

Turkey, June 5-18 – 2005

Southern and North-eastern parts

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Rose-coloured Starlings, SW of Sivas, June 2005. Photo: Måns Grundsten.

Introduction

Travelling to Turkey in June means great chances of encountering the breeding specialities of this vast country. Most migratory birds have left Turkey, though. Going any later will probably reduce the possibilities to locate some of the breeding birds. Singing activity drops as further into the summer you get. We decided to do this trip as many have done before with some small changes. Cyprus was included mostly by inspiration of dutch birders making such a trip last year. Furthermore, the extremely eastern parts were excluded. Partly since two of us had seen the main four target species there (Grey-necked Bunting, Mongolian Finch, Paddyfield Warbler and Red-wattled Plover) in other countries. The other two of us had seen one respectively two of these species earlier. Red-wattled Plover seems to be impossible at the moment considering the political instability along the Turkish border with Syria/Iraq. Already knowing the huge distances necessary to cover Turkey, we felt like at least exclude some of the hundreds of kilometres. This meant also having more time at the places we would visit.

Car Rental

At arrival we booked a car (Fiat Doblo) at Sixt Rent-A-Car including free miles and full insurance for two weeks. This cost 753 TL (Million Turkish Lira) (1 TL=5.5 SEK, 2005-06-05) or 450 Euros. Although we arrived at midnight 01.00 there were at least five different car rental agencies opened. The car worked excellent most of the times. It was a diesel engine and at some steep tracks in the mountains (especially at Nemrut Dagi) we had to drive really slowly. Unless you're uncomfortable with the uncertainty I would recommend hire the car upon arrival in Antalya. I guess the price will be better. In total we drove about 4500 km.

Accommodation

We had no problems at all finding accommodation.

Two of the nights were spent under open sky, and these were days when we've been driving far. The first night was at Akseki new site and the second night out was at Narince. One night we spent on the Cyprus ferry.

-At Isikli/Durnalik we slept in the garden at the newly constructed Tourist Information centre located some three km along the main road after Isikli (signed from Isikli). It's on the left-hand side and will hopefully be the place to stay for future visiting birders. The guy running the centre is called Iman and is very generous and friendly (see further notes later on).

Hotels/Motels as follows:

- Tasucu: Can't remember the name of the motel, but it was located along the main road through Tasucu toward Silifke and costed something like 20 TL/double room
- Birecik: Motal Mirkalem, Seems to be the only hotel in Birecik, relatively expensive. Something like 50 TL/double room (don't remember exactly)
- Bingöl: Hotel Atli, 20 TL/double room
- Ikizdere (N Sivri Kaya):Biberoglu Motel, 30 TL/double room, located next to the river just S of Ikizdere. A newly constructed Motel. It will be a little further to drive to the Black Grouse site in the morning but at least it's cheaper than Motel Genesis at Camlik which is the other opportunity for this area, we met Mustapha Sari briefly in Sivri Kaya the first evening but he couldn't promote any accommodation in Sivri Kaya.
- Sultan Marshes: Sultan Center, 30 TL/double room. The natural place to stay when visiting this area.
- Demirkazik: Luckily we met a nice guy called Burga from Istanbul, he was a hiker who had recently become interested in birdwatching. He had access to a mountain hut just next to the Mountain Centre where he let us stay for free, it was modestly equipped but perfect for our needs. Huge thanks to Burga anyway.
- Kulu: Hotel Furkan, 30 TL/double room
- Akseki: Hotel Durek, 20 TL/double room

Literature

- Collins Bird Guide, Lars Svensson, Killian Mullarney *et al.* (1999)
Birds of Europe, Lars Jonsson (1992)
Birds of the Middle-East, RF Porter, S Christensen, P Schiermacker-Hansen (1996)
Lonely Planet Guide Turkey (2004)
Lonely Planet Travel Atlas Turkey (1997) (1:800 000), wouldn't recommend anyone buying this map. At Narince/Nemrut Dagi the roads were marked wrongly making us going on an 80 km detour and almost missing the car ferry. It was hard to find any larger maps than 1:800 000.
Finding Birds in Turkey – Ankara to Birecik, Dave Gosney (1991-1996)
Finding Birds in Eastern Turkey, Dave Gosney (1992)
Nemrut Dagi, Adiyaman, Turkey, Daniele Occhiato, *Birding World* (14:8, 343-344)
And different travel reports from the internet, all found linked via www.eurobirding.com, including:
Andreas Kristensen, June 1999
Juha Niemi, June-July 2001
Ulf Johansson, June 2002 (in Swedish)
Chris Batty, June 2003
Jens Sogaard Hansen *et al.*, May 2004
Kasper P Hendriks, June-July 2004 (excellent report!)
Richard Bonser, July 2004
We used tape-recordings from Roché.

Itinerary at a glance

- 5.6: Arrived at Antalya Airport at 01.00 (Flight tickets bought from Swedish charter tour company Detur). Drove to Akseki during the night. Birded Akseki until 11-12, then drove all the way to Tasucu (extremely slow driving along the coastway) where we arrived at 23.00. Along the way we stopped for birding a few times, Anamur for example.
- 6.6: Quickly booked the ferry tickets to Cyprus and parked the car at Lades Hotel nearby the harbour. We boarded the ferry at 00.00 and it left at 02.00. Arrived Cyprus (Girne) at 08.00. Took a cab to Bellapais monastery. The ferry back was boarded at 12.00 and left 14.00. Arrived Tasucu at 20.00.
- 7.6: Birded Göksu delta until 12.00 then drove to Isikli. Birded the last evening hours there.
- 8.6: Walked from Iman's (see notes) to Isikli. The afternoon was spent at Durnalik. Evening drive to Birecik. Arrived at sunset.
- 9.6: Birded Birecik all day. Driving to Narince after sunset.
- 10.6: Birded Narince then Nemrut Dagi until 12.30. Car ferry at Diyarbakir Yolu, then driving via Siverik to Diyarbakir and finally Bingöl.
- 11.6: Morning driving from Bingöl to Gelinkaya via Erzurum. Arrived Gelinkaya 07.30. Birded all day from Gelinkaya via Ispir to Sivri Kaya where we arrived late at evening. Night at Ikizdere.
- 12.6: Sivri Kaya, Ovitdagi Gecidi, we then went to the Black Sea coast. Looked at gulls at Rize and then returned to Ikizdere.
- 13.6: Driving all day from Ikizdere, via Sivri Kaya, Ispir, Erzurum, Erzincan, Sivas, Kayseri to Sultan Marshes where we arrived at sunset.
- 14.6: Birded Sultan Marshes until 14.00 the drove to nearby Demirkazik where we birded all evening.
- 15.6: Demirkazik until 12.00. Birded at Lake Nigde and then drove to Kulu.

