

Kuwait trip report, April 8th-18th 2006



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Itinerary

8th: Airport - Ahmadi - Fahaheel Park - Sewer Plant Reeds - Khiran Resort – South Doha Reserve - Doha Spur High Tide

9th: Kadmah Gardens - Sabah Al-Ahmad Natural Reserve

10th: South Doha Reserve - Kadmah Gardens - Subiya Power Station - Hujaijah - Abdali Farms - Rawdatain - Sabah Al-Salem

11th: Pipeline Beach - Khiran - Um al Maradin Island - Khiran - Power Station Pools

12th: Green Island - Pipeline Beach - Power Station Pools - Pipeline Beach and Power Station Pools Surroundings - Pipeline Beach Villa Road - Sewer Plant Reeds

13th: Jahra Farms - Kadmah Gardens - Sabah Al-Ahmad Natural Reserve - Bubian Island

14th: Western Desert - Al Abraq - Wadi Batin –Western Desert - Doha East Outflow - Sulaibikhat

15th: Jahra East - Doha Spur High Tide – Jal Az-Zor

16th: Pipeline Beach - Power Station Pools - Pipeline Beach again (Acacia trees) - Raptor watch along Khiran highway - Khiran Sandspit - raptor watch along Khiran highway - Wafra Farms and surroundings - Fahaheel

17th: Sabah Al-Salem – Jal Az-Zor - Kuwait City coastline - Jahra East - Fahaheel

18th: flight out of Kuwait

Preface

Abstract

This trip report covers the observations and itinerary of a full time birding trip to Kuwait for ten days in April 2006. The main purpose of the trip was to find out about the birding in the country as well as trying to see some specific species difficult to see elsewhere in the Western Palearctic, or maybe finding a surprise or two. Main target species were Socotra Cormorant, Caspian Plover, Egyptian Nightjar, Basra Reed Warbler, and Grey Hypocolius. We saw all but Caspian Plover – apparently it was too late in the season for that species. Other good birds seen were Yellow-browed Warbler, Great Tit (first record for Kuwait), Sooty Falcon, Mountain Lesser Whitethroat, and surprisingly good numbers of migrants such as Rufous-tailed Scrub Robin, White-throated Robin (about 61), Isabelline Shrike (about 95) and much more. We also missed out on Syke's Warbler, but Martin Poulsen who stayed a week longer saw one later.

A Finnish team with Rami Lindroos, Ilkka Sahi, and Keijo Wahlroos was visiting Kuwait in the same period as us. Some of the days we teamed up for birding, other days we just exchanged information with text messages or met in the evening as we stayed at the same hotel. Some of the other days were spent with very friendly and helpful locals Brian Foster and Khaled Nasrallah.

Before going we practically didn't know anything about birding in Kuwait apart from a few websites such as www.osme.org and www.alsirhan.com and a string of emails with Brian Foster before the very useful book by George Gregory "The Birds of the State of Kuwait" was published shortly before our visit.

At the time of writing (May 2006) only one trip report from Kuwait is available on the Internet. That is primarily because it has not been possible for tourists to visit the country. But since 2005 the visa rules have changed, and it is now easy for most westerners to obtain a visa upon arrival in the airport. Kuwait truly deserves to become the next birding hot-spot, not only for its WP specialities but indeed also for its generally high quality birding – as we hope to convey with this trip report. That said, our birding activity was very high and we didn't spend much time on photographing or doing anything else than birding during daylight, so probably we saw a little bit more than can be expected. We also used walkie-talkies which made it possible to cover greater areas and see more birds. 180 species in total. Rarity report forms have been filled out and sent to the Kuwait Rarity Committee for observations of Sooty Falcon, Yellow-browed Warbler, Icterine Warbler, and Great Tit.

How to read this report

In the following day by day section observations from every day are listed together with notes about encounters with locals and local culture etc. In the end of the report a complete list of all species can be found. Detailed information about how to see particular species, notes about identification, and comments on the observations is reserved for this section.

A specific section ("Sites") about important birding sites not covered or only covered briefly in "The Birds of the State of Kuwait" is also included. Some useful

information about what to know when going to Kuwait from a birder's point of view is in the section "Other things to know about Kuwait".

Feel free to send comments or questions to Andreas Hagerman at andreash@surfpost.dk

Day by day

The following is more or less a print of our notebooks. Some common species are not mentioned.

April 8th

Arrived at the airport and paid about 13 € for the visa with no problems.

Ahmadi 8.45-9.15

Collared Dove 3, swift sp 3, Bee-eater 2, Wryneck 1, Tree Pipit 5, White-eared Bulbul 3, Rufous-tailed Scrub-robin 1, Redstart 6, Lesser Whitethroat 3, Chiff-chaff 5, Willow warbler 1, Common Myna 3

Fahaheel Park 9.35-11.05

Lesser Kestrel 1, Little Tern 3, Pallid Swift 1, Blue-cheeked Bee-eater 2, Wryneck 1, Crested Lark 1, Red-rumped Swallow 1, House Martin 10, Tawny Pipit 1, Tree Pipit 3, Yellow Wagtail 3, Redstart 8, Blackcap 2, Lesser Whitethroat 2, Chiff-chaff 1, Isabelline Shrike 1

Fahaheel -> Sewer Plant Reeds

Black Kite 1, Woodchat Shrike 1

Sewer Plant Reeds 11.35-13.00

Little Egret 1, Kentish Plover 4, Little Stint 9, Curlew Sandpiper 3, Ruff 20, Common Snipe 2, Common Sandpiper 1, Wood Sandpiper 1, Terek Sandpiper 1, Red-throated Pipit 1, Black-headed Wagtail 1, Whinchat 1, Northern Wheatear 1, **Clamorous Reed Warbler 1** singing, Chiff-chaff 10, Sand Martin 1, Isabelline Shrike 2

Khiran Resort 13.30-14.40

Great Cormorant 2, Squacco Heron 5, Cattle Egret 1, Kestrel 1, Grey Plover 2, Slender-billed Gull 6 moving north, Caspian Tern 1 moving north, Lesser Crested Tern 10, Sandwich Tern 1, **White-cheeked Tern 1**, **Bridled Tern 200** foraging off the coast, Little Tern 2, Bee-eater 2, Hoopoe 1, Red-throated Pipit 1, Redstart 5, Eastern Olivaceous Warbler 1, Blackcap 4, Chiff-chaff 30, Isabelline Shrike 2, **Cinereous Bunting 1** male (semenowi)

This tourist resort area is under construction and we asked in the reception if it was OK to enter. It was. At a later visit it was not OK however.

South Doha Reserve 17.00-17.30 – rest of the day with Brian Foster and Finnish team
Graceful Prinia 5, Blue-cheeked Bee-eater 2, Pallid Harrier 1 adult male moving through, Reed Warbler 1, Siberian Stonechat 1, Bluethroat 1 female, Night Heron 1, Little Bittern 1

Doha Spur High Tide 17.45-18.45

Grey Heron 1, **Crab Plover 26**, Ringed Plover 5, **Lesser Sand Plover 200**, Dunlin 50, Ruff 1, Curlew Sandpiper 10, Broad-billed Sandpiper 32, Curlew 5, Terek

Sandpiper 43, Slender-billed Gull 10, Heuglin's Gull 2 2nd-cal, Caspian Tern 1 2nd-cal, Sandwich Tern 5

Smashing scenery! Evening sunlight on 200 Lesser Sand Plovers in full summer plumage and many other good waders with the evening prayer sounding from a nearby minaret. Kuwait City skyline in the horizon, very exotique.

April 9th

Kuwait City -> Kadmah Gardens 7.30-8.30
Pallid Harrier 1 male, Ring-necked Parakeet 2

Kadmah Gardens 8.30-9.20 with Finnish team
Squacco Heron 5, Purple Heron 1, Black Kite 4, Steppe Buzzard 2, Booted Eagle 6, Osprey 1, Collared Pratincole 15, **Red-wattled Lapwing 1**, Common Sandpiper 3, Namaqua Dove 2, Blue-cheeked Bee-eater 20 moving north, Wryneck 1, Crested lark 2, Red-throated Pipit 2, Yellow Wagtail 25, Bluethroat 1 female, White-throated Robin 1, Black Redstart 1, Northern Wheatear 1, Isabelline Shrike 2, Ortolan Bunting 1

Sabah Al-Ahmad Natural Reserve (SAANR) 9.30-18.00 with Khaled Nasrallah and Finnish team
Steppe Buzzard 3, Short-toed Eagle 2, Steppe Eagle 5, Imperial Eagle 1, Lesser Kestrel 1, Sparrowhawk 1, Marsh Harrier 1, Pallid Harrier 3, Montagu's Harrier 1 female, Quail 4, Little Owl 1, Scops Owl 1, Turtle Dove 1, Namaqua Dove 1, Hopoe 3, Wryneck 1, **Black-crowned Finch-Lark 3**, Bar-tailed Desert-lark 6, Tawny Pipit 2, Yellow Wagtail 35, **Grey Hypocolius 1**, Rufous-tailed Scrub Robin 4, White-throated Robin 2, Whinchat 3, Isabelline Wheatear 1, Northern Wheatear 10, Eastern Black-eared Wheatear 5, Desert Wheatear 1, Pied Wheatear 4, Rufous-tailed Rock Thrush 1, Sedge Warbler 1, **Basra Reed Warbler 2**, Blackcap 5, Lesser Whitethroat 2, Menetrie's Warbler 2, Chiff-chaff 25, Spotted Flycatcher 3, **Semi-collared Flycatcher 2**, Spanish Sparrow 1, Isabelline Shrike 10, Southern Grey Shrike 4, Woodchat Shrike 12, **Pale Rock Sparrow 29**, Ortolan Bunting 75

Brian connected us to local Khaled who was kind enough to drive us around in the national park in his jeep (we only had a normal car which was not suitable for the national park). The Finns followed along in their jeep. After seeing displaying Black-crowned Finch-lark at the entrance gate we went to the lower parts of the park to search for a Grey Hypocolius seen there the day before but we had no luck. Instead good numbers of Woodchat Shrikes and other migrants.

It was not until we reached an isolated group of trees and a water pond called Tulha deep inside the park that the action really caught on. Two Basra Reed Warblers field observed followed by a Grey Hypocolius and lots of other really good birds made for a perfect afternoon.

Some local photographers arrived and took some group photos of happy birders.



The crew in Tulha in the national park. From left: Khaled Nasrallah, Keijo Wahlroos, Illka Sahi, Rami Lindroos, Jens Søgaaard Hansen, Tommy Frandsen, Andreas Hagerman, Martin Poulsen.

April 10th

South Doha Reserve 5.25-6.20

White Stork 1, Little Bittern 1, Black-crowned Night Heron 1, Squacco Heron 1, Cattle Egret 1, Grey Heron 1, Purple Heron 1, Marsh Harrier 1, Moorhen 1, Purple Swampphen 1, Red-throated Pipit 1, Rufous-tailed Scrub Robin 2, Bluethroat 1, Sedge Warbler 1, Great Reed Warbler 1, Graceful Warbler 20, Isabelline Shrike 3

Kadmah Gardens 7.00-8.30

Black Kite 1, Pallid Harrier 2 males, Montagu's Harrier 1 2nd cal, Sparrowhawk 1, Osprey 1, Scop's Owl 1, Hoopoe 1, Red-throated Pipit 5, Yellow Wagtail 10, White-throated Robin 3, Redstart 5, Chiff-chaff 10, Willow Warbler 1, Isabelline Shrike 3

Kahmah Gardens -> Subiya Power Station 8.30-9.15

Marsh Harrier 1, Pallid Harrier 1 female, Long-legged Buzzard 1, Black-winged Pratincole 7 moving through, Blue-cheeked Bee-eater 6

Subiya Power Stations surroundings 9.15-9.50

Squacco Heron 10, Western Reef Egret 5, Terek Sandpiper 2, Caspian Tern 1, Slender-billed Gull 1, Redstart 2, Whinchat 1, Chiff-chaff 3, Willow Warbler 2, Common Myna 1

Hujaijah 10.06-10.55

Steppe Eagle 2 moving through, Blue-cheeked Bee-eater 1, Tawny Pipit 5, White-throated Robin 1, Redstart 2, Northern Wheatear 1, Lesser Whitethroat 1, Chiff-chaff 5, **Semi-collared Flycatcher 1 male**, Pale Rock-sparrow 1

DEAD BIRDS FOUND SHOT:

Pallid Harrier 1, Harrier sp 3, Hawk sp 4, Scop's Owl 1, Bee-eater 1, Blue-cheeked Bee-eater 1, Hoopoe 1, Kestrel 1, Lesser Kestrel 1, Great Grey Shrike 1, Barn Swallow 1, Woodchat Shrike 1

Hujaijah is a very isolated group of trees favoured by tired migrants, including many raptors. The local shooters take advantage of this and often drive by in their jeeps shooting what is resting in the trees. Be prepared for a horrible sight..

Hujaijah -> Abdali 11.10-12.00

Steppe Eagle 1, **Griffon Vulture 1**, Black-winged Pratincole 9, Northern Wheatear 8, Pied Wheatear 2

Abdali Farms 12.00-13.55

Collared Pratincole 2 fly-over, Yellow Wagtail 60 (including 2 *lutea*), Rufous-tailed Scrub Robin 2

Rawdatain 14.15-14.55

Turtle Dove 1, Cuckoo 1, Hoopoe 1, Wryneck 2, Grey Wagtail 1, Rufous-tailed Scrub Robin 2, White-throated Robin 2, Redstart 6, Eastern Olivaceous Warbler 1, hippolais sp 1, Blackcap 2, Chiff-chaff 10, Willow Warbler 3, **Semi-collared Flycatcher 1** male, Masked Shrike 1

This isolated farm just next to the road was crowded with birds compared to the vast Abdali Farms area.

Sabah Al-Salem 15.55-18.10 with Brian Foster

Glossy Ibis 2, Hobby 1, Spotted Crake 4, **Little Crake 1**, Moorhen 8, Black-winged Stilt 2, Collared Pratincole 1, Little Ringed Plover 1, Kentish Plover 5, Little Stint 14, Curlew Sandpiper 6, Ruff 3, Common Snipe 2, Bar-tailed Godwitt 1, Marsh Sandpiper 12, Greenshank 1, Wood Sandpiper 20, Terek Sandpiper 2, Common Sandpiper 15, Black-headed Gull 1, Slender-billed Gull 9, Rose-ringed Parakeet 1, Cuckoo 1, Pallid Swift 21, Red-throated Pipit 1, White-throated Robin 1, Isabelline Shrike 1

April 11th

Pipeline Beach 08.10-12.20 with Finnish crew

Socotra Cormorant 2, Little Bittern 1, Little Tern 1, Quail 1, Namaqua Dove 2, Bee-eater 20, Wryneck 5, Red-throated Pipit 50 moving through, **Grey Hypocolius 1** female, Rufous-tailed Scrub Robin 5, Nightingale 2, **White-throated Robin 25**, Redstart 50, Whinchat 36, Isabelline Wheatear 1, Northern Wheatear 3, Eastern Black-eared Wheatear 2, Pied Wheatear 2, Rufous-tailed Rock Thrush 1, **Basra Reed Warbler 1**, Great Reed Warbler 5, Eastern Olivaceous Warbler 10, Common Whitethroat 3, **Mountain Lesser Whitethroat 1**, **Asian Desert Warbler 1**, Menetrie's Warbler 1, Chiff-chaff/Willow Warbler 100, Spotted Flycatcher 15, Isabelline Shrike 6, Red-backed Shrike 1, Lesser Grey Shrike 1, Masked Shrike 1, Pale Rock Sparrow 3, **Cinereous Bunting 1** male (semenowi), Ortolan Bunting 29

Fantastic site! 5 more cormorants further out were probably also Socotra Cormorants



The crew at Pipeline Beach seen from east. Foto: Jens Søgaaard Hansen

Khiran and surroundings 12.40-14.30

Slender-billed Gull 1, Little Tern 2, Turtle Dove 1, Wryneck 1, Whinchat 19, Eastern Black-eared Wheatear 1, Rufous-tailed Rock-thrush 1, Common Whitethroat 1, Isabelline Shrike 1, Southern Grey Shrike 1

Um Al-Maradin Island ca 15.00-16.50

Great Cormorant 1, Swift Tern 2, Lesser-crested Tern 20, Bridled Tern 40, Turtle Dove 1, Hopoe 5, Short-toed Lark 3, Yellow Wagtail 10 (1 lutea), Rufous-tailed Scrub Robin 1, Nightingale 1, White-throated Robin 2, Redstart 35, Whinchat 25, Isabelline Wheatear 1, Northern Wheatear 5, Eastern Black-eared Wheatear 2, Pied Wheatear 3, Song Thrush 1, Eastern Olivaceous Warbler 1, Blackcap 5, Lesser Whitethroat 1, Chiff-chaff/Willow Warbler 100, Ortolan Bunting 2

We approached some locals to ask if they knew a good spot for seawatching. They didn't quite understand what we were talking about and asked if we were from Denmark because they had heard about this group of Danish birdwatchers visiting Kuwait – by chance they actually knew Khaled who had talked about us. They were very excited and kindly offered to take us out in their boat to Um Al-Maradin Island 15 km off the coast. An offer we couldn't resist. Thank you Abdullah and friends!



Khiran 17.10-17.20

Pallid Harrier 1 female moving through, **Sooty Falcon 1** adult hunting over the resort bungalows, Grey Plover 6, Redshank 1, Rose-ringed Parakeet 6

Power Station Pools 17.40-17.50

White-throated Robin 2, **Upcher's Warbler 1**

Khaled had arranged a dinner for us and the Finnish team and a few local birders at a traditional Kuwaiti restaurant downtown Kuwait City. Khaled's friend Ahmad was the host of the evening. Very nice people and very nice food!

April 12th

Green Island 07.50-09.00

Western Reef Egret 1, Slender-billed Gull 4, Sandwich Tern 6, Little Tern 10, Common Sandpiper 2, Bee-eater 25, Red-vented Bulbul 4, **Grey Hypocolius 24**, Rufous-tailed Scrub Robin 7, Isabelline Wheatear 1, Blackcap 12, Common Whitethroat 1, Chiff-chaff/Willow Warbler 20, **Great Tit 1** singing – first record for Kuwait, Common Myna 4, also 1 Village Weaver



Part of a flock of 24 Grey Hypocolius, Green Island, April 12th, 2006. This species is attracted to a special kind of tree with berries, also visible on this photo. Photo: Jens Søgaaard Hansen

Pipeline Beach and acacias 10.20-13.50

Socotra Cormorant 1, Baillon's Crake 1, Scop's Owl 1, Egyptian Nightjar 1, Bee-eater 135 moving through, Red-throated Pipit 10, Nightingale 1, Bluethroat 1, White-throated Robin 6, Redstart 10, Whinchat 6, Desert Wheatear 1, Pied Wheatear 1, Eastern Black-eared Wheatear 1, Reed Warbler 1, **Basra Reed Warbler 1** (same as

yesterday), Eastern Olivaceous Warbler 2, **Upcher's Warbler 1, Icterine Warbler 1**, Lesser Whitethroat 5 and 1 **Mountain Lesser Whitethroat** (same as yesterday), Menetrie's Warbler 1, **Yellow-browed Warbler 1**, Isabelline Shrike 8, Red-backed Shrike 1, Masked Shrike 1, **Pale Rock Sparrow 22**, Ortolan Bunting 16



This Egyptian Nightjar was flushed from the sand dunes at Pipeline Beach. It landed 50 metres away and gave good photographic opportunities. The Finns were alerted by SMS and twitched the bird from Doha Spur (100 km). Photo: Jens Sogaard Hansen

We were sitting on the road next to the acacias watching Yellow-browed Warbler and other rarities when a guy from the house nearby came out and gave us orange juice and cold water.

Power Station Pools 14.00-14.40

Wryneck 1, Tawny Pipit 1, Tree Pipit 6, Rufous-tailed Scrub Robin 5, Nightingale 2, White-throated Robin 3, Whinchat 5, Isabelline Wheatear 1, Rufous-tailed Rock Thrush 1, **Upcher's Warbler 1**, Common Whitethroat 2, Menetrie's Warbler 1, Isabelline Shrike 4, Red-backed Shrike 1, Woodchat Shrike 1, Masked Shrike 1, **Pale Rock Sparrow 11**, Ortolan Bunting 12

Power Station Pools / Pipeline Beach surroundings 14.50-15.20

Wryneck 2, Whinchat 10, Pied Wheatear 1, Isabelline Shrike 7, Red-backed Shrike 1, Ortolan Bunting 2

Pipeline Beach Villa Road 15.30-16.20

Black Kite 1, Hobby/Sooty Falcon 1, Bee-eater 80, European Roller 1, Wryneck 3, Rufous-tailed Rock Thrush 1, **Eastern Orphean Warbler 1, Isabelline Shrike 10**

Sewer Plant Reeds 16.35-17.30

Cattle Egret 8, Purple Heron 1, Kestrel 1, Little Stint 35, Curlew Sandpiper 8, Dunlin 2, Ringed Plover 18, Bee-eater 60, Yellow Wagtail 15, Bluethroat 1, **Clamorous Reed Warbler 1** singing, Isabelline Shrike 3

April 13th

Jahra Farms 06.10-06.50 with Brian Foster
Sparrowhawk 1, **Bank Myna 2**

Kadmah Gardens 07.10-07.45 with Brian
Hawk sp 1, Steppe Buzzard 1

SAANR 08.10-10.20 with Brian, Finnish team, and several locals
Steppe Eagle 3, Pallid Harrier 3, Montagu's Harrier 1, Sparrowhawk 3, Quail 1, Pratincole sp 22, Bar-tailed Desert lark 2, Hopoe Lark 1, Northern Wheatear 5, Eastern Black-eared Wheatear 2, Barred Warbler 1, Red-backed Shrike 1, Masked Shrike 1, Ortolan Bunting 50

Bubian Island and surrounding islands 11.30-14.30 with Brian, Finnish team, and several locals
Spoonbill 2, Western Reef Egret 110, **Crab Plover 700** (estimat), Pratincole sp 30, Bar-tailed Godwit 25, Curlew 12, Sanderling 1, **Terek Sandpiper 400** (estimat), Ruddy Turnstone 40, Slender-billed Gull 1000 (estimat), Heuglin's Gull 2, Caspian Tern 8, Gull-billed Tern 200 (1 2nd cal), Swift Tern 25, Lesser-crested Tern 60, Northern Wheatear 1, **Clamorous Reed Warbler 1**, Isabelline Shrike 1

Extreme heat and sunlight hit us all hard and we had to cancel afternoon birding.

April 14th

with Brian Foster and Finnish crew

Western Desert 06.00-07.15
Sparrowhawk 2, Pallid Harrier 2 2nd-cal, Black-winged Pratincole 2, Hopoe Lark 6, Temminck's Horned Lark 2, Northern Wheatear 3

Al Abra 07.15-11.00
Squacco Heron 1, Steppe Buzzard 1, Marsh Harrier 1, Sparrowhawk 4, Wood Sandpiper 1, Blue-cheeked Bee-eater 1, Bee-eater 30, European Roller 1, **Grey Hypocolius 3**, Rufous-tailed Scrub Robin 4, White-throated Robin 4, Redstart 10, Stonechat 1, Marsh Warbler 1, Great Reed Warbler 2, Eastern Olivaceous Warbler 5, Blackcap 34, Garden Warbler 2, Barred Warbler 1, Lesser Whitethroat 10, **Mountain Lesser Whitethroat 1**, **Eastern Orphean Warbler 1**, **Menetrie's Warbler 6**, **Greenish Warbler 1**, Chiff-chaff/Willow Warbler 80, Spotted Flycatcher 1, **Semi-collared Flycatcher 1**, Golden Oriole 2, Isabelline Shrike 2, Red-backed Shrike 2, Masked Shrike 1, Ortolan Bunting 13
DEAD BIRDS FOUND SHOT:

European Roller 1, Grey Hypocolius 1, White-throated Robin 1, Sand Martin 1, Night Heron 8, Black-winged Stilt 1

When we arrived at the entrance of this big oasis we said hello to the owners of the oasis that Brian has made an agreement with so he can go birding there when he likes. Only the owners of the oasis are allowed to shoot inside the oasis – other shooting teams are circling around the oasis shooting at migrants coming in to roost at this very isolated site in the middle of the desert. Anyway it was very strange to walk around birding with gunshots going off every minute. Funny to see the shooters outside watching us probably thinking "how can they be allowed to go inside when they don't even shoot at the birds?". Although we were prepared for these kind of experiences it was really shocking.

Al Abra -> Wadi Batin 11.10-12.00

Pallid Harrier 1 2nd-cal, **Black-crowned Finch Lark 1, Dunn's Lark 1** (5 km SW of Al Abra), Bar-tailed Desert Lark 3

Wadi Batin 12.00-12.30

Little Bittern 9 moving through, Hopoe Lark 1, Bar-tailed Desert Lark 5, Northern Wheatear 1, Rufous-tailed Rock Thrush 1

Wadi Batin -> drive out of desert 12.30-14.00

Steppe Eagle 1, Bar-tailed Desert lark 5, Desert Lark 1, Temminck's Horned Lark 2, Northern Wheatear 3, Eastern Black-eared Wheatear 1, Pied Wheatear 2

Said good-bye to the Finnish crew that left for Finland same evening

Doha East Outflow 15.30-17.10

Little Bittern 1, Squacco Heron 1, Grey Heron 4, Greater Flamingo 3, Moorhen 6, Avocet 1, Temminck's Stint 1, Ruff 12, Marsh Sandpiper 9, Red-rumped Swallow 3, Red-throated Pipit 20, Yellow Wagtail 10, Rufous-tailed Scrub Robin 6, Bluethroat 1, White-throated Robin 1, Siberian Stonechat 1 male, Great Reed Warbler 3, Reed Warbler 2, Common Whitethroat 1, Chiff-chaff/Willow Warbler 25, Red-backed Shrike 1

Sulaibikhat Bay 17.20-17.55

Western Reef Egret 10, Grey Heron 25, Shoveler 11, Black Kite 1, Slender-billed Gull 180, Heuglin's Gull 2, Grey Plover 1, Curlew 10, Spotted Redshank 1

April 15th

Jahra East 08.15-11.20

Great Cormorant 3, Western Reef Egret 20, Grey Heron 25, Greater Flamingo 2, Eurasian Wigeon 1, Black Kite 40, Harrier sp 1, Sparrowhawk 17, Steppe Buzzard 2, Greater Spotted Eagle 2 2nd-cals, Steppe Eagle 6, Booted Eagle 2, Osprey 1, Spotted Crake 1, Collared Pratincole 3, Ringed Plover 300, Lesser Sandplover 50, Sanderling 3, Little Stint 400, Curlew Sandpiper 100, Dunlin 100, Broad-billed Sandpiper 5, Ruff 15, Whimbrel 1, Marsh Sandpiper 23, Ruddy Turnstone 150, Heuglin's Gull 5, Gull-

billed Tern 1, Caspian Tern 15, Sandwich Tern 10, Little Tern 4, Red-throated Pipit 40, Yellow Wagtail 50, White Wagtail 1, Great Reed Warbler 1

Doha Spur High Tide 11.40-12.40

Crab Plover 4, Collared Pratincole 1, Ringed Plover 140, Little Ringed Plover 1, **Lesser Sand Plover 550**, Grey Plover 95, Sanderling 3, Curlew Sandpiper 515, Dunlin 250, **Broad-billed Sandpiper 103**, Ruff 25, Bar-tailed Godwit 150, Curlew 55, Terek Sandpiper 160, Ruddy Turnstone 50, Caspian Tern 11, Sandwich Tern 30, Common Tern 1

Jal Az-Zor 13.40-15.10

Black Kite 3, Montagu's Harrier 6, Pallid Harrier 2, Harrier sp 13, Sparrowhawk 12, Steppe Buzzard 1, Steppe Eagle 6, Eagle sp 2, Booted Eagle 3, Osprey 1, Kestrel 14, Lesser Kestrel 1, **Sooty Falcon 1 2nd-cal**, Bee-eater 30, European Roller 1

Good migration of raptors despite the relative late time in season. Especially the harriers were moving through. We started out on the ridge close to Kadmah Gardens and moved west to get better views. Unfortunately we were arrested by the Jahra police because apparently we were overlooking some military base (close to the highway crossing the ridge). The officers who didn't speak any English took us to the head quarters in Jahra where we were interrogated old skool style by the sherif. When they saw our scopes and digital cameras and video recorders and Martins Palestine scarf they thought we were terrorists, and suddenly we were surrounded by ten different officers shouting to each others and making many telephone calls obviously thinking they were onto something huge. This may sound strange but one has to remember that they were not used to tourists, and the explanation that we were birdwatchers simply didn't make sense to them. The sherif didn't even know that the visa rules had changed and repeatedly asked who our sponsor was or which company we worked for. When it looked like they were going to confiscate our cameras we flashed Ahmad's business card and were released almost immediately with no further charges. Two hours had passed by however, and the day was over birdingwise – who knows how many Oriental Honey Buzzards we missed?!

April 16th

(all day with Brian)

Pipeline Beach 08.05-09.35

Socotra Cormorant 8 (1 adult and 7 juveniles or 2nd-cals), Pallid Harrier 1, Sparrowhawk 4, Kestrel 1, Bridled Tern 1, Bee-eater 10, Red-throated Pipit 10, Isabelline Wheatear 1, White-throated Robin 5, **Mountain Lesser Whitethroat 1**, Common Whitethroat 3, Southern Grey Shrike 1, Lesser Grey Shrike 1, Red-backed Shrike 1, Isabelline Shrike 11

Power Station Pools 09.40-10.10

Pallid Harrier 1, Turtle Dove 1, White-throated Robin 2, Eastern Olivaceous Warbler 1, **Upcher's Warbler 1**, Menetrie's Warbler 1, Lesser Grey Shrike 1, Isabelline Shrike 7

Pipeline Beach Acacias 10.20-10.45

Namaqua Dove 2, European Roller 2, Red-throated Pipit 8, Grey Wagtail 1, White-throated Robin 3, Eastern Olivaceous Warbler 3, Barred Warbler 1, Isabelline Shrike 2

Khiran Highway 10.50-12.00

Black Kite 1, Short-toed Eagle 2, Marsh Harrier 2, Pallid Harrier 2, Montagu's Harrier 3 males, Harrier sp 1, Sparrowhawk 4, Steppe Buzzard 1, Steppe Eagle 1, Lesser Kestrel 5, Kestrel 52, Hobby 2, Rufous-tailed Rock Thrush, Isabelline Shrike 1

A local journalist popped by and took some photographs of us. He was happy to tell that we was a once-hunter-now-turned-photographer as quite a few other locals.

Khiran Sandspit 12.15-12.30

Oystercatcher 1, Black-winged Stilt 4, Lesser Sand Plover 60, Grey Plover 3, Marsh Sandpiper 3, Heuglin's Gull 2, Larus sp 1 (only seen on video tape back in Denmark), Caspian Tern 3, Lesser-crested Tern 115, Little Tern 1

Khiran Highway 13.30-14.05

Harrier sp 1, Sparrowhawk 1, Steppe Buzzard 1, Booted Eagle 1, Lesser Kestrel 9, Kestrel 30, Hobby 2, Bee-eater 35

Wafrah and surroundings 14.30-16.20

Sparrowhawk 1, Pallid Harrier 2, Steppe Eagle 1, Booted Eagle 1, Kestrel/Lesser Kestrel 25, Wryneck 1, **Black-crowned Finch-lark 4**, Isabelline Shrike 3

Fahaheel 17.00-18.00

Arctic Skua 1, Sandwich Tern 4, **White-cheeked Tern 2**, Little Tern 2

April 17th

Sabah Al-Salem (morning)

Spttd Crake 4, Roller 1, Yellow Wagtail 40, Whinchat 5, Rufous-tailed Rock Thrush 1, Reed Warbler 5, Blackcap 8, Barred Warbler 1, Isabelline Shrike 1, **Indian Silverbill 4**

Green Island (morning)

Little Tern 1, Grey Hypocolius 1 female, Masked Shrike 1

Jal Az-Zor 09.05-10.10

Black Kite 3, Marsh Harrier 2, Pallid Harrier 5, Sparrowhawk 2, Steppe Buzzard 1, Steppe Eagle 9, Lesser Kestrel 1, Kestrel 10, Hobby 1, Peregrine Falcon 1 adult, **Black-crowned Finch-lark 2**

Kuwait City coastline, Gulf Street 11.00-12.00

Arctic/Pomarine Skua 3 moving north, White-cheeked Tern 1, Bridled Tern 3, Little Tern 3

We decided to use the rest of the day to search for Saunder's Tern

Jahra East 14.00-15.00

Little Egret 2, Grey Heron 55, Wigeon 1, Marsh Harrier 1, Avocet 1, Collared Pratincole 8, Little Ringed Plover 2, Lesser Sand Plover 180, Grey Plover 60, Sanderling 5, Little Stint 500, Temminck's Stint 5, Curlew Sandpiper 50, Broad-billed Sandpiper 30, Marsh Sandpiper 20, Black-headed Gull 35, Gull-billed Tern 12 (7 ad, 5 2nd-cal), Isabelline Shrike 3

Fahaheel 16.05-17.30

Socotra Cormorant 1 resting on pier off the harbour, Great Cormorant 1, Skua sp 2, Lesser Crested Tern 15, Sandwich Tern 10, White-cheeked Tern 2, Wryneck 1, Redstart 8, Song Thrush 2, Eastern Olivaceous Warbler 2, Chiff-chaff 10

Sites



Generally the large farms like Wafrah and Abdali were disappointing and held only few birds. Isolated spots like Tulha in SAANR and Rawdatain were filled with migrant birds. Here is a short description of our favourite sites:

Pipeline Beach

This site is a top-notch Western Palearctic migration hot-spot watch point as well as resting site for massive numbers of migrant passerines. The site is located just west of Zour Port (restricted area) and is about the only spot on the coastline south of Fahaheel that is easily accessed. The coast is fenced off but the fence is just there to prevent cars from driving on the beach and it is legal to cross it by foot. The area is the strip of land between the Zour Port road and the sea, forming a 4 km long line of sand dunes with scattered bushes leading west from Zour Port. At the western end there are two rows of acacia trees that attract many birds.

Power Station Pools

This site is not mentioned in the book. It is a few dried out pools with bushes and reeds situated a few km south of Pipeline Beach, west of the road leading from Zour Port. Same kind of birds as Pipeline Beach.

Sabah Al-Ahmad Natural Reserve (SAANR)

The national reserve is a must to visit. The fence around the park prevents sheep from overgrazing the desert. To get access you need to be approved by a local birder or member of the park or the like. When you have gotten access one time, the guards will recognize you and let you in at later visits.

Tulha is a small area deep inside the park with small trees and a drinking pool. Usually this area is filled with birds and you can spend hours here.

Jahra East

A really good site for pipits, wagtails, waders, terns etc. We reached this site in our normal car but had to walk a long distance at one of the visits. A jeep is very useful here, especially after recent rain. This is also a good site to get an impression of the raptor migration as the raptors tend to cross the site heading towards the ridge on the other side of the bay.



Thanks to Google Earth for these satellite photos of Jahra East. Go to <http://maps.google.com/> to find high resolution pictures of parts of Kuwait. Actually very useful when normal maps lack detail.

Jal Az-Zor (the ridge)

The mountain ridge going northeast along the coast north of Jahra attracts good numbers of raptors. It can be difficult however to find a suitable watch point. We had good experiences using a watch point accessed via a tarmac road going from the Subiya road about opposite Kadmah Gardens. But the migration of raptors is not necessarily visible from this site if the winds are not favourable and you might need to move a few km along the ridge to get better views. It is important to avoid the cliffs on the northeastern side of the Basra road crossing the ridge as this is a military area and you could get arrested for using binoculars here. Maybe it is possible to find a better watchpoint on the other side of the road.

Other things to know about Kuwait

Hotel

Hussa House (behind The Kuwait Continental), tel: 2560331 – 2520349 was good value at a price about 20 €a night per person. Probably it is difficult to find hotels in Kuwait with prices that low. Huge breakfast at the nearby Continental Hotel was included in the price. The breakfast was sooo good and with many variuos foods (like a good Copenhagen style brunch) that we could go birding the whole day with no meals before dinner in the evening. The only problem was that it was not served before 7 a.m. so some early birding hours were lost.

We searched in vain for three youth hostels that we had found on a google search.

Hunting

Hunting or just shooting birds is a popular hobby in Kuwait. At some sites like Kadmah Gardens it can be a problem for birders. One of the mornings spent at that site was disturbed by a party of shooters driving around and shooting from a jeep.

Prices

The food prices were about the half of Danish prices - surprisingly low for such a wealthy country. Gasoline for the car is almost free, cutting down the birder's budget.

People

Brian Foster is essential to know and contact before going. He can be contacted at brian_foster_uk@yahoo.co.uk - remember to write something meaningful in the subject field like "kuwait birding". If he has the time, he will be glad to meet and do some birding.

The locals are very friendly and don't seem to be surprised when a group of western birders with telescopes and binoculars walk by.

Car hire

Jeep needed for some parts. We rented a normal car at Europcar in the airport for about 33 €per day. We recommend to hire a jeep though, at least for some days.

Driving

The locals tend to drive very fast and recklessly, as witnessed by many car crashes and burnt down cars in the roadside. Compared to European driving there is a difference when driving on highways with three lanes: the middle lane is the slow one and the two others are used for overtaking. The traffic is generally fast and close and it is recommended to just go with the flow – driving safely and slowly can actually be dangerous! Driving into Kuwait City in rush hour (around 18-24 pm) is extremely challenging and requires good driving skills.

Thank you

Brian Foster

Khaled Nasrallah

Ahmad Almershed

and other very friendly locals!

George Gregory

Rami Lindroos

Keijo Wahlroos

Ilkka Sahi

Jukka Ihanus

Pekka Fågel

Species List with comments on some interesting species

1. **Great Cormorant** *Phalacrocorax carbo*
2. **Socotra Cormorant** *Phalacrocorax nigrogularis*
We were nervous about how difficult it would be to get this species, as the book describes it mainly as a summer visitor arriving in May. However, it proved very easy at Pipeline Beach, where several birds were present offshore. A total of about 10 birds (1 adult) were seen on our three visits there. Also, on 17th a single bird was sitting on a pier off Fahaheel Harbour. The best chances for this species are on the southern parts of the coast.
3. **Little Bittern** *Ixobrychus minutus*
One bird at Doha Reserve on 8th and 9th and another at Doha East Outfall on 14th. Also one at Pipeline Beach on 11th. 9 birds migrating along the border to Iraq at Wadi Batin on 14th was exotic.
4. **Black-crowned Night Heron** *Nycticorax nycticorax*
5. **Squacco Heron** *Ardeola ralloides*
6. **Cattle Egret** *Bubulcus ibis*
7. **Western Reef Heron** *Egretta gularis*
common in coastal areas north of Kuwait City.
8. **Little Egret** *Egretta garzetta*
One bird at Sewer Plant Reeds on 8th
9. **Grey Heron** *Ardea cinerea*
10. **Purple Heron** *Ardea purpurea*
one at Kadmah Gardens on 9th, one at Doha South Reserve on 10th, one at Sewer Plant Reeds on 12th
11. **White Stork** *Ciconia ciconia*
A single bird flying low over Doha South Reserve on 10th was a good record.
12. **Glossy Ibis** *Plegadis falcinellus*
Two birds at Sabah Al-Salem on 10th
13. **Eurasian Spoonbill** *Platalea leucorodia*
14. **Greater Flamingo** *Phoenicopterus ruber*
15. **Eurasian Wigeon** *Anas penelope*
One bird at Jahra East on 15th
16. **Northern Shoveler** *Anas clypeata*
11 birds at Sulaibikhat on 14th

17. **Black Kite** *Milvus migrans*
18. **Griffon Vulture** *Gyps fulvus*
A single soaring over the desert near Subiya Power Station on 10th
19. **Short-toed Eagle** *Circaetus gallicus*
20. **Western Marsh Harrier** *Circus aeruginosus*
21. **Pallid Harrier** *Circus macrourus*
Common. In the first days only adult males, later only females and 2nd-cal birds. 26 birds identified along with 16 unidentified ringtail harriers. All were migrating birds.
22. **Montagu's Harrier** *Circus pygargus*
11 in total is a high count for Kuwait. 6 (4 adult males) at Jal Az-Zor on 15th and 3 adult males migrating along the highway near Khiran on 16th. The raptor migration watch at Jal Az-Zor on 15th was unfortunately stopped by the Jahra police - preventing an even higher harrier count. In the 90 minutes we had on the ridge we saw 6 Montagu's Harriers, 2 Pallid Harriers, and 13 unidentified ringtail harriers. We know that Pallid Harrier is by far the most common of the two but this day Montagu's really seemed to be the dominating species.
23. **Eurasian Sparrowhawk** *Accipiter nisus*
Seen almost daily. 17 migrating past Jahra on 15th and 12 past Jal Az-Zor same day were the highest counts.
24. **Common Buzzard** *Buteo buteo*
Steppe Buzzard. A few seen almost daily. This species is much more common in March.
25. **Long-legged Buzzard** *Buteo rufinus*
One seen from the road outside SAANR on 10th
26. **Greater Spotted Eagle** *Aquila clanga*
Two 2nd-cal birds migrating past Jahra East on 15th
27. **Steppe Eagle** *Aquila nipalensis*
Seen almost daily. 6 migrating past Jahra East on 15th and 6 past Jal Az-Zor same day.
28. **Imperial Eagle** *Aquila heliaca*
One immature in SAANR on 9th
29. **Booted Eagle** *Hieraaetus pennatus*
6 moving through at Kadmah Gardens in the morning of 9th, 2 at Jahra East on 15th, 3 at Jal Az-Zor same day, one at Khiran highway on 16th and one at Wafrah same day.
30. **Osprey** *Pandion haliaetus*

31. **Lesser Kestrel** *Falco naumanni*
32. **Common Kestrel** *Falco tinnunculus*
33. **Hobby** *Falco subbuteo*
At the two highway raptor watches at Khiran on 16th 4 migrating birds were seen. Also one at Sabah Al-Salem on 10th
34. **Sooty Falcon** *Falco concolor*
One adult hunting over Khiran Resort on 11th. A couple of other brief sightings of what could possibly be Sooty Falcon were had in same area. A 2nd-cal bird was seen on 15th from Jal Az-Zor. This bird was circling right above us before migration north. The plumage was a mix of juvenile and adult feathers: underparts recalling Rough-legged Buzzard with dark primary coverts forming a dark square on each underwing, which was otherwise pale/worn. Head and body completely dark. Comments on this rare plumage are most welcome.
35. **Peregrine Falcon** *Falco peregrinus*
One adult migrating past Jal Az-Zor on 17th
36. **Common Quail** *Coturnix coturnix*
37. **Spotted Crake** *Porzana porzana*
38. **Little Crake** *Porzana parva*
One showing extremely well at Sabah Al-Salem in the afternoon on 10th
39. **Baillon's Crake** *Porzana pusilla*
One adult came flying in when we were looking at various warblers in the acacia area at Pipeline Beach on 12th. Good but short views were obtained before it lurked off into a closed garden.
40. **Common Moorhen** *Gallinula chloropus*
41. **Purple Swamp-hen** *Porphyrio porphyrio*
42. **Common Coot** *Fulica atra*
43. **Eurasian Oystercatcher** *Haematopus ostralegus*
44. **Black-winged Stilt** *Himantopus himantopus*
45. **Pied Avocet** *Recurvirostra avosetta*
46. **Crab-plover** *Dromas ardeola*
Huge colonies at Bubian Island. Also easy to see at Doha High Tide.
47. **Collared Pratincole** *Glareola pratincola*
48. **Black-winged Pratincole** *Glareola nordmanni*

49. **Little Ringed Plover** *Charadrius dubius*
50. **Ringed Plover** *Charadrius hiaticula*
51. **Kentish Plover** *Charadrius alexandrinus*
52. **Lesser Sand Plover** *Charadrius mongolus*
53. **Grey Plover** *Pluvialis squatarola*
54. **Red-wattled Plover** *Hoplopterus indicus*
One bird seen at Kadmah Gardens on 9th. The Finns saw several birds around the Abdali Farms, including nests.
55. **Sanderling** *Calidris alba*
56. **Little Stint** *Calidris minuta*
57. **Temminck's Stint** *Calidris temminckii*
58. **Curlew Sandpiper** *Calidris ferruginea*
59. **Dunlin** *Calidris alpina*
60. **Broad-billed Sandpiper** *Limicola falcinellus*
61. **Ruff** *Philomachus pugnax*
62. **Common Snipe** *Gallinago gallinago*
63. **Bar-tailed Godwit** *Limosa lapponica*
64. **Whimbrel** *Numenius phaeopus*
65. **Eurasian Curlew** *Numenius arquata*
66. **Spotted Redshank** *Tringa erythropus*
67. **Common Redshank** *Tringa totanus*
68. **Marsh Sandpiper** *Tringa stagnatilis*
69. **Common Greenshank** *Tringa nebularia*
70. **Green Sandpiper** *Tringa ochropus*
71. **Wood Sandpiper** *Tringa glareola*
72. **Terek Sandpiper** *Xenus cinereus*
73. **Common Sandpiper** *Actitis hypoleucos*
74. **Ruddy Turnstone** *Arenaria interpres*

75. **Arctic Skua** *Stercorarius parasiticus*
76. **Black-headed Gull** *Larus ridibundus*
77. **Slender-billed Gull** *Larus genei*
78. **Lesser Black-backed Gull** *Larus fuscus*
79. **Gull-billed Tern** *Sterna nilotica*
80. **Caspian Tern** *Sterna caspia*
81. **Crested Tern** *Sterna bergii*
82. **Lesser Crested Tern** *Sterna bengalensis*
83. **Sandwich Tern** *Sterna sandvicensis*
84. **Common Tern** *Sterna hirundo*
85. **White-cheeked Tern** *Sterna repressa*
 The Finns dipped out on this species, so apparently it is not that easy.
 However we had one bird off Khiran on 8th and two birds together off
 Fahaheel Harbour on 17th. With a little patience Fahaheel Harbour is
 probably the best site for this species.
86. **Bridled Tern** *Sterna anaethetus*
87. **Little Tern** *Sterna albifrons*
88. **Rock Dove** *Columba livia*
89. **Eurasian Collared Dove** *Streptopelia decaocto*
90. **European Turtle Dove** *Streptopelia turtur*
91. **Laughing Dove** *Streptopelia senegalensis*
92. **Namaqua Dove** *Oena capensis*
93. **Ring-necked Parakeet** *Psittacula krameri*
94. **Common Cuckoo** *Cuculus canorus*
95. **Eurasian Scops Owl** *Otus scops*
96. **Little Owl** *Athene noctua*
97. **Egyptian Nightjar** *Caprimulgus aegyptius*
 We had planned to search for this target species at Wafrah Farms where
 Brian had seen it last spring, but luckily we saw one at Pipeline Beach.
98. **Common Swift** *Apus apus*

99. **Pallid Swift** *Apus pallidus*
100. **Blue-cheeked Bee-eater** *Merops persicus*
101. **European Bee-eater** *Merops apiaster*
102. **European Roller** *Coracias garrulus*
103. **Hoopoe** *Upupa epops*
104. **Eurasian Wryneck** *Jynx torquilla*
105. **Black-crowned Sparrow-lark** *Eremopterix nigriceps*
More common than expected. Seen on about 5 occasions.
106. **Dunn's Lark** *Eremalauda dunni*
Difficult-to-get species which we had not seen without Brian's local expertise.
107. **Bar-tailed Desert Lark** *Ammomanes cincturus*
108. **Desert Lark** *Ammomanes deserti*
109. **Hoopoe Lark** *Alaemon alaudipes*
110. **Greater Short-toed Lark** *Calandrella brachydactyla*
111. **Crested Lark** *Galerida cristata*
112. **Temminck's Horned Lark** *Eremophila bilopha*
113. **Sand Martin** *Riparia riparia*
114. **Barn Swallow** *Hirundo rustica*
115. **Red-rumped Swallow** *Hirundo daurica*
116. **House Martin** *Delichon urbica*
117. **Tawny Pipit** *Anthus campestris*
118. **Tree Pipit** *Anthus trivialis*
119. **Red-throated Pipit** *Anthus cervinus*
120. **Yellow Wagtail** *Motacilla flava*
Subspecies *lutea*, *thunbergi*, *beema*, and *feldegg* seen.
121. **Grey Wagtail** *Motacilla cinerea*
122. **White Wagtail** *Motacilla alba*
123. **White-cheeked Bulbul** *Pycnonotus leucogenys*

124. **Red-vented Bulbul** *Pycnonotus cafer*
Green Island is apparently the only safe site for this introduced species.
125. **Grey Hypocolius** *Hypocolius ampelinus*
Seen on 5 occasions. 24 birds together at the very urban Green Island on 12th was a great surprise. According to Khaled, April is a little late in the season for this species which is more common in March. The species is very drawn to a special kind of tree with berries.
126. **Rufous-tailed Scrub Robin** *Cercotrichas galactotes*
127. **Common Nightingale** *Luscinia megarhynchos*
128. **Bluethroat** *Luscinia svecica*
129. **White-throated Robin** *Irania gutturalis*
Common in bushy habitat. 61 birds counted, most at Pipeline Beach with a massive fall of 25 birds on 11th. These totals are much higher than one could expect from the book, but maybe our kind of birding has not been performed so much in the past in Kuwait. Kuwait must be the world's best stop over area for this species?
130. **Black Redstart** *Phoenicurus ochruros*
131. **Common Redstart** *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*
132. **Whinchat** *Saxicola rubetra*
133. **Stonechat** *Saxicola torquata*
134. **Isabelline Wheatear** *Oenanthe isabellina*
135. **Northern Wheatear** *Oenanthe oenanthe*
136. **Pied Wheatear** *Oenanthe pleschanka*
137. **Black-eared Wheatear** *Oenanthe hispanica*
138. **Desert Wheatear** *Oenanthe deserti*
139. **Rufous-tailed Rock Thrush** *Monticola saxatilis*
140. **Song Thrush** *Turdus philomelos*
141. **Graceful Warbler** *Prinia gracilis*
142. **Sedge Warbler** *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*
143. **Marsh Warbler** *Acrocephalus palustris*
144. **Eurasian Reed Warbler** *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*
145. **Clamorous Reed Warbler** *Acrocephalus stentoreus*

146. **Great Reed Warbler** *Acrocephalus arundinaceus*
147. **Basra Reed Warbler** *Acrocephalus griseldis*
Two birds were seen 200 metres from each other along with many other migrants at Tulha in SAANR on 9th (photographed by Keijo), and one was in the acacia area at Pipeline Beach on 11th and 12th. A probable was seen briefly at Doha East Outflow on the afternoon of 14th. The birds moved around in a quite skulky manner, typically about 0,10-1 m above the ground, with the body held in a horizontal manner. All these birds were migrants – the local breeding birds tend to arrive around mid April according to Brian.
148. **Eastern Olivaceous Warbler** *Hippolais pallida*
149. **Upcher's Warbler** *Hippolais languida*
150. **Icterine Warbler** *Hippolais icterina*
One bird in the acacias at Pipeline Beach on 12th.
151. **Ménétries's Warbler** *Sylvia mystacea*
In total 23 birds. 6 at Al Abraq on 14th was the highest count.
152. **Asian Desert Warbler** *Sylvia nana*
1 at Pipeline Beach on 12th. Found by the Finnish team who also saw another bird in SAANR the day before we arrived. This species is more common in March.
153. **Orphean Warbler** *Sylvia hortensis*
1 at Pipeline Beach Villa Road on 12th and 1 at Al Abraq on 14th.
154. **Barred Warbler** *Sylvia nisoria*
155. **Lesser Whitethroat** *Sylvia curruca*
Common.
The subspecies *althaea*, 'Mountain Lesser Whitethroat' (also referred to as 'Hume's Lesser Whitethroat') seems to pass through Kuwait in small numbers. 3 birds were seen of this very distinct subspecies of Lesser Whitethroat. Two at Pipeline Beach on 11th-12th and 16th and one at Al Abraq on 14th. Larger (size of Common Whitethroat) and darker than nominate Lesser Whitethroat. Cold colours above recalling Orphean or Rüppels Warbler. At least two of the birds had a curious behaviour of spending much time feeding on the ground. Very little is known about these lesser whitethroat subspecies, and the book *Sylvia Warblers* unfortunately doesn't cover *althaea* satisfyingly, I think, and certainly the photos are quite poor. Anyway more knowledge is needed about this interesting subspecies or species.
156. **Common Whitethroat** *Sylvia communis*
157. **Garden Warbler** *Sylvia borin*

158. **Blackcap** *Sylvia atricapilla*
159. **Greenish Warbler** *Phylloscopus trochiloides*
One at Al Abraha on 14th only showed briefly
160. **Yellow-browed Warbler** *Phylloscopus inornatus*
One in acacias at Pipeline Beach on 12th. Initially thought to be a Humes Leaf Warbler (at least by some of us..) we have now identified this bird as a Yellow-browed Warbler, mostly because of the spotted ear-coverts seen well on photos taken by Keijo. Darkish legs and bill point to Humes though, so it's a tricky one. Unfortunately it was silent. Also captured on video by Andreas Hagerman. Brian Foster managed to twitch the bird after work.
161. **Common Chiffchaff** *Phylloscopus collybita*
162. **Willow Warbler** *Phylloscopus trochilus*
163. **Spotted Flycatcher** *Muscicapa striata*
164. **Semi-collared Flycatcher** *Ficedula semitorquata*
Although late in the migration period for this species we managed to see 5 birds including 3 males.
165. **Great Tit** *Parus major*
A singing bird was at Green Island on 12th. First Kuwaiti record. We didn't realize the caliber of this rarity until we got back to the car and saw in the book that it wasn't on the Kuwait list. The possibility of it being an escape was considered unlikely by local birders.
166. **Eurasian Golden Oriole** *Oriolus oriolus*
167. **Isabelline Shrike** *Lanius isabellinus*
95 made it to the notebook. 20 in the area around Pipeline Beach 16th was the highest count. In the first days of the trip we identified a handful of isabellinus-types, but all others identified to race were *phonecuroides*. Many were left unidentified though, but generally we estimate that 95 % were *phonecuroides*.
168. **Red-backed Shrike** *Lanius collurio*
169. **Lesser Grey Shrike** *Lanius minor*
170. **Southern Grey Shrike** *Lanius meridionalis*
171. **Woodchat Shrike** *Lanius senator*
172. **Masked Shrike** *Lanius nubicus*
173. **Bank Mynah** *Acridotheres ginginianus*
A special dwell in the Jahra Farms area used to be a breeding site for many Bank Mynas but in 2006 apparently no birds bred in the dwell. Only brief views were obtained by us at this site. The birds tend to be very shy, and

one has to be alert when approaching the site as they may be flushed and disappear quickly.

174. **Common Mynah** *Acridotheres tristis*

175. **House Sparrow** *Passer domesticus*

176. **Spanish Sparrow** *Passer hispaniolensis*

177. **Pale Rock Sparrow** *Petronia brachydactyla*

2006 was a particularly good year for this species in Kuwait. We saw flocks in the SAANR, at Huajiaha, at Pipeline Beach, Powerstation Pools, and Sewage Plant.

178. **Indian Silverbill** *Euodice malabarica*

179. **Cinereous Bunting** *Emberiza cineracea*

A male at Khiran Resort was a surprise find on 8th. Another was seen at Pipeline Beach on 11th. Both were of the semenowi race. Also the Finnish team saw one bird the day before we arrived.

180. **Ortolan Bunting** *Emberiza hortulana*

Number of species seen: 180