

# Autumn birding in Iran

12-26 November 2017



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## Introduction

A while ago, a birder friend told me of his plan to go birdwatching in Iran for two weeks during November. This was accompanied by an invite to come along, so needless to say, I boarded that train!

Our trip would be in the second half of the month, between 12 and 26 of November. For the both of us Iran seemed like an interesting country which is a bit of the beaten path, both touristically and birdwise. So when we talked to friends who had visited Iran, we became more enthusiastic, since everyone praised the friendliness of the people and the beauty of the landscape.

Birdwise Iran fits typically into the Middle East region. For a European, bird species are quite familiar but with a nice addition of more eastern specialties. For me personally, this would be a trip with not too many new species, since I have visited the Emirates and had my fair share of desert birding in Morocco. But still some nice species are lurking around.

Especially the south coast gives an Arabian feeling, both the climate and the birds, but still there are some differences with what you find on the other side of the Strait of Hormuz. Some birds are at their westmost distribution on the south east coast of Iran. Iran also has a (near) endemic bird, the Pleske's Ground Jay, which can be found in the central and eastern steppes and deserts.

Coming to the Caspian coast, habitats change dramatically, the Alborz mountains shield off the inner parts from rain and therefore the Caspian coast is a very green area, largely cultivated, with wooded hills on the north flanks of the Alborz. This coastline is an important wintering ground for waterfowl and many others. And last but not least, this is the wintering ground of a single male Siberian Crane from the western populations. This bird winters in the rice fields of Fereydunkenar.

Geographically, Iran is diverse and ranges from coastal plains and mangroves to snow-peaked mountains. But dominating is a rugged and arid landscape.

Climate throughout the country differed gravely, the south brought sub-tropical heath, while the central parts had cold nights and pleasant daytime temperatures. The north was rather similar to the centre, but less cold nights.

## Logistics

We flew with Pegasus airline (230 euro) to the Imam Khomeini International Airport in Tehran, with a transfer in Istanbul. In Iran we moved around using public transport. For long distances, this was mainly busses (VIP) and short distances taxi/savari. Hitchhiking in a western sense was rather hard, since everybody is kind of a taxi. We also took a comfortable night train from Tehran to Bandar Abbas.

Bus network is extensive, but not all cities have a terminal, but you can flag a bus down in the streets.

Train tickets were booked beforehand using [www.iranrail.net](http://www.iranrail.net) for 27 euro per person.

Bus tickets were mostly bought at the moment itself, but once or twice this resulted in some waiting time because busses were already full. Busses are inexpensive, e.g. a bus ride of 450km costs about 8 euro pp. Tables in the link give a good indication of prices for busses from Tehran: <https://www.lonelyplanet.com/iran/tehran/transport/getting-there-away/land>.

We mostly slept in a tent during the trip, interchanged with hotel/motel/guesthouse, all cheap.

Table 1 overnight places

Date	Name	Price	Comment
14/11	Minab tourism hotel (Melat Park)	€17 +breakfast pp	Room with airco, wifi
16/11	Zinat Garden guesthouse	€6 +supper pp	traditional room, carpet like mattress
19/11	Yazd friendly guesthouse	€5 +breakfast pp	nice patio, dormitory
21/11	Camping Fereydunkenar	Free	room, with light and heating
23-24/11	Motel Gorgan	€5 +breakfast pp	Basic room, wifi downstairs

The currency in Iran is Iranian Rials. Our exchange rate was €1=47600 IRR. Because of the impracticality of these high numbers, most prices are said in Toman, 1 Toman=10 IRR. So beware if you think something is ridiculously cheap, it is likely the tenfold. ATM's don't accept Visa/Mastercard/Maestro, so exchange cash. We changed each 200 euro, which was sufficient for the entire trip.

We read that using a thumbs up is considered rude, but actually saw some people using it in a western fashion, even on neon signs. Also wearing shorts is not commonly done, so be aware of that. But follow what the locals do. My impression was that they did not really care when I rolled my trousers in the south.