- 16.6: Birded Kulu Gölü until 11.00. Then drove to Akseki, birded walled plantation all evening.
17.6: Birded Akseki new site until 10.00 then drove to Side.
18.6: Relaxed at the beach at Side until 12.00. Drove to Antalya. The Police pulled us in halfway, claiming we had run a red light (this was not true! when we drove it was still blinking green!). We paid them 20 TL (probably down the pocket, since we didn't get any receipt...). Returned the car to Sixt without any troubles. Flight back at 15.55, arrived Stockholm at 20.00.

Site comments (in chronological order)

Akseki

New site:

Very good birding early morning. The White-backed Woodpecker eluded us both mornings although we heard one bird drumming the first morning, accelerating in frequency but descending in power. It felt like there was a lot more activity on our first morning here compared to the morning two weeks later. This is clearly a site for breeding birds, and singing activity drops as further into the breeding season you get, naturally.

Old site:

Very impressive forest, but very few birds, one of us had a brief look of a woodpecker with yellow rump taking off from a trunk and disappearing. That might have been a Grey-headed Woodpecker.

Graveyard:

Big disappointment. Very few birds. A pair of Syrian Woodpeckers a sole Masked Shrike, that's all.

Walled plantation:

Classic site for Rüppell's Warbler. We had approx 5 birds in the bushes on the slope north of the plantation. The plantation itself held a few families of Eastern Bonelli's Warblers and Middle Spotted Woodpecker.

Rubbish dump:

Between Akeski town and old site, you're passing a rubbish dump on you right hand side. Around here we found a few Cretzschmar's Buntings (A species that was surprisingly hard to find throughout the trip). Here also Rüppell's Warbler and Western Rock Nuthatch.



Scopoli's Shearwater, S of Tasucu, June 2005. Photo: Måns Grundsten.

Anamur

Just off shore close to the castle in Anamur there is a small cliff. This cliff held a few Shags as well as Yellow-legged Gulls. While watching this cliff, we also found a soaring Eleonora's Falcon.

Bellapais monastery (Cyprus)

This is a popular tourist destination in Girne so all taxi drivers probably know of this site. Upon arrival try to walk uphill through the narrow streets until you reach the outskirts. It took us perhaps an hour to locate both the wheatear and the warbler. Since the ferry arrives at 8 o'clock you'll have 3-3 ½ hours at Bellapais before you'll have to return to the harbour for the return ferry if you want to be back at Tasucu the same evening. There are faster ferries running the tour between Girne and Tasucu as well, but the time schedule for these ferries is not the best from a birders point of view.

The cost for the two-way ferry was 90 TL per person. At Girne you'll have to pay taxes (two different). In total there is something like 16,5 + 3,5 TL per person.



Cyprus Pied Wheatear, Bellapais Monastery, June 2005. Photo: Måns Grundsten.

Göksu delta

The site description in Gosney for reaching the observation-tower is not completely correct, and quite hard to follow. By chance we found at the reception at Lades Motel (where we have had our car parked during our brief Cyprus journey) a brochure with a small description of how to reach Göksu delta. This brochure held very valuable information. Lades Motel is located on your right hand side, close to the harbour, when coming from west. Note that going to the observation-tower at early morning means quite bad light condition, an afternoon-evening visit is a better choice. A good telescope is necessary here. After standing in the tower during the morning we continued to site 5 and 6 in Gosney. Black Francolin called almost everywhere and during the morning we had two observations of different males from the car. Later on, at mid-day we tried site 7 and 8, but this was quite fruitless. We didn't visit site 12 and 13, unfortunately, from the observation-tower we saw quite some birds over there. So site 12 and 13 might be interesting.

Isikli/Iman's

Roughly the same species as can be found at Durnalik also can be found at Isikli. If you continue past Isikli on the main road (Gosney, page 18) you reach Iman's Tourist Centre after some three km. It's on your left hand side and situated nicely with some orchards surrounding the house. Climbing up the hillside behind the house means reaching the same "lunar landscape area" that you reach by climbing the track at Isikli. And this is exactly what we did one morning. And not at all surprisingly we found most (if not all) specialities for the area. Upcher's Warbler, White-throated Robin, Cinereous Bunting and Eastern Rock Nuthatch were all quite easy. These are all breeding species, and once you find the right habitat they are all quite common. Around the lunar landscape we also found a female Desert Finch, Finsch's Wheatear, Isabelline Wheatear, Rufous-tailed Rock Thrush, Blue Rock Thrush, Western Rock Nuthatch, Red-backed Shrike, Bimaculated Lark and two Short-toed Eagles. Two birds that we hoped for seemed to be absent from the area, those were Pale Rock Sparrow and Kurdish Wheatear. But fortunately these are not at all as elusive when searching for them at Nemrut Dagı.

Durnalik

To reach to upper parts at Durnalik there is a new road under construction going from the village of Durnalik parallel to the small track in the valley (Gosney, page 17). Hopefully this road will be driveable soon, because the upper parts seem more interesting than the valley itself. We didn't find Pale Rock Sparrow or Kurdish Wheatear here either. Remember if your itinerary includes Narince and Nemrut Dagi, you don't need to go to Isikli/Durnalik for any species! We did though, it felt too risky to skip these locations which has been on birding tour itineraries since birders started to go to Turkey. But after our experience, we believe that it's time for a change. We suggest that future birders should go to Narince and Nemrut Dagi instead of going to Isikli/Durnalik!

Birecik

Main Wadi:

Ménétries' Warbler was very easy, but the other speciality See-see Partridge proved more difficult. During our morning visit we had three encounters, but only two of us saw the birds. So we had to return for an evening visit to make another effort in trying to see the small partridge. This time we were more fortunate since one bird flew past the Wadi and landed on the opposite side, giving brief views before walking away. We're not sure about the best strategy, beside allowing time, since we saw See-see Partridge both while walking inside the wadi as well as climbing the hillsides and walking further uphill looking down the wadi.

During the morning we had two small flocks of Black-bellied Sandgrouse flying pass both from south to north. There was also a distant male Black Francolin calling and a male Finsch's Wheatear.

Ponds S of Birecik:

There is a road running parallel to the river south for some kilometres, aside this road there are at a few occasions some promising looking ponds. At one stop we had a male and a female Little Bittern, and two Ferruginous Ducks. Going south along Euphrates is very exciting and we recommend future trips doing the same thing. It's supposed to be a good area for Pied Kingfisher as well although we never saw one.

Scops Owl Café:

The same evening we arrived at Birecik we went to the park after sunset. One European Scops Owl was calling, and in the south-west corner of the park we had a Scops Owl hunting and briefly standing on the ground, but the light condition was too bad to see whether there was a regular Scops owl or a Striated.

Instead, going to the café in the middle of the day seems a better plan, at then the birding activity is rather low, since the temperature by then can have risen to outrageous levels. We searched the park for some 20 minutes before we had located a Scops Owl which in the telescope proved to be a nice Striated Scops Owl. A family of Long-eared Owls were also found, including four juveniles.

N of Birecik:

Between site 4 and 5 there is a lot of cultivation, with a lot of tree plantations (can't remember if it was olive-trees or which kind of tree it was), but in this general area we had a lot of Dead Sea Sparrows. At site 4, just behind an OTO garage (mentioned in Bonser, 2004) we had a female Chestnut-shouldered Petronia.

Blue-cheeked Bee-eater and Cream-coloured Cursor:

We met a very nice Bald Ibis Project Officer at the Ibis Centre, his name was Turan Cetin (turancetin@dogadernegi.org). He told us about a colony of Blue-cheeked Bee-eaters at Bozova (NE of Birecik) and a few Cream-coloured Cursors in the north-eastern outskirts of a small village called Yeniakpınar. See map for further details.

Unfortunately we felt that we hadn't the time exploring these sites, but maybe future birdwatchers have. He sounded very trustworthy, and for the Cream-coloured Cursors, he said that he had seen them himself.



Map of Birecik and surroundings. The roads marked with red are larger tarmac, orange with black borders are smaller tarmac and the roads marked with plain orange are dirt roads.

Narince

Since 2001, Narince has been a reliable site for Olive-tree Warbler. We had one singing individual approx 1 km east of the village of Narince. The area that looks potentially good is far more vast, meaning that in total there must be quite a few pairs here. The Great Reed Warbler resemblance of the Olive-tree Warbler song was a good give-away, although the sighting at first wasn't very convincing. But the proportionally large bill and the lack of tail movements, combined with the song finally made us comfortable with the identification. What confused us mostly was the picture in Svensson, Mullarney *et al.* This picture shows a rather greyish warbler with distinctive dark spots on the undertail coverts. This feature is neither mentioned in the text and nor present in any other of the guidebooks we carried. Very strange indeed. We also saw White-throated Robin, Masked Shrike, Chestnut-shouldered Petronia, Cinereous Bunting and Eastern Rock Nuthatch here.

Nemrut Dagı

Together with Narince this area is one of the best we birded in Turkey. For instance most of the good birds at Isikli/Durnalik were easily found at Nemrut Dagı, for instance White-throated Robin, Upcher's Warbler and Cinereous Bunting. Nemrut Dagı is probably the best site for Kurdish Wheatear and Pale Rock Sparrow. We had at least eight different wheatears, also a few Finsch's Wheatears on the mountain. One male Pale Rock Sparrow was found along the road up the mountain. The road sometimes is very steep and requires a lot from the vehicle you're driving. Especially the last km up to the top is extremely steep. The road is quite poor and uneven. Beside the birds no one can deny the mythical history of the fascinating stone sculptures on top of the mountain. It's truly worth a visit. Nemrut Dagı is considered a World Heritage Site by UNESCO. All birding can be made roadside.

Gelinkaya

We found one pair of Semi-collared Flycatchers approx 500 m upstream the river. Park the car at the bridge over the river. Then walk on the west side of the river along a small track. This track finally goes into some small patches of rather thick, low forest in which we found the flycatchers, just by the river. Mountain Chiffchaff was quite easy in the area. Also good numbers of Cetti's Warblers, Marsh Warblers and Common Nightingales.

Sivri Kaya

We had really bad luck with the weather when we were in Sivri Kaya. When we arrived the first evening there was still clear blue sky and we could find two Caucasian Black Grouse (both males) on the slopes some km above Sivri Kaya. When descending, suddenly, fog came crawling up the hillsides. Thick and wet, and soon we couldn't see more than 100 metres ahead of us. This weather sustained for our whole staying, giving us no more views of the Black Grouses. The bad weather probably had its origin from the wet air coming in from the Black Sea. The following day when we made another try for the Black Grouse and Snowcocks up at the pass at Ovitgadi Gecidi, we soon found out that just a couple of kilometers further north the sky soon cleared and here we could find both a Caspian Snowcock, a few good passerines (Alpine Accentor and Crimson-winged Finch) and raptors. Around the houses at Ovitdagi Gecidi we found a lot of birds even though the fog still was pretty thick. We had at least three singing Radde's Accentors, and many Water Pipits and Twites. Since Red-fronted Serin and Wallcreeper have both been seen by others and our sighting of Radde's Accentor means that (at least in theory) you could exert Demirkazik from the itinerary and instead go for Sivri Kaya all the way. Although Crimson-winged Finch and Red-fronted Serin still seem more reliable at Demirkazik. But still, this new information offers an alternative opportunity when planning a future trip.

In the area all birding were done from the road, it's not necessary to walk up the hillsides to see the species.

Camlik

Behind the expensive Hotel Genesis in Camlik, there is some good forest. This is probably the best spot for Green Warbler (ssp. *nitidus*) since the roaring sound of the river doesn't disturb as much as in other places along the way from Sivri Kaya and downhill. The forests around here seem surprisingly unspoiled and there was a feeling that almost anything could turn up around here.

Sultan Marshes

Reading the reports from the last couple of years our expectations on the Sultan Marshes were set quite low. People have been written about lack of water and so forth. We birded at morning-hours around the pumping station and at the near-by watching tower. There were a few pools with water, containing some wetland birds like Red-crested Pochard and Ruddy Shelduck. This is where we saw the two Citrine Wagtails as well. When we were on our way back from the pumping station we met two National Park Rangers. They told us about some Flamingos and good amounts of other wetland birds further north in the area. After asking for direction they quickly decided to drive ahead of us showing us the way, very nice of them! We drove north along the east side of Yay Gölü. After reaching a village (probably Sindelhocuk) we drove another km before entering another village (probably Soysali). Look at map page 35, Gosney. Just southwest of this village we saw a watching tower (of exactly the same kind like the one at the pumping station). And this was the place. From this tower we scanned the wetlands and counted something like: Flamingo 26, Little Egret 19, Black Stork 22, White Stork 50, Spur-winged Plover 1, Black-tailed Godwit 1, Mediterranean Gull 12, Whiskered Tern 130, Gull-billed Tern 10, Little Tern 20. The birding in the whole area was quite exciting and hopefully the area will have more visitors in the future.

Demirkazik

We tried the different sites mentioned in Gosney. The first evening we drove quite far up the mountain (Gosney, site 4) before the track became too steep. Here we had Chukar and Finsch's Wheatear. At the mouth of the gorge we had a couple of families of Red-fronted Serin before sunset. On the following morning we woke up early and started to climb the shallow valley above the Mountain centre. We started at 03.30 and reached "the plateau" at around 05.00. It was quite an exhausting climb. But well up at the plateau we were immediately rewarded with at least two different calling Caspian Snowcocks, of whom one showed itself at a ridge for a short while. Also a nice pair of Crimson-winged Finches at the plateau. We then walked north toward the gorge. At top of the gorge we saw many Radde's Accentors. During the descending walk through the gorge we had no fortune with the Wallcreeper (although one of us had a suspicious but brief view of something...).

If you're not keen to pay Ali a lot of money to drive you up to the chromium mine you can do well and saving the money by doing the climb yourself. And we saw all our target species...

Lake Nigde

Southwest of Nigde you're passing a lake. We found access to the lake by travelling through the university area (western parts) and a smaller road (eastern parts). When going on the main road between Nigde and Bor you can easily see the lake and it soon becomes straightforward where to make the approach.

Best birds seen:

Ruddy Shelduck 10, Common Pochard 300, White-headed Duck 10, Black-necked Grebe 5, Greater Flamingo 540, Spur-winged Plover 3, Whiskered Tern 60, Moustached Warbler 1.

Kulu Gölü

Great wetland site south of Ankara. Dalmatian Pelican was observed here in July 2004 and hence one of the reasons for us going here. The lake isn't breeding ground for the pelicans but the description of Kulu Gölü in Gosney gave us hopes of at least seeing a lot of wetland species. This was true. The lake was filled with Greater Flamingos, approximately 3000 birds. It was some rain showers before our visit making the circle-drive around the lake impossible (to muddy), but we still got good views of the whole area. In a small lake just south of the main lake is where we found all of the ducks. There are a few scattered pieces of reed here.

Best birds seen:

Ruddy Shelduck 110, Common Pochard 80, Tufted Duck 1 female (small lake, usually a wintering species in Turkey), White-headed Duck 20 (small lake), Black-necked Grebe 22, Squacco Heron 1 (small lake), Greater Flamingo 3000(!), Lesser Kestrel 1 2y-male (NE), 1 adult male (along the road west of the lake), Stone Curlew 2 (on fields E of main lake), Mediterranean Gull 230, Slender-billed Gull 150, Gull-billed Tern 350(!), Black-bellied Sandgrouse 3 at western shores taking off early morning, 2 at south-eastern shores taking off early morning, really good numbers of larks around the lake.

South of Kulu along the way to Konya we stopped at a salt lake named Köpek Gölü. At this seemingly sterile place we found a colony of Gull-billed Terns, approx 100 birds, also three Slender-billed Gulls and a sole Greater Flamingo.

List of bird-species observed in Turkey, June 5-18 2005

Total: 241 species

Ruddy Shelduck *Tadorna ferruginea*

e.g. 340 Sultan Marshes 14.6

Common Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*

Gadwall *Anas strepera*

Common Teal *Anas crecca*

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*

Garganey *Anas querquedula*

1 male at Göksu 7.6, 4 at Lake Nigde 15.6

Northern Shoveler *Anas clypeata*

Marbled Duck *Marmaronetta angustirostris*

10 at Göksu 7.6

Red-crested Pochard *Netta rufina*

14 in pairs at the pumping station, Sultan Marshes 14.6

Common Pochard *Aythya farina*

e.g. 300 at Lake Nigde 15.6, 80 at Kulu Gölü 16.6

Ferruginous Duck *Aythya nyroca*

2 at Göksu 7.6, 2 S of Birecik 9.6

Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula*

1 female at Kulu Gölü 16.6. Normally a wintering species.

White-headed Duck *Oxyura leucocephala*

3 females at Göksu 7.6, 8 at Lake Nigde 15.6, 20 at Kulu Gölü 16.6

Caucasian Black Grouse *Tetrao mlokosiewiczi*

2 males at the slopes above the first rhododendrons west of the road N of Ovitdagi Gecidi, Sivri Kaya 11.6

Caspian Snowcock *Tetraogallus caspius*

1 seen approx 1-2 km SE of Ovitgadi Gecidi 12.6, 1 male seen and 1 heard Demirkazik 15.6.

Chukar *Alectoris chukar*

1 male at Demirkazik 14.6, 2 at Demirkazik 15.6

See-see Partridge *Ammoperdix griseogularis*

3 at Main Wadi, Birecik 9.6

Black Francolin *Francolinus francolinus*

2 males seen and another 3 heard at Göksu 7.6, 1 heard at Main Wadi, Birecik 9.6

Common Quail *Coturnix coturnix*

1 heard SW of Maden Köprübasi 13.6, 1 heard W of Sivas 13.6, 1 heard at Lake Nigde 15.6, 1 heard at Kulu Gölü 16.6, 1 heard SW of Konya 16.6

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*

Black-necked Grebe *Podiceps nigricollis*

5 at Lake Nigde 15.6, 22 at Kulu Gölü 16.6

Scopoli's Shearwater *Calonectris diomedea diomedea*

40 seen from the Girne-Tasucu ferry 6.6

Yelkouan Shearwater *Puffinus yelkouan*

7 seen from the Girne-Tasucu ferry 6.6

Great Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo sinensis*

1 at Göksu 7.6, 1 at Black Sea coast 12.6

European Shag *Phalacrocorax aristotelis desmarestii*

15 at Anamur 5.6

Pygmy Cormorant *Phalacrocorax pygmeus*

40 on Euphrates at Birecik 9.6

Little Bittern *Ixobrychus minutus*

1 male + 1 female at small ponds S of Birecik 9.6

Black-crowned Night Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax*

1 at Göksu 7.6, 3 at Birecik 8.6, 2 S of Birecik 9.6

Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis*

2 S of Birecik 9.6

Squacco Heron *Ardeola ralloides*

2 at Göksu 7.6, 3 S of Birecik 9.6, 1 at Kulu Gölü 15.6

Little Egret *Ergetta garzetta*

e.g. 19 at northern Sultan Marshes 14.6

Great Egret *Egretta alba*

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*

Purple Heron *Ardea purpurea*

Black Stork *Ciconia nigra*

6 at a valley close to Gerger NE of Nemrut Dagı 10.6, 26(!) at Sultan Marshes (mostly northern parts) 14.6

White Stork *Ciconia ciconia*

Northern Bald Ibis *Geronticus eremite*

50 at Birecik 9.6. From the Bald Ibis program.

