passage migrant, primarily observed during the spring in the company of other warbler species. A bird with a unique warbling song interrupted with nasal “violin” sounds.



L 13.5cm

الدخلة الصفراء

Icterine Warbler

*Hippolais icterina*



Autumn (MP)



Spring (MP)





(MP)

دخلة الجنادب

## Common Grasshopper Warbler

*Locustella naevia*

L 12.5cm

Scarce passage migrant. An extremely elusive bird that skulks in damp areas; its presence is usually recorded during ornithological ringing. In spring it is sometimes located due to its unusual song, which resembles the trilling sound of a grasshopper.



(MP)



(MP)





(MP)

Uncommon passage migrant. A marsh bird, but seen in thickets with bushes and trees anywhere during migration.

Its monotonous song, like the sound of a fishing reel, is heard in Kuwait's reed beds, where the species may perhaps breed.



L 14cm

دخلة الأنهار بيضاء الحنجرة

Savi's Warbler

*Locustella luscinioides*



(MP)



(MP)





دخلة الأنهار

## River Warbler

*Locustella fluviatilis*



L 13cm

Scarce passage migrant. An elusive bird, similar to Savi's Warbler in some respects. Although it may prefer damp habitats, it is often found in desert oasis and farmland away from wetlands during migration. Often skulks and forages close to the ground.

الدخلة مروحية الذيل

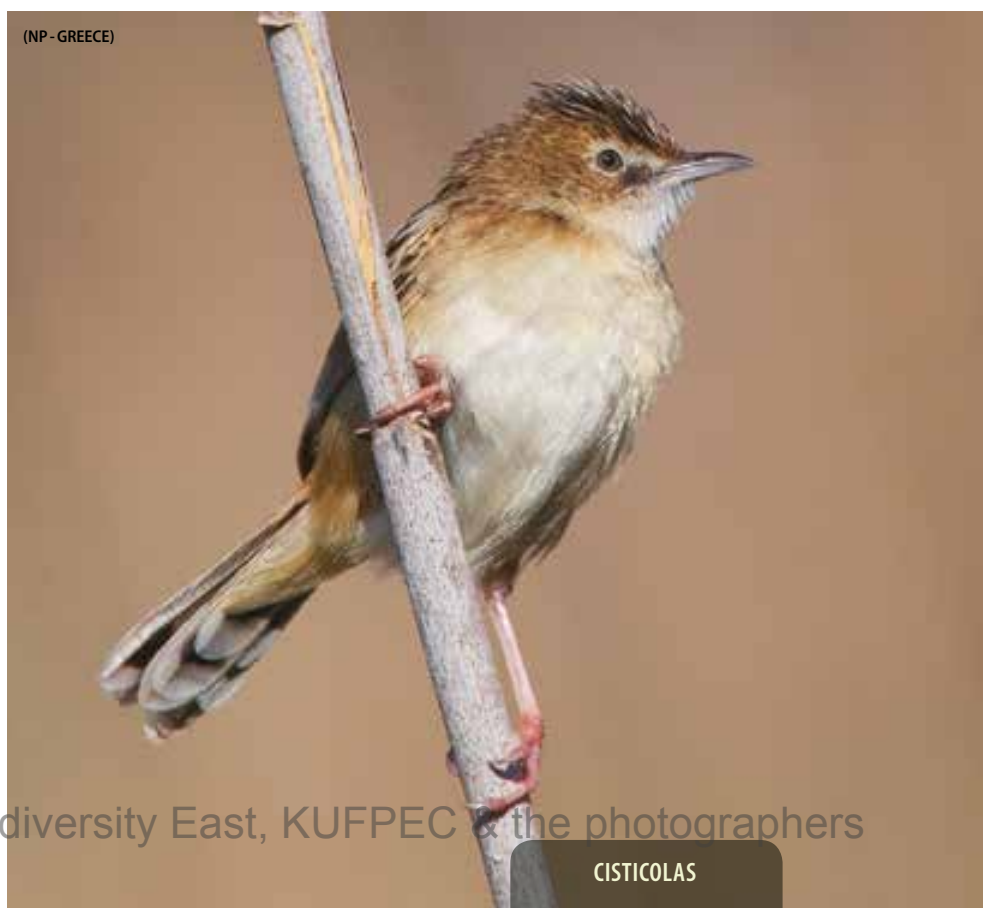
## Zitting Cisticola

*Cisticola juncidis*



L 10cm

Vagrant. A tiny warbler that may visit Kuwait irregularly during dispersal since it does breed in nearby southern Iraq. It has a characteristically rhythmic zitting call from which it gets its name. Its preferred habitat is tall grasslands, sometimes near wetlands.







(SHA)

Common resident; breeds in Kuwait.  
Has expanded its range in Kuwait after the late 1970s, even colonizing Failaka.  
It is found in damp grasslands, rough scrub thickets, tamarisk and reeds. A charismatic noisy bird, often singing a simple rattling trill.



L 11cm

المنمة

## Graceful Prinia

*Prinia gracilis*

(SIR)



In nest (KHA)



Juvenile (SIR)





(SIR)

الثرثار الأفغاني

## Afghan Babbler

*Turdoides caudata buttoni*



L 23cm

Uncommon resident; breeds in Kuwait.  
Has recently established a small  
population initially at Abdaly Farms near  
the Iraq border since about 2007.  
This is one of the only known sites in Kuwait  
to observe this rare regional specialty.



(SIR)



Juveniles (NAS)



(GHA)





Male (MK)

Common passage migrant; rare winter and summer visitor. One of Eurasia's most abundant woodland warblers. Widespread on bushes and trees throughout the country both in autumn and spring. Often observed in loose groups on passage; commonly up to 100 recorded in a day.



L 14cm

أبو قلنسوة

## Eurasian Blackcap

*Sylvia atricapilla*



Female (SIR)



Female (SIR)



Male (GHA)





(MK)

دخلة الحدائق

## Garden Warbler

*Sylvia borin*

L 14cm

Uncommon passage migrant;  
rare winter visitor. This species  
is usually seen in small numbers,  
on bushes and trees,  
in widely scattered areas  
throughout the country.



(SIR)



(MP)





Male autumn (SIR)

Uncommon passage migrant; rare winter visitor. The region's largest *Sylvia* warbler. A widespread bird on migration, usually seen in small numbers or sometimes in scattered groups wherever there are clusters of trees and bushes.



L 16cm

الدخلة الموشاة

## Barred Warbler

*Sylvia nisoria*

Female (SIR)



Immature autumn (SIR)



Male (MP)





(GHA)

الدخلة بيضاء الحنجرة الصغيرة

## Lesser Whitethroat

*Sylvia curruca*



L 13.5cm

Common passage migrant; scarce winter visitor. Widespread on passage. Several races occur in Kuwait with slight plumage differences. This variation in plumage sometimes makes this an identification challenge since confusion may arise with related species (Desert and Hume's).



(MP)



(MP)



(MP)





Autumn (SIR)

Scarce passage migrant. A unique specialty, this species is rarely observed in the Western Palearctic. This bird is remarkably similar to a Lesser Whitethroat, but much paler and slightly smaller.



L 13cm

الدخلة بيضاء الحنجرة الصحراوية

## Desert Whitethroat

*Sylvia minula*

Rare passage migrant. Usually darker and slightly larger than the otherwise similar Lesser Whitethroat. An Asian specialty breeding in the mountains of Iran, rarely observed in the Western Palearctic.



L 14cm

دخلة هيوم بيضاء الحنجرة

## Hume's Whitethroat

*Sylvia althaea*

Autumn (MP)



Autumn (PF)





Male autumn (MP)

دخلة البساتين الشرقية

## Eastern Orphean Warbler

*Sylvia crassirostris*



L 15cm

Uncommon passage migrant; rare summer visitor. The largest of our *Sylvia* warblers with a melodic song recalling that of a Nightingale. On migration, attracted to clumps of trees in plantations or oases.



Male autumn (SIR)



Female autumn (PF)





(SIR)

Common passage migrant and winter visitor. A very small light coloured warbler; one of the few warblers found out in the desert in mid winter. Has the peculiar habit of sometimes following Desert or Mourning Wheatears.



L 11.5cm

دخلة الصحراء الآسيوية

## Asian Desert Warbler

*Sylvia nana*

(HAJ)



(SIR)



(MP)





Male (MK)

الدخلة بيضاء الحنجرة الشائعة

## Common Whitethroat

*Sylvia communis*



L 14cm

Very common passage migrant and rare summer visitor. One of temperate Eurasia's most widespread warblers. Passes through Kuwait in very large numbers; sometimes over a thousand may be observed during "falls" when birds become grounded due to severe weather.



Female/immature male (CC)



Female/immature male (MK)



Immature (SIR)





Male (GHA)

Common passage migrant and winter visitor. Although this bird superficially recalls the Mediterranean's Sardinian Warbler, it is a range restricted Middle Eastern species. It has the habit of waving its tail in a peculiar way.



L 12.5cm

الدخلة الآسيوية

## Ménétriés's Warbler

*Sylvia mystacea*



Male (SHA)



Male (MP)



Female (SIR)





(DO - ITALY)

العندليب قصير الذيل

## Winter Wren

*Troglodytes troglodytes*



L 9.5cm

Extremely rare vagrant. First found in Kuwait in late November 1995; one of two sightings recorded in Kuwait in winter.

One of the smallest birds, with its characteristic short cocked tail and hard mechanically repeated ticking calls.

(TG - GREECE)







Uncommon resident; breeds in Kuwait.  
A non-indigenous Indomalayan species  
established in Kuwait since 1980.  
Its breeding populations fluctuate  
and it is much more localized  
than the Common Myna.



L 21cm

مينا الأنهار

**Bank Myna**

*Acridotheres ginginianus*



Juvenile (SIR)



(MP)



(PF)





(CC)

المينا الشائعة

## Common Myna

*Acridotheres tristis*

L 23cm

Very common resident; breeds in Kuwait. A non-indigenous species established since the late 1970's in Kuwait. Birds may have originated as cage bird escapees or transported via shipping to this country. Today it is a common city bird, often seen in fairly large flocks.



(SIR)



(MP)



(SP)





Male (SIR)

Scarce passage migrant; rare winter visitor. Large populations of this bird winter in northern India and move irregularly westwards to settle and breed in areas with a good supply of locusts. In Kuwait seen usually in small, fluctuating numbers.



L 21cm

السمرم

## Rose-coloured Starling

*Pastor roseus*

Juvenile (MP)



Immature moulting (PF)



Males spring (HAJ)





Winter (MK)

الزرزور الشائع

## Common Starling

*Sturnus vulgaris*

L 21cm

Very common winter visitor and common passage migrant. Often seen in very large flocks especially on agricultural land; sometimes roosts of over 1000 birds will gather at reed beds in winter.



Winter (CC)



(MP)





Female (SIR)

Scarce but widespread and regular visitor in winter. One of Eurasia's most widespread thrushes. Although a shy bird, its distinctive alarm calls easily make its presence known.



L 25cm

الشحرور الشائع

## Eurasian Blackbird

*Turdus merula*

Male (MP)



Female (MP)





Male (SIR)

السمنة سوداء الحنجرة

## Black-throated Thrush

*Turdus atrogularis*



L 23cm

Rare winter visitor. A thrush from central and northern Asia that regularly reaches Kuwait in very small numbers.

Often seen singly, but a count of 24 individuals was recorded at Al-Abraq in mid January 1985.



Male (PF)



Male (MP)





(AJ-JAPAN)

Extremely rare vagrant.  
Kuwait's rarest thrush, originating  
in Northern Asia. One was present  
at Al-Abraq in January and  
early February 1985.



L 24cm

السمنة القاتمة

## Dusky Thrush

*Turdus eunomus*

Vagrant. A mountain bird driven south  
by severe winters; it may seem very  
out of place in a desert oasis.  
In Kuwait it has been seen mainly  
in late autumn and winter at a variety  
of farms and also at Jahra Pool Reserve.



L 24cm

الشحرور أبيض الحنجرة

## Ring Ouzel

*Turdus torquatus*

Immature winter (GHA)



Winter (SIR)





Winter (SIR)

السمنة حمراء الجناح

Redwing

*Turdus iliacus*

L 20cm

Rare winter visitor. A small shy thrush which may be easily overlooked. Although quite similar to the much more common Song Thrush, this bird is seen in very small numbers.

سمنة الحقول

Fieldfare

*Turdus pilaris*

L 25cm

Rare winter visitor. One of the largest thrushes. Sometimes driven south during severe winters. Irregularly occurring in Kuwait in small numbers at farms and wetland areas.

Immature winter (NP - GREECE)







Winter (MP)

Common winter visitor; uncommon passage migrant. Often in small numbers in many agricultural areas throughout Kuwait. It is a shy bird and will burst out of thickets giving a distinctive ticking “zip” flight call.



L 22cm

السمنة المغردة  
Song Thrush  
*Turdus philomelos*



(MP)



(MP)



(MP)





Winter (MP)

السمنة الرقشاء

## Mistle Thrush

*Turdus viscivorus*

L 28cm

Rare winter visitor. As with most forest birds from the north this species usually seeks farmland and plantations in Kuwait.

It is a large thrush that has similar markings to a Song Thrush. Its flight-call is a distinctive dry rattling trill.



Winter (SIR)



Winter (PF)





(HAJ)

Uncommon winter visitor.  
One of Eurasia's most common forest  
and garden birds; occurs in very small  
numbers in Kuwait. It is rather  
shy and confined to areas with trees  
and bushes; often heard before it is seen.



L 14cm

أبو الحناء

## European Robin

*Erithacus rubecula*

(SHA)



(GW)



(CC)





Male (MP)

أزرق الحلق ذو البقعة الحمراء  
Red-spotted Bluethroat

*Luscinia svecica*



L 14cm

Common passage migrant and winter visitor. Prefers damp locations such as reed beds or humid thickets. This is the nominate subspecies from northern Eurasia and differs in the male's throat markings. In winter and autumn subspecies identification is difficult.



Female (SIR)



Male breeding plumage (MP)



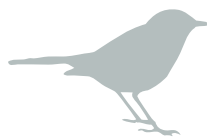
Female / immature male winter (MP)





Male (MK)

Winter visitor and scarce passage migrant; status of this subspecies is not well known. Other Bluethroat subspecies such as Caucasian Bluethroat (*Luscinia svecica magna*) which is lumped with this subspecies, also pass through Kuwait.



L 14cm

## أزرق الحلق ذو البقعة البيضاء White-spotted Bluethroat

*Luscinia svecica cyanecula*



Male (CC)



Male (GHA)



Male (MK)





(MP)

العندليب الشائع

## Thrush Nightingale

*Luscinia luscinia*


L 16cm

Uncommon passage migrant; rare summer visitor. This elusive species often skulks in thickets. It is probably quite widespread in Kuwait and sometimes seen in groups; an exceptional count of 99 birds was recorded in late April 1968.



(MP)



(SIR)



(MP)





Uncommon passage migrant. Famous for its beautiful song, this bird is usually seen singly or in small numbers, often hiding in thickets. It is much less common than the Thrush Nightingale in Kuwait.



L 16cm

## الهزار الشائع Common Nightingale

*Luscinia megarhynchos*

Vagrant. Kuwait's single record was first registered in early May 2007 at Jahra Farms. This is an eastern race of the Nightingale that breeds in Iran and is distinguished by its paler plumage. Needs careful observation for identification to be confirmed.



L 16cm

## الهزار الشرقي Eastern Nightingale

*Luscinia megarhynchos golzii*







Male breeding plumage (PF)

أبو صبرة

## White-throated Robin

*Irania gutturalis*

L 16cm

Uncommon passage migrant.  
A strikingly coloured nightingale-like bird,  
it is a unique Middle Eastern specialty.  
Usually observed in thickets or near  
bushes and trees on migration  
throughout most of Kuwait.