## Literature

### Books

- Helm Field Guide: Birds of the Middle East (Porter and Aspinall, 2010)

- Collins Bird Guide (Svensson, Mullarney, Zetterström, 2012)

### Reports (found on [www.cloudbirders.com](http://www.cloudbirders.com))

- [Report](#) of Jos Stratford

- [Report](#) of Jens Thallund

- [Report](#) of Jouko Hogmander

### Other

Locations of species were also retrieved from [www.ebird.org](http://www.ebird.org) and [www.observation.org](http://www.observation.org)

Also thanks to Brecht De Meulenaer for info!

## Itinerary

12/11: Landed at IKA around 4 am, took the train to Bandar Abbas around noon

13/11: Wader watching eastern Bandar Abbas, ride to Tiab, camping near shrimp farms

14/11: Tiab coastal area, ride to Minab, Melat Park

15/11: Start in Melat, date groves, wadi near Minab

16/11: Wadi, ride to Bandar Abbas, ferry to Qeshm, ride to Laft and Tabl

17/11: Tabl (Hara forest), ride to ferry and bus to Shahr e Babak

18/11: Steppe birding west of Shahr e Babak

19/11: Steppe birding and bus to Yazd, visiting Yazd

20/11: Ride to Tehran and to Babolsar

21/11: Early morning arrival Babolsar, hunting pond near Babolsar, Fereydunkenar rice fields

22/11: Ride to Bandar e Torkaman, Gorgan Bay birding

23/11: Gorgan Bay birding ride to Gomishan, ride to Gorgan

24/11: Forest birding Gorgan

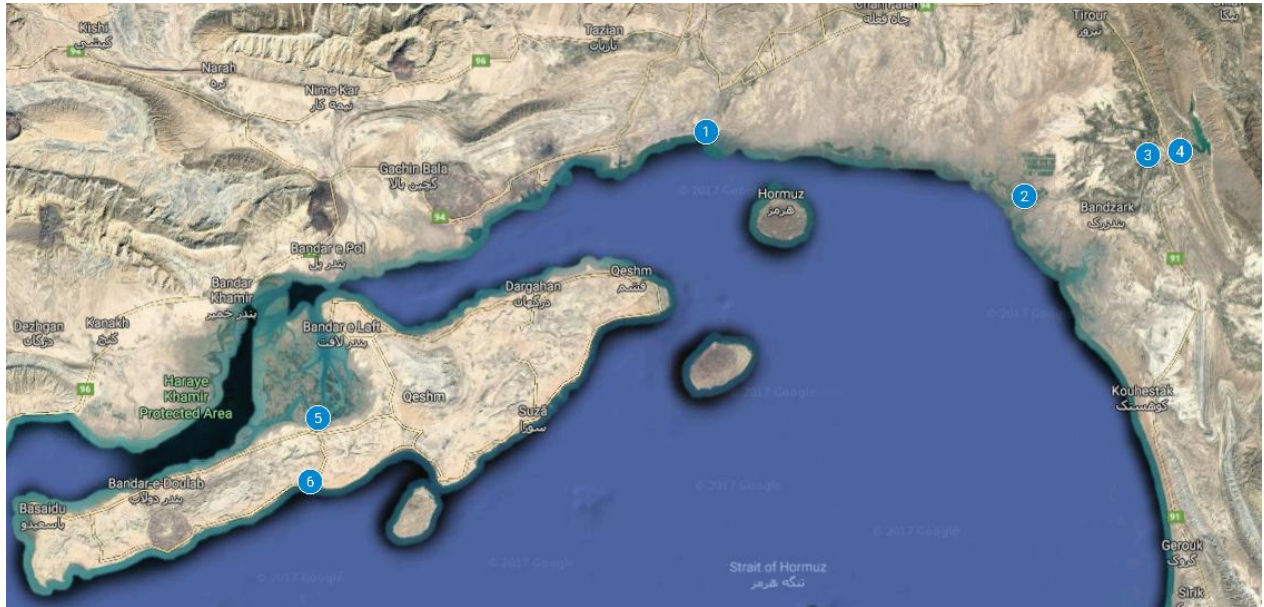
25/11: Bus ride to Tehran

26/11: Early departure from IKA

## Detailed report

I will not give a day by day report, but discuss the different locations visited, per region

### Southern coastal region (13-17/11)



Map 1: overview Southern coastal region. Bandar Abbas (1), Tiab (2), Minab, date groves (3), Minab, wadi (4), Tabl, Hara forest (5), Salakh (6).

