

Israel 7.2-14.2 2009

Report written by: Petter Olsson
Email: kungsfagelsangare@hotmail.com

Team:

Petter Olsson, Martin Rydberg-Hedén and Mikael Ohlson, all from Sweden

Prices:

(SEK=Swedish crownes, 1 Euro = 11 SEK at the time of the trip)

Flight from Arlanda, Sweden to Aqaba, Jordan	2000 SEK
Taxi from Aqaba airport to the border	100 SEK
Taxi from the border to central Eilat	70 SEK
Dormroom at Coreen Hostel, Eilat	100 SEK/Night
Rental car with free km	2400 SEK/Week
Lift up on Mount Hermont	80 SEK
Petrol	9-10 SEK/Liter
Food	~100SEK/day
Exit fee at the border when leaving Israel	190 SEK

Weather during the trip:

7.2 Sun, some wind

8.2 A little bit windy, but sunny

9.2 Cloudy and some wind

10.2 **Sandstorm, fair in the morning though, Urim was useless.**

11.2 No wind at dawn, but increasing during the morning, sunny.

12.2 No wind at all during the whole day, sunny. Best of the days.

13.2 Sunny and light wind.

General information:

Safety

We had no troubles at all during the whole week even though they had election the 11th. We crossed the West Bank without any problems along road 90. We were recommended to do this in daylight. Otherwise just don't walk off the roads where there are mine fields or shooting ranges, but this is quite obvious I presume. Urim was not any problem to reach at all even though it is close to the Gaza-area.

You will of course notice military activity all the time, but as long as you are friendly to them and do what they tell you to do at barriers and borders then they are really easy to deal with.

Flight ticket

Bought a last minute ticket from El-al over phone about three weeks before departure from Arlanda to Aqaba. It takes about 15 minutes to drive from the airport in Aqaba to the border station.

Rental car

We rented our car from Budget, worth noting is that they reserved 1000 US dollars as a guarantee during our rental period. Extra driver was 2 US/Day. We drove 2500 km from Sunday morning until Friday noon. Worth noting is also that this car-company as most of the stores in Israel are closed on Saturdays and closes about 14.00 on Friday afternoon.

Lift up on Mount Hermon

Open between 12.00 to 15.30. We were not allowed to walk down the slope, so the birdwatching must take place either on the top where we saw the Crimson-Winged Finches and the Shore Larks or from the lift on the way up and down.

Entering Jordan from Israel

Don't bring a GPS, at least the guards on the Jordan side told us that we were not allowed to bring GPS:s into Jordan unless you are a military. Though we had no trouble with this on the airport when we arrived. But it took us some extra 45 minutes to enter Jordan on our way to the airport due to this. Of course we had some other "strange" equipment as walkie-talkies, scopes, binoculars, spotlight, camera-equipment and camping-equipment. So I guess that it was rather the combination of stuff we brought that made them suspicious.

Program:

7.2 Arriving at Aqaba in the afternoon -Eilat.

8.2 IBRCE- Road 90 to Tiberias with stop at Kefar Ruppin, night in tent at Mount Arbel

9.2 Morning at Mount Arbel – Hula-area – Mount Hermon – Kibbutz El Rom – Hula-area – Drive to Nizzana during the night.

10.2 Nizzana – Urim – Km 20 - Eilat

11.2 Km 33 – Elifaz – Wadi Quetura – Yotvata – Yoseftal hospital – Drive north to Hazeva

12.2 Hazeva – Km 186 – Wadi Mishmar – Wadi Salvadore – Mietspe Dragot – Neot Hakikar – Night outside the reserve at Ammran's Pillars

13.2 Ammran's Pillars – Eilat-area

14.2 IBRCE – Aqaba - Home

Living:

7.2 Coreen Hostel, Eilat

8.2 Camping at Mount Arbel

9.2 Camping at Nizzana

10.2 Coreen Hostel, Eilat

11.2 Camping a few km off road 90 along road 227.

12.2 Camping outside the reserve at Ammran's pillars

13.2 Owl-catching at IBRCE

List of observed species:

Common shelduck

Several seen at Lake Agamon 9.2 and at Km 20 10.2, also seen in Nizzana

Eurasian Wigeon

6 Lake Agamon 9.2

Mallard

Common at fresh-water ponds.