Male pale variant (GHA)



Male (HAJ)



Female/winter male (MP)





(MK)

Common passage migrant and uncommon summer visitor; breeds in Kuwait. Commonly seen on passage wherever thickets or bushes exist. Discovered breeding in the first years of 2000 at Abu Halifa, Abdaly, the Jahra area, Doha Nature Reserve and other sites.



L 15cm

الشوالة

## Rufous-tailed Scrub Robin

*Cercotrichas galactotes*



(MP)



(MP)



(HAJ)





(MK)

الفتاح

## Black Scrub Robin

*Cercotrichas podobe*



L 18cm

Extremely rare vagrant. First recorded in Kuwait in early May 2006, this unique bird may be expanding its range in Arabia. Good places to look for this bird are at the oasis farms in Kuwait's western desert.



(SHA)



(SHA)





Male winter (MP)

Vagrant. Most observations are from the winter and rarely in the autumn, at places with bushes and trees such as the desert oases. This is a unique Asian species and its migration routes are poorly known.



L 16cm

الحميراء بيضاء الكتف

## Eversmann's Redstart

*Phoenicurus erythronotus*



Male winter (MP)



Male winter (PF)





Female (GHA)



Male (MP)



Male (SIR)

الحميراء الدبساء الغربية

## Western Black Redstart

*Phoenicurus ochruros*



L 15cm

Uncommon passage migrant and winter visitor. Seen in very small numbers in many places throughout Kuwait. This bird often forages on the ground, characteristically bobbing its body and trembling its tail.

الحميراء الدبساء الشرقية

## Eastern Black Redstart

*Phoenicurus ochruros phoenicuroides*



L 15cm

Uncommon passage migrant and winter visitor. A subspecies probably originating from north-eastern Iran, identified in breeding plumage males only. Other races of Black Redstart may also visit Kuwait.



Male (SIR)



Male breeding plumage (MP)





Ehrenberg's Redstart (*Phoenicurus phoenicurus samamiscus*) (MP)

Very common passage migrant and scarce winter visitor. At least two subspecies occur. Usually seen throughout Kuwait wherever there are small patches of trees and bushes. Migrating flocks of up to 100 have been recorded.



L 15cm

الحميراء الشائعة

## Common Redstart

*Phoenicurus phoenicurus*



Female (SIR)



Female (SIR)



Male spring (GW)





Male breeding plumage (MK)

البرقش الأحمر

## Whinchat

*Saxicola rubetra*

L 12.5cm

Uncommon passage migrant;  
rare winter visitor. These small  
chats are attracted to bushes,  
and in Kuwait they are usually  
seen in very small numbers.

Female (SIR)

Male non-breeding (MP)

Female (SIR)





Male (SIR)

Uncommon passage migrant and winter visitor. Often seen in open terrain with scattered bushes, in winter on farmland and wetlands. Although typical of European landscapes, this bird exists in Kuwait alongside other stonechat species and subspecies. Conspicuous, likes to perch on the top of bushes.



L 12cm

البرقش الأوربي

## European Stonechat

*Saxicola rubicola*

Female (MP)



Male winter (SIR)



Female (SIR)





Male (SIR)



Female (SIR)

البرقش السيبيري

## Siberian Stonechat

*Saxicola maurus*

L 12cm

Uncommon passage migrant and winter visitor. This and the two related subspecies are Asian specialties often occurring in Kuwait together. The adult males give a striking colour contrast when compared to the European Stonechat.

البرقش البيزنطي

## Byzantine Stonechat

*Saxicola maurus armenicus*

L 12.5cm

Uncommon passage migrant and winter visitor. Only adult males distinguishable from nominate race; note the black tail, pure white belly and dark chestnut breast.



Male (SIR)



Female (SIR)





Male (SIR)



Female (MK)

Uncommon passage migrant and winter visitor. The palest Stonechat subspecies, easily distinguished when the adult male is in flight: the tail has white on the sides of its base, remarkably resembling the tail pattern of a Northern Wheatear!



L 12cm

البرقش القزويني

## Caspian Stonechat

*Saxicola maurus variegatus*

Extremely rare vagrant. A single observation, first recorded in Kuwait in early March 2008, at Jahra Pool Reserve. A distinctive Eastern Palearctic species breeding in Eastern Iran, and sometimes dispersing westwards.



L 13cm

البرقش الأبقع

## Pied Stonechat

*Saxicola caprata*

Spring (GHA)







Summer (MP)

الأبلق الرملي

## Isabelline Wheatear

*Oenanthe isabellina*

L 16cm

Very common passage migrant and winter visitor. Very frequently observed in a variety of habitats, typically seen on dry ground. Stands tall with elegant upright posture. During passage large numbers are seen, up to 50 in mid March 2000 at Khiran.



(GW)



Winter (JP)



Winter (SIR)





Male (GHA)

Common passage migrant. A long-distance migrant passing in large numbers. Seen in many types of habitats, including open terrain near Kuwait city. Up to 50 seen together between Kuwait City and Jahra in mid March 2000.



L 15cm

أبو بليق

## Northern Wheatear

*Oenanthe oenanthe*

Female (MP)



Male (HAJ)



Male (MP)





Male (HAJ)

فقاقة كردستان

## Kurdistan Wheatear

*Oenanthe xanthoprymna*



L 15cm

Scarce passage migrant. A Middle Eastern specialty with a remarkably restricted range.

It is related to Red-tailed Wheatear, both were formerly considered races within one species. Often seen singly or in very small groups.



Female (HAJ)



Male (HAJ)



Female (HAJ)





(MP)

Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor. More common than Kurdistan Wheatear in Kuwait; often seen in remote locations in small numbers. A unique Asian specialty, rarely observed in other countries in the Western Palearctic.



L 15cm

الفقاقة حمراء الذيل

Red-tailed Wheatear

*Oenanthe chrysopygia*

(MP)



(SIR)



(PF)





Male breeding plumage (GHA)

الفقاقة البقعاء

## Pied Wheatear

*Oenanthe pleschanka*



L 16cm

Very common passage migrant and rare winter visitor. A widespread black-and-white wheatear of the Eurasian steppes. Widely seen throughout Kuwait on migration, sometimes in passing groups; up to 40 seen at Al-Abraq in mid March 2000.

Male pale-throated form (DO)



Female (MP)



Immature male (MP)







Male (SIR)

Uncommon passage migrant. A typical Mediterranean breeder; arriving in small numbers this far east. Usually seen singly, but up to 10 recorded at Al-Abraq in mid March 2000.



L 15cm

الفقاقة سوداء الأذن الشرقية

## Eastern Black-eared Wheatear

*Oenanthe hispanica melanoleuca*

Male (MK)



Female (SIR)



Male pale-throated form (MP)





Male winter (VID)

فقاقة البادية

## Desert Wheatear

*Oenanthe deserti*

L 14.5cm

Very common passage migrant and common winter visitor. One of the most characteristic wheatears of Kuwait; often in the middle of the desert, but also on open agricultural terrain. In flight note the distinctively all-black tail.



Male (MK)



Male (MP)



Female (SIR)





Breeding plumage (SIR-SAUDI ARABIA)

Rare visitor in spring, autumn and winter. A large, nearly black wheatear of the Arabian deserts. A species preferring the most barren rocky deserts, usually attracted to rocky wadis and even abandoned buildings or ruins.



L 17cm

## الفقاقة السوداء بيضاء التاج White-crowned Wheatear

*Oenanthe leucopyga*



Winter/immature (MP)



Winter immature (MP)



Spring (SP)





Male (MK)



Male (HAJ)

الفقاقة الحزينة الشرقية

## Eastern Mourning Wheatear

*Oenanthe lugens*



L 13.5cm

Uncommon winter visitor. A characteristic winter bird of Kuwait's escarpment wadis, especially in the Jal Az-Zor. Usually seen in small numbers perching on rock outcrops or tiny desert bushes. A distinctive Middle Eastern specialty.

الفقاقة العربية

## Finsch's Wheatear

*Oenanthe finschii*



L 15cm

Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor. An Asian specialty, recorded in very small numbers, often out in the desert, especially attracted to rocky escarpments or wadis.



Female (HAJ)



Male (SIR)





(MP)

Vagrant. Single birds have been recorded in early spring, winter and rarely in autumn. Care must be taken not to confuse this species with the near identical Variable Wheatear *Oenanthe picata*, which breeds in Iran.



L 16.5cm



(PF)

الفقاقة السوداء ببيضاء البطن

## Hume's Wheatear

*Oenanthe albonigra*

Vagrant. Rarely observed in early spring and winter. One of several black-and-white desert wheatears so characteristic of the rocky deserts. A Middle Eastern specialty with a rather restricted distribution through central and western Arabia.



L 17cm

الفقاقة المقلنسة

## Hooded Wheatear

*Oenanthe monacha*



Male spring (OC-UAE)



Male winter (DM)





Male (SIR)

سمنة الصخور

## Rufous-tailed Rock Thrush

*Monticola saxatilis*



L 19cm

Uncommon passage migrant.  
A colourful mountain bird, occurring  
in lowland habitats in Kuwait  
on passage. Up to 10 have been  
recorded together on passage  
in Ahmadi, in early May 1967.



Male (MK)



Female (MP)



Female (MK)





Male (GW)

Uncommon passage migrant; scarce winter visitor. A bird of the Mediterranean and the mountains of western Asia. It will frequent rocky terrain and ruins, similar to habitats it breeds in further north.



L 21cm

السمنة الزرقاء

## Blue Rock Thrush

*Monticola solitarius*

Immature autumn (SIR)



Female (SIR)



Male (MK)





(GHA)

خاطف الذباب المرقط  
**Spotted Flycatcher**  
*Muscicapa striata*



L 14cm

Very common passage migrant; rare winter visitor. A remarkable long-distance migrant widespread throughout the temperate Western Palearctic. It will sometimes be seen migrating in loose groups; 75 recorded in late May 1968.

(MP)

(HAJ)

(SIR)







Male (SIR)

Uncommon passage migrant mainly in spring. A little-known Eurasian Flycatcher seen in Kuwait wherever there are trees and clumps of bushes. Sometimes it will gather in small flocks on migration; up to 23 in late April 1968.



L 13cm

خاطف الذباب شبه المطوق

Semi-collared Flycatcher

NT

*Ficedula semitorquata*

Female (MP)

Male (PF)







Male breeding plumage (MP)

خاطف الذباب أحمر الصدر  
Red-breasted Flycatcher

*Ficedula parva*



L 12cm

Scarce passage migrant, mainly in autumn.  
A very small flycatcher that spends  
a lot of time hunting insects near  
the ground or in low bushes.  
Usually found where there are  
thickets, plantations and orchards.



Female (MP)



Non-breeding autumn (SIR)





Winter (HAJ)

Extremely rare vagrant. Kuwait's first record of this tiny sunbird was in early January 2008 at Ras Subiya. This species possibly entered Kuwait after severe winter weather, perhaps from Iran, where the nearest known resident populations exist.



L 10cm

التمير الأرجواني  
Purple Sunbird  
*Cinnyris asiaticus*



Winter (MP)



Winter (SIR)





Male breeding plumage (MP)

العصفور الدوري

## House Sparrow

*Passer domesticus*

L 15cm

Abundant resident; breeds in Kuwait. The commonest urban bird, but also abundant at farms and houses in the countryside.

In agricultural land many hundreds may gather. This bird is specially adapted to live near humans, a very successful species.

Male winter (MP)

Female (MP)

Juvenile (SIR)







Male (KHA)

Very common winter visitor and common resident; breeds in Kuwait. A migratory sparrow that loves to travel, feed and breed in flocks. Breeding colonies have been recorded in Kuwait after 2001 at several locations, including Sabah Al-Ahmad Natural Reserve, Abdaly Farms, Jahra Farms and other places.



L 15cm

## العصفور الأندلسي Spanish Sparrow

*Passer hispaniolensis*

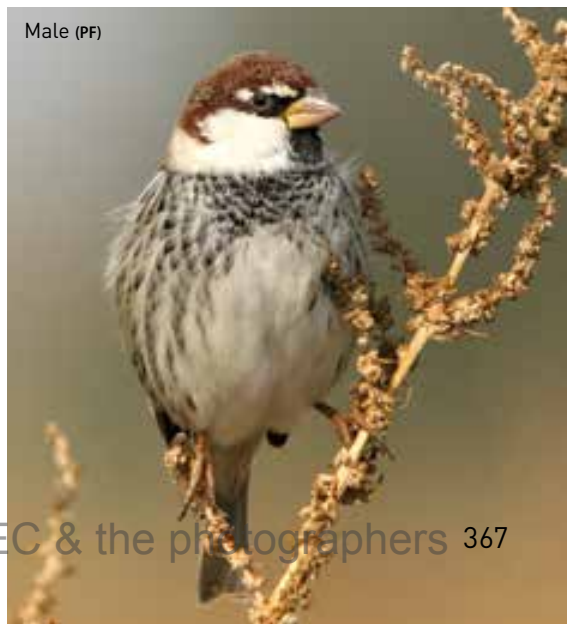
Female (MP)



Male (SIR)



Male (PF)







Male (PF)

عصفور البحر الميت  
Dead Sea Sparrow  
*Passer moabiticus*



L 12cm

Vagrant. Although this small sparrow species was first recorded in Kuwait in 1996 it has since been spotted at several localities. The species is a Middle Eastern specialty where it has a patchy and restricted distribution.

Female (SIR)



Male(SIR)



Males and females (GW)







(GHA)

Uncommon passage migrant and rare summer visitor; has bred in Kuwait. An Asian specialty with a patchy distribution in this part of the Western Palearctic. In Kuwait this species has been recorded in many places, but its superficial resemblance to the House Sparrow may mean it is often overlooked.



L 15cm

عصفور الصخور الباهت

Pale Rockfinch

*Carospiza brachydactyla*

(MP)



(PF)





Male (SIR)

## العصفور أصفر الحنجرة Yellow-throated Sparrow

*Gymnoris xanthocollis*



L 13.5cm

Uncommon passage migrant; scarce summer visitor; breeds in Kuwait. An Asian specialty with a limited distribution in the Western Palearctic. The status of this bird in Kuwait has probably been overlooked. It was first found breeding in 2000 and it currently nests sporadically at various sites.



Male (PF)



Immature (SIR)



Male (GHA)





Male (VL)

There is still doubt as to whether this species is naturally occurring in Kuwait; however a single sighting may have involved a true vagrant (although this is not yet confirmed by KORC). A male was spotted at Al-Abraq oasis in mid November 2010. Its normal range is in southern Arabia.



L 13cm

العصفور العربي الذهبي

## Arabian Golden Sparrow

*Passer euchlorus*

Uncommon resident; has bred in Kuwait. Considered non-indigenous in Kuwait; individuals may have originated from escaped caged birds. Breeding was first confirmed in 2004. Presumably native populations of this species are expanding their range in other parts of the Arabian peninsula.



L 11cm

فضي المنقار الهندي

## Indian Silverbill

*Lonchura malabarica*

(GHA)



(NAS)





(HAJ)

عصفور الشوك أبيض الصدر

## Radde's Accentor

*Prunella ocularis*

L 15.5cm

Extremely rare vagrant. Kuwait's first record was a bird in Al-Abraq in late March 2007 and a second in March 2012 at Sabah Al-Ahmad Natural Reserve; an accidental occurrence.

This is a mountain bird, its nearest known breeding area being the Zagros range of Iran.

عصفور الشوك الشائع

## Dunnock

*Prunella modularis*

L 14.5cm

Extremely rare vagrant. Most Kuwaiti records are during late autumn and winter. A widespread European garden bird, breeding in high mountains in the southern part of its Western Palearctic range. It superficially resembles a sparrow, formerly being called the Hedge Sparrow.



(DO - ITALY)





Male (DD - INDIA)



Male (AA - KAZAKSTAN)

Extremely rare vagrant. Kuwait's first record was one at Jahra Pool Reserve ringed in late November 1995. A little-known central Asian species, presumably far off its normal range.



L 15cm

## عصفور الشوك أسود الحنجرة Black-throated Accentor

*Prunella atrogularis*

Extremely rare vagrant. First recorded in Kuwait in mid November 2006 at Al-Abraq. An exotic-looking bird from the Eastern Palearctic. Characteristic field marks include two dark breast band markings, unlike any other wagtail.



L 17cm

## أصقع المروج Forest Wagtail

*Dendronanthus indicus*



(PF)



(MP)





Male breeding plumage (SIR)

راعية الخيل زرقاء الرأس  
Blue-headed Wagtail

*Motacilla flava flava*



L 16.5cm

Very common passage migrant; scarce summer visitor. The “Yellow Wagtail” species complex has many distinct races, most being distinguished by the male’s breeding plumaged head colourings. Females are all similar; hybrids among the races occur. Identification to subspecies level may be impossible for females and juvenile birds.



Female/immature (SIR)



Male (GHA)



Female/immature (MK)





Male (MP)



Male (SIR)

Common passage migrant. This bird along with other races may migrate in flocks. In severe weather they may be seen in hundreds during “falls”, even in the middle of the desert. Some plumages of this race may closely resemble the Citrine Wagtail.



L 16cm

## راعية خيل سايكس Sykes's Wagtail *Motacilla flava beema*

Rare passage migrant. This race may be seen among the large numbers of other “Yellow Wagtails” but usually in small numbers. The only race of wagtail where much of the head is white.



L 16cm

## راعية الخيل بيضاء الرأس White-headed Wagtail *Motacilla flava leucocephala*



Male (SIR)



Male (SIR)





Male (SIR)



Male (SIR)

## راعية الخيل سوداء الرأس الشرقية Eastern Black-headed Wagtail

*Motacilla flava 'melanogrisea'*



L 15.5cm

Common passage migrant.  
An eastern variant of the  
Black-headed Wagtail subspecies,  
which it closely resembles.  
As in most wagtails, this race will  
be seen in mixed wagtail flocks.

## راعية الخيل سوداء الرأس Black-headed Wagtail

*Motacilla flava feldegg*



L 15.5cm

Very common passage migrant and winter  
visitor. The most abundant of the "Yellow  
Wagtail" subspecies observed in Kuwait;  
this bird is especially attracted to coastal  
wetlands. Some authorities consider this  
characteristic subspecies a distinct species.



Male (MP)



Male (MK)





Male (SIR)



Male (MK)

Scarce passage migrant. This is superficially similar to the Black-headed subspecies. Careful observation is usually needed to discern males with this plumage.



L 16cm

## راعية الخيل رمادية الرأس Grey-headed Wagtail

*Motacilla flava thunbergi*

Common passage migrant. One of the most common of the "Yellow Wagtail" races, often with the commonly occurring Blue-headed race. This race may have an entirely yellow head, superficially similar to the Citrine Wagtail.



L 16cm

## راعية الخيل صفراء الرأس Yellow-headed Wagtail

*Motacilla flava lutea*



Male (SIR)



Male (MK)





Male spring (MK)

الصقعاء

## Citrine Wagtail

*Motacilla citreola*



L 18cm

Common passage migrant; rare winter visitor. This species may be frequently overlooked among the large numbers of migrating wagtails in spring and autumn. Although it passes in small numbers, it is widespread in Kuwait.



Male (SIR)



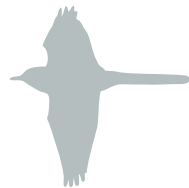
Female (SIR)





Male Spring (SIR)

Uncommon passage migrant; scarce winter visitor. This is a widespread Eurasian species that reaches Kuwait in fairly small numbers; the highest numbers have been recorded on the coast; 20 at Khiran in mid March 2000.



L 18cm

راعية الخيل الرمادية

**Grey Wagtail**

*Motacilla cinerea*



(MP)



Immature (SIR)





Non-breeding plumage (MP)

الأصقع

## White Wagtail

*Motacilla alba*

L 18cm

Abundant passage migrant and winter visitor. The commonest wagtail in Kuwait. Will often gather in large numbers on agricultural lands but also along the coast; up to 1000 recorded on passage in early March 1986. In autumn, they normally arrive as the last of the Yellow Wagtails are leaving.



Non-breeding (MP)



Non-breeding (SIR)





Spring (SIR)



Spring (GHA)

Extremely rare vagrant. Two records of this species have been confirmed in early March 2011 at Jahra Pool Reserve and February 2012 at Wafra Farms. It is a bird from the Eastern Palearctic with distinct markings; it may gain species status in the future.



L 18cm

## الأصقع المقنع Masked Wagtail

*Motacilla alba personata*

Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor. A large, long-legged pipit with streaky upperparts, it is a Siberian breeder that is regularly seen on passage in many areas in Kuwait. Although usually seen singly, a flock of 6 were spotted in early April 2007.



L 18cm

## الجشنة الكبيرة Richard's Pipit

*Anthus novaeseelandiae richardi*



Non-breeding (SIR)



Non-breeding (SIR)





Breeding plumage (MK)

الجشنة الصفراء

## Tawny Pipit

*Anthus campestris*

L 16.5cm

Very common passage migrant and uncommon winter visitor; rare summer visitor. The lightest coloured pipit regularly seen in Kuwait. Often on agricultural land and even arid open terrain; up to 35 recorded on passage in early April 2006.

(MP)

(HAJ)

(MP)





Spring (SIR)

Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor. A small, widespread Eurasian pipit. Not as common in Kuwait as it is further west during winter. Sometimes seen in small groups on passage.



L 14.5cm

## جشنة المروج Meadow Pipit

*Anthus pratensis*



Autumn (MP)



Winter (MP)





Non-breeding plumage (MP)

جشنة الشجر

## Tree Pipit

*Anthus trivialis*

L 15cm

Common passage migrant and scarce winter visitor. Very similar to Meadow Pipit, but usually distinguished by its discordant buzzing flight call. Often in small flocks on passage, usually on agricultural areas where it hunts insects stealthily in the grasses.



Non-breeding (GW)



Spring (MP)



Spring (MP)





Spring (MP)

Very common passage migrant and scarce winter visitor. Immediately distinguished among migrating pipits by its reddish breast and facial colouring, but this is quite variable among individuals, and it fades in winter.



L 15cm

## الجشنة حمراء الصدر Red-throated Pipit

*Anthus cervinus*



Non-breeding (SIR)



Spring (MP)



Non-breeding (GHA)





Non-breeding plumage (MP)

الجشنة كدراء الصدر

## Buff-bellied Pipit

*Anthus rubescens japonicus*



L 15.5cm

Rare irregular visitor. Recorded sporadically in winter, but also in late autumn and early spring. This is a close relative of the Water Pipit, with which it shares similar plumage; it may also resemble an Olive-backed Pipit. Careful observation is required to confirm identification in the field.



(SIR)



(MK)



(SIR)





Non-breeding plumage (CC)

Very common winter visitor and common passage migrant. The most abundant wintering pipit in Kuwait. Often seen in very large flocks, especially on agricultural land or on the coast. Up to 320 recorded in mid December 2002.



L 16cm

جشنة الماء

## Water Pipit

*Anthus spinoletta*

(SIR)



(GW)



(MP)





(MB - UAE)

الجشنة زيتونية الظهر  
Olive-backed Pipit

*Anthus hodgsoni*



L 14.5cm

Rare winter visitor. A northern breeder from Siberia and northern Russia, difficult to observe in the Western Palearctic. The species may be overlooked as a Tree Pipit, since it has a similar flight call. The key identification field marks include a strongly marked head and nearly unstreaked back.

الحسون الظالم  
Common Chaffinch

*Fringilla coelebs*



L 16cm

Rare winter visitor. One of the Western Palearctic's most widespread finches. Sometimes driven south during hard winters, but probably not occurring annually in Kuwait. Usually found on agricultural land and plantations in very small numbers.



Female (DO-ITALY)



Male winter (DO-ITALY)





Non-breeding plumage (GHA)

Rare winter visitor. As with the Chaffinch this northern bird has an irregular occurrence in Kuwait, but when it does occur it may be in small flocks; up to 15 in late November 1988.



L 16cm

الشرشور

## Brambling

*Fringilla montifringilla*

Rare winter visitor. A northern forest bird that may reach Kuwait irregularly, perhaps during severe winter weather. Populations and winter dispersal movements vary greatly from year to year in this species.



L 12cm

الحسون الشوكي

## Eurasian Siskin

*Carduelis spinus*

Non-breeding plumage (MP)





(MK)

الحسون الذهبي

## European Goldfinch

*Carduelis carduelis*

L 13cm

Rare passage migrant and winter visitor. Although one of Eurasia's most widespread finches further north, this species reaches Kuwait irregularly and in very small numbers.

الحسون الذهبي الشرقي

## Eastern Goldfinch

*Carduelis carduelis caniceps*

L 13cm

Extremely rare vagrant. The eastern equivalent of the European Goldfinch very rarely encountered in the Western Palearctic.

A single bird, the first occurrence of the species in Kuwait, was seen in mid May 2005 at Sabah-Alhmed Natural Reserve.



(VAR - INDIA)



(AA - KAZAKSTAN)





Female winter (MK)



Non-breeding plumage (MK)

Rare winter visitor. One of the many finches that occasionally extend their range this far south only during severe winters. Kuwait is near the southern limit of this species' regularly occurring winter range. Small flocks are sometimes observed, even in desert wadis or along the coast.



L 14cm

التفاحي

## Common Linnet

*Carduelis cannabina*

Scarce passage migrant, recorded more frequently in the autumn. This is a widespread Asian bird, which visits Kuwait fairly frequently; often seen in a variety of areas with trees and bushes. Small flocks may also be seen; up to 22 at Al-Abraq in mid October 2007.



L 15cm

الحسون الوردي

## Common Rosefinch

*Carpodacus erythrinus*

Male (NAS)



Female/immature (PF)





Spring (GHA)



Spring (PF)

النغر المنغولي

## Mongolian Finch

*Bucanetes mongolicus*

L 13cm

Extremely rare vagrant. This is a rare Asian specialty known to breed in Eastern and Central Iran. It was first observed in Kuwait in early March 2009 at Sabah Al-Ahmad Natural Reserve.

النغر الصحراوي

## Desert Finch

*Rhodospiza obsoleta*

L 14cm

Vagrant in spring and autumn. Although a widespread species that may be expanding its range in Arabia, this bird is rarely seen in Kuwait. The vast deserts do hold their secrets well; even evidence of its breeding in Kuwait has not yet been confirmed.



Breeding plumage (MP)



Breeding plumage (HAJ)





Breeding plumage (SIR)

Uncommon resident; breeds. A widespread species of the desert and semi-desert. Populations are known to be nomadic, the species' abundance in Kuwait may fluctuate; however, nesting occurrences are known to be localized.



L 13cm

النغر الشائع

## Trumpeter Finch

*Bucanetes githagineus*



(MP)

(SIR)







(MP)

درسة الذرة

## Corn Bunting

*Emberiza calandra*



L 19cm

Common winter visitor; uncommon passage migrant. A bird of open grain fields and grassy areas where it is often seen in small flocks; up to 184 recorded in early January 2002.



(MP)



(MP)



(GW)





Male non-breeding (NP-GREECE)



Non-breeding plumage (GHA)

Extremely rare vagrant. Recorded for the first time during spring passage in mid March 2002 at Heraijah, in Northern Kuwait and a second in March 2012 at Sabah Al-Ahmad Natural Reserve. A bird at the southern limits of its normal range.



L 17cm

الدرسة الصفراء

## Yellowhammer

*Emberiza citrinella*

Extremely rare vagrant. Very rarely recorded during spring migration. This is a mountain bird that may descend to lower elevations during winter conditions; the species' nearest breeding areas are in the southern Zagros mountains of Iran.



L 16cm

درسة الصخور

## Rock Bunting

*Emberiza cia*

Non-breeding plumage (GHA)







Non-breeding (SIR)



Non-breeding (SIR)

بلبل الشعير رمادي الرقبة

## Grey-necked Bunting

*Emberiza buchanani*



L 15cm

Extremely rare vagrant. Observed singly during spring and autumn migration; could easily be overlooked due to its resemblance to the Ortolan Bunting. An Asian specialty with nearest breeding areas in the Zagros mountains of Iran.

الدرسة الصغيرة

## Little Bunting

*Emberiza pusilla*



L 13cm

Rare winter visitor. These tiny buntings breed in the northern Eurasian taiga and tundra and may seem out of place in the desert. They have been documented several times in Kuwait at various locations.



Non-breeding plumage (SIR)





Male breeding plumage (MK)

Scarce passage migrant. A little-known species maintaining small populations with a restricted Western Asian global distribution. This Middle Eastern specialty is frequently seen in Kuwait in both spring and autumn. Often observed at water holes and ponds in desert oases.



L 17cm

## بلبل الشعير السوري الشرقي Eastern Cinereous Bunting

NT

*Emberiza cineracea semenowi*



Juvenile (SIR)

(PF)







Male spring (MP)

## بلبل الشعير الشائع Ortolan Bunting

*Emberiza hortulana*



L 16cm

Common passage migrant. Large numbers of these birds are frequently observed on passage in open farmland and a variety of other habitats, especially during the spring. They often migrate in groups; 500 were counted at Sulaibiya Pivot Fields in mid April 2008.



Female (HAI)



Males (MP)



Female (SIR)





Immature (SP)

Scarce passage migrant and rare winter visitor. This species has an unusual East-West migration pattern breeding in the Mediterranean and overwintering in South Asia. It is a very conspicuous bird on migration; up to 32 observed during passage in late August 2005.



L 17cm

الدرسة سوداء الرأس

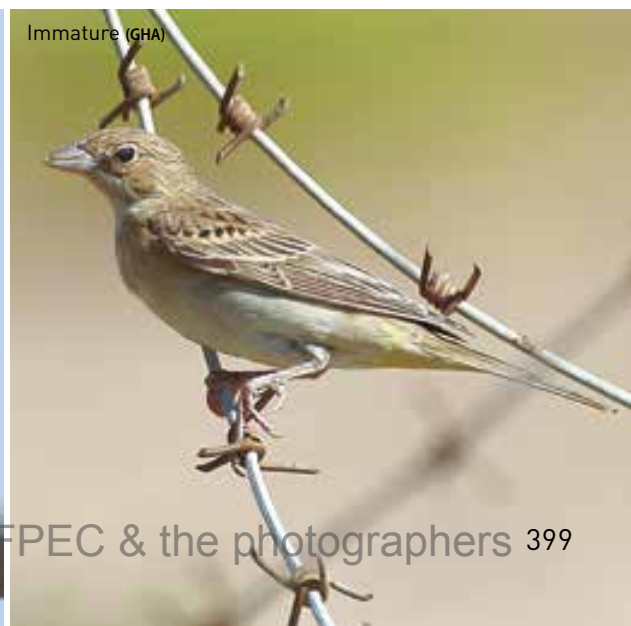
## Black-headed Bunting

*Emberiza melanocephala*

Male transitional (MP)



Male spring (MP)



Immature (GHA)





Immature (PF)

درسة الخمائل

## Rustic Bunting

*Emberiza rustica*

L 14cm

Extremely rare vagrant. Only twice recorded in Kuwait, during spring and autumn migration. A species breeding in northern Eurasia and wintering in eastern Asia, probably occurring as an accidental visitor.

الدرسة حمراء الرأس

## Red-headed Bunting

*Emberiza bruniceps*

L 16cm

Rare passage migrant and winter visitor. An Asian specialty rarely reaching the Western Palearctic. A close relative of the Black-headed Bunting with which it is known to hybridize south-east of the Caspian Sea. Difficult to distinguish from Black-headed Bunting in winter plumage.



Male (PF)





Male (DO-ITALY)

Rare winter visitor. This species prefers reed beds and salt marsh habitats during the non-breeding season. In Kuwait it has been seen on several occasions in wetland habitats around Kuwait Bay, most notably around Jahra.



L 15cm

درسة القصب

## Common Reed Bunting

*Emberiza schoeniclus*

Female (SIR)



Immature winter (SIR)





Flock of Crab-plovers, Bubiyan, late spring (MP)





# Appendices

---



# Glossary

*This account briefly helps define some of the ornithological and conservation terms used in this book. Some terms relating to the frequency of occurrence of birds in Kuwait are defined within the introductory section of the book (p. 52-53).*

**Accidental:** An extremely rare transient visitor, synonymous usually with “extremely rare vagrant”. Alludes to the notion that the natural occurrence of the species is by “accident” since these birds often come from very far away influenced by unusual weather conditions or even on board a ship such as a tanker. They are recorded very rarely (for example, less than three times within a decade).

**Adult:** A bird with definitive mature plumage.

**Birding:** The recreational pursuit of watching and recording wild birds. Almost synonymous with birdwatching this is the preferred term used by serious hobbyists who passionately enjoy studying birds. The English term “birder” originally referred to hunter of birds but this is no longer used as such.

**Birdwatching:** Practically synonymous with birding. Some birders consider this rendition of their hobby old-fashioned. Beyond the pastime and hobby of watching birds, the serious study of birds is termed ornithology. Amateurs, be it serious birders or leisure-striving birdwatchers, may contribute greatly to ornithology.

**Call:** A sound uttered by a bird that is unconnected with either courtship or territorial protection. A bird’s alarm call for example is a specific sound made to ward off enemies or to attract attention to a specific danger.

**Conservation status:** Relating to the scientific assessment of a bird’s population condition or how threatened or vulnerable the species is to extinction. On a global scale this assessment is organized by the IUCN (International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources), the world’s main au-

thority on conservation status of all species and the originator of the Red Data List.

**Colonial nester:** A bird species that nests with others either of its own species (monospecific colonies) or with other species (mixed-species colonies).

**Crepuscular:** Active during twilight hours, in morning and evening. Some crepuscular species are also partially nocturnal.

**Cryptic:** Marking, colouring or behaviour that makes a bird difficult for a predator to see.

**Disperser:** A bird that has moved away from its breeding or normal resident range.

**Diurnal:** Active during the day.

**Eclipse plumage:** Plumage that in certain birds, especially ducks, replaces the breeding plumage and is worn for only a short period of time. In male ducks this post-breeding plumage is cryptic (similar to female plumage).

**Ecoregion:** Distinctive ecosystem region at a broader scale than landscape. Terrestrial, freshwater and marine ecoregions have been mapped based on the biotic homogeneity and environmental conditions within these geographical units.

**Extirpation:** Analogous to local extinction. A species that no longer exists in a specific area but does survive elsewhere.

**Fall:** In birding, used to denote the event of a large number of migrant birds being “grounded” after harsh weather conditions. This often takes place during mass migration movements in spring or autumn but it is usually an irregular and unpredictable event.

**Feral:** In ornithology, used to denote a once-domesticated species that has reverted to the wild state. The feral pigeon, one of the commonest city birds, is an

example.

**Field marks:** Particular attributes of a bird by which a species can be separated from another with some certainty; regarded by birders as species’ identification “trademarks” or “identification tags.” This phrase was popularized by the late Roger Tory Peterson in his Natural History field guides.

**Habitat:** The specific environment where a bird lives (i.e. a species’ “home” environment); or a generic type of place which is a distinct feature of the landscape (i.e. a habitat type).

**Immature:** Young bird. After a young bird leaves the nest in juvenile plumage, which can last varying lengths of time, there follows a complete or partial moult into immature plumage. This persists until the attainment of adult plumage.

**Jizz:** The over-all character of a bird, its holistic impression that aids recognition in the field. The term is derived from fighter pilot’s acronym, “GISS”, which stands for General Impression Size and Shape. This term is important for birders in learning to identify a species immediately after a quick glance.

**Juvenile:** A very young bird in juvenile plumage. This plumage is the first full set of feathers of a young bird after it loses its natal down.

**List:** In birding, it is a list of species seen by a particular observer. Birders strive to keep annotated lists – be it a “day list”, “site list”, “year list” or a “life list.” Also used as a verb: to keep or compile a bird list. Passionate birders who keep many lists are sometimes affectionately called “listers.”

**Migration:** The periodical mass movement of birds from one re-

gion to another for the purpose of breeding, feeding or surviving harsh seasonal changes.

**Morph:** A colour or other physical variant within a local population of birds. Also referred to as form. Several bird species have morphs that are commonly seen side-by-side and they also interbreed. This creates variation in plumage types even within the same species.

**Nocturnal:** Active at night.

**Non-indigenous species:** Species not native to a country or region – usually dispersed through introductions by humans. Also known as introduced, alien or exotic species. Recently introduced pet birds are also called escapes. Most non-indigenous species do not survive, but when these species have established robust breeding populations for over a decade they may be considered naturalized.

**Pair:** Denotes two birds of the opposite sex that have mated. Widely used to count and record breeding colonies of birds or birds that may have restricted numbers of breeding individuals (i.e. raptors, waders etc.).

**Passerine:** So-called “sparrow-like birds” or perching birds; all birds within the family Passeriformes. Other usually large birds in many other families are known as non-passerines. Taxonomically this conveniently divides an area’s list of birds into two groups.

**Plumage:** The sum total of feathers on a bird’s body.

**Protected area:** In conservation, an area or site set aside through policy for the protection of nature. Sanctuary, refuge, reserve and various park designations involve categories of official protected areas. “Proposed protected areas” may involve sci-





Spring flowers in Sabah Al-Ahmad Natural Reserve (MP)

entific designations such as Bird-Life International's Important Bird Area designations.

**Population comeback:** In conservation, when an anthropogenic pressure has been lifted a species population may respond positively and be restored in terms of numbers and geographic range expansion. The increasing occurrence of some rare vagrants in Kuwait may relate to population comebacks, for example.

**Range:** The entire geographic area across which a species is regularly found.

**Race:** Synonymous with subspecies.

**Resident:** Non-migratory birds; some resident species do undertake localized movements or longer seasonal journeys, but this term denotes a species that remains in an area throughout the year.

**Roost:** A place or site used by birds for sleeping. Also, the act of settling at such a place.

**Ringling:** The scientific pursuit of marking birds usually using leg bands to explore their migration movements (also known as Banding in North America). Satellite telemetry is also used to follow bird movements. Professional teams also involving amateur birders organize such research pursuits using mist nets to safely trap, mark and immediately release wild birds.

**Scavenger:** A bird that eats carrion.

**Scope or spotting scope:** A telescope, usually a smaller light-

weight version used for birding not astronomy. When digital cameras are coupled onto the eyepiece the new technique of digiscoping can be easily mastered.

**Sea watching:** Observing birds or wildlife (using binoculars) during a boat trip.

**Soaring:** A method of flight by which a bird glides on rising air currents without actively flapping its wings. Vultures and other raptors or migrating large birds soar on thermals.

**Song:** Bird song generally consists of repeated "phrases" or notes to attract a mate, announce territory or both. Often sung at dawn ("dawn chorus") or prior to evening roost. Bird song can be a diagnostic means of identifying species.

**Species:** A distinctive group of interbreeding or potentially interbreeding individuals of common ancestry that are reproductively isolated from all other such groups. Distinct species sometimes do interbreed and form hybrids.

**Species complex:** A group of very closely related species or subspecies. For example, the yellow wagtails create a species complex made up of several closely related subspecies.

**Specialty:** For birders and naturalists, a specialty signifies a much sought-after localized species with a localized geographical range. It may also include species which are difficult to see in a particular region but may be easily seen in other geographic

realms. For example, some East Asian birds are considered specialties in Kuwait because they are not seen in any other part of the Western Palearctic Zoogeographic realm.

**Specialist:** As opposed to a generalist, it is a species that has specific requirements for certain habitats or food items. It is therefore usually restricted to certain places and therefore is more vulnerable to changes than a generalist. In contrast generalists can survive in many habitats and may utilize a wide range of food items.

**Subspecies:** Distinct population of a species that is morphologically unique and distinct from other populations and that is essentially geographically isolated at least during the breeding season from other distinct populations. Synonymous with race.

**Transitional plumage:** The period when a bird is changing plumage usually as result of moult from immature to adult plumage.

**Wetland:** A uniquely diverse range of habitat types that are characterized by shallow water or temporarily wet ground and sometimes the presence of specific wetland plant communities (such as water-loving plants). In Kuwait, temporary wet areas such as sabkha, playas, salt marshes, mudflats and intertidal marine shallows are considered wetlands. Micro-wetlands and artificial wetland types also exist in reservoirs, ponds, and agricultural areas also.

**Western Palearctic:** One of earth's major zoogeographic realms or ecozones (sometimes treated more broadly as the Palearctic). Biogeographical realms are separated from each other by the inherent uniqueness of their fauna and flora and their boundaries obviously do not have universal validity. In ornithology, the boundaries of this realm were defined by Cramp and Simmons in 1977 and are still treated as a legitimate delineation, making Kuwait one of the eastern most states within this realm.

**Vagrant:** A bird outside the normal or regularly recorded distribution of the species. Also sometimes known as accidental (i.e. referring to extremely rare vagrants). In less studied areas a vagrant may in fact refer to an irregularly occurring transient within the species' normal range.

**Wader:** Denotes all sandpipers and relatives in the order Charadriiformes. The term is synonymous with shorebird, an alternative term often used widely in the Americas for this group of birds.

**Zoogeography and biogeography:** The study of the geographical distribution of animals and life forms respectively. Zoogeographers have divided up the world into distinct "faunal regions" or biogeographic realms (also called ecozones). The Western Palearctic is one such realm with a distinctive fauna very different from others in the great Afro-Eurasian supercontinent.