### **Bandar Abbas (13/11)**

6:30 am, arriving with the train for Tehran. We are welcomed by a warm climate and some taxi's. After some chatting with the drivers we arrived on the coast at the east side of town. Here the flats begin, which means wader time! Walking along the coast towards the flats, birds came in nicely: **Purple Sunbirds** in the park with **Green Bee-eaters** and some **Pallid Swifts**. The tidal area started to grow and **Dunlins**, **Little Stints**, **Sanderlings**, **Ringed-**, **Kentish-**, **Grey-** and **Great Sand Plover** came into sight. **Terek Sandpiper** was rather common and some **Marsh Sandpipers** were around. We stopped under a tree at a little outflow where a group of waders were feeding. Here **Lesser Sandplover** and both **Godwits** were added. But waders were not the only thing around. On the fence a **White-throated Kingfisher** and a male **Variable Wheatear** kept us company. Flying around on the flats were **Gull-Billed Terns** and **Caspian Terns**. On a wooden structure for fishing, **Lesser** and **Greater Crested Tern** were resting with **Cormorants**.

Suddenly I noticed a group of waders flying with 2 larger individuals, which I couldn't place, luckily they landed, For the first seconds I could not really grip what I was seeing, that's no redshank! Soon realisation came that I indeed was looking at 2 **Great Knots**, euphoria

dominated the moment as I didn't expect to see this target this easily! Some scanning set the tally on 8 individuals.

We walked to the bus station and took a savari for 4 euro pp to Minab, and then to Tiab.



### Tiab (13-14/11)

Arriving in Tiab brought us an **Indian Pond Heron**. We walked to the eastside of the village to a tidal gully with some docked boats. A **White-Throated Kingfisher** was around and a young **White-Winged Tern** flew by. Thinking about a strategy to bird this area I looked around a bit with my binoculars, a huge bill and striped head caught my attention, **Great Stone-Curlew** (*map 2, point 3*)! Now that was easy...

Walked along the main road to the shrimpfarms and pitched our tent. A walk in the area produced **Isabelline Wheatear**, **Lesser Short-Toad Lark** and **Afghan Babbler**. Next day we went along the northside of the shrimpfarms and left the track after crossing a ditch (*map 2, blue line*). **Dunlins**, **Little Stints**, **Curlew Sandpipers** and **Citrine Wagtails** welcomed us. Hopping in the sand we found some **Sand Larks**. As we went further, a committee of about 500 **Cormorants** and some **Dalmatian Pelicans** showed us the way to the mangroves. We dropped our bags (*map 2, point 5*) and left them in the good care of a **Clamorous Reed Warbler**, **Greater Spotted Eagle** and some waders. At the big tidal stream we parked ourselves for some birding (*map 2, point 6*). A group of 11 **Great Stone-Curlews** landed before our eyes to fly-off minutes later. **Greater Spotted Eagles** were rather numerous, chilling in the mangroves. **Mudskippers** revealed themselves with the falling tide and in between an aggregation of **Curlews** 2 **Pied**

**Avocets** joined the wader list. After some walking and swimming we set of towards town where a **Shikra** flew by.



Map 2: Detail of Tiab region. Great Stone-Curlew (3), Backpack drop point (5), Tidal stream birding point (6), walked path (blue line)





## Minab (14-16/11)

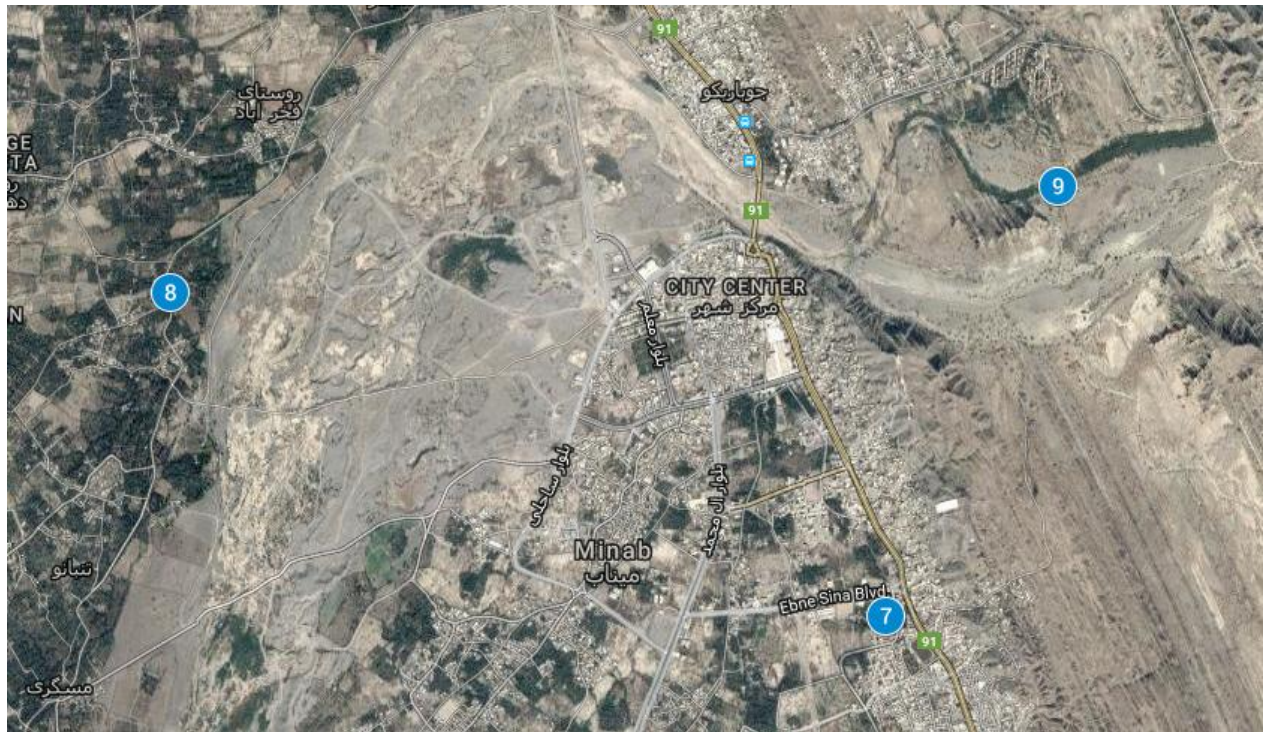
When we arrived in Minab, we checked into the Minab tourist hotel next to Melat Park (*map 3, point 7*). We decided to check the park before darkness. An **Indian grey mongoose**, **Purple Sunbirds**, **White-Throated Kingfisher** and **Desert Whitethroats** were around. Suddenly both of us stood still and shouted: DRONGO! A Drongo was flying around and perched in a tree. I took some picks, went closer and the lack of a rictal spot, contrast between belly and back and bill shape convinced us this was an **Ashy Drongo**. We followed it for a while and while photographing I suddenly saw a black shape bobbing its head. Yes, **Spotted Owlet!**

The 15<sup>th</sup> was dedicated to the date groves and more precisely, Sind Woodpecker. First stop to look for the Drongo got us a male **Crested Honey Buzzard**. We walked towards the palms but were stopped by 2 guys who lead us into a compound, something about police. They were on the edge of aggressive, asking for passports, so we said they were in the hotel. After some calling, the mood changed to a more hospital one and we could make out that we should not continue there, thieves. So we made a detour and walked towards the groves. A **Shikra** flew by and 2 **Crested Honey Buzzards**. Some **Silverbills** and **Kingfishers** kept us amused, but no sign of our quarry. The sun was burning and after leaving our first site for Sind Woodpecker we walked further along the path. Suddenly a woodpecker call and yes, there he was, a male **Sind Woodpecker**, perched in a palm tree with a **White-throated Kingfisher** (*map 3, point 8*). Satisfied, we returned to the hotel and chilled a bit.

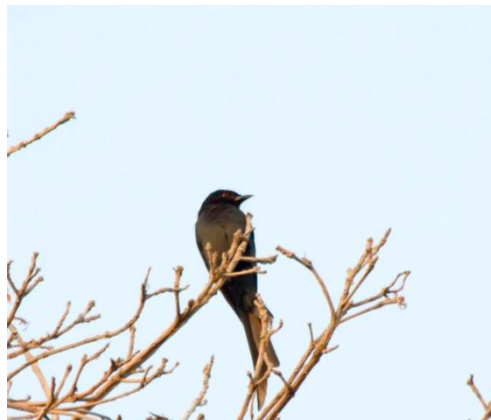
Later we walked to the Wadi near Minab. We stopped at a spot where water was still flowing and reeds grew (*map 3, point 9*). 3 **Graceful Prinia's** were calling and later I flushed a francolin, could have been Black Francolin, but I could not exclude Grey with certainty.

Next day we did some early morning birding next to the rocky slopes, **Striolated Bunting** and **Desert Lark** were common and we also found a male **Hume's Wheatear**. We had been scanning the slopes and suddenly Willem prevailed, 4 **See-See Partridges** were running on the slopes. At the stream I saw a **Moustached Warbler** and 6 **Wild Boars** came out of the bushes.





Map 3: Detail of Minab region. Melat park (7), Sind woodpecker spot (8) wadi spot (9).



## Qeshm (16-17/11)

On arriving with the ferry we had some **Lesser Crested Terns** and **Indian Humpbacked dolphins**.

Qeshm island proved to be less productive than expected. We visited the Hara forest, which is a big mangrove area. First we went to Laft, but not many birds around except the expected herons, so we headed for Tabl. We were lead to the village of Salakh were we slept in a guesthouse. Next morning when we left the village a zipping call draw our attention, some **Plain Leaf Warblers** were hopping in the Acacia's. 3 **Egyptian Vultures** flew around and then we got a ride to Tabl. We walked until the end of the jetty where we stayed shortly. On the way we saw a young **Shikra**, **Gull-Billed Terns**, **Variable Wheatear** and our target, a group of **Crab Plovers**.

We had it with the heat, and birdwise our targets where seen, so we went back to the ferry and took a bus to Shahr e Babak.



Map 4: Detail of Qeshm. Tabl jetty (10), Salakh (11)



## Central region: Shahr e Babak (18-19/11)



Map 5: Overview Shahr e babak.

We started walking the 18<sup>th</sup> early morning and got a ride to our destination, the steppes near Shahr e Babak. This should be a good site for Pleske's Ground Jay so we planned to spend the day here. We dropped our bags a bit away from the road and started walking (*map 6, point 14*). Soon we saw our first **Desert Wheatear** of the trip. I said to Willem, we might see its stalker, and yes a small bird was following the wheatear, **Desert Warbler** it was. The steppes here were dominated by low *Artemisia* shrubs with some widespread *Zygophyllum* in between. But further away the latter became more abundant. While walking we enjoyed **Bar-Tailed Larks, Scrub Warblers, Skylark, Crested Lark, 2 Crowned Sandgrouses** and **Lesser Short-Toad Lark**. *Zygophyllum* shrubs became more abundant and while scanning I saw an orange shape in a shrub. This could be it, I took my scope and yes, Pleske's it was! We followed the bird and discovered that there were 2 of them (*Map 6, point 12*). They were quite shy and we always found them perched in a bush, upon approaching they would jump to the ground and run/fly away, to be gone for some time. Mission accomplished! We returned and had a distant **Black-Bellied Sandgrouse**. We chilled around our backpacks and saw **Imperial Eagle, Finch Wheatear, Little Owl, Steppe Grey Shrike and Long-legged Buzzard**. Late afternoon we did another walk and stumbled upon the **Pleske's** again. Still shy, but better light. We pitched the tent in a depression and enjoyed the beautiful starscape (*map 6, point 13*).

Next morning I went for a walk and managed to see 2 **Pleske's** again. We packed our stuff and headed back to the road. **Crowned Sandgrouses** were moving and we enjoyed nice flybys of groups up to 30 individuals. A **Steppe grey Shrike** landed at 3 meters of us and suddenly Willem saw a big bird flying, we took our bins and I shouted Houbara, meaning **Macqueens Bustard**.

After the reintroduced birds in the Emirates, this was finally a tick for me, and an observation like I wanted it, shy birds flying over the steppes! We headed for Yazd where we stayed in the Yazd Friendly Hostel.

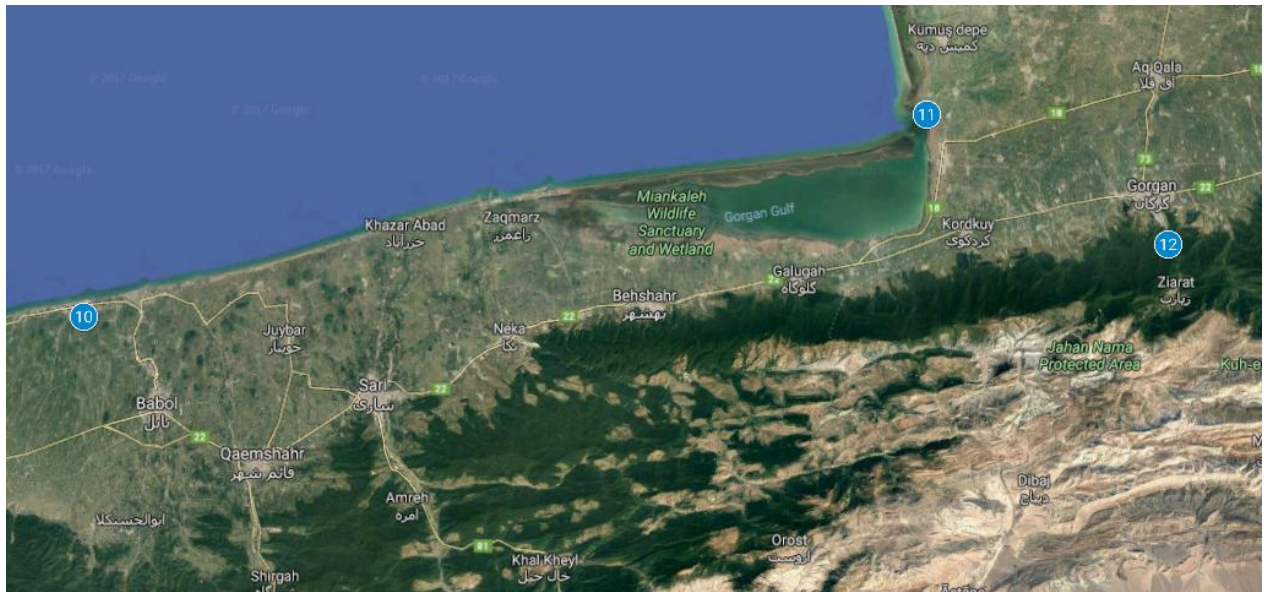


Map 6: detail of Shahr e Babak. Pleske's spot (12), Sleeping place (13), backpack drop point (14).





## Northern coastal Area (21-25/11)

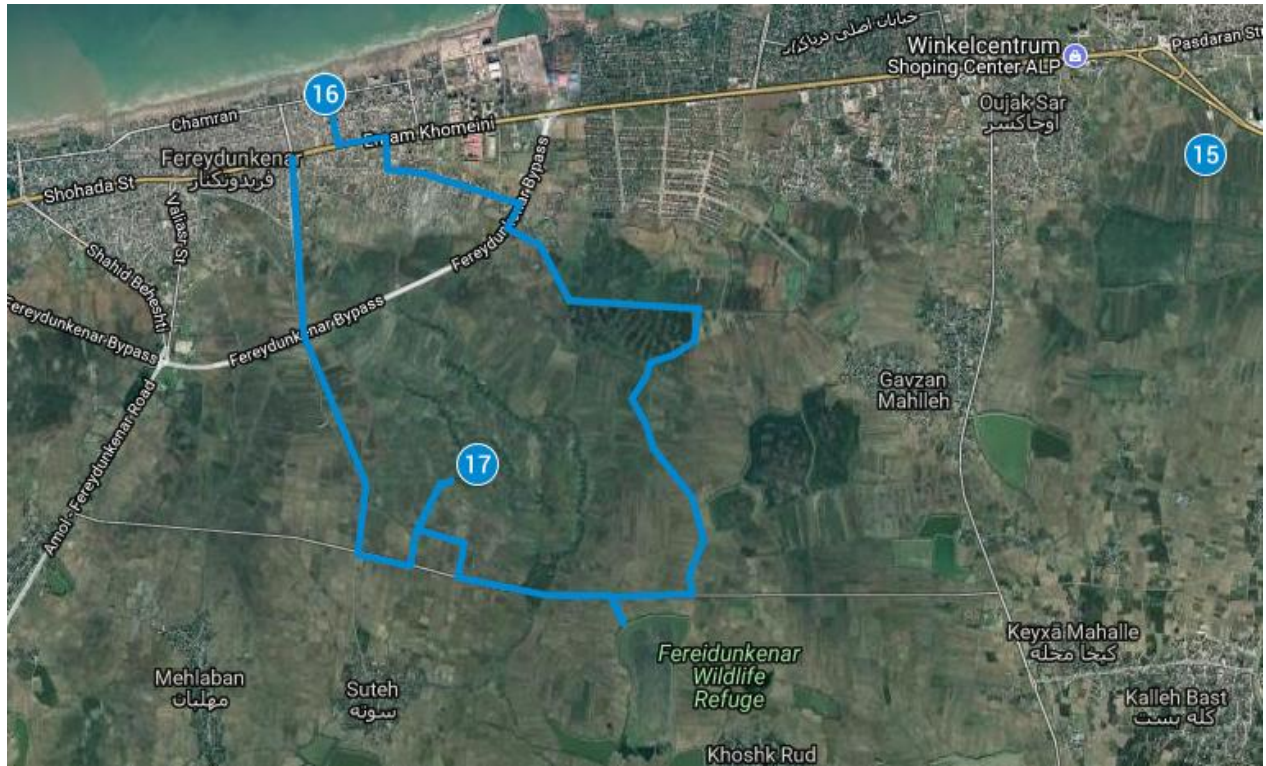


Map 7: Overview of Caspian region. Fereydunkenar (10), Gorgan Bay, around Bandar Torkaman (11), Gorgan Forest (12).

### **Fereydunkenar (21/11)**

Arrived middle of the night in Babolsar, so we walked westwards towards a pond. On our way we heard **Robins**, **Song Thrushes** and **Redwings**. A **Long-Eared Owl** flew by. The pond was a hunting paradise with nets everywhere and reeds were cut, so we didn't stay there. **Meadow Pipits** were common. Suddenly we heard a strange calling pipit. After checking with recordings, this was most likely a **Buff-bellied Pipit** (*map 8, point 15*)! We took a bus towards Fereydunkenar and dropped our stuff at a camping near the coast (*map 8, point 16*). A quick scan over sea resulted in **Sandwich Tern**, **Little Gull**, **Crested Grebe**, **Black-necked Grebe** and **Caspian Gull**. Off to the fields, the centre of town had a statue of 2 Siberian Cranes, so we were in the right place. Leaving the town we saw a big swarm of **Cormorants** and ducks, **Tree Sparrows**, **Chaffinches**, **Bramblings**, **Spanish Sparrows** were common. On the fields a lot of **Skylarks** with some **Calandra Larks** in between were seen. A local brought us to another part of the area where fields were more wet. **Water Rails** ran over the road and we stumbled upon a site which was pretty sealed off (*map 8, point 17*), likely the other side was were all the waterfowl was. Locals invited us to tea and something to eat. Everybody knows which bird you want to see and they started to call. Unfortunately, the last wintering Siberian Crane hadn't arrived yet. So we walked around a bit in between the fields, ponds and hunting areas. Raptors were diverse here: **Greater Spotted-**, **Steppe-** and **Imperial Eagles**, **Long-legged Buzzard**,

**Common Buzzard, Sparrowhawk, Marsh Harrier and Hen Harrier.** After a long day of walking we returned to the camping and decided to move eastwards next day.



Map 8: Detail of Fereydunkenar. First stop with possible BB-pipit (15), camping (16), approximate route in Fereydunkenar (blue line), sealed off zone (17)





## Gorgan Bay

After some busses and taxis we arrived at a camping ground north of Bandar Torkaman (*map 9, point 18*). Extensive flats dominated this shallow bay, and birds were numerous. **Great** and **Little Egrets** were numerous, as were the waders. **Dunlin, Little Stint, Black-tailed Godwit** and **Common Snipe** were most numerous, with good numbers of **Common Ringed Plover**, some **Temmincks Stints** and **Marsh Sandpipers**. **Spotted Redshank** and **Ruff** completed the waders list. This all was topped with **Whiskered** and **White-winged Terns**, lots of **Meadow Pipits, Water Pipits** and **Skylarks**. Suