

Syria 22.02.2009 - 28.03.2009

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Itinerary:

- 22.02.09: Observation in Bludan, Frontier to Lebanon and the Valley north of Damascus. Car ride to Palmyra.
- 23.02.09: Car ride to Deir-es-Zor with several stops in the desert. Observation in Deir-es-Zor (around the footbridge). Car ride to Al Hasakah.
- 24.02.09: Observation between Al Hasakah and Quintani. Car ride to Rakkah.
- 25.02.09: Observation around Zenobia and the Euphrates south of Zenobia, at a back water near Kubar and in Mhemideh. Car ride to Palmyra.
- 26.02.09: Observation at the Bald Ibis colony and the adjacent water supply dam. Car ride to As Suwayda with a stop 20 km north of As Suwayda.
- 27.02.09: Observation in the black basalt desert. Car ride to Dera.
- 28.02.09: Observation in the Wadi near Shayk Miskin. Car ride to Damascus.



Sites visited:

Bludan village (33°43'52.7"N / 36°07'59.5" E)

25 cm of snow during our stay!

Frontier to Lebanon (33°38'19.7"N / 35°59'09.8" E)

Small valley near the frontier to Lebanon, a place for Sombre Tit and Syrian Serin. Perhaps due to the snow there were no Syrian Serins when we were there.

Valley north of Damascus (33°35'51.0"N / 36°03'23.0" E)

Small valley with orchards just next to the street - the place we found the Pine Buntings!

Palmyra - Deir-es-Zor

Desert habitats next to the street.

Deir-es-Zor footbridge (35°20'39,8"N / 40°08'57,7"E)

Alhasaka – Quintani

Steppe habitat. The place where the huge Sociable Lapwing flocks were found in 2007.

Zenobia (35°39'48,9"N / 39°49'05,4"E)

Ruines and stony desert valley next to arable land along the Euphrates.

Euphrates south of Zenobia (35°39'07,7"N / 39°49'05,4"E)

Back water near Kubar (35°35'45,0"N / 39°55'48,3"E)

Mhemideh (35°25'42,1"N / 40°06'23,4"E)

Bald Ibis colony north of Palmyra (34°41'44,9"N / 38°21'27',8"E)

No Bald Ibis when we were there, but still a very nice place.

Water supply dam north of Palmyra (34°40'18,7"N / 38°13'47,9"E)

Place 20 km north of As Suwayda (32°58'29,1"N / 38°13'47,9"E)

Stony arable land next to the street.

Black desert east of As Suwayda (around 32°58'29.1" N / 36°36'06.4" E)

Magnificent black basalt desert. The area of the black desert is well visible on Google Earth. We mainly explored the places along the road between As Suwayda and As Zalaf and then unfortunately had to leave the area due to heavy rain and snowfalls in the adjacent hills. Without any question, the plains are a wonderful and underwatched part of Syria that may provide further discoveries in future.

Wadi near Shaykh Miskin (32°45'27,9"N / 36°01'24,9"E)

We first wanted to go to the large Wadi next to Hayt which forms the frontier between Syria and Jordan, but because of the heavy rainfalls we decided to go to this smaller one. Habitats include: Orchards, village, fields and of course a beautiful Wadi.



Steppe between Al Hasakah and Quintani & Black basalt desert east of As Suwayda (N. Martinez)



Euphrates south of Zenobia & Bald Ibis colony north of Palmyra (N. Martinez)



Valley next to the frontier to Lebanon and the Wadi near Shayk Miskin (D. Matti)

Commented species list:

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

Observed in Deir-es-Zor (23.02.09), Euphrates south of Zenobia, Mhemideh (both 25.02.09)

Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*

Observed in Mhemideh (25.02.09), water supply dam (26.02.09)

Great Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*

Euphrates south of Zenobia (25.02.09, not counted)

Little Bittern *Ixobrychus minutus*

1 ft at Deir-es-Zor footbridge (23.02.09)

Black-crowned Night-Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax*

Only calls heard in Al Hasaka (town, 24.02.09)

Great Egret *Ardea alba*

Several ind. in Mhemideh (25.02.09)

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*

Several ind. Mhemideh (25.02.09), 1 ind. in the Wadi near Shaykh Miskin (28.02.09)

Squacco Heron *Ardeola ralloides*

1 Ind. in Mhemideh (25.02.09)

Gray Heron *Ardea cinerea*

Several ind. Mhemideh, Euphrates south of Zenobia (both 25.02.09)

Bald Ibis

Not seen at the colony (25.02.09). The birds returned only after our visit

Anser sp.

250 ind. in flight 10 km north of Rakkah (24.02.09)

Common Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*

5 ind. on the water supply dam (26.02.09)

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*

Deir-es-Zor (23.02.09), Mhemideh (25.02.09), water supply dam (26.02.09; not counted)

Northern Pintail *Anas acuta*

Mhemideh (25.02.09), water supply dam (26.02.09; not counted)

Gadwall *Anas strepera*

Mhemideh (25.02.09), water supply dam (26.02.09; not counted)

Northern Shoveler *Anas clypeata*

Mhemideh (25.02.09), water supply dam (26.02.09; not counted)

Eurasian Wigeon *Anas penelope*

Mhemideh (25.02.09), water supply dam (26.02.09; not counted)

Marbled Teal *Marmaronetta angustirostris*

4 ind. in Mhemideh (25.02.09)

Eurasian Teal *Anas crecca*

Mhemideh (25.02.09), water supply dam (26.02.09; not counted)

Common Pochard *Aythya ferina*

Mhemideh (25.02.09), water supply dam (26.02.09; not counted)

Ferruginous Pochard *Aythya nyroca*
18 ind. in Mhemideh (25.02.09)

Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula*
Mhemideh (25.02.09), water supply dam (26.02.09; not counted)

unidentified *Aquila* sp. *Aquila* sp.
1 prob. *Aquila clanga*; Euphrates south of Zenobia (25.02.09)

Imperial Eagle *Aquila heliaca*
1 ad ind. between Alhasaka and Quintani (24.02.09)

Black Kite *Milvus migrans*
Ssp. *linneatus* common

Western Marsh-Harrier *Circus aeruginosus*
1 ind. (FT) in Mhemideh (25.02.09)

Pallid Harrier *Circus macrourus*
2 ad m, 1 prob f between Palmyra and Deir-es-Zor (23.02.09), 1 m between Al Hasaka and Quintani (25.02.09)



Pallid harrier ad male: 24.02.09, between Al Hasakah and Quintani (24.02.09, N. Martinez)

Long-legged Buzzard *Buteo rufinus*
common

Eurasian Buzzard *Buteo buteo*
1 ind. over the Wadi near Shaykh Miskin (28.02.09)

Eurasian Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*
1 ind. in Bludan (22.02.09), between Palmyra and Deir-es-Zor (23.02.09), at the Euphrates south of Zenobia (25.02.09) and in the Wadi near Shaykh Miskin (28.02.09)

Eurasian Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*
common

Lesser Kestrel *Falco naumanni*

Min. 2 ad males at the Bald Ibis colony (26.02.09)

Eurasian Hobby *Falco subbuteo*

1 ind. in Mhemideh (25.02.09)

Merlin *Falco columbarius*

1 ad male (very bright colored ind.) in the black desert east of As Suwayda (27.02.09)

Chukar *Alectoris chukar*

2 ind 20 km north of As Suwayda (26.02.09), 1 ind. calling in a Wadi in the black desert east of As Suwayda (27.02.09)

See-see Partridge *Ammoperdix griseogularis*

1 male in Zenobia (25.02.09)

Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus*

1 ind. in Deir-es-Zor (23.02.09), Euphrates south of Zenobia (25.02.09), Wadi near Shaykh Miskin (28.02.09)

Little Crake *Porzana parva*

1 ind. (female type) in Deir-es-Zor (23.02.09)

Common Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*

Deir-es-Zor (23.02.09), Euphrates south of Zenobia (25.02.09), Mhemideh (25.02.09), Water supply dam (26.02.9), Wadi near Shaykh Miskin (28.02.09; not counted)

Eurasian Coot *Fulica atra*

Deir-es-Zor (23.02.09), Euphrates south of Zenobia (25.02.09), Mhemideh (25.02.09), Water supply dam (26.02.9; not counted)

Purple Swamphen *Porphyrio porphyrio*

1 ind. in Mhemideh (25.02.09)

Common Crane *Grus grus*

2 ad ind. migrating over the water supply dam (26.02.09)

Black-winged Stilt *Himantopus himantopus*

1 ind. in Mhemideh (25.02.09)

Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius*

Min. 1 ind. at the back water near Kubar (25.02.09)

Common Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*

4 ind. at the back water near Kubar (25.02.09)

Snowy Plover *Charadrius alexandrinus*

Min. 10 ind. at the back water near Kubar (25.02.09)