# Index of scientific names

<i>Accipiter badius</i> . . . . .	115	<i>Calidris tenuirostris</i> . . . . .	186	<i>Falco subbuteo</i> . . . . .	133	<i>Motacilla citreola</i> . . . . .	378	<i>Prunella ocularis</i> . . . . .	372
<i>Accipiter brevipes</i> . . . . .	116	<i>Caprimulgus aegyptius</i> . . . . .	245	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i> . . . . .	129	<i>Motacilla flava beema</i> . . . . .	375	<i>Psittacula krameri</i> . . . . .	235
<i>Accipiter gentilis</i> . . . . .	118	<i>Caprimulgus europaeus</i> . . . . .	244	<i>Falco vespertinus</i> . . . . .	130	<i>Motacilla flava feldegg</i> . . . . .	376	<i>Pterocles alchata</i> . . . . .	226
<i>Accipiter nisus</i> . . . . .	117	<i>Carduelis cannabina</i> . . . . .	391	<i>Ficedula parva</i> . . . . .	364	<i>Motacilla flava flava</i> . . . . .	374	<i>Pterocles exustus</i> . . . . .	226
<i>Acridotheres ginginianus</i> . . . . .	325	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i> . . . . .	390	<i>Ficedula semitorquata</i> . . . . .	363	<i>Motacilla flava leucocephala</i> . . . . .	375	<i>Pterocles orientalis</i> . . . . .	227
<i>Acridotheres tristis</i> . . . . .	326	<i>Carduelis carduelis caniceps</i> . . . . .	390	<i>Fregata ariel</i> . . . . .	78	<i>Motacilla flava lutea</i> . . . . .	377	<i>Pterocles senegallus</i> . . . . .	227
<i>Acrocephalus arundinaceus</i> . . . . .	298	<i>Carduelis spinus</i> . . . . .	389	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i> . . . . .	388	<i>Motacilla flava 'melanogrisea'</i> . . . . .	376	<i>Ptyonoprogne fuligula obsoleta</i> . . . . .	288
<i>Acrocephalus dumetorum</i> . . . . .	305	<i>Carpodacus erythrinus</i> . . . . .	391	<i>Fringilla montifringilla</i> . . . . .	389	<i>Motacilla flava thunbergi</i> . . . . .	377	<i>Ptyonoprogne rupestris</i> . . . . .	288
<i>Acrocephalus griseldis</i> . . . . .	297	<i>Carpospiza brachydactyla</i> . . . . .	369	<i>Fulica atra</i> . . . . .	146	<i>Muscicapa striata</i> . . . . .	362	<i>Puffinus griseus</i> . . . . .	71
<i>Acrocephalus melanopogon</i> . . . . .	300	<i>Cecropis daurica</i> . . . . .	289	<i>Galerida cristata</i> . . . . .	280	<i>Neophron percnopterus</i> . . . . .	106	<i>Puffinus persicus</i> . . . . .	71
<i>Acrocephalus palustris</i> . . . . .	304	<i>Cercotrichas galactotes</i> . . . . .	341	<i>Gallinago gallinago</i> . . . . .	171	<i>Netta rufina</i> . . . . .	68	<i>Pycnonotus cafer</i> . . . . .	285
<i>Acrocephalus schoenobaenus</i> . . . . .	301	<i>Cercotrichas podobe</i> . . . . .	342	<i>Gallinago media</i> . . . . .	170	<i>Numenius arquata</i> . . . . .	176	<i>Pycnonotus leucogenys leucotis</i> . . . . .	284
<i>Acrocephalus scirpaceus</i> . . . . .	302	<i>Ceryle rudis</i> . . . . .	252	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i> . . . . .	145	<i>Numenius minutus</i> . . . . .	174	<i>Rallus aquaticus</i> . . . . .	139
<i>Acrocephalus scirpaceus fuscus</i> . . . . .	303	<i>Cettia cetti</i> . . . . .	290	<i>Gelochelidon nilotica</i> . . . . .	212	<i>Numenius phaeopus</i> . . . . .	175	<i>Ramphocoris clotbey</i> . . . . .	274
<i>Acrocephalus (stentoreus) brumescens</i> . . . . .	299	<i>Charadrius alexandrinus</i> . . . . .	164	<i>Glareola maldivarum</i> . . . . .	199	<i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i> . . . . .	86	<i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i> . . . . .	153
<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i> . . . . .	184	<i>Charadrius asiaticus</i> . . . . .	167	<i>Glareola nordmanni</i> . . . . .	200	<i>Oena capensis</i> . . . . .	234	<i>Remiz pendulinus</i> . . . . .	272
<i>Aegyptius monachus</i> . . . . .	108	<i>Charadrius atrifrons</i> . . . . .	165	<i>Glareola pratincola</i> . . . . .	198	<i>Oenanthe albonigra</i> . . . . .	359	<i>Rhodospiza obsoleta</i> . . . . .	392
<i>Alaemon alaudipes</i> . . . . .	273	<i>Charadrius dubius</i> . . . . .	163	<i>Grus grus</i> . . . . .	148	<i>Oenanthe chrysopygia</i> . . . . .	353	<i>Riparia riparia</i> . . . . .	286
<i>Alauda arvensis</i> . . . . .	282	<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i> . . . . .	162	<i>Gymnoris xanthocolis</i> . . . . .	370	<i>Oenanthe deserti</i> . . . . .	356	<i>Rissa tridactyla</i> . . . . .	201
<i>Alauda gulgula</i> . . . . .	282	<i>Charadrius leschenaultii</i> . . . . .	166	<i>Gyps fulvus</i> . . . . .	107	<i>Oenanthe finschii</i> . . . . .	358	<i>Saxicola caprata</i> . . . . .	349
<i>Alcedo atthis</i> . . . . .	251	<i>Charadrius morinellus</i> . . . . .	168	<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i> . . . . .	150	<i>Oenanthe hispanica melanoleuca</i> . . . . .	355	<i>Saxicola maurus</i> . . . . .	348
<i>Ammomanes cinctura</i> . . . . .	276	<i>Chlamydotis macqueenii</i> . . . . .	138	<i>Halcyon smyrnensis</i> . . . . .	250	<i>Oenanthe isabellina</i> . . . . .	350	<i>Saxicola maurus armenicus</i> . . . . .	348
<i>Ammomanes deserti</i> . . . . .	275	<i>Chlidonias hybrida</i> . . . . .	222	<i>Haliaeetus albicilla</i> . . . . .	105	<i>Oenanthe leucopyga</i> . . . . .	357	<i>Saxicola maurus variegatus</i> . . . . .	349
<i>Anas acuta</i> . . . . .	63	<i>Chlidonias leucopterus</i> . . . . .	223	<i>Himantopus himantopus</i> . . . . .	152	<i>Oenanthe lugens</i> . . . . .	358	<i>Saxicola rubetra</i> . . . . .	346
<i>Anas clypeata</i> . . . . .	62	<i>Chlidonias niger</i> . . . . .	224	<i>Hippolais icterina</i> . . . . .	309	<i>Oenanthe monacha</i> . . . . .	359	<i>Saxicola rubicola</i> . . . . .	347
<i>Anas crecca</i> . . . . .	65	<i>Chroicocephalus genei</i> . . . . .	202	<i>Hippolais languida</i> . . . . .	308	<i>Oenanthe oenanthe</i> . . . . .	351	<i>Scolopax rusticola</i> . . . . .	168
<i>Anas penelope</i> . . . . .	67	<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i> . . . . .	203	<i>Hippolais olivetorum</i> . . . . .	306	<i>Oenanthe pleschanka</i> . . . . .	354	<i>Spilopelia senegalensis</i> . . . . .	233
<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i> . . . . .	61	<i>Ciconia ciconia</i> . . . . .	80	<i>Hirundo rustica</i> . . . . .	287	<i>Oenanthe xanthopyrmyna</i> . . . . .	352	<i>Stercorarius longicaudus</i> . . . . .	225
<i>Anas querquedula</i> . . . . .	64	<i>Ciconia nigra</i> . . . . .	79	<i>Hydrocoleus minutus</i> . . . . .	201	<i>Onychoprion anaethetus</i> . . . . .	218	<i>Stercorarius parasiticus</i> . . . . .	225
<i>Anas strepera</i> . . . . .	60	<i>Cinnyris asiaticus</i> . . . . .	365	<i>Hydroprogne caspia</i> . . . . .	213	<i>Oriolus oriolus</i> . . . . .	266	<i>Stercorarius pomarinus</i> . . . . .	224
<i>Anhinga melanogaster rufa</i> . . . . .	99	<i>Circus cyaneus</i> . . . . .	112	<i>Hypocolius ampelinus</i> . . . . .	270	<i>Otus brucae</i> . . . . .	239	<i>Sterna bengalensis</i> . . . . .	215
<i>Anser albifrons</i> . . . . .	56	<i>Circus macrourus</i> . . . . .	113	<i>Iduna caligata</i> . . . . .	305	<i>Otus scops</i> . . . . .	240	<i>Sterna bergii</i> . . . . .	214
<i>Anser anser rubriroris</i> . . . . .	55	<i>Circus pygargus</i> . . . . .	114	<i>Iduna pallida</i> . . . . .	307	<i>Pandion haliaetus</i> . . . . .	100	<i>Sterna hirundo</i> . . . . .	219
<i>Anthropoides virgo</i> . . . . .	147	<i>Cisticola juncidis</i> . . . . .	312	<i>Iduna rama</i> . . . . .	306	<i>Parus major</i> . . . . .	271	<i>Sterna paradisaea</i> . . . . .	221
<i>Anthus campestris</i> . . . . .	382	<i>Clalidris melanotos</i> . . . . .	190	<i>Irania gutturalis</i> . . . . .	340	<i>Passer domesticus</i> . . . . .	366	<i>Sterna repressa</i> . . . . .	220
<i>Anthus cervinus</i> . . . . .	385	<i>Columba livia (forma domestica)</i> . . . . .	231	<i>Ixobrychus minutus</i> . . . . .	85	<i>Passer euchlorus</i> . . . . .	371	<i>Sterna sandvicensis</i> . . . . .	216
<i>Anthus hodgsoni</i> . . . . .	388	<i>Columba oenas</i> . . . . .	230	<i>Jynx torquilla</i> . . . . .	256	<i>Passer hispaniolensis</i> . . . . .	367	<i>Sternula albifrons</i> . . . . .	217
<i>Anthus novaeseelandiae richardi</i> . . . . .	381	<i>Columba palumbus</i> . . . . .	230	<i>Lanius aucheri</i> . . . . .	263	<i>Passer moabiticus</i> . . . . .	368	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i> . . . . .	232
<i>Anthus pratensis</i> . . . . .	383	<i>Coracias benghalensis</i> . . . . .	248	<i>Lanius collurio</i> . . . . .	257	<i>Pastor roseus</i> . . . . .	327	<i>Streptopelia orientalis meena</i> . . . . .	229
<i>Anthus rubescens japonicus</i> . . . . .	386	<i>Coracias garrulus</i> . . . . .	249	<i>Lanius isabellinus</i> . . . . .	258	<i>Pelecanus crispus</i> . . . . .	98	<i>Streptopelia risoria</i> . . . . .	231
<i>Anthus spinoletta</i> . . . . .	387	<i>Corvus frugilegus</i> . . . . .	269	<i>Lanius lorioti</i> . . . . .	262	<i>Pelecanus onocrotalus</i> . . . . .	98	<i>Streptopelia turtur</i> . . . . .	228
<i>Anthus trivialis</i> . . . . .	384	<i>Corvus ruficollis</i> . . . . .	269	<i>Lanius minor</i> . . . . .	261	<i>Pernis apivorus</i> . . . . .	101	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i> . . . . .	328
<i>Apus affinis</i> . . . . .	247	<i>Corvus splendens</i> . . . . .	268	<i>Lanius nubicus</i> . . . . .	265	<i>Pernis ptilorhynchus</i> . . . . .	102	<i>Sylvia althaea</i> . . . . .	319
<i>Apus apus</i> . . . . .	246	<i>Coturnix coturnix</i> . . . . .	54	<i>Lanius phoenicoides</i> . . . . .	259	<i>Phaethon aethereus</i> . . . . .	78	<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i> . . . . .	315
<i>Apus pallidus</i> . . . . .	247	<i>Crex crex</i> . . . . .	140	<i>Lanius schach</i> . . . . .	260	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i> . . . . .	96	<i>Sylvia borin</i> . . . . .	316
<i>Aquila chrysaetos</i> . . . . .	125	<i>Cuculus canorus</i> . . . . .	237	<i>Lanius senator</i> . . . . .	264	<i>Phalacrocorax nigrogularis</i> . . . . .	97	<i>Sylvia communis</i> . . . . .	322
<i>Aquila clanga</i> . . . . .	122	<i>Cursorius cursor</i> . . . . .	197	<i>Larus armenicus</i> . . . . .	208	<i>Phalaropus fularicus</i> . . . . .	196	<i>Sylvia crassirostris</i> . . . . .	320
<i>Aquila fasciatus</i> . . . . .	126	<i>Cygnus olor</i> . . . . .	57	<i>Larus cachinnans</i> . . . . .	207	<i>Phalaropus lobatus</i> . . . . .	195	<i>Sylvia curruca</i> . . . . .	318
<i>Aquila heliaca</i> . . . . .	124	<i>Delichon urbicum</i> . . . . .	289	<i>Larus canus</i> . . . . .	206	<i>Philomachus pugnax</i> . . . . .	194	<i>Sylvia minula</i> . . . . .	319
<i>Aquila nipalensis</i> . . . . .	123	<i>Dendronanthus indicus</i> . . . . .	373	<i>Larus fuscus</i> . . . . .	209	<i>Phoenicurus minor</i> . . . . .	77	<i>Sylvia mystacea</i> . . . . .	323
<i>Aquila pennata</i> . . . . .	127	<i>Ardea alba</i> . . . . .	267	<i>Larus fuscus barabensis</i> . . . . .	211	<i>Phoenicurus roseus</i> . . . . .	76	<i>Sylvia nana</i> . . . . .	321
<i>Aquila pomarina</i> . . . . .	121	<i>Ardea cinerea</i> . . . . .	91	<i>Larus fuscus heuglini</i> . . . . .	210	<i>Phoenicurus erythronotus</i> . . . . .	343	<i>Sylvia nisoria</i> . . . . .	317
<i>Ardea alba</i> . . . . .	93	<i>Ardea purpurea</i> . . . . .	92	<i>Larus ichtyaetus</i> . . . . .	205	<i>Phoenicurus ochruros</i> . . . . .	344	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i> . . . . .	72
<i>Ardea cinerea</i> . . . . .	91	<i>Egretta garzetta</i> . . . . .	94	<i>Larus melanocephalus</i> . . . . .	204	<i>Phoenicurus ochruros</i> . . . . .	344	<i>Tachymarpis melba</i> . . . . .	246
<i>Ardea purpurea</i> . . . . .	92	<i>Egretta gularis schistacea</i> . . . . .	95	<i>Leucophaeus pipixcan</i> . . . . .	204	<i>phoenicoides</i> . . . . .	344	<i>Tadorna ferruginea</i> . . . . .	59
<i>Ardeola grayii</i> . . . . .	89	<i>Elanus caeruleus</i> . . . . .	103	<i>Limicola falcinellus</i> . . . . .	193	<i>Phoenicurus phoenicurus</i> . . . . .	345	<i>Tadorna tadorna</i> . . . . .	58
<i>Ardeola ralloides</i> . . . . .	88	<i>Emberiza bruniceps</i> . . . . .	400	<i>Limosa lapponica</i> . . . . .	173	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i> . . . . .	292	<i>Threskiornis aethiopicus</i> . . . . .	81
<i>Arenaria interpres</i> . . . . .	185	<i>Emberiza buchanani</i> . . . . .	396	<i>Limosa limosa</i> . . . . .	172	<i>Phylloscopus fuscatus</i> . . . . .	296	<i>Torgos tracheliotus</i> . . . . .	109
<i>Asio flammeus</i> . . . . .	243	<i>Emberiza caelindra</i> . . . . .	394	<i>Locustella fluviatilis</i> . . . . .	312	<i>Phylloscopus humei</i> . . . . .	295	<i>Tringa erythropus</i> . . . . .	177
<i>Asio otus</i> . . . . .	242	<i>Emberiza cia</i> . . . . .	395	<i>Locustella luscinioides</i> . . . . .	311	<i>Phylloscopus inornatus</i> . . . . .	295	<i>Tringa glareola</i> . . . . .	182
<i>Athene noctua liliith</i> . . . . .	242	<i>Emberiza cineracea semenowi</i> . . . . .	397	<i>Locustella naevia</i> . . . . .	310	<i>Phylloscopus nitidus</i> . . . . .	296	<i>Tringa nebularia</i> . . . . .	180
<i>Aythya ferina</i> . . . . .	66	<i>Emberiza citrinella</i> . . . . .	395	<i>Lonchura malabarica</i> . . . . .	371	<i>Phylloscopus orientalis</i> . . . . .	294	<i>Tringa ochropus</i> . . . . .	181
<i>Aythya fuligula</i> . . . . .	70	<i>Emberiza hortulana</i> . . . . .	398	<i>Lullula arborea</i> . . . . .	283	<i>Phylloscopus sibilatrix</i> . . . . .	294	<i>Tringa stagnatilis</i> . . . . .	179
<i>Aythya nyroca</i> . . . . .	69	<i>Emberiza melanocephala</i> . . . . .	399	<i>Luscinia luscinia</i> . . . . .	338	<i>Phylloscopus sindianus</i> . . . . .	293	<i>Tringa totanus</i> . . . . .	178
<i>Botaurus stellaris</i> . . . . .	84	<i>Emberiza pusilla</i> . . . . .	396	<i>Luscinia megarhynchos</i> . . . . .	339	<i>Phylloscopus trochilus</i> . . . . .	291	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i> . . . . .	324
<i>Bubo ascalaphus</i> . . . . .	241	<i>Emberiza rustica</i> . . . . .	400	<i>Luscinia megarhynchos golzii</i> . . . . .	339	<i>Platalea leucorodia</i> . . . . .	83	<i>Turdoides caudata huttoni</i> . . . . .	314
<i>Bubulcus ibis</i> . . . . .	90	<i>Emberiza schoeniclus</i> . . . . .	401	<i>Luscinia svecica</i> . . . . .	336	<i>Plegadis falcinellus</i> . . . . .	82	<i>Turdus atrogularis</i> . . . . .	330
<i>Bucanetes githagineus</i> . . . . .	393	<i>Eremophila bilopha</i> . . . . .	283	<i>Luscinia svecica cyanecula</i> . . . . .	337	<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i> . . . . .	159	<i>Turdus eunomus</i> . . . . .	331
<i>Bucanetes mongolicus</i> . . . . .	392	<i>Eremopterix nigriceps</i> . . . . .	281	<i>Lymnocyrtus minimus</i> . . . . .	169	<i>Pluvialis fulva</i> . . . . .	160	<i>Turdus iliacus</i> . . . . .	332
<i>Burhinus oedipnemus</i> . . . . .	149	<i>Erythacus rubecula</i> . . . . .	335	<i>Marmaronetta angustirostris</i> . . . . .	66	<i>Podiceps auritus</i> . . . . .	74	<i>Turdus merula</i> . . . . .	329
<i>Buteo buteo vulpinus</i> . . . . .	119	<i>Eudynamys scolopaceus</i> . . . . .	235	<i>Melanocorypha bimaculata</i> . . . . .	275	<i>Podiceps cristatus</i> . . . . .	73	<i>Turdus philomelos</i> . . . . .	333
<i>Buteo rufinus</i> . . . . .	120	<i>Falco amurensis</i> . . . . .	130	<i>Melanocorypha calandria</i> . . . . .	274	<i>Podiceps grisegena</i> . . . . .	74	<i>Turdus pilaris</i> . . . . .	332
<i>Butorides striata</i> . . . . .	87	<i>Falco columbarius</i> . . . . .	132	<i>Mergus serrator</i> . . . . .	57	<i>Podiceps nigricollis</i> . . . . .	75	<i>Turdus torquatus</i> . . . . .	331
<i>Calandrella brachydactyla</i> . . . . .	277	<i>Falco concolor</i> . . . . .	131	<i>Merops apiaster</i> . . . . .	255	<i>Poecile lugubris</i> . . . . .	271	<i>Turdus viscivorus</i> . . . . .	334
<i>Calandrella rufescens</i> . . . . .	278	<i>Falco cherrug</i> . . . . .	135	<i>Merops persicus</i> . . . . .	254	<i>Porphyrio porphyrio</i> . . . . .	144	<i>Tyto alba</i> . . . . .	238
<i>Calidris alba</i> . . . . .	187	<i>Falco columbarius</i> . . . . .	132	<i>Microcarbo pygmeus</i> . . . . .	99	<i>Porzana parva</i> . . . . .	141	<i>Upupa epops</i> . . . . .	253
<i>Calidris alpina</i> . . . . .	192	<i>Falco naumanni</i> . . . . .	128	<i>Milvus migrans</i> . . . . .	104	<i>Porzana porzana</i> . . . . .	143	<i>Vanellus gregarius</i> . . . . .	157
<i>Calidris canutus</i> . . . . .	186	<i>Falco peregrinus</i> . . . . .	136	<i>Monticola saxatilis</i> . . . . .	360	<i>Porzana pusilla</i> . . . . .	142	<i>Vanellus indicus</i> . . . . .	156
<i>Calidris ferruginea</i> . . . . .	191	<i>Falco peregrinus pelegrinoides</i> . . . . .	137	<i>Monticola solitarius</i> . . . . .	361	<i>Prinia gracilis</i> . . . . .	313	<i>Vanellus leucurus</i> . . . . .	158
<i>Calidris minuta</i> . . . . .	188			<i>Motacilla alba</i> . . . . .	380	<i>Prunella atrogularis</i>			