Gadwall

Some individuals seen at Km 188 8.2

Pintail duck

20 Km 20 11.2

Shoveler

Very common in Kefar Ruppim and Hula-area. Thousands seen.

Eurasian Teal

Common in fresh-water ponds.

Garganey

1 Km 188 8.2

Chukar

Fairly common, seen and heard at many places

Sand Partridge

2 Km 186 12.2,

4 Wadi Salvadora 12.2

4 Wadi Mishmar 12.2

2 Metzoke Dragot 12.2

Little Grebe

Fairly common

Greater Flamingo

5 IBRCE 8.2

White Pelican

4 Lake Agamon 9.2

Great Cormorant

Common

Pygmy Cormorant

Common in the Hula-area 9.2

Black-Crowned Night Heron

Common in Kefar Ruppin 8.2 and the Hula-area 9.2

Cattle Egret

Common in the north, hundreds seen.

Little Egret

20 IBRCE 8.2 and 13.2

Squacco Heron

1 Hula-area 9.2

Great White Egret

Fairly common.

Grey Heron

Fairly common

Black Stork

15 Kefar Ruppin 8.2

1 Wadi Salvadora 12.2

Glossy Ibis

50 Lake Agamon 9.2

Osprey

2 Hula-area 9.2

Crested Honey Buzzard

1 in the Date plantation north of the border station.

Black Kite

Common around Kefar Ruppin 8.2 and in the Urim-area 10.2

White-Tailed Sea-Eagle

2 In the Hula-area 9.2

Griffon Vulture

9 Wadi Mishmar 12.2

Hen Harrier

1 ad male at Kibbutz El Rom.

Marsh Harrier

1 IBRCE 8.2

2 Lake Agamon

Montague's Harrier

1 2nd cy at Km 236 8.2

Pallid Harrier

1 IBRCE 8.2
3 Nizzana 10.2

Sparrowhawk

5 in the Eilat-area 13-14.2
1 Yotvata 11.2

Levant Sparrowhawk

1 Ad male, Yotvata 11.2

Steppe Buzzard

Fairly common

Long-legged Buzzard

Fairly common

Bonelli's Eagle

2 ad Metzoke Dragot 12.2

Imperial Eagle

2 Urim 10.2

Steppe Eagle

3 Eilat 8.2
20 IBRCE 13.2
15 IBRCE 14.2

Booted Eagle

1 IBRCE 8.2
1 dark morph Date-plantation north of IBRCE 13.2

Kestrel

Common, especially in the north

Lesser Kestrel

1 Km 335 8.2

Peregrine Falcon

1 ad Urim

Barbary Falcon

1 pair Yotvata 8.2
1 pair Km 33 11.2
1 pair Wadi Salvadora 12.2

Merlin

1 Mount Hermon 9.2

Moorhen

Common in the Hula-area

Coot

Common in Kefar Ruppin 8.2

Maqueen's Bustard

2 Nizzana 10.2

Common Crane

Thousands in the Hula-area 9.2

Stone Curlew

2 Mount Arbel 8.2

4 Hula-area 9.2

4 Nizzana 10.2

Cream-Colored Courser

1 Km 33 11.2

Black-Winged Stilt

Fairly common

Avocet

10 Lake Agamon 9.2

5 Nizzana 10.2

Ringed Plover

10 IBRCE 8.2 and 13-14.2

Kentish Plover

20 Km 20 11.2

Spur-winged Plover

Fairly Common

Lapwing

5 Lake Agamon 9.2

Ruff

15 IBRCE 8.2

Dunlin

10 IBRCE 8.2

Little Stint

10 IBRCE 8.2

Redshank

10 IBRCE 8.2

Common Sandpiper

4 Kefar Ruppin 8.2

6 Hula-area 9.2

Green Sandpiper

2 IBRCE 8.2

Marsh Sandpiper

2 IBRCE 8.2 and 13-14.2

Greenshank

1 IBRCE 13.2

Common Snipe

8 Hula-area 9.2

2 Km 19 11.2

White-Eyed Gull

2 North Beach 13.2

Slender-Billed Gull

20 Km 20 11.2

Black-Headed Gull

Fairly common

Palla's Gull

Fairly common Kefar Ruppin 8.2

Fairly common Hula-area 9.2

1 Km 20 11.2

Armenian Gull

5 Hula-area 9.2

Yellow-Legged Gull

1 IBRCE 8.2

Caspian Tern

2 North Beach 11.2

White-Winged Black Tern

3 IBRCE 8.2

Black-Bellied Sandgrouse

50 Nizzana 10.2 Drinking between 08.30-09.30

Parked the car at 30°53.590 N 34° 26.257 E, then the birds went down to drink in the southeastern pond.

Spotted Sandgrouse

20 Nizzana 10.2 Drinking between 08.30-09.30

Parked the car at 30°53.590 N 34 ° 26.257 E, then the birds went down to drink in the southeastern pond.

Crowned Sandgrouse

3 Nizzana 10.2 Drinking between 08.30-09.30

Parked the car at 30°53.590 N 34 ° 26.257 E, then the birds went down to drink in the southeastern pond.

Pin-Tailed Sandgrouse

9 Nizzana 10.2 Drinking between 08.30-09.30

Parked the car at 30°53.590 N 34 ° 26.257 E, then the birds went down to drink in the southeastern pond.

Pterocles sp.

150 Nizzana 10.2 just flew by the ponds between 08.30-09.30

Rock Dove

Common

Collared Dove

Common

Laughing Dove

Common

Namaqua Dove

4 Ein Tamal, Neot Hakikar 12.2

Great-Spotted Cuckoo

1 Km 283 8.2

Ring-Necked Parakeet

Common in Eilat

Long-Eared Owl

1 ringed at IBRCE 13.2

Striated Scops Owl

1 Wadi Quetura 11.2, Seemed to prefer the greenest densest tree in the wadi, which of course is found quite close to the end of the wadi, that is 2-3 km walk from Road 90.

Little Swift

5 Mount Arbel 9.2

Common Swift

2 Km 19 11.2

Pallid Swift

Common

Nubian Nightjair

2 displaying at Ein Tamal, Neot Hakkikar 12.2

Common Kingfisher

2 Hula-area 9.2

White-Breasted Kingfisher

2 Kefar Ruppin 8.2

12 Hula-area 9.2

4 Eilat-area 13-14.2

Pied Kingfisher

1 Kefar Ruppin 8.2

6 Hula-area 9.2

Little Green Bee-Eater

Fairly common

Hoopoe

1 Km 327 8.2

2 Yotvata 11.2

Syrian Woodpecker

10 Kibbutz El Rom 9.2

Skylark

Common

Oriental Skylark

2 Yotvata Fields 11.2, southern circular field, but flew off to the northern.

Crested Lark

Common

Bar-Tailed Lark

Fairly common

Desert Lark

Fairly common, more common than Bar-tailed Lark

Shore Lark

7 Mount Hermon 9.2

Temminck's Lark

1 Km 33 11.2

Hoopoe Lark

1 Km 34 11.2

African Rock Martin

Fairly Common

Crag Martin

3 Km 212 8.2

House Martin

Fairly common in Eilat 8.2 and 13-14.2.

Sand Martin

5 Yotvata fields 11.2

Barn Swallow

Common

Red-Rumped Swallow

9 IBRCE 13-14.2

Water Pipit

Fairly common

Buff-Bellied Pipit

2 Elifaz sewage pond 11.2

Meadow Pipit

Fairly common in the north

Red-Throated Pipit

Fairly common

Tawny Pipit

1 Km 34 11.2

Long-Billed Pipit

1 Mount Arbel 9.2

White-Spectacled Bulbul

Common

White Wagtail

Common

Grey Wagtail
5 Hula-area 9.2

Black Bush Robin
1 Yoseftal Hospital, Eilat 11.2

Common Nightingale
1 Kefar Ruppin 8.2
1 Hazeva 12.2

Alpine Accentor
1 Mount Hermon 9.2

Robin
2 IBRCE 8.2
Fairly common in the north

Bluethroat
10 IBRCE 8.2 and 13-14.2

Black Redstart
Fairly common

Blackstart
Common

Caspian Stonechat
1 Km 277 8.2

Stonechat
Common

Isabelline Wheatear
2 Nizzana 10.2

Desert Wheatear
2 Nizzana 10.2
2 Km 33 11.2

Mourning Wheatear
Fairly common along road 90 8.2, also seen in Nizzana

Hooded Wheatear
Uncommon along road 90 8.2

Finsch's Wheatear
1 Nizzana 10.2
1 Shiwta 10.2

White-Crowned Wheathear

Fairly common along road 90

Kurdish Wheathear

1 Wadi Mishmar 12.2

Blackbird

5 Kefar Ruppim 8.2

Song Thrush

2 IBRCE 8.2

Blue Rock Thrush

2 Mount Arbel 9.2

Graceful prinia

Common

Scrub Warbler

Fairly Common

Cetti's Warbler

6 Kefar Ruppim 8.2

Western Clamorous Warbler

1 Km 188 8.2

2 Kefar Ruppim 8.2

1 Hula-area 9.2

Reed Warbler

1 IBRCE 8.2

Sedge Warbler

2 IBRCE 14.2

Spectacled Warbler

1 Km 278 8.2

Blackcap

1 IBRCE 13.2

Sardinian Warbler

Fairly common

Lesser Whitethroat

3 Yotvata 11.2

Common Whitethroat

1 wadi Quetura 11.2

Cyprus Warbler

1 Km 161 8.2

5 Km 186 12.2

4 Wadi Mishmar 12.2

Arabian Warbler

3 Along Road 227 (30°49.632N 35°13.611E)

Chiffchaff

Common

Western Rock Nuthatch

1 Mount Hermon 9.2

Great Tit

Common in the north

Penduline Tit

3 Hula-area 9.2

Arabian babbler

4 IBRCE 8.2

2 Km 186 12.2

A few more birds seen, but don't remember where

Palestine sunbird

Common

Southern Grey Shrike

Fairly common along road 90

Jay

2 Kefar Ruppim 8.2

2 Arbel 9.2

Starling

500 Ofaquim 10.2

Tristram's Crackle

Common around Dead sea

2 Eilat 13.2

Brown-Necked Raven

Common

Raven

2 Km 257 8.2

Fan-tailed Raven

Fairly common Metzoke Dragot 12.2

Crow

Fairly common

Indian House Crow

Common in Eilat

House Sparrow

Common

Spanish Sparrow

Common

Dead-Sea Sparrow

Fairly Common

Indian Silverbill

30 IBRCE 13-14.2

Chaffinch

Common

Greenfinch

Fairly common in the north

Hawfinch

40 Kibbutz El Rom

Desert Finch

10 Km 33 11.2

Goldfinch

Common in the north

Red-Fronted Serin

2 Mount Hermon 9.2

Syrian Serin

2 Mont Arbel 9.2

Linnet

Common in the north

Sinai Rosefinch

10 Ammran's Pillar's 13.2

Trumpeter Finch

7 Km 186 12.2

50 Wadi Mishmar 12.2

Crimson-Winged Finch

2 Mount Hermon 9.2

Yellowhammer

10 Mount Hermon 9.2

Rock Bunting

1 Mount Hermon 9.2

Corn Bunting

Common in the north

Cretschmar's Bunting

1 Mount Arbel 9.2

Striolated Bunting

1 Wadi Mishmar 12.2

1 Wadi Salvadora 12.2