

KUWAIT BECAUSE BASRA IS TO FAR.

A short trip to Kuwait to see Basra Reed Warbler



The second Basra we saw by Pekka Fagel

Itinerary

- 23-04 Departed from Frankfurt to Kuwait City to arrive late in the evening.
- 24-04 Picked up by Pekka Fagel at my Hotel in Kuwait City (Ibis) in the early morning and birded together with two German birdwatchers at Al Abra q (a plantation) and SAANR (a desert reserve) and ended the day at Jahra Farms
- 25-04 Birded in the morning at Abdaly Farms, then drove to Subia (to look for terns and shorebirds) after that to Jahra Pool Reserve (a big marsh) and ended the day at Green Island in Kuwait City
- 26-04 Birded in the morning at Pivot Fields (a big farm for crops) and later on to Kabt (desert reserve) and ended the tour at Port Zour, after that drove to Kuwait City for a dinner and moved to the airport to take a night flight to Frankfurt.

Legenda:

***AAAA** = New Species (2)

AAAA = Good bird species, for me or for the area.

000* = Species considered now to be category C (contra The Birds of the State of Kuwait by Gregory)

The Bird list

001 SOCOTRA CORMORANT – phalacrocorax nigrogularis

260 4 ex, two times two, both adult and immature sitting on several markers in the sea.

002 LITTLE BITTERN – ixobrychus minutus

24-apr	25-apr	26-apr
	1 male	6

003 NIGHT HERON – nycticorax nycticorax

24-apr	25-apr	26-apr
1		1

004 SQUACCO HERON – ardeola ralloides

Quite heavy migration, most birds not in summer plumage,

24-apr	25-apr	26-apr
15	15	10

005 WESTERN CATTLE EGRET – bubulcus ibis

A total of 27 seen.

006 LITTLE EGRET – egretta garzetta

25-04 3 ex. seen at Jahra Pool Reserve.

007 WESTERN REEF EGRET – egretta gularis

25-04 1 ex. at Subia.

008 PURPLE HERON – ardea purpurea

Quite good migration of single birds or in flocks

24-apr	25-apr	26-apr
1	33	3

009 GREY HERON - ardea cinerea

A total of 6 seen on all days.

010 WHITE STORK – ciconia ciconia

26-04 12 ex. sitting on the irrigation installation on the Pivot fields

011 EURASIAN SPOONBILL - platalea leucorodia

25-04 1 ex. at Subia.

012 NORTHERN SHOVELER – anas chipeata

25-04 2 males at Jahra Pool Reserve

013 BLACK KITE – milvus migrans

A total of 2 seen, both Lineatus like birds.

014 MARSH HARRIER – circus aeruginosus

1 female at SAANR, and 1 female at the Pivot fields.

015 MONTAGU'S HARRIER – circus pygargus

1 immature male at SAANR, and 1 immature at the Pivot fields.

016 SHIKRA – accipiter badius

24-04 1 immature or female seen very well in flight. Different structure as Sparrowhawk (longer tail) with 5 thin tail bands and very pale wingtips seen while circling.



Shikra, notice the five tailbands, by Rainer Ertel

017 STEPPE BUZZARD – *buteo buteo* ssp: *vulpinus*

24-04 2 ex. seen spread over the day, not very obvious Vulpinus birds.

018 BOOTED EAGLE – *hieraaetus pennatus*

25-04 1 dark face flying over Abdaly Farms, nice views with the “headlights”

019 EURASIAN KESTREL – *falco tinnunculus*

A total of 6 birds seen spread over the days.

020 SPOTTED CRAKE – *porzana porzana*

24-apr	25-apr	26-apr
1	7	1

The bird on 24-04 was walking in the middle of the desert! Most others were seen at Jahra Pool Reserve.

021 MOORHEN – *gallinula chloropus*

A total of 9 seen with most at Jahra Pool Reserve.

022 OYSTERCATCHER – *haematopus ostralegus*

26-04 2 ex. at Port Zour.

023 BLACK-WINGED STILT – *himantopus himantopus*

A total of 50 seen at SAANR and Jahra Pool Reserve.

024 CRAB PLOVER – *dromas ardeola*

25-04 9 ex, quite distant at Subia.

025 BLACK-WINGED PRATINCOLE – *glareola nordmanni*

24-apr	25-apr	26-apr
70	0	25

In flocks, sometimes mixed with Collared. Very nice views.



Collared Pratincole by Rainer Ertel

026 COLLARED PRATINCOLE – *glareola pratincola*

A total of 5 birds seen on two days often mixed in with the Black-Winged.

027 LITTLE RINGED PLOVER – *charadrius dubius*

25-04 1 ex. at Jahra Pool Reserve.

028 COMMON RINGED PLOVER – *charadrius hiaticula*

A total of 3 seen at Jahra Pool Reserve.

029 KENTISH PLOVER – *charadrius alexandrinus*

A total of 31 seen at various suitable locations.

030 RED-WATTLED LAPWING – *hoplopterus indicus*

25-04 1 ex. defending its territory at Abdaly Farms, it the WP was important for me a good species.



Noisy bird by Rainer Ertel

031 WHITE-TAILED LAPWING – *chettusia leucura*

25-04 2 ex. in summer plumage at Jahra Pool Reserve, always a good species to see on a trip.

032 LITTLE STINT – *calidris minuta*

24-apr	25-apr	26-apr
40	60	5

Nice summer plumaged birds.

033 TEMMINCK'S STINT – *calidris temminckii*

25-04 1 ex in summer plumage at Jahra Pool Reserve

034 CURLEW SANDPIPER – *calidris ferruginea*

24-apr	25-apr	26-apr
70	10	25

Most in “cracking” summer plumage.

035 JACK SNIPE – *lymnocryptes minimus*

25-04 1 ex. showing very well at Jahra Pool Reserve, very late for the species which is not common.



Jack Snipe by Rainer Ertel

036 COMMON SNIPE – *gallinago gallinago*

25-04 2 ex. at Jahra Pool Reserve.

037 MARSH SANDPIPER – *tringa stagnatilis*

A total of 12 seen mainly at Jahra Pool Reserve.

038 WOOD SANDPIPER – *tringa glareola*

The commonest wader with a total of 240 birds seen.

039 RUFF – *philomachus pugnax*

24-apr	25-apr	26-apr
20	30	1

Most birds were not in breeding plumage.

039 COMMON SANDPIPER – *actitis hypoleucos*

24-apr	25-apr	26-apr
10	20	3

040 RUDDY TURNSTONE – *arenaria interpres*

26-04 3 ex. at a marsh near Port Zour.

041 RED-NECKED PHALAROPE – *phalaropus lobatus*

24-apr	25-apr	26-apr
1	40	0

All at Jahra Pool Reserve. Almost all not yet in summer plumage.

042 ARCTIC SKUA – *stercorarius parasiticus*

25-04 2 ex, migrating north in the evening while watching from Green Island.

043 SLENDER-BILLED GULL – *larus genei*

A total of 15 birds mostly not in summer plumage (immatures) along the coast.

044 HEUGLIN'S GULL – *larus heuglini*

26-04 1 ad at Port Zour on a sandbar, quite dark mantled.

045 CASPIAN TERN – *sterna caspia*

25-04 2 ex. on a sandbar at Subia.

046 SWIFT TERN – *sterna bergii*

28-04 8 ex, seven adults in summer plumage at Subia on a sandbar and one close in flying seen from Green Island. This is probably one of the easiest WP places to see this species.

047 LESSER CRESTED TERN – *sterna bengalensis*

A total of 55 seen along the coast, this is the most common tern along the coast.

048 SANDWITCH TERN – *sterna sandvicensis*

26-04 3 ex. at various harbours along the coast.

049 BRIDLED TERN – *sterna amaethetus*

26-04 12 ex. seen at Port Zour, some sitting on the markers.

050 WHITE-CHEEKED TERN - *sterna repressa*

26-04 A total of 60 seen at two sites along the coast, at a little harbour close to Port Zour and at a sandbar at Port Zour. All cracking summer plumage birds. It was a long time since I saw this species.



White cheeked terns above by Rainer Ertel under by Pekka Fagel.

051 LITTLE TERN – sterna albifrons

A total of 12 seen along the coast. It seems that Saunder's is very rare in Kuwait. All bird checked where Little.

052 WHITE-WINGED BLACK TERN – chlidonias leucopterus

24-04 20 ex. in one flock at a desert lake at SAANR.

053 COLLARED DOVE – streptopelia decaocto

Seen every day in small numbers

054 TURTLE DOVE – streptopelia turtur

A total of 13 seen on all day, some where shot by hunters...

055 LAUGHING DOVE – streptopelia senegalensis

Common in the cities.

056 NAMAQUA DOVE – oena capensis

4 birds seen on two days, often near the camels on the farms.

057*RING-NECKED PARAKEET – psittacula krameri

24-04 3 ex. at Jahra Farms.

058 COMMON CUCKOO – cuculus canorus

26-04 1 ex. at the Pivot Fields.

059 EUROPEAN NIGHTJAR – caprimulgus europaeus

25-04 1 ex. sitting in a tree at Green Island



The wrong nightjar by Rainer Ertel.

060 PALLID SWIFT – apus pallidus

A total of 35 seen daily in Kuwait city.

061 WHITE-BREASTED KINGFISHER – halcyon smyrnensis

1 present at Jahra Farms and seen several times.

062 BLUE-CHEEKED BEE-EATER – merops superciliosus

24-apr	25-apr	26-apr
50	3	10

Very nice views of these birds migrating, unfortunately I will never forget seeing one shot, while gliding away, by a local hunter... Also we found a few dead or dying under the trees at one location.

Learned the different call from Common Bee-eater (more hollow)

063 EUROPEAN BEE-ATER – merops apiaster

24-apr	25-apr	26-apr
200	40	10

Also migrating over the city

064 EUROPEAN ROLLER – coracias garrulous

25-04 2 ex. flying north in the desert.

065 HOOPOE – upupa epops

A total of 3 seen spread over the days.

066 WRYNECK – jynx torquilla

24-04 1 ex. seen well at SAANR.

067 BLACK-CROWNED FINCH LARK – *eremoptrix nigriceps*
26-04 2 ex. a pair at a little drinking pool at Kabt.



The male Black-crowned Finch Lark at the drinking pool by Rainer Ertel

068 BAR-TAILED DESERT LARK – *ammomanes cinturus*

24-04 4 ex. at SAANR, seen quite well

069 HOOPOE LARK – *alaemon alaudipes*

24-04 3 ex. spread over the day, solitaire birds. A great bird to see.

070 SHORT-TOED LARK – *calandrella brachydactyla* ssp:??

24-04 30 ex at SAANR, the birds were streaked on the whole of the breast and I could not see any dark patches at the side of the neck. They had big bills so where no Lesser.

071 CRESTED LARK – *galerida cristata*

Common throughout the trip.

072 SAND MARTIN – *riparia riparia*

Constantly migrating though all visited places.

073 HOUSE MARTIN – *delichon urbica*

A total of 4 birds seen surprisingly low number.

074 BARN SWALLOW – *hirundo rustica*

Constantly migrating though all visited places

075 TAWNY PIPIT – *anthus campestris*

24-04 6 ex. in a small flock at SAANR.

076 TREE PIPIT – *anthus trivalis*

24-apr	25-apr	26-apr
1	2	2

077 RED-THROATED PIPIT – *anthus cervinus*

24-apr	25-apr	26-apr
20	100	10

Nice summer plumaged birds.

078 YELLOW WAGTAIL – *motacilla flava*

ssp: *Feldegg*

24-apr	25-apr	26-apr
50	100	10

ssp: *Beema*

24-04 40 seen in one flock at Al Abraaq farms.



Beema by Rainer Ertel

ssp: **Thunbergi**

24-apr	25-apr	26-apr
10	20	0

ssp: **Lutea**

24-apr	25-apr	26-apr
3	1	0



Nice Lutea by Rainer Ertel

----***WHITE-CHEEKED BULBUL – pycnonotus leucogenys**

Seen daily with a maximum of 30 birds often in the cities, surprisingly that this species is now considered category C.

----* **RED-VENTED BULBUL – pycnonotus cafer**

25-04 5 ex. Seen well at Green Island.

079 RUFIOUS BUSH ROBIN – cerotrichas galactotes

24-apr	25-apr	26-apr
10	50	20

Nice to see the numbers building up en of during my stay.

080 THRUSH NIGHTINGALE – luscinia luscinia

24-apr	25-apr	26-apr
30	1	0

On the first day they where literally everywhere and softly singing.

081 BLUETHROAT – luccinia svecica

24-04 2 birds seen at SAANR. One bird had a totally blue throat but was not completely “on colour”

082 WHITE-THROATED ROBIN – iranica gutturalis

24-apr	25-apr	26-apr
4	0	1

Nice males, cracking bird to see.

083 COMMON REDSTART – phoenicurus phoenicurus

24-apr	25-apr	26-apr
60	20	5

No samamiscus birds noted.

084 WHINCHAT – saxicola rubetra

24-apr	25-apr	26-apr
20	10	10

085 NORTHERN WHEATEAR – oenanthe oenanthe

24-apr	25-apr	26-apr
2	0	50

086 EASTERN BLACK-EARED WHEATEAR – oenanthe melanoleuca

26-04 1 very nice male at Kabt



Eastern Black Eared Wheatear by Rainer Ertel

087 ROCK THRUSH – monticola saxatilis

24-04 1 first summer male (with no white rump) in a flock of Ortolan Buntings at SAANR.

088 SEDGE WARBLER – acrocephalus scoenobaenus

26-04 a total of 15 seen at Pivot fields (in the crocodile pond) and at Jahra Pool Reserve.

They looked somehow darker than the birds in the Netherlands.

089 EUROPEAN REED WARBLER – acrocephalus scirpaceus ssp: fuscus or something else??

26-04 25 ex. at the back of the reeds of Jahra Pool Reserve. The birds were singing and often seen with food in their bills. One bird was feeding a fledged young. They looked very pale, warm brown and short winged.

090 MARSH WARBLER – acrocephalus palustris

24-apr	25-apr	26-apr
25	1	0

Feeding in scrub on farms.

091 CLAMOROUS REED WARBLER – acrocephalus stentoreus

26-04 1 singing and seen briefly but good in the reeds at Jahra Pool Reserve.

092 GREAT REED WARBLER – acrocephalus arundinaceus

24-apr	25-apr	26-apr
1	2	4

***093 BASRA REED WARBLER – ACROCEPHALUS GRISELDIS**

24-apr	25-apr	26-apr
3	3	1

Seen at in chronicle order at Al Abraq Farms, SAANR, in a small reed bed behind a café and Jahra Pool Reserve (singing).

A quite large, long billed (with a large pale base) short-tailed long winged Reed warbler. The song, was deep slow and a bit Reed Warbler like.



Look at the long bill and wings.

094 EASTERN OLIVACEOUS WARBLER – *hippolais opaca*

24-apr	25-apr	26-apr
3	2	1

Small numbers on migration.

095 SYKES WARBLER – *hippolais rama*

25-04 1 ex, catching flies at Green Island. A featureless small flat headed very pale hippolais. Booted is a vagrant so was excluded.

096 UPCHER'S WARBLER – *hippolais languida*

24-apr	25-apr	26-apr
10	1	2

Very nice views of this for me not often seen species. Big birds with often a lot of white in the wingpanel. Often turning the tail in a typical way. Tail always looking dark also from a distance.



The big Upcher's Warbler by Rainer Ertel

097 ICTERINE WARBLER – hippolais icterina

24-04 1 ex, seen well (quite yellow) at Al Abrak.

098 BARRED WARBLER – sylvia nisoria

24-apr	25-apr	26-apr
4	1	0

Always very nice views, also some less marked (first summer?) birds.

099 LESSER WHITETHROAT – sylvia curruca ssp: curruca?

24-apr	25-apr	26-apr
100	1	0

Looking very much like “our” nominate (sub) species

100 COMMON WHITETHROAT – sylvia communis ssp; icterops or rubicola

24-apr	25-apr	26-apr
40	20	10

Larger, more grey than the Western Europe birds but with a brown wing(panel)

101 BLACKCAP – sylvia atricapilla

24-apr	25-apr	26-apr
40	20	5

102 WILLOW WARBLER – phylloscopus trochilus ssp: yakutensis

24-apr	25-apr	26-apr
200	100	50

Most bird where very grey.

103 RED-BREASTED FLYCATCHER – ficedula parva

24-04 2 immature/female type birds together found on call by Pekka at Al Abraç. Rare in spring.



Nice Red Breasted Flycatcher by Rainer Ertel.

104 SEMI-COLLARED FLYCATCHER – ficedula semitorquata

24-apr 25-apr 26-apr

2 (a pair) 1 fem.

Very nice views of quite straightforward birds (also the females) at Al Abraq and Jahra Farms.



Semi-collared Flycatcher, the male by Rainer Ertel the female by Pekka Fagel.

105 SPOTTED FLYCATCHER – muscipala striata

24-apr 25-apr 26-apr

300 10 10

***106 AFGHAN BABBLER - turdoides huttoni ssp. salvadorii**

25-04 7 ex. in one family party at Abdaly Farms. Located on there whistling calls. Very pale babbler's a bit looking like Iraq Babbler.



An adult Afghan Babbler by Pekka Fagel



An immature Afghan Babbler by Rainer Ertel

107 GOLDEN ORIOLE – oriolus oriolus

24-04 3 ex. at SAANR.

108 DAURIAN SHRIKE – lanius isabellinus

24-apr	25-apr	26-apr
1	5	3

Identified on the colour of the underparts (warm on Daurian) but still some hard birds where seen.



A nice male Daurian Shrike at Jahra Pool Reserve by Rainer Ertel

109 TURKESTAN SHRIKE – lanius phoenicuroides

24-apr	25-apr	26-apr
1	2	2



Typical Turkestan because of the white underparts?

110 RED-BACKED SHRIKE – lanius collurio

24-apr	25-apr	26-apr
400	30	5

A massive movement on 24-04. Every bush has a shrike.....

111 LESSER GREY SHRIKE – *lanius minor*

24-apr	25-apr	26-apr
10	2	2

They just started to come though.

112 STEPPE GREY SHRIKE – *lanius pallidirostris*

24-04 1 ex. at SAANR. A left over from the winter. A classic bird with no dark lore and a light base of the bill.

113 WOODSHAT SHRIKE – *lanius senator* ssp: *niloticus*

24-apr	25-apr	26-apr
2	2	1

The birds were very dark on the head.

114 MASKED SHRIKE – *lanius nubicus*

24-apr	25-apr	26-apr
15	0	1

Making the total to 7 shrike species. Quite impressive!

----* COMMON MYNA – *aridotheres tristis*

A total of 37 seen mostly near villages.

----* BANK MYNA – *aridotheres ginginianus*

A total of 11 birds seen all at Jahra Farms.

115 HOUSE SPARROW – *passer domesticus*

Very common in large flocks.

116 SPANISH SPARROW – *passer hispaniolensis*

24-apr	25-apr	26-apr
40	0	10

Mostly sedentary birds I presume.

117 ORTOLAN BUNTING – *emberiza hortulana*

24-apr	25-apr	26-apr
400	3	100

Incredible common, luckily.

GOITERD GAZELLE – *gazella subgutturosa*

24-04 1 ex. at SAANR. ID probably not correct but it looked like this species (with a quite vague brown flank line) and it is the species which is the most likely based on geographical location. Maybe this gazelle was just an escape.

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