# Index of common English names

Afghan Babbler	314	Common Redshank	178	Feral Pigeon	231	Long-legged Buzzard	120	Rufous Turtle Dove	229
African Collared Dove	231	Common Redstart	345	Ferruginous Duck	69	Long-tailed Shrike	260	Rustic Bunting	400
African Darter	99	Common Reed Bunting	401	Fieldfare	332	Long-tailed Skua	225	Saker Falcon	135
African Sacred Ibis	81	Common Ringed Plover	162	Finsch's Wheatear	358	Macqueen's Bustard	138	Sanderling	187
Alpine Swift	246	Common Rosefinch	391	Forest Wagtail	373	Mallard	61	Sand Martin	286
Amur Falcon	130	Common Sandpiper	184	Franklin's Gull	204	Marbled Duck	66	Sandwich Tern	216
Arabian Golden Sparrow	371	Common Shelduck	58	Gadwall	60	Marsh Sandpiper	179	Savi's Warbler	311
Arabian Grey Shrike	263	Common Snipe	171	Garden Warbler	316	Marsh Warbler	304	Sedge Warbler	301
Arctic Skua	225	Common Starling	328	Garganey	64	Masked Shrike	265	Semi-collared Flycatcher	363
Arctic Tern	221	Common Swift	246	Glossy Ibis	82	Masked Wagtail	381	Shikra	115
Armenian Gull	208	Common Tern	219	Golden Eagle	125	Maurayan Grey Shrike	262	Short-eared Owl	243
Ashy Drongo	267	Common Whitethroat	322	Graceful Prinia	313	Meadow Pipit	383	Short-toed Snake Eagle	110
Asian Desert Warbler	321	Common Wood Pigeon	230	Great Black-headed Gull	205	Mediterranean Gull	204	Siberian Stonechat	348
Asian Koel	235	Corn Bunting	394	Great Cormorant	96	Ménétriés's Warbler	323	Slender-billed Gull	202
Baillon's Crake	142	Corncrake	140	Great Crested Grebe	73	Merlin	132	Sociable Lapwing	157
Baltic Gull	209	Crab-plover	151	Greater Flamingo	76	Mistle Thrush	334	Socotra Cormorant	97
Bank Myna	325	Cream-coloured Courser	197	Greater Hoopoe-Lark	273	Mongolian Finch	392	Sombre Tit	271
Barbary Falcon	137	Crested Honey Buzzard	102	Greater Sand Plover	166	Montagu's Harrier	114	Song Thrush	333
Barn Swallow	287	Crested Lark	280	Greater Short-toed Lark	277	Mountain Chiffchaff	293	Sooty Falcon	131
Barred Warbler	317	Curlow Sandpiper	191	Greater Spotted Eagle	122	Moustached Warbler	300	Sooty Shearwater	71
Bar-tailed Godwit	173	Dalmatian Pelican	98	Greater White-fronted Goose	56	Mute Swan	57	Spanish Sparrow	367
Bar-tailed Lark	276	Daurian Shrike	258	Great Knot	186	Namaqua Dove	234	Spotted Crake	143
Basra Reed Warbler	297	Dead Sea Sparrow	368	Great Reed Warbler	298	Northern Goshawk	118	Spotted Flycatcher	362
Bimaculated Lark	275	Demoiselle Crane	147	Great Snipe	170	Northern Lapwing	154	Spotted Redshank	177
Black-bellied Sandgrouse	227	Desert Finch	392	Great Spotted Cuckoo	236	Northern Pintail	63	Spotted Sandgrouse	227
Black-crowned Night Heron	86	Desert Lark	275	Great Tit	271	Northern Shoveler	62	Spur-winged Lapwing	155
Black-crowned Sparrow-Lark	281	Desert Wheatear	356	Great White Pelican	98	Northern Wheatear	351	Squacco Heron	88
Black-headed Bunting	399	Desert Whitethroat	319	Green Sandpiper	181	Olive-backed Pipit	388	Steppe Buzzard	119
Black-headed Wagtail	376	Dunlin	192	Green Warbler	296	Olive-tree Warbler	306	Steppe Eagle	123
Black Kite	104	Dunnock	372	Grey-headed Wagtail	377	Oriental Pratincole	199	Steppe Gull	211
Black-legged Kittiwake	201	Dunn's Lark	279	Grey Heron	91	Oriental Skylark	282	Stock Dove	230
Black-necked Grebe	75	Dusky Thrush	331	Grey-necked Bunting	396	Ortolan Bunting	398	Striated Heron	87
Black Scrub Robin	342	Dusky Warbler	296	Grey Phalarope	196	Pacific Golden Plover	160	Swift Tern	214
Black Stork	79	Eastern Black-eared Wheatear	355	Grey Plover	161	Pale Crack Martin	288	Sykes's Wagtail	375
Black-tailed Godwit	172	Eastern Black-headed Wagtail	376	Grey Wagtail	379	Pale Rockfinch	369	Sykes's Warbler	306
Black Tern	224	Eastern Black Redstart	344	Gull-billed Tern	212	Pallid Harrier	113	Tawny Pipit	382
Black-throated Accentor	373	Eastern Bonelli's Warbler	294	Hen Harrier	112	Pallid Scops Owl	239	Temminck's Lark	283
Black-throated Thrush	330	Eastern Cinereous Bunting	397	Heuglin's Gull	210	Pallid Swift	247	Temminck's Stint	189
Black-winged Kite	103	Eastern Goldfinch	390	Hooded Wheatear	359	Pectoral Sandpiper	190	Terek Sandpiper	183
Black-winged Pratincole	200	Eastern Greylag Goose	55	Horned Grebe	74	Peregrine Falcon	136	Thick-billed Lark	274
Black-winged Stilt	152	Eastern Imperial Eagle	124	House Crow	268	Persian Shearwater	71	Thrush Nightingale	338
Blue-cheeked Bee-eater	254	Eastern Mourning Wheatear	358	House Sparrow	366	Pharaoh Eagle Owl	241	Tree Pipit	384
Blue-headed Wagtail	374	Eastern Nightingale	339	Hume's Leaf Warbler	295	Pied Avocet	153	Trumpeter Finch	393
Blue Rock Thrush	361	Eastern Olivaceous Warbler	307	Hume's Wheatear	359	Pied Kingfisher	252	Tufted Duck	70
Blyth's Reed Warbler	305	Eastern Orphean Warbler	320	Hume's Whitethroat	319	Pied Stonechat	349	Turkestan Shrike	259
Bonelli's Eagle	126	Egyptian Nightjar	245	Hypocolius	270	Pied Wheatear	354	Upcher's Warbler	308
Booted Eagle	127	Egyptian Vulture	106	Icterine Warbler	309	Pin-tailed Sandgrouse	226	Water Pipit	387
Booted Warbler	305	Eurasian Bittern	84	Indian Pond Heron	89	Pomarine Skua	224	Water Rail	139
Brambling	389	Eurasian Blackbird	329	Indian Reed Warbler	299	Purple Heron	92	Western Barn Owl	238
Bridled Tern	218	Eurasian Blackcap	315	Indian Reef Heron	95	Purple Sunbird	365	Western Black Redstart	344
Broad-billed Sandpiper	193	Eurasian Collared Dove	232	Indian Roller	248	Purple Swampphen	144	Western Cattle Egret	90
Brown-necked Raven	269	Eurasian Coot	146	Indian Silverbill	371	Pygmy Cormorant	99	Western Great Egret	93
Buff-bellied Pipit	386	Eurasian Crag Martin	288	Isabelline Wheatear	350	Radde's Accentor	372	Western Marsh Harrier	111
Byzantine Stonechat	348	Eurasian Curlew	176	Jack Snipe	169	Red-backed Shrike	257	Western Osprey	100
Calandra Lark	274	Eurasian Dotterel	168	Kentish Plover	164	Red-billed Tropicbird	78	Western White Stork	80
Caspian Gull	207	Eurasian Golden Oriole	266	Kurdistan Wheatear	352	Red-breasted Flycatcher	364	Whimbrel	175
Caspian Plover	167	Eurasian Golden Plover	159	Lanner Falcon	134	Red-breasted Merganser	57	Whinchat	346
Caspian Reed Warbler	303	Eurasian Griffon Vulture	107	Lappet-faced Vulture	109	Red-crested Pochard	68	Whiskered Tern	222
Caspian Stonechat	349	Eurasian Hobby	133	Laughing Dove	233	Red-footed Falcon	130	White-cheeked Tern	220
Caspian Tern	213	Eurasian Hoopoe	253	Lesser Crested Tern	215	Red-headed Bunting	400	White-crowned Wheatear	357
Cetti's Warbler	290	Eurasian Nightjar	244	Lesser Flamingo	77	Red Knot	186	White-eared Bulbul	284
Chestnut-bellied Sandgrouse	226	Eurasian Oystercatcher	150	Lesser Frigatebird	78	Red-necked Grebe	74	White-headed Wagtail	375
Cinereous Vulture	108	Eurasian Penduline Tit	272	Lesser Grey Shrike	261	Red-necked Phalarope	195	White-spotted Bluethroat	337
Citrine Wagtail	378	Eurasian Reed Warbler	302	Lesser Kestrel	128	Red-rumped Swallow	289	White-tailed Eagle	105
Collared Pratincole	198	Eurasian Scops Owl	240	Lesser Sand Plover	165	Red-spotted Bluethroat	336	White-tailed Lapwing	158
Common Black-headed Gull	203	Eurasian Siskin	389	Lesser Short-toed Lark	278	Red-tailed Wheatear	353	White-throated Kingfisher	250
Common Chaffinch	388	Eurasian Skylark	282	Lesser Spotted Eagle	121	Red-throated Pipit	385	White-throated Robin	340
Common Chiffchaff	292	Eurasian Sparrowhawk	117	Lesser Whitethroat	318	Red-vented Bulbul	285	White Wagtail	380
Common Crane	148	Eurasian Spoonbill	83	Levant Sparrowhawk	116	Red-wattled Lapwing	156	White-winged Tern	223
Common Cuckoo	237	Eurasian Stone-curlew	149	Lilith Owllet	242	Redwing	332	Willow Warbler	291
Common Grasshopper Warbler	310	Eurasian Teal	65	Little Bittern	85	Richard's Pipit	381	Winter Wren	324
Common Greenshank	180	Eurasian Wigeon	67	Little Bunting	396	Ring Ouzel	331	Woodchat Shrike	264
Common Gull	206	Eurasian Woodcock	168	Little Crake	141	River Warbler	312	Wood Lark	283
Common House Martin	289	Eurasian Wryneck	256	Little Curlew	174	Rock Bunting	395	Wood Sandpiper	182
Common Kestrel	129	European Bee-eater	255	Little Egret	94	Rook	269	Wood Warbler	294
Common Kingfisher	251	European Goldfinch	390	Little Grebe	72	Rose-coloured Starling	327	Yellow-browed Warbler	295
Common Linnet	391	European Honey Buzzard	101	Little Gull	201	Rose-ringed Parakeet	235	Yellowhammer	395
Common Moorhen	145	European Robin	335	Little Ringed Plover	163	Ruddy Shelduck	59	Yellow-headed Wagtail	377
Common Myna	326	European Roller	249	Little Stint	188	Ruddy Turnstone	185	Yellow-throated Sparrow	370
Common Nightingale	339	European Stonechat	347	Little Swift	247	Ruff	194	Zitting Cisticola	312
Common Pochard	66	European Turtle Dove	228	Little Tern	217	Rufous-tailed Rock Thrush	360		
Common Quail	54	Eversmann's Redstart	343	Long-eared Owl	242	Rufous-tailed Scrub Robin	341		



# Index of Arabic names

320	دخلة البساتين الشرقية	250	القرلي أبيض الصدر	248	الشقراق الهندي	283	الحمرة المقرنة الشرقية	150	أكل المحار
304	دخلة البطاح	251	القرلي الشائع	171	الشنقب الشائع	276	الحمرة سوداء الذيل	335	أبو الحناء
293	دخلة الجبال	228	القمري	169	الشنقب الصغير	279	الحمرة عريضة المنقار	200	أبو اليسر أسود الجناح
310	دخلة الجنادب	229	القمري الشرقي	170	الشنقب الكبير	344	الحميراء الديساء الشرقية	198	أبو اليسر الشائع
316	دخلة الحدائق	226	الكدرية الشائعة	59	الشهرمان الأحمر	344	الحميراء الديساء الغربية	199	أبو اليسر الشرقي
307	دخلة الزيتون الشرقية	227	الكدرية بيضاء الجناح	58	الشهرمان الشائع	345	الحميراء الشائعة	351	أبو بليق
305	دخلة الشجر	227	الكدرية غبراء الجناح	341	الشوالة	343	الحميراء بيضاء الكتف	114	أبو شودة
321	دخلة الصحراء الآسيوية	152	الكروسع	258	الصدر أحمر الذيل	224	الخرشنة السوداء	340	أبو صبرة
291	دخلة الصفصاف	224	الكركر الشمالي	257	الصدر أحمر الظهر	219	الخرشنة الشائعة	90	أبو قردان الغربي
294	دخلة الغابات	225	الكركر القطبي	261	الصدر الرمادي الصغير	217	الخرشنة الصغيرة	315	أبو قلنسوة
302	دخلة القصب الأوربية	225	الكركر طويل الذيل	263	الصدر الرمادي العربي	213	الخرشنة القزوينية	62	أبو مجرف
297	دخلة القصب البصرية	148	الكركي	260	الصدر طويل الذيل	221	الخرشنة القطبية	83	أبو ملعة
303	دخلة القصب القزوينية	149	الكروان	266	الصفاري	215	الخرشنة المتوجة الصغيرة	337	أزرق الحلق ذو البقعة البيضاء
298	دخلة القصب الكبيرة	133	الكويج	131	الصفير الأسخم	214	الخرشنة المتوجة الكبيرة	336	أزرق الحلق ذو البقعة الحمراء
299	دخلة القصب الهندية	135	الكلول الآسيوي	135	الصفير الحر	222	الخرشنة المشوبة	373	أصعق المروج
308	دخلة الديوان	80	القلق الأبيض الغربي	137	الصفير المغربي	218	الخرشنة الملجمة	350	الأليق الرملي
294	دخلة بونلي الشرقية	79	القلق الأسود	378	الصقعاء	223	الخرشنة بيضاء الجناح	380	الأصعق
306	دخلة سايكس	256	اللواء	192	الطيوطى الداكنة	220	الخرشنة بيضاء الخد	381	الأصعق المنع
306	دخلة شجر الزيتون	187	المردوان	196	الطيوطى الرمادية	212	الخرشنة نورسية المنقار	82	الأبوق اللامع
319	دخلة هيوم بيضاء الحنجرة	113	المرزة الباهة	184	الطيوطى الشائعة	289	الخطاف أحمر العجز	81	الأبوق المقدس
400	درسة الحمامات	143	المرعة الرقطاء	186	الطيوطى الشمالية	287	الخطاف الشائع	56	الإوز الأغر الكبير
394	درسة الذرة	142	المرعة الصغيرة	189	الطيوطى الصغيرة الرمادية	233	الدبسي	55	الإوز الرمادي الشرقي
395	درسة الصخور	273	المكاء	188	الطيوطى الصغيرة الشائعة	323	الدخلة الآسيوية	118	البازي
401	درسة القصب	326	المينا الشائعة	186	الطيوطى الكبيرة	296	الدخلة الخضراء	117	الباشق
78	رئيس البحر	77	النحام الصغير	195	الطيوطى حمراء الرقبة	292	الدخلة الشائعة	116	الباشق الشرقي
379	راعية الخيل الرمادية	76	النحام الكبير	177	الطيوطى حمراء الساق الرقطاء	309	الدخلة الصفراء	98	البجعة البيضاء الكبيرة
375	راعية الخيل بيضاء الرأس	108	النسر الأسود	178	الطيوطى حمراء الساق الشائعة	296	الدخلة القاتمة	98	البجعة الكدراء
377	راعية الخيل رمادية الرأس	109	النسر الأصلع	180	الطيوطى خضراء الساق	305	الدخلة المستحذية	235	البراكيت الأخضر
374	راعية الخيل زرقاء الرأس	107	النسر الشائع	190	الطيوطى داكنة الصدر	300	الدخلة المشوبة	349	البرقش الأبقع
376	راعية الخيل سوداء الرأس	181	النساسة	193	الطيوطى عريضة المنقار	317	الدخلة الموشاة	346	البرقش الأحمر
377	راعية الخيل سوداء الرأس الشرقية	393	النغر الشائع	370	العصفور أصفر الحنجرة	322	الدخلة بيضاء الحنجرة الشائعة	347	البرقش الأوربي
376	راعية الخيل صفراء الرأس	392	النغر الصحراوي	367	العصفور الأندلسي	319	الدخلة بيضاء الحنجرة الصحراوية	348	البرقش البنينطي
375	راعية خيل سايكس	392	النغر المنغولي	366	العصفور الدوري	318	الدخلة بيضاء الحنجرة الصغيرة	348	البرقش السيبيري
165	زقراق الرمل الصغير	194	النفاش المشاكس	371	العصفور العربي الذهبي	290	الدخلة رمادية الأذن	349	البرقش القزويني
166	زقراق الرمل الكبير	153	النكات	125	العقاب الذهبية	295	الدخلة صفراء الحجاب	61	البركة
151	زقراق السرطان	313	النمنمة	121	العقاب المنقطة الصغيرة	312	الدخلة مروحية الذيل	130	البريق الشائع
246	سمامة الألب	203	النورس أسود الرأس	122	العقاب المنقطة الكبيرة	197	الدراج	130	البريق الشرقي
332	سمنة الحقل	201	النورس أسود الرجلين	100	العقاب النسارية الغربية	396	الدرة الصغيرة	68	البط أحمر العرف
360	سمنة الصخور	208	النورس الأزرق	105	العقاب بيضاء الذيل	395	الدرة الصفراء	60	البط السماري
262	صدر الوادي الجنوبي	209	النورس البلطقي	338	العندليب الشائع	400	الدرة حمراء الرأس	67	البط الصواي
259	صدر تركستان الأكل	206	النورس الشائع	324	العندليب قصير الذيل	399	الدرة سوداء الرأس	69	البط الكستنائي
134	صقر الغزال	201	النورس الصغير	129	العويسق	267	الدرونجو الرمادي	66	البط كستنائي الرأس
179	طيوطى البطاح	207	النورس القوقازي	128	العويسق	264	الدغناش الشامي	284	البليل أبيض الخدين
183	طيوطى الرمل	202	النورس دقيق المنقار	99	الغاق القزم	265	الدغناش القطبي	285	البليل أحمر العجز
182	طيوطى الغيط	238	الهامة	96	الغاق الكبير	106	الرخمة الشائعة	63	البليول الشائع
368	عصفور البحر الميت	253	الهدهد	269	الغذاف	147	الريو	87	البشون أخضر الظهر
372	عصفور الشوك أبيض الصدر	339	الهزار الشائع	146	الغراء	328	الزرزور الشائع	93	البشون الأبيض الغربي
373	عصفور الشوك أسود الحنجرة	339	الهزار الشرقي	268	الغراب الدوري	103	الزرق	92	البشون الأرجواني
372	عصفور الشوك الشائع	86	الواق الأخضر الصغير	269	الغراب بني الرقبة	99	الزقة	88	البشون الذهبي
369	عصفور الصخور الباهة	85	الواق الصغير	94	الغزنوق الأبيض الصغير	158	الزقراق أبيض الذيل	89	البشون الذهبي الهندي
123	عقاب البادية	84	الواق الكبير	95	الغزنوق الأسود الهندي	168	الزقراق الأغر	91	البشون الرمادي
110	عقاب الحيات	230	الورشان	74	الغطاس أحمر الرقبة	157	الزقراق الأنيس	57	البلقشة حمراء الصدر
119	عقاب السهول	237	الوفاق الشائع	75	الغطاس أسود الرقبة	159	الزقراق الأوربي	242	البومة الصغيرة
101	عقاب العمل الحوامة	236	الوفاق المنقط الكبير	72	الغطاس الصغير	164	الزقراق الاسكندراني	242	البومة طويلة الأذن
102	عقاب العمل المقنزعة	132	اليؤز	73	الغطاس المتوج الكبير	160	الزقراق الياسيفيكي	243	البومة قصيرة الأذن
126	عقاب بونلي	172	بقوية سلطانية	74	الغطاس المعروف	161	الزقراق الرمادي	241	البوهة
97	غاق سوقطري	173	بقوية مخططة الذيل	226	الزقراق الشامي	154	الزقراق الشامي	115	البندق
371	فضي المنقار الهندي	397	بلبل الشعير السوري الشرقي	231	الفاخنة الأفريقية	167	الزقراق القزويني	391	التفاحي
356	فقاقة البادية	398	بلبل الشعير الشائع	232	الفاخنة الشائعة	162	الزقراق المطوق الشائع	57	التم الأخضر
352	فقاقة كردستان	396	بلبل الشعير رمادي الرقبة	342	الفتاح	163	الزقراق المطوق الصغير	365	التصير الأرجواني
282	قبرة الحقول الشائعة	384	جشنة الشجر	78	الفراقات الصغيرة	156	الزقراق الهندي	240	التبج الأوربي
282	قبرة الحقول الصغيرة	387	جشنة الماء	354	الفقاقة البقعاء	155	الزقراق ذو الجناح النائي	239	التبج الباهة
283	قبرة الغابات	383	جشنة المروج	358	الفقاقة الحزينة الشرقية	244	السبد الأوربي	314	الثرثار الأفغاني
185	قنبرة الماء	71	جلم الماء القاح	359	الفقاقة السوداء بيضاء البطن	245	السبد المصري	270	الجاثم المبرقع
175	كروان الغيط	71	جلم الماء الفارسي	357	الفقاقة السوداء بيضاء التاج	127	السبر	382	الجشنة الصفراء
191	كروان الماء الأحمر	230	حمام أخضر الرقبة	358	الفقاقة العربية	120	السقاوة	381	الجشنة الكبيرة
174	كروان الماء الصغير	364	خاطف الذباب أحمر الصدر	359	الفقاقة المقلنسة	247	السمامة الباهة	385	الجشنة حمراء الصدر
176	كروان الماء الكبير	362	خاطف الذباب المرقط	353	الفقاقة حمراء الذيل	246	السمامة الشائعة	388	الجشنة زيتونية الظهر
111	مرزة البطائح الغربية	363	خاطف الذباب شبه المطوق	355	الفقاقة سوداء الأذن الشرقية	247	السمامة الصغيرة	386	الجشنة كدراء الصدر
112	مرزة النجاج	252	خاطف ظله	255	القارية الأوربية	54	السمانى	138	الخبازى الشرقية
140	مرعة البر	216	خرشنة الساندويش	254	القارية زرقاء الخدين	327	السمرور	104	الحداة الشائعة
139	مرعة الماء	288	خطاف الجبال	280	القبيرة الشائعة	334	السمنة الرقشاء	66	الحذف الرخامي
141	مرعة رمادية البطن	286	خطاف الرمال	275	القبيرة الصحراوية	361	السمنة الزرقاء	65	الحذف الشتوي
124	ملك العقبان الشرقي	288	خطاف الصخور	281	القبيرة سوداء التاج	331	السمنة القاتمة	64	الحذف الصيفي
325	مينا الأنهار	289	خطاف المدن الشائع	274	القبيرة سوداء الصدر	333	السمنة المغردة	70	الحذف المقنزعة
204	نورس البحر الأبيض المتوسط	168	دجاجة الأرض	274	القبيرة عريضة المنقار	332	السمنة حمراء الجناح	390	الحصون الذهبي
205	نورس السمك	144	دجاجة السلطان	278	القبيرة قصيرة الإصبع الصغيرة	330	السمنة سوداء الحنجرة	390	الحصون الذهبي الشرقي
211	نورس السهول	145	دجاجة الماء	277	القبيرة قصيرة الإصبع الكبيرة	136	التشاهين	389	الحصون الشوكي
204	نورس فرانكلين	295	دخلة أوراق هيوم	275	القبيرة قصيرة الذيل	331	التشحور أبيض الحنجرة	388	الحصون الظالم
210	نورس هوجلن	312	دخلة الأنهار	271	القرقف الحزين	329	الشحور الشائع	391	الحصون الوردي
		311	دخلة الأنهار بيضاء الحنجرة	271	القرقف الكبير	389	الشحور	231	الحمام الدوري
		301	دخلة البردي	272	القرقف المنع	249	الشقراق الأوربي	234	الحمم



# Birding code of conduct

*Birds may associate humans as predators. Disturbance can keep birds from their nests, leaving chicks hungry or enabling predators to take eggs or young. During hot or cold weather, or when migrants have just made a long flight, repeated flushing of birds can cause them to use up vital energy that they need for feeding. Intentional or reckless disturbance of some species at or near the nest is illegal in many countries.*

## **Promote the welfare of birds and their environment.**

- Support the protection of birds and their habitats.
- Avoid stressing birds or exposing them to danger, exercise restraint and caution during observation and photography.
- Avoid chasing and repeatedly flushing birds, especially during the nesting season.
- Limit the use of recordings and other methods of attracting birds, and never use such methods in heavily birded areas, or for attracting any species that is Threatened, Endangered, or of Special Concern, or is rare in the local area.
- Keep well back from nests and nesting colonies, roosts, display areas, and important feeding sites to avoid disturbance and exposure to predators.
- Birds, nests, or eggs must not be handled except in cases of recognized research.
- Think about your field craft. Disturbance is not just about going too close. If you act carefully and use camouflage (i.e. your car as a hide) you'll be able to get closer without disturbing birds.
- Use artificial light sparingly for filming or photography, especially when shooting close-ups.
- Before advertising the presence of a rare vagrant, evaluate the potential for disturbance to the bird, its surroundings, and other people in the area, and proceed only if access can be controlled and disturbance minimized, and permission has been obtained from private land-owners.
- Stay on roads, trails, and paths where they exist; otherwise keep habitat disturbance to a minimum.
- Share your observations with other birders and environmental organizations. Support species and site conservation and monitoring initiatives.

## **Respect the law, and the rights of other people.**

- Do not enter private property without the owner's explicit permission.
- Follow all laws, rules, and regulations governing use of roads and public areas.
- Practice common courtesy in contacts with other people. Your exemplary behavior will generate goodwill with birders and non-birders alike.
- Never stop your vehicle in a traffic lane to view birds. Always pull completely onto the shoulder to conduct short-term or long-term viewing. No shoulder? Don't stop. Birding while driving is dangerous!

## **Group birding, whether organized or impromptu, requires special care.**

- Respect the interests, rights, and skills of fellow birders, as well as people participating in other legitimate outdoor activities.
- Minimize unnecessary talk, noise or sudden movement to avoid disturbing birds.
- Follow the leaders' pace to allow special sightings to be shared by the entire group.
- Group leader responsibilities should include being a role model for the group. Teach through word and example.
- Group leader must keep groups to a size that limits impact on the environment and does not interfere with others using the same area.
- Group leader should learn and inform the group of any special circumstances applicable to the areas being visited (e.g. no tape recorders allowed).
- Group leader should ensure that everyone in the group knows and practices the birding ethic.



Gynandris Irises:  
they are sensitive to  
off-road vehicle trampling. (MP)



# Contributing photographers

*43 photographers and naturalists have kindly contributed their work for this guide. This book includes 1400 photographs, selected from a set of over 5000 images all offered freely by the volunteer photographers. In this book each photograph includes the codified initials of the photographer. Here we present a very brief notation about each contributor.*

- AA Aurélien Audevard.** French ornithologist working for the Ligue of Protection of Birds (LPO) on the Hyères salt marshes; a bird photographer and digiscoper who has travelled all over the world. [www.ouessant-digiscoping.fr](http://www.ouessant-digiscoping.fr)
- AAK Ayman Al Kanderi.** A very keen Kuwaiti photographer and birder with a creative eye who was inspired to take up the hobby after seeing many good images on the Internet.
- AJ Ayuwat Jearwattananok.** An avid birder and photographer based in Thailand who contributes images regularly to Oriental Bird Club
- ALH Ali Alhafez.** A keen Kuwaiti environmentalist, he has studied Marine Biology at Oxford University and heads KEPS volunteer marine wildlife team. Ali is mostly focused on marine conservation and underwater photography but is now beginning to learn bird photography as well.
- AV Abhishek Varma.** An avid birder and photographer based in India who contributes images regularly to Oriental Bird Club. [www.flickr.com/photos/abhishekvarma](http://www.flickr.com/photos/abhishekvarma)
- BF Brian Foster.** Former KORC Member, previous resident of Kuwait who played a big role in highlighting birding in Kuwait as a hobby. He is now retired in the UK, but continues to watch birds all over the world, when he is not fishing.
- CB Chris Batty.** Comes from England with an interest in birds from an early age and an enthusiasm for rarities. Travelled throughout the Western Palearctic and beyond, a trained ringer, local bird recorder and report editor, member of the Rare Bird Alert team, has graduated in Ecology and Education and has worked for the RSPB. Elected to the British Birds Rarities Committee.
- CC Christine Canzanella.** A native of New York City who has spent the last nine years in Kuwait, teaching English and Arabic and working as a translator. Started bird photography in Kuwait, thanks to its rich birdlife and the opportunities to observe migrating birds every autumn and spring.
- CL Chris Lansdell.** An active birder since 1985 based in Norfolk, UK. Runs the birding tour company Oenanthe Birding Adventures since 2008. [chrislansdell.blogspot.com](http://chrislansdell.blogspot.com)
- CV Chris Vlachos.** One of Greece's most outstanding nature photographers. He is a member and frequent volunteer at the Hellenic Ornithological Society and is deeply involved in conservation initiatives in Greece. [www.500px.com/ChrisVlachos](http://www.500px.com/ChrisVlachos)
- DC Dave Clark.** American hydrologist living in Al Ain UAE for about 12 years. He is a geologist and nature photography is his hobby.
- DD Devashish Deb.** An avid birder and photographer based in India who contributes images regularly to Oriental Bird Club.
- DF David Fisher.** A keen British birder who has travelled widely in search of birds (seen more than 7,500 species) and leads tours for Sunbird birdtour company. Involved in the British Ornithologists' Club, the Neotropical Bird Club, the East African Rarities Committee and the Seychelles Bird Records Committee.
- DM Daniel Mauras.** A physics teacher, began birding three years before retirement. Since then he has been birding and photographing birds around France, the Western Palearctic and beyond.
- DO Daniele Occhiato.** A wildlife photographer based in Tuscany, Italy who specializes on birds but often focuses on other animals and landscapes too - mostly in Tuscany and during trips abroad. All his photos are of wild, unrestrained animals. [www.pbase.com/dophoto](http://www.pbase.com/dophoto)
- DW Derrick Wilby.** Keen birder and wildlife photographer. Retired civil engineer now enjoying birding full-time - mainly Africa but also around the world.
- GHA Khaled Al Ghanem.** Holds a bachelors in Geography (Kuwait University) and a Masters in Desert and Arid Zone Sciences (Arabian Gulf University, Bahrain). Has more than 15 years experience in wildlife management and conservation at Environment Public Authority, Department of Biodiversity Conservation, Division of Natural Reserves. Since 1997 his activities concentrate on monitoring, photographing and recording birds, particularly at Jahra Pool Reserve where he works as manager. [www.flickr.com/photos/45826342@N02](http://www.flickr.com/photos/45826342@N02)
- GP Gillian Pope.** Lives in Kuwait with her family and enjoys travelling, discovering new places and participating in photographic expeditions.
- GW Graham Whitehead.** A geologist from England. Currently Manager of KUFPEC's South East Asia Region. Has worked for KUFPEC based in Kuwait since 2002. He has a lifelong interest in the outdoors and the natural world, is a member of KEPS and took up photographing birdlife in Kuwait in 2008, following a first visit to the oasis farm at Al-Abraq with Mike Pope. He was instrumental in arranging funding for the "Birds of Kuwait" book with KUFPEC as sponsor.
- HAI Rashed Al Hajji.** One of Kuwait's most dedicated birders who has a sharp eye and a reputation for finding rarities. A very keen photographer who spends long hours in the nature and knows the environment of Kuwait in depth. [www.flickr.com/photos/13994274@N03](http://www.flickr.com/photos/13994274@N03)



- HW Huw Roberts.** From North Wales; living and birding in Arabia since 1995 including Bahrain (2 years), Oman (6 years), and UAE (the last 9 years). He is lecturer at UAE University, interests include ornithology and wildlife photography. [www.pbbase.com/wildlifeuae](http://www.pbbase.com/wildlifeuae)
- JIR Meshal Al Jirweay.** Kuwaiti naturalist who started bird photography around 1997 and was instrumental in starting KEPS with other interested birders (Mahmood Shehab and Khalid Al Nasrallah) in 2000.
- JP Jaden Pope.** The youngest contributing member who at 9-years of age is inspired by his Dad and loves being outdoors – anywhere.
- KAN Mohammad Al Kanderi.** Kuwaiti photographer who loves wildlife and artistic landscape photography and is also a member of both VWC and KEPS. [www.flickr.com/photos/11034887@N00](http://www.flickr.com/photos/11034887@N00)
- KHA Samera Al Khalifah.** Distinguished Kuwait photographer, she holds a B.A. in Political Science and is currently working as an Administration Services Supervisor. Her photography focuses on birds, wildlife and people. She is a member of many organisations and a recipient of many photographic awards. [www.flickr.com/photos/sk300c-al-khalifah](http://www.flickr.com/photos/sk300c-al-khalifah)
- LS Lefteris Stavrakas.** Greek birdwatcher and wildlife photographer, he has participated in a great number of conservation projects in Greece. He is presently caretaker of four Important Bird Areas in Greece and a member of the Hellenic Ornithological Society since 1997.
- MB Mike Barth.** From England and currently resident in Dubai, working for IBM. He has a passion for bird photography and world travel. [www.mike-barth.blogspot.com](http://www.mike-barth.blogspot.com)
- MK Mohammad Khorshed.** A Kuwaiti production operator who works for KOC. A very keen birder and creative photographer who was inspired to take up the hobby after seeing many good images on the internet since 2007. [www.flickr.com/photos/33762699@N06](http://www.flickr.com/photos/33762699@N06)
- MP Mike Pope.** South African born, now resident in Kuwait with his family since October 2006, KORC Chairman since 2008 who has a passionate and long-term interest in birding, wildlife, conservation and photography. As a member of KEPS he would dearly like to see legislation in place to prohibit the continued shooting of migratory birds in Kuwait. [kuwaitbirding.blogspot.com](http://kuwaitbirding.blogspot.com) & [www.hawar-islands.com/blog/14\\_stub.php](http://www.hawar-islands.com/blog/14_stub.php)
- NAS Khaled Al Nasrallah.** Author and photographer of The Birds of the Sabah Al-Ahmad Natural Reserve book in 2011 who is an avid birder and passionate videographer and photographer since 1995. He was one of the founding members of KEPS and is currently the leader of the Sabah Al Ahmad Natural Reserve team at the Voluntary Work Center.
- NP Nikos Petrou.** Greek prosthodontist, nature photographer and writer, actively involved in conservation since the 1980s serving in NGOs such as the WWF and current president of the Hellenic Society for the Protection of Nature. He has published several books on Greek nature and enjoys exploring nature around the world. [www.biodiv.gr](http://www.biodiv.gr)
- OC Oscar Campbell.** Originally from Northern Ireland, Oscar has lived in the UAE since 2006 where he teaches chemistry. He enjoys travel, photography and all aspects of natural history, but especially bird migration and identification. He is currently Chairman of the Emirates Birds Records Committee as well as KORC External Adjudicator
- PF Pekka Fagel.** Originally from Finland and an avid birder and photographer who is a long-time member of both KORC and KEPS. [www.birdsofkuwait.com/blog](http://www.birdsofkuwait.com/blog)
- PP Phil Penlington.** An ardent birder and photographer living in South Africa. [www.birdpics.co.za](http://www.birdpics.co.za)
- SHA Humoud Al Shaiji.** A keen Kuwaiti photographer and birder who works for KGOC. He was inspired to take up the hobby after seeing many good images on the Internet; he is active in finding new birds and collecting better images to promote Kuwait's biodiversity. [www.flickr.com/photos/showaiji](http://www.flickr.com/photos/showaiji)
- SIR AbdulRahman Al Sirhan.** Kuwaiti electrical engineer who lectures for the Telecommunication & Navigation Institute. A very keen naturalist, studying many aspects of the fauna and flora of the wider region, he is photographing birds since 2001. He is the appointed KORC Secretary and has been a member of KEPS since 2002. [www.birdsofkuwait.com](http://www.birdsofkuwait.com)
- SP Simon Price.** A South African twitcher, who took up birding photography during his 18-month sojourn in Kuwait. Back in South Africa, he continues to strive for the perfect shot and posts his efforts on the internet. [www.flickr.com/photos/simons\\_snapshots](http://www.flickr.com/photos/simons_snapshots)
- SUR Abdulmohsen Al Suraye.** A Kuwaiti telecommunication engineer working in Ministry of Communication since 1980. He started watching birds in 2001 and is involved in KEPS since 2002 as a volunteer. He loves birding as a hobby and is doing everything possible to promote conservation. [www.flickr.com/photos/57122991@N07](http://www.flickr.com/photos/57122991@N07)
- TG Theodoros (Akis) Gaitanakis.** Greek birdwatcher and wildlife photographer who has taken many photographic journeys in Greece and abroad. An active member of the Hellenic Ornithological Society, he lives in Athens.
- TH Trevor Hardaker.** Trevor and his wife Margaret have a deep interest in wildlife which leads to many travels around their home in Cape Town, South Africa and the world. [www.hardaker.co.za](http://www.hardaker.co.za)
- TP Tommy Pedersen.** Born in Oslo, Norway - resident in Dubai since 2002 and B-777 Captain for Emirates Airlines. He manages the UAE birding website since 2005 and is interested in birding, travelling and nature photography. [www.flickr.com/photos/sandmanindubai](http://www.flickr.com/photos/sandmanindubai)
- VID Aris Vidalis.** Greek graphic designer-photographer with a long-standing love for nature, working on environmental interpretation, involved in conservation and a founding member of Biodiversity East. [www.arisvidalis.com](http://www.arisvidalis.com)
- VL Vincent Legrand.** He has a geographical focus on rare birds and animals in the Western Palearctic Biozone that has taken him to the four corners of this realm in search of rare and accidental species. [www.vincentlegrand.com](http://www.vincentlegrand.com)



# References

- Alfadhel, A.F., 2005. *Birds of Kuwait – A Portrait*. Designed and printed by British Industries. Kuwait.
- Al Ghanem, K. and Al-Shihabi, Y., 2006. *The Birds of Jahra Pool Reserve*. Kuwait.
- Al Nasrallah, K., 2011. *The Birds of the Sabah Al-Ahmad Natural Reserve*. Kuwait.
- Alsdarawi F. and Faraj M., 2004. Establishing a trans-boundary peace park in the demilitarised zone (DMZ) on the Kuwaiti/Iraqi borders. *Parks (War and Protected Areas)*, 14(1):48-55.
- Al Sirhan, A., 2011. *Kuwait Annotated Checklist of Birds*. Kuwait Ornithological Rarities Committee. Electronic Checklist (29 pp.). Available at [www.oskonline.org/annotated\\_checklist.shtml](http://www.oskonline.org/annotated_checklist.shtml)
- Al Yamani, F.Y., Bishop, J., Ramadhan, E., Al-Husaini, M., and Al-Ghadban, A.N., 2004. *Oceanographic Atlas of Kuwait's Waters*. Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research. Kuwait.
- Ararat, K. Fadhil, O., Porter, R.F. and Salim, M., 2011. Breeding birds in Iraq: Important new discoveries. *Sandgrouse* 33: 12-33.
- Barthel, P.H. and Dougalis, P., 2008. *New Holland European Bird Guide*. New Holland Publishers, UK.
- BirdLife International, 2001. *Threatened Birds of Asia: the BirdLife International Red Data Book*. BirdLife International, Cambridge, UK.
- BirdLife International, 2003. *Saving Asia's threatened birds: a guide for government and civil society*. BirdLife International, Cambridge, UK.
- BirdLife International 2012. *Important Bird Areas factsheet: Jal Az-Zor*. Downloaded from <http://www.birdlife.org> on 25/06/2012.
- Bonser, R., Al-Sirhan, A., Crochet, P-A., Legrand, V., Monticelli, D and Pope, M., 2012. Birding Kuwait. *Birding World* 24: 1-18.
- Caulton E. and Keddle, D., 1989. Environmental conservation problems in Kuwait. *The Environmentalist* 9 (3): 219-228.
- Clark, W.S., 1999. *A Field Guide to the Raptors of Europe, The Middle East and North Africa*. Oxford University Press. UK.
- Clayton, D.A. and Wells, K., 1994. *Discovering Kuwait's Wildlife* (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition). Fahad Al-Marzouk, Kuwait.
- Conder, P., 1982. *RSPB Guide to Birdwatching*. Hamlyn, UK.
- Cowan, P.J. and Pilcher, C.W.T., 2003. The status of desert birds in Kuwait. *Sandgrouse* 25(2): 122-125.
- Cramp, S., Simmons, K.E.L. and Perrins, C.M., 1977-1994. *The Birds of the Western Palearctic*. Vols 1-9. OUP, Oxford UK.
- Dickinson, E. (editor), 2003. *The Howard and Moore Complete Checklist of the Birds of the World*. Revised and enlarged 3rd Edition. Christopher Helm, UK.
- Forsman, D., 1999. *Raptors of Europe and the Middle East: A Handbook of Field Identification*. Poyser, London, UK.
- Garnett, S.T. and Christidis, L., 2005. Implications of changing species definitions for conservation purposes. *Bird Conservation International* 17: 187-195.
- Gill, F., Wright, M. and Donsker, D., 2010. *IOC World Bird Names* (Version 2.3.). Available at <http://www.worldbirdnames.org>
- Gregory, G., 2005. *The Birds of the State of Kuwait*. Gibraltar Point Field Station, Skegness. UK.
- Gregory, G., 2008. *Kuwait Bird List 26/6/2008*. Published at BirdForum.net.
- Gregory, G., Robertson, P., and Thomas, B., 2001. Reduction of bird shooting in Kuwait. *Sandgrouse* 23(1): 34-38.
- Harris, A., Shirihai, H., and Christie, D., 1996. *The Macmillan Birder's Guide to European and Middle Eastern Birds*. Macmillan General Books, UK.
- Hayman, P., Marchant, J., and Prater, T., 1986. *Shorebirds: An identification guide to waders of the world*. Houghton Mifflin Company, USA.
- Jennings, M.S., 2010. Atlas of the Breeding Birds of Arabia. *Fauna of Arabia* 25.
- Jones, D. A., 1996. *A field guide to the shores of Kuwait and the Arabian Gulf*. Kuwait University, Blandford Press.
- Jonsson, L., 1992. *Birds of Europe with North Africa and the Middle East*. Helm, UK.
- Kuwait Environmental Protection Society, 2012. *Unjustified Shooting of Birds in Kuwait: The reality and proposed solutions*. Compiled by C. Canzanella. KEPS, Kuwait.
- Olsen, K.M. and Larsson, H., 2003. *Gulls of Europe, Asia and North America. Helm identification guides*. Christopher Helm, UK.
- Ornithological Society of the Middle East (OSME), 2010. *OSME region list of Birds: A consultative document* (version 2.3). Available online at: [www.osme.org/orl/orl.shtml](http://www.osme.org/orl/orl.shtml).
- Pilcher, C. and Shehab, M., 1994. State of Kuwait. In *Important Bird Areas of the Middle East* (Evans, M. (ed)). BirdLife Conservation Series No 2. pp 230-238. BirdLife International, Cambridge, UK.
- Porter, R. and Aspinal, S., 2010. *Birds of the Middle East*. Helm, UK.
- Svensson, L., Mullarney, K., and Zetterstrom, D., 2009. *Collins Bird Guide* (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition). Harper Collins, London, UK.
- Tucker, G.M., and Heath, M.F., 1994. *Birds in Europe: Their conservation status*. BirdLife Conservation Series No. 3. Birdlife International. Cambridge, UK.



# Acknowledgements

*The production team would like to thank:*

*His Excellency the Assistant Undersecretary of Border Security Affairs and Chief of Police,  
**Major General Mohammed Yousef Al-Sabah** for his precious support and friendship and all Coast Guard Officers  
and personnel, whose kind assistance throughout our work has made our achievements possible.*

*KUFPEC Chairman **Mr. Nizar M. Al-Adsani**  
for his vision, belief and confidence in sponsoring this project.*

***Kuwait Ornithological Rarities Committee**, Mike Pope (Chairman), Abdulrahman Al-Sirhan (Secretary) and members Pekka Fagel, Oscar Campbell (UAE), Peter Kennerley (UK) and Brian Foster (UK) for their invaluable input and use of the Annotated Checklist of Birds of Kuwait.*

***Sabah al Ahmad Sea City** team (specifically Ian Williams and Nithyanandan Manickam) for use of their boats for on-going surveys.*

*The owners of **Al-Abraq, Sulaibiya Pivot Fields, Jahra Farms, Al-Shallal Farm** for allowing us access to their farms.*

***Alghanim Industries** for use of their fabulous SINAATI boat to access Kubbar Islands for summer census counts of breeding terns.*

***Steve Gantlett**, Birding World Editor for his kind permission to reference and use "Birding Kuwait" article by Richard Bonser with AbdulRahman Al-Sirhan, Pierre Andre-Crochet, Vincent Legrand, David Monticelli and Mike Pope.*

*The ornithologists and naturalists who helped review identifications and read texts, especially **Paschalis Dougalis, Nikos Petrou, Dick Forsman, Triantaphyllos Akriotis** (University of the Aegean) and **James Bishop** (KISR).*

***Yahya Al-Shehabi** and **Khaled Al Ghanem** of the EPA for their kind cooperation and provision of a wealth of information about Jahra Pool Reserve.*

*Biodiversity East members in Cyprus who helped in various ways in production issues; Special thanks to **Elli Tzirkalli**.*

*Finally we acknowledge all Kuwaiti Environmental organizations for the continued work they are doing to raise awareness with respect to nature conservation:*

**KEPS** – Kuwait Environmental Protection Society

**BMAPT** – Bird Monitoring and Protection Team

**VWC** – Voluntary Work Center

**EPA** – Environmental Protection Agency

**KISR** – Kuwait Institute of Scientific Research

*Finally, we thank our respective families for sacrificing family time to support meeting the tight deadline of this exciting project.*



The "Birds of Kuwait" project team (from left to right): G. Whitehead, S. Zogaris, V. Vlami, N. Papathanasopoulou, A. Vidalis and M. Pope.