Eurasian Dotterel *Charadrius morinellus*

5 ind. in the steppe between Al Hasaka and Quintani (24.02.09), min. 50 ind. in the black desert east of As Suwayda (27.02.09)

Northern Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*

5 ind. in Mhemideh (25.02.09)

Spur-winged Plover *Vanellus spinosus*

Min. 15 ind. in Mhemideh (25.02.09), 1 ind. in the Wadi near Shaykh Miskin (28.02.09)

White-tailed Lapwing *Vanellus leucurus*

Min. 20 ind. in Mhemideh (25.02.09)



White-tailed Lapwing in Mhemideh (25.02.09, T. Stalling)

Dunlin *Calidris alpina*

2 ind. at the back water near Kubar (25.02.09)

Little Stint *Calidris minuta*

Min. 10 ind. at the back water near Kubar (25.02.09), 2 ind. in Mhemideh (25.02.09)

Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*

Present at the Euphrates south of Zenobia (25.02.09), Mhemideh (25.02.09), Water supply dam (26.02.09). 1 ind. at a small pond in the black desert east of As Suwayda (27.02.09)

Common Redshank *Tringa totanus*

1 ind. in Mhemideh (25.02.09), present at the Water supply dam (26.02.09)

Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus*

5 ind. in Mhemideh (25.02.09)

Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*

4 ind. in Mhemideh (25.02.09)

Eurasian Curlew *Numenius arquata*

1 ind. Mhemideh (25.02.09)

Common Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*

Deir-es-Zor (23.02.09), Euphrates south of Zenobia (25.02.09), Mhemideh (25.02.09), Water supply dam (26.02.9), Wadi near Shaykh Miskin (28.02.09; not counted)

Ruff *Philomachus pugnax*

Mhemideh (25.02.09, not counted)

Slender-billed Gull *Larus genei*

20 ind. over Mhemideh (25.02.09)

Great Black-headed Gull *Larus ichthyaetus*

2 ad and 1 imm; Euphrates south of Zenobia (25.02.09)

Armenian Gull *Larus armenicus*
min. 2 ad Euphrates south of Zenobia (25.02.09)

Rock Pigeon *Columba livia*
Feral form very common

Eurasian Collared-Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*
common

Laughing Dove *Streptopelia senegalensis*
common

Eagle Owl/Pharao Eagle Owl *Bubo sp.*
1 ind. at the cliffs of the Bald Ibis Colony (26.02.09)

Little Owl *Athene noctua*
Seen several times on perches along the road

Common Swift *Apus apus*
Small numbers seen at several occasions

Alpine Swift *Tachymarptis melba*
5 ind. over the Wadi near Shaykh Miskin (28.02.09)

Little Swift *Apus affinis*
Min. 3 ind. over the water supply dam (26.02.09)

Hoopoe *Upupa epops*
Seen between Damascus and Palmyra (22.02.09), at the Bald Ibis colony (26.02.09; min. 10 ind.) and in the black desert east of As Suwayda (27.02.09; min. 10 ind.)

Common Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*
1 ind. at the Euphrates south of Zenobia (25.02.09)

White-throated Kingfisher *Halcyon smyrnensis*
1 ind. Wadi near Shaykh Miskin (28.02.09)

Pied Kingfisher *Ceryle rudis*
Deir-es-Zor (23.02.09; 2 ind.), Euphrates south of Zenobia (25.02.09; min. 5 ind.), Mhemideh (25.02.09; min. 4 ind.)

Syrian Woodpecker *Dendrocopos syriacus*
1 ind. in Bludan and 1 ind. in the valley down of Bludan (22.02.09)

Eurasian Wryneck *Jynx torquilla*
1 ind. Wadi near Shaykh Miskin (28.02.09)

Eurasian Skylark *Alauda arvensis*
common

Crested Lark *Galerida cristata*
very common

Wood Lark *Lullula arborea*
8 ind. Wadi near Shaykh Miskin (28.02.09)

Lesser Short-toed Lark *Calandrella rufescens*
3-5 ind. in the steppe between Al Hasaka and Quintani (24.02.09)

Desert Lark *Ammomanes deserti* (nominate ssp)
Zenobia (25.02.09), Bald Ibis colony (26.02.09)

Desert Lark *Ammomanes deserti annae*

Common in the black desert east of As Suwayda (27.02.09)



Desert Lark: nominate (25.02.09, Zenobia) & ssp. annae (27.02.09, black desert east of As Suwayda; N.Martinez)

Calandra Lark *Melanocorypha calandra*

Seen between Deir-es-Zor and Al Hasaka (23.02.09), between Al Hasaka and Quintani (25.02.09) and 20 km of As Suwayda (26.02.09)

Temminck's Lark *Eremophila bilopha*

Seen between Palmyra and Damascus (26.02.09) and in the Black desert east of As Suwayda (27.02.09)

Greater Short-toed Lark *Calandrella brachydactyla*

1 ind. in the black desert east of As Suwayda (27.02.09)

Greater Hoopoe-Lark *Alaemon alaudipes*

4 ind. (2x2) between Palmyra and Damascus (23.02.09)

Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica*

Small numbers seen at several occasions

Common House-Martin *Delichon urbica*

1 ind. between Deir-es-Zor and Al Hasakah (23.02.09)

Tawny Pipit *Anthus campestris*

1 ind. in Zenobia (25.02.09), 2 ind. in the black desert east of As Suwayda (27.02.09)

Tree Pipit *Anthus trivialis*

1 at the water supply dam (26.02.09) and 1 in the Wadi near Shaykh Miskin (28.02.09)

Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis*

10 ind. in Zenobia (25.02.09) and also present in the Wadi near Shaykh Miskin (28.02.09)

Water Pipit *Anthus spinoletta*

6 ind. in Mhemideh (25.02.09), 1 ind. in the Wadi near Shaykh Miskin (28.02.09)

Red-throated Pipit *Anthus cervinus*

1 ind. in a field next to the Wadi near Shaykh Miskin (28.02.09)

White Wagtail *Motacilla alba*

Common along the Euphrates and other freshwater places

Gray Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*

1 ind. next to a guard's house in the black desert (27.02.09) and 1 ind. in the Wadi near Shaykh Miskin (28.02.09)

White-spectacled Bulbul *Pycnonotus xanthopygos*
5 ind. in the Wadi near Shaykh Miskin (28.02.09)

White-cheeked Bulbul *Pycnonotus leucogenys*
3 ind. in Deir-es-Zor next to the footbridge (23.02.09)

European Robin *Erithacus rubecula*
Bludan (22.02.09), frontier to Lebanon (22.02.09) and Wadi near Shaykh Miskin (28.02.09; not counted)

Bluethroat *Luscinia svecica*
1 ab m (white-spotted) on the Euphrates south of Zenobia (25.02.09) and min. 15 ind. (females and white-spotted males) plus 1 red-spotted male in the Wadi near Shaykh Miskin (28.02.09)

Black Redstart *Phoenicurus ochruros*
Both subspecies *ochruros* and *gibraltariensis* common

Northern Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe*
1 ind. between Palmyra and Deiz-es-Zor (23.02.09)

Isabelline Wheatear *Oenanthe isabellina*
Common, seen each day except for 28.02.

Desert Wheatear *Oenanthe deserti*
2 ad males between Palmyra and Deiz-es-Zor (23.02.09), 3 males & 1 female in the black desert east of As Suwayda (27.02.09)

Finsch's Wheatear *Oenanthe finschii*
Seen between Damascus and Pamlyra (1 female, dark throated, 22.02.09), east of the Euphrate next to Zenobia (2 ad males, 25.02.09) and in the black desert east of As Suwayda (several ind. incl. males and 1 bright throated female (27.02.09).
Black and white Wheatears seen from the car (esp. between Palmyra and Deir-es-Zor) presumably belong to that species as well.

Mourning Wheatear *Oenanthe lugens lugens*
2 pairs and one single bird at the Bald Ibis colony (26.02.09)

Mourning Wheatear *Oenanthe lugens* „Basalt“ form
In total 5 ind. seen in the black desert east of As Suwayda: 1 pair at the cliffs of a Wadi (N 32 42 02.7 E 36 54 10.3) with the male singing (and reacting to a tape with the song of ssp. *lugens*) and 3 additional single individuals seen at different places next to the street in the black desert (between N 32 42 02.7 E 36 54 10.3 and N 32 55 55.29 E 37 20 50.9).



adult males of the Mourning Wheatear ssp. *lugens* (26.02.09, Bald Ibis colony) and „basalt form“ (27.02.09, black desert; N. Martinez)



ad. male of the „Basalt Wheatear“: black desert east of As Suwayda (27.02.09, N. Martinez)

White-headed Black Wheatear *Oenanthe leucopyga*

First for Syria. 1 ad ind. in the black desert east of As Suwayda (N 32 54 09.1 E 37 19 05.2). The bird was first seen from the car sitting on the top of a stone just next to the street. It was again seen at the same place 2 hours and heavy rainfalls later.

Habitat: Black basalt desert along the road. The place where the bird was found was managed by trucks and the bird was mostly sitting on the top of small artificial stone/clay humps.

According to a sheperd (that could distinguished it from the Basalt Wheatear in a book) this species occurs in the area.



adult White Crowned Black Wheatear with tail pattern visible (N. Martinez) and its habitat (D. Matti)



adult White Crowned Black Wheatear: N 32 54 09.1 E 37 19 05.2 (27.02.09, T. Roth)

European Stonechat *Saxicola rubicola rubicola*

Small valley near the frontier to Lebanon (22.02.09), Wadi near Shaykh Miskin (28.02.09, not counted)

Siberian Stonechat *Saxicola maura variegata*

Small valley near the frontier to Lebanon (3 females, 22.02.09), between Palmyra and Al Hasakah (min. 5, 23.02.09), Mhemideh (1 ind., 25.02.09)

Blue Rock-Thrush *Monticola solitarius*

1 female in the small valley near the frontier to Lebanon (22.02.09), min. 3 ind. in the Wadi near Shaykh Miskin (28.02.09)

Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos*

small valley near the frontier to Lebanon (not counted, 22.02.09)

Eurasian Blackbird *Turdus merula*

Bludan, small valley near the frontier to Lebanon, Valley north of Damascus (all 22.02.09) and Wadi near Shaykh Miskin (28.02.09; not counted)

Spectacled Warbler *Sylvia conspicillata*

1 ft between Palmyra and Deir-es-Zor (23.02.09)

Greater Whitethroat *Sylvia communis*

1 ind. next to a water hole in the black desert east of As Suwayda (27.02.09)

Streaked Scrub-Warbler *Scotocerca inquieta inquieta*

Min. 5 ind. in a Wadi in the black desert east of As Suwayda (N 32 42 02.7 E 36 54 10.3, a pair of the Basalt Wheatear was observed at the same place; 27.02.09)

Graceful Prinia *Prinia gracilis*

Common in Deir-es-Zor (23.02.09), Mhemideh (25.02.09), the water supply dam (26.02.09) and the Wadi near Shaykh Miskin (28.02.09)

Sedge Warbler *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*
1 ind. in the Wadi near Shaykh Miskin (28.02.09)

Moustached Warbler *Acrocephalus melanopogon*
1 ind. in Deir-es-Zor (23.02.09) and in Mhemideh (25.02.09)

Cetti's Warbler *Cettia cetti*
Deir-es-Zor (23.02.09, min. 2), Euphrates south of Zenobia (25.02.09, min. 1), Mhemideh (25.02.09, not counted), Wadi near Shaykh Miskin (28.02.09, not counted)

Acrocephalus sp.
Deir-es-Zor (23.02.09, 1 ind.), Euphrates south of Zenobia (25.02.09, 1 ind.)

Common Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita*
Seen in Bludan (22.02.09; 2 ind.), Deir-es-Zor (23.02.09; not counted), at the Euphrates south of Zenobia (25.02.09; 1 male singing) next to a pond in the black desert (27.02.09; 1 ind.) and in the Wadi near Shaykh Miskin (28.02.09; not counted)

Great Tit *Parus major*
Bludan (22.02.09, not counted)

Sombre Tit *Poecile lugubris*
4 ind. in the small valley near the frontier to Lebanon (22.02.09)

Eurasian Penduline-Tit *Remiz pendulinus*
1 ind. in the Wadi near Shaykh Miskin (28.02.09)

Rock Nuthatch *Sitta neumayer*
Common in the small valley near the frontier to Lebanon (22.02.09)

Rufous-tailed Shrike *Lanius isabellinus*
1 ind. in Mhemideh (25.02.09) and 1 ind. in the Wadi near Shaykh Miskin (28.02.09)



Rufous-tailed Shrike: Wadi near Shaykh Miskin (28.02.09, N. Martinez)

Woodchat Shrike *Lanius senator*

1 ind. between Palmyra and Damascus (26.02.09), 1 ind. in trees next to a guards house in the black desert (27.02.09). Probably ssp. niloticus.

Northern Shrike *Lanius excubitor*

1 ind. between Palmyra and Damascus (23.02.09)

Iraq Babbler *Turdoides altirostris*

Ca. 10 ind. in Deir-es-Zor (23.02.09), ca. 5 ind. along the Euphrat south of Zenobia (25.02.09) and ca. 5 ind. in Mhemideh (25.02.09)

Eurasian Magpie *Pica pica*

Bludan (22.02.09), Al Hasakah (23.02.09), Rakkah (24.02.09; not counted)

Eurasian Jay *Garrulus glandarius atricapillus*

Bludan, frontier to Lebanon, valley north of Damascus (22.02.09; each time ca. 5 ind.)

Eurasian Jackdaw *Corvus monedula*

Together with Rooks in Rakkah (24.02.09)

Rook *Corvus frugilegus*

Min. 500 ind. in Rakkah (24.02.09)

Hooded Crow *Corvus cornix*

Common

Common Raven *Corvus corax*

2 ind. between Palmyra and Deir-es-Zor (23.02.09)

Brown-necked Raven *Corvus ruficollis*

2 prob. ind. at the Bald Ibis colony (26.02.09)

European Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*

Observed between Deir-es-Zor and Al Hasakah (23.02.09), Al Hasakah and Quintani (24.02.09) and in Mhemideh (25.02.09)

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*

Very common

Spanish Sparrow *Passer hispaniolensis*

Min. 1 ad male in Zenobia (25.02.09)

Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*

Bludan, frontier to Lebanon, valley north of Damascus (22.02.09) and in the Wadi near Shaykh Miskin (28.02.09)

Brambling *Fringilla montifringilla*

Bludan (22.02.09, some ind.)

Eurasian Linnet *Carduelis cannabina*

Common

European Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis*

Valley near the frontier to Lebanon (22.02.09, ca. 10 ind.)

European Greenfinch *Carduelis chloris*

Bludan, frontier to Lebanon, valley north of Damascus (22.02.09, common), 2 ind. in the desert between Palmyra and Deir-es-Zor (23.02.09) and in the Wadi near Shaykh Miskin (28.02.09, abundant)

European Serin *Serinus serinus*

Frontier to Lebanon, valley north of Damascus (22.02.09, common) and in the Wadi near Shaykh Miskin (28.02.09, common)

Trumpeter Finch *Bucanetes githaginea*

Ca. 10 ind. at the Bald Ibis colony (26.02.09)



Trumpeter Finch at the Bald Ibis colony (26.02.09, N. Martinez)

Desert Finch *Rhodospiza obsoleta*

Ca. 5 between Al Hasakah and Quintani (24.02.09) and 1 m east of the Euphrates next to Zenobia (25.02.09)

Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus*

1 ft in Mhemideh (25.02.09)

Yellowhammer *Emberiza citrinella*

Bludan (22.02.09, common), valley north of Damascus (22.02.09, min. 200)

Pine Bunting *Emberiza leucocephalos*

Third record for Syria. 2 ind. (1 ft and 1 ad male) together with the Yellowhammers in the valley north of Damascus (N 33 35 51.0 E 36 03 23.0; 22.02.09). Both ind. were seen for about 1 min. each before they disappeared in the orchards of the valley.

Corn Bunting *Emberiza calandra*

common

Rock Bunting *Emberiza cia*

3 ind. in Bludan (22.02.09) and at least 5 ind. at the frontier to Lebanon (22.02.09)

Amphibians and Reptiles

Treefrog sp. *Hyla* sp.

Heard calling (like european *H. arborea* and therefore rather no *H. savignyi*) at the backwater near Kubar (25.02.09)

Green toad *Bufo viridis*

1 ind. found under a Stone in the Wadi near Shayk Miskin (28.02.09)

Gecko sp. *Phydactylus* cf. *puiseuxi*

1 ind. on the wall of a fountain at the Bald Ibis colony (26.02.09)

Acanthodactylus sp. *Acanthodactylus* cf. *schreiberi*

2 ind. in the desert between Palmyra and Deir-es-Zor (23.02.09)

Mesalina sp. *Mesalina brevirostris*

Several ind. at the Bald Ibis colony (26.02.09)

Ocellated Skink *Chalcides ocellatus*

1 ind. found under a Stone in the Wadi near Shayk Miskin (28.02.09)

Hardun *Laudakio stellio*

1 ind. found under a Stone in the Wadi near Shayk Miskin (28.02.09)

Greek Land Turtle *Testuda graeca*

2 ind. (1 year-old juvenile and 1 adult) in the arable land 20 km north of As Suwayda (26.02.09)