Eurasian Spoonbill *Platalea leucorodia*

1 at Göksu 7.6

Greater Flamingo *Phoenicopterus roseus ruber*

26 at Sultan Marshes northern parts 14.6, 3 at Col Gölü 14.6, 540 at Lake Nigde 15.6, 3000 at Kulu Gölü 16.6, 1 at Köpek Gölü 16.6



Greater Flamingos, Kulu Gölü, June 2005. Photo: Måns Grundsten.

European Honey Buzzard *Pernis apivorus*

1 at Nemrut Dagı 10.6. Late migrant?

Black Kite *Milvus migrans*

Lammergeier *Gypaetus barbatus*

1 ad at Gölyurt Gecidi 11.6, 2 SE of Ovitdagi Gecidi 12.6

Egyptian Vulture *Neophron percnopterus*

1 subad near Gerger, E Nemrut Dagı 10.6, 1 ad SW Maden Köprübasi 11.6, 1 ad W of Refahiye (W of Erzincan) 13.6

Eurasian Griffon Vulture *Gyps fulvus*

1 SE of Ovitdagi Gecidi 12.6

Short-toed Eagle *Circaetus gallicus*
2 at lunar landscape, Isikli 8.6, 1 (light-headed) at the pumping station, Sultan Marshes 14.6

Western Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus*

Northern Goshawk *Accipiter gentiles*
1 at Akseki new site 5.6

Eurasian Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*
1 pair at Akseki new site 5.6

Common Buzzard *Buteo buteo vulpinus*
1 en route Erzincan-Sivas 13.6

Long-legged Buzzard *Buteo rufinus*

Steppe Eagle *Aquila nipalensis*
1 subad (2-3y) at Ovitdagi Gecidi 11.6. A late migrant?

Golden Eagle *Aquila chrysaetos*

Booted Eagle *Hieraetus pennatus*
2 (dark morph) SW of Maden Köprübasi 11.6, 2 (dm) en route Ispir-Erzurum 13.6, 2 (light morph) en route 13.6, 1 (dm) 14.6, 1 (dm) Kulu Gölü 16.6

Lesser Kestrel *Falco naumanni*
1 ad male NW Kulu Gölü 15-16.6, 1 2y-male NE Kulu Gölü 16.6

Common Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*

Red-footed Falcon *Falco vespertinus*
5 at Göksu (N of Akgöl observation tower). Only ad males and 2y-males. Late migrants?

Eurasian Hobby *Falco subbuteo*

Eleonora's Falcon *Falco eleonora*
1 at Anamur 5.6

Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus brookei*
1 SE of Ovitdagi Gecidi 12.6

Common Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*

Purple Gallinule *Porphyrio porphyrio caspius*
4 at Göksu 7.6

Common Coot *Fulica atra*

Common Crane *Grus grus*
1 en route Sivas-Kayseri 13.6, 2 Sultan Marshes 14.6

Eurasian Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*

Black-winged Stilt *Himantopus himantopus*

Pied Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta*

Stone Curlew *Burhinus oedicephalus*
2 at fields east of Kulu Gölü 16.6

Little Ringed Plover *Chardrius dubius*

Kentish Plover *Charadrius alexandrinus*

Greater Sand Plover *Chardrius leschenaultii columbinus*
24 at Col Gölü (N of Sultan Marshes) 14.6, this seems to be one of the most reliable sites for GSP during breeding times. As described by Batty (2003) drive north along Kanal II on the west side for approx 3.5 km (we could only drive 2.5 and had to walk the last km (which was nothing less than intensely hot!)) then look east.

Spur-winged Plover *Vanellus spinosus*

Northern Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*

Ruff *Philomachus pugnax*
1 at Göksu 7.6

Common Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*
1 at Göksu 7.6

Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*
1 at Göksu 7.6, 1 at Sultan Marshes 14.6

Common Redshank *Tringa totanus*

Marsh Sandpiper *Tringa stagnatilis*
1 flew by at the pumping station, Sultan Marshes 14.6

Common Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*

Green Sandpiper *Tringa glareola*

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*

Mediterranean Gull *Larus melanocephalus*
12 at Sultan Marshes (northern parts) 14.6, 230(!) at Kulu Gölü 16.6

Black-headed Gull *Larus ridibundus*

Slender-billed Gull *Larus genei*
2 at the pumping station, Sultan Marshes 14.6, 150 at Kulu Gölü 16.6

Caspian Gull *Larus cachinnans*
5 at Rize harbour 12.6

Yellow-legged Gull *Larus michaellis*
Scattered observations along the Mediterranean coast. 150 at Rize harbour 12.6

Gull *Larus sp.*

We had some troubles with identification of the larger gulls. We had 1 subad at a valley close to Gerger 10.6, which might have been an Armenian Gull (*Larus armenicus*). We also had 5 larger gulls at Kulu Gölü which we're not sure of (might have been Armenian as well). Based on geographical distribution the larger gulls observed in central and central-eastern Turkey should be Armenian, while gulls along the coast are rather likely to be Yellow-legged (sp. *michaellis*). And few Caspian Gulls can be observed along the Black Sea Coast. This is based on what others have written in earlier trip reports...Our field guides didn't cover the gulls well enough. Hopefully the new Helm-guide "Gulls" will bring some clarity to the matter.

Gull-billed Tern *Sterna nilotica*

17 at Sultan Marshes 14.6, 350(!) at Kulu Gölü 16.6, 100 at Köpek Gölü 16.6

Common Tern *Sterna hirundo*

Little Tern *Sterna albifrons*

Whiskered Tern *Chlidonias hybrida*

4 at Göksu 7.6, 135 at Sultan Marshes (northern parts) 14.6, 60 at Lake Nigde 15.6

White-winged Black Tern *Chlidonias leucopterus*

1 at Göksu 7.6

Black-bellied Sandgrouse *Pterocles orientalis*

5+2 flew by at Main Wadi, Birecik 9.6, 3+2 at Kulu Gölü 16.6

Rock Dove *Columba livia*

Common Wood Pigeon *Columba palumbus*

Eurasian Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*

European Turtle Dove *Streptopelia turtur*

Laughing Dove *Streptopelia senegalensis*

Common Cuckoo *Cuculus canorus*

Striated Scops Owl *Otus brucei*

1 ad at Scops Owl Café, Birecik. We found our bird approx 25 m NW of the blue fountain mentioned in Gosney.

European Scops Owl *Otus scops*

Little Owl *Athene noctua indigena*

Tawny Owl *Strix aluco*

2 calling Akseki new site 5.6, 1 calling at late evening Isikli 7.6

Long-eared Owl *Asio otus*

1 pair + 4 pull Scops Owl Café, Birecik 9.6



Calandra Lark, Kulu Gölü, June 2005. Photo: Måns Grundsten.

Eurasian Nightjar *Caprimulgus europaeus*

1 calling Akseki new site 5.6, 1 seen on the road to the pumping station, Sultan Marshes at sunset 14.6, 1 calling at Demirkazik 15.6

Common Swift *Apus apus*
Alpine Swift *Apus melba*
Little Swift *Apus affinis*
 20 just N of Birecik 9.6
White-breasted Kingfisher *Halcyon leucocephala*
 1 at Göksu (site 2, Gosney) 7.6
European Bee-eater *Merops apiaster*
 Totally 68 birds seen
Roller *Coracias garrulous*
 Totally 32 birds seen
Hoopoe *Upupa epops*
Wryneck *Jynx torquilla*
 1 seen + 1 heard at Akseki new site 5.6
Green Woodpecker *Picus viridis*
 Heard at Akseki new site 5 & 17.6, heard at Gelinkaya 11.6
Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopus major*
 2 at Camlik 12.6
White-backed Woodpecker *Dendrocopos leucotos lilfordi*
 1 heard drumming at Akseki new site 5.6
Syrian Woodpecker *Dendrocopos syriacus*
Middle Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos medius*
 5 at Akseki new site 5 & 17.6, 4 at Akseki walled plantation 5 & 16.6
Lesser Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos minor*
Calandra Lark *Melanocorypha calandra*
 e.g. 75 at Kulu Gölü 16.6
Bimaculated Lark *Melanocorypha bimaculata*
 8 at Isikli (lunar landscape) 8.6, 2 at Main Wadi, Birecik 9.6, 2 en route 13.6
Greater Short-toed Lark *Calandrella brachydactyla*
 e.g. 60 at Kulu Gölü 16.6
Lesser/Asian Short-toed Lark *Calandrella rufescens/cheleensis aharonii?*
 50 at Sultan Marshes 14.6, 1 at Lake Nigde 15.6, 60 at Kulu Gölü 16.6. See other reports for a discussion about the taxonomic status of this lark.
Crested Lark *Galerida cristata*
Woodlark *Lullula arborea*
Skylark *Alauda arvensis*
 2 at Kulu Gölü 16.6
Horned Lark *Eremophila alpestris penicillata*
 10 at Nemrut Dagi 10.6, easy at both Sivri Kaya area and Demirkazik
Sand Martin *Riparia riparia*
Crag Martin *Hirundo rupestris*
Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica*
Red-rumped Swallow *Hirundo daurica*
House Martin *Delichon urbicum*
Tawny Pipit *Anthus campestris*
 2 SW of Maden Köprübasi 11.6
Tree Pipit *Anthus trivialis*
 1 singing at Sivri Kaya 12.6
Water Pipit *Anthus spinoletta coutelli*
 Easy at Ovitdagi Gecidi, Sivri Kaya 11-13.6
Black-headed Wagtail *Motacilla flava feldegg*
 Present at most wetland areas in Turkey. A few females(?) almost looked like ssp. *flava* at the pumping station, Sultan Marshes 14.6.
 Blue-headed Wagtail (ssp. *flava*) 1 ad male (with an injured leg) at a rubbish dump at Rize 12.6
Citrine Wagtail *Motacilla citreola werae*
 2 males at the pumping station, Sultan Marshes 14.6
Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*
 Common in Sivri Kaya-Ikizdere area 11-13.6
White Wagtail *Motacilla alba alba*
White-spectacled Bulbul *Pycnonotus xanthopygos*
White-throated Dipper *Cinclus cinclus*
 3 at Sivri Kaya-Ikizdere area 11-12.6
Winter Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*
Dunnock *Prunella modularis*
 1 at Sivri Kaya 12.6, 3 at Camlik 12.6
Radde's Accentor *Prunella ocularis*
 3 at Ovitdagi Gecidi, Sivri Kaya 12.6. 6 at upper gorge, Demirkazik 15.6.
Alpine Accentor *Prunella collaris*

1 at Ovitdagi Gecidi 12.6

Rufous Bush Robin *Cercotrichas galactotes syriacus*

European Robin *Erithacus rubecula*

Common Nightingale *Luscinia megarhynchos*
1 at Akseki new site 5.6, 2 at Birecik 9.6, 5 at Gelinkaya 11.6

White-throated Robin *Irania gutturalis*
25 at Isikli-Iman's-Durnalik 8.6, 15 at Narince-Nemrut Dagi 10.6, 1 2y-male at the shallow valley, Demirkazik 15.6

Black Redstart *Phoenicurus ochruros ochruros*

Common Redstart *Phoenicurus phoenicurus samamisticus*
1 family at Akseki new site 5 & 17.6

Whinchat *Saxicola rubetra*
1 male en route 13.6

Isabelline Wheatear *Oenanthe isabellina*
e.g. 50 at Sultan Marshes 14.6, 200(!) at Kulu Gölü 16.6

Northern Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe*

Cyprus Pied Wheatear *Oenanthe cypriaca*
4 above Bellapais monastery 6.6

Black-eared Wheatear *Oenanthe hispanica melanoleuca*

Finsch's Wheatear *Oenanthe finschii*
3 at Isikli (lunar landscape) 8.6, 1 at Main Wadi, Birecik 9.6, 4 at Nemrut Dagi 10.6, 3 at Demirkazik 14.6

Kurdish Wheatear *Oenanthe xanthopyrma*
8 at Nemrut Dagi 10.6. The only reliable site in Turkey? Might be possible at Isikli/Burnalik earlier in season

Rufous-tailed Rock Thrush *Monticola saxatilis*

Blue Rock Thrush *Monticola solitarius*

Ring Ouzel *Turdus torquatos amicornum*
2 at Gölyurt Gecidi 13.6, 1 at Demirkazik 15.6

Eurasian Blackbird *Turdus merula*

Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos*
5 at Camlik 12.6

Mistle Thrush *Turdus viscivorus*

Cetti's Warbler *Cettia cetti*
e.g. 3 at Bellapais monastery 6.6, 15 at Gelinkaya 11.6

Zitting Cisticola *Cisticola juncidis*
1 en route Bellapais monastery 6.6

Graceful Prinia *Prinia gracilis*

Moustached Warbler *Acrocephalus melanopogon mimicus*
2 at Göksu (observation tower, Akgöl) 7.6, 10 at Sultan Marshes 14.6, 1 at Lake Nigde 15.6

Sedge Warbler *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*
2 singing at Murat Nehri, S of Bingöl 10.6

Marsh Warbler *Acrocephalus palustris*
5 at Gelinkaya 11.6, 1 at Sivri Kaya 12.6

Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus scirpaceus fuscus*

Great Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus arundinaceus*

Eastern Olivaceous Warbler *Hippolais pallida*

Upcher's Warbler *Hippolais languida*
10 at Isikli/Iman's/Durnalik 8.6, 3 at Nemrut Dagi 10.6

Olive-tree Warbler *Hippolais olivetorum*
1 seen well singing 1 km E of Narince 10.6

Ménétries' Warbler *Sylvia mystacea rubescens*
15 at Main Wadi, Birecik 9.6

Cyprus Warbler *Sylvia melanothorax*
5 above Bellapais monastery 6.6

Rüppell's Warbler *Sylvia rueppelli*
6 at walled plantation and Akseki rubbish dump 5 & 16-17.6

Eastern Orphean Warbler *Sylvia crassirostris*

Lesser Whitethroat *Sylvia curruca*

Common Whitethroat *Sylvia communis (icterops?)*
4 at Gelinkaya 11.6, 1 at Ovitdagi Gecidi 12.6, 1 en route 13.6

Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla*

Green Warbler *Phylloscopus trochiloides nitidus*
1 at Sivri Kaya 12.6, 2 at Ikizdere 12.6, 3 at Camlik 12.6, 1 en route 12.6

Eastern Bonelli's Warbler *Phylloscopus orientalis*
10 seen at Akseki new site and walled plantation 5 & 16-17.6

Common Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita*
1 singing en route at Sivas 13.6

Mountain Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus sindianus lorenzii*

10 at Gelinkaya 11.6

Goldcrest *Regulus regulus*

Spotted Flycatcher *Muscicapa striata*

Semi-collared Flycatcher *Muscicapa semitorquata*

1 pair at Gelinkaya 11.6

Long-tailed Tit *Aegithalos caudatus tephronotus*

Sombre Tit *Parus lugubris*

Coal Tit *Parus ater*

Blue Tit *Parus caeruleus*

Great Tit *Parus major*

Krüper's Nuthatch *Sitta krueperi*

Easy at Akseki new site

Eurasian Nuthatch *Sitta europaea caesia*

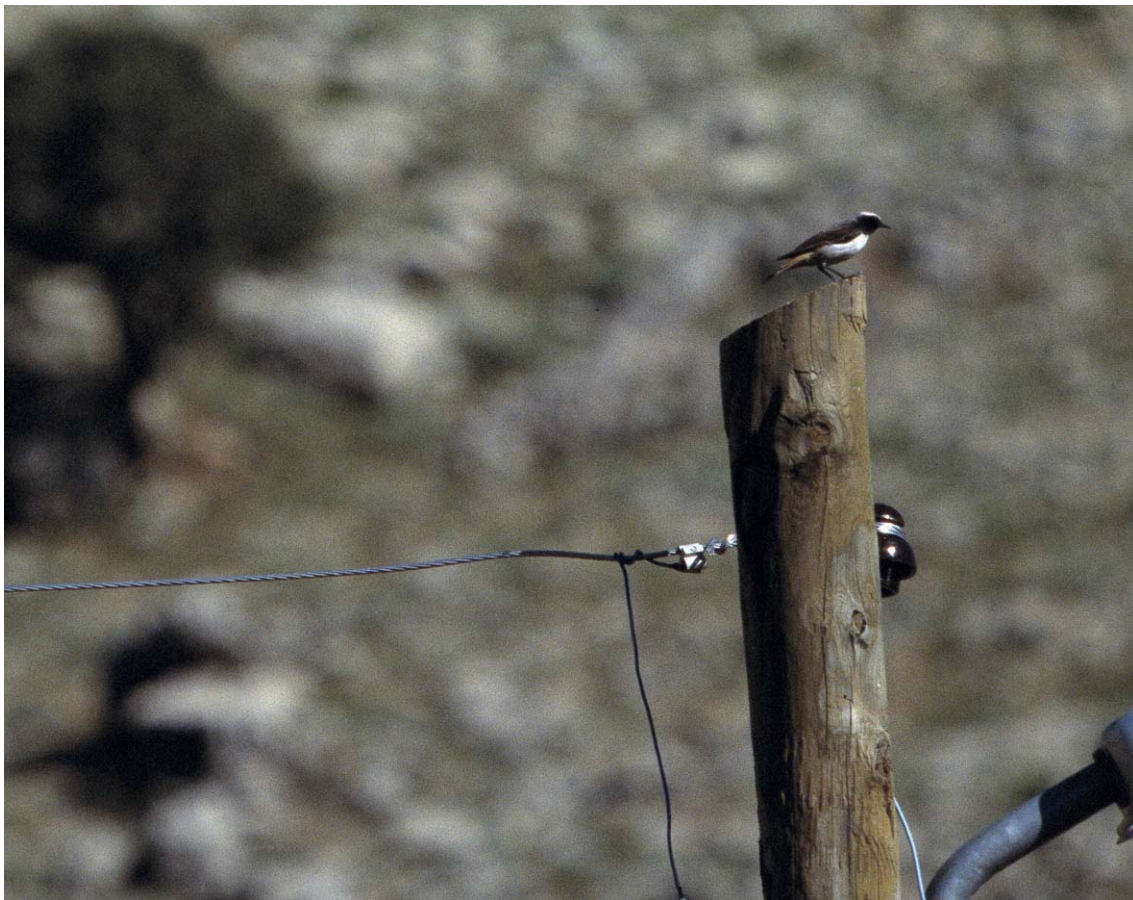
2 at Ispir 11.6

Eastern Rock Nuthatch *Sitta tephronota*

Easy at Isikli-Iman's-Durnalik. Also observed at Narince-Nemrut Dagı

Western Rock Nuthatch *Sitta neumayer*

Seen at Isikli, Durnalik, Demirkazik and Akseki



Kurdish Wheatear, Nemrut Dagı, June 2005. Photo: Måns Grundsten.

Short-toed Treecreeper *Certhia brachydactyla*

6 at Akseki new site 5.6

Penduline Tit *Remiz pendulinus (caspius?)*

3 males at the pumping station, Sultan Marshes 14.6

Golden Oriole *Oriolus oriolus*

Widespread around Ispir-Maden Köprübasi

Red-backed Shrike *Lanius collurio*

1 female Iman's (lunar landscape), 1 male found dead W of Sivas 13.6, 2 males Demirkazik 14-15.6

Lesser Grey Shrike *Lanius minor*

Totally 10 birds seen, roadside, easiest around Sultan Marshes-Demirkazik

Woodchat Shrike *Lanius senator niloticus*

Totally 30 birds seen, easiest in the southern parts

Masked Shrike *Lanius nubicus*

20 seen at Akseki 5 & 16-17.6, 1 at Narince 10.6

Eurasian Jay *Garrulus glandarius* (*ssp?*)

Common Magpie *Pica pica*

Alpine Chough *Pyrrhocorax graculus*

20 at Demirkazik 14-15.6

Red-billed Chough *Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax*

Western Jackdaw *Corvus monedula* (*sommerengii?*)

Rook *Corvus frugilegus*

Hooded Crow *Corvus corone cornix*

Common Raven *Corvus corax*

2 at Göksu 7.6, 2 at İkizdere 12.6

European Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*

Rose-coloured Starling *Sturnus roseus*

12 en route E of Sarkisla, SW of Sivas 13.6

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*

Spanish Sparrow *Passer hispaniolensis*

e.g. 30 at Narince 10.6

Dead Sea Sparrow *Passer moabiticus*

50 N of Birecik 9.6

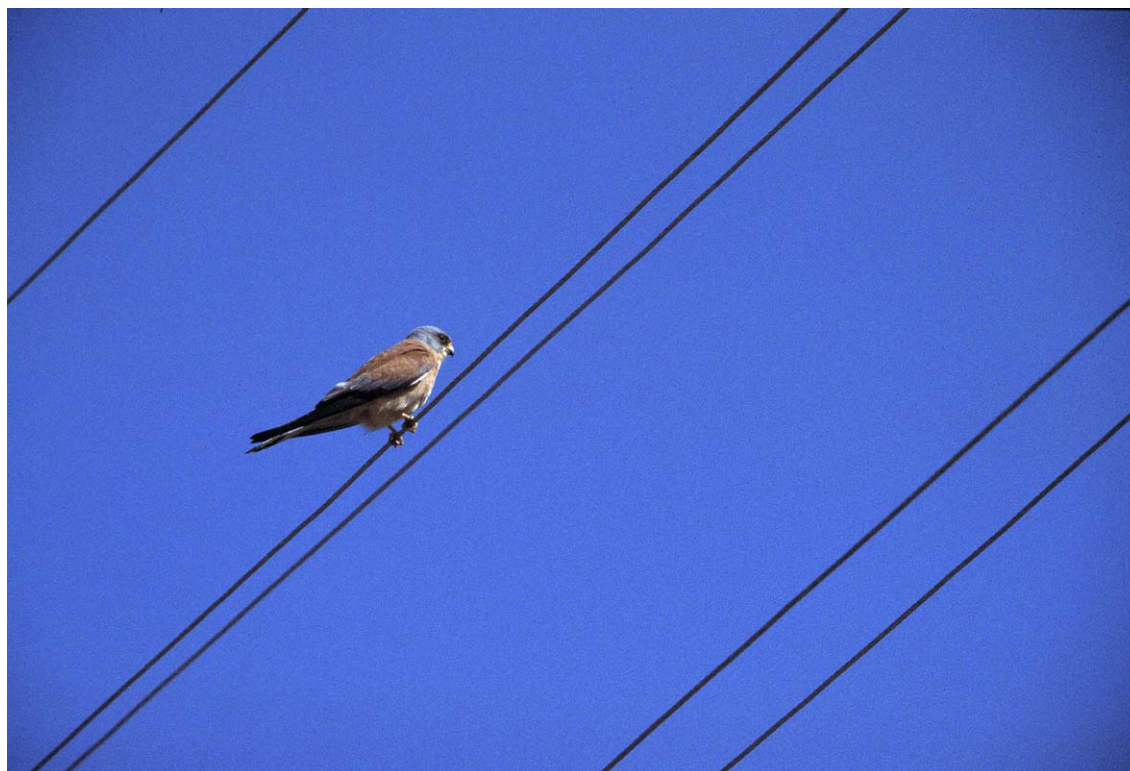
Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus*

Pale Rock Sparrow *Petronia brachydactyla*

1 male singing at Nemrut Dagi 10.6

Chestnut-shouldered Petronia *Petronia canthocollis*

1 female at Birecik (site 4) 9.6, 1 female at Ayran, N Birecik 9.6, 1 male at Narince 10.6



Lesser Kestrel, Kulu Gölü, June 2005. Photo: Måns Grundsten.

Rock Sparrow *Petronia petronia*

Snow Finch *Montifringilla nivalis*

Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*

Red-fronted Serin *Serinus pusillus*

20 at Demirkazik 14-15.6

Eurasian Serin *Serinus serinus*

European Greenfinch *Carduelis chloris*

Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis*

Linnet *Carduelis cannabina*

Twite *Carduelis flavirostris brevirostris*

20 at Ovitdagi Gecidi, Sivri Kaya 11-13.6. Morphologically very distinct from other Twites. Whiteish underparts, blackish breast, bright pink rump. Call closer to Redpoll. This isolated population might better be treated as a separate species (Caucasian Twite)?

Red Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra*

3 & 2 Akseki new site 5 & 17.6

Crimson-winged Finch *Rhodopechys sanguineus*

2 at Ovitdagi Gecidi 12.6, 2 SW of Maden Köprübasi 13.6, 3 at Demirkazik 15.6

Desert Finch *Rhodospiza obsoleta*

1 female at Isikli (lunar landscape) 8.6, 3 at Iman's 8.6, 1 male S of Birecik 9.6

Common Rosefinch *Carpodacus erythrinus*

Eurasian Bullfinch *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

1 male at Camlik 12.6

Rock Bunting *Emberiza cia*

1 at Sivri Kaya 12.6, 2 at Ikizdere 12.6, 4 at Demirkazik 15.6

Cinereous Bunting *Emberiza cineracea semenowi*

Easy at Isikli-Iman's-Durnalik and at Narince-Nemrut Dagi

Ortolan Bunting *Emberiza hortulana*

Cretzschmar's Bunting *Emberiza caesia*

>3 at Akseki rubbish dump 5 & 17.6, 2 at Isikli 8.6

Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus*

2 at Sultan Marshes (site 6) 14.6

Black-headed Bunting *Emberiza melanocephala*

Corn Bunting *Emberiza calandra*

This report was written by Måns Grundsten: m.grundsten@spray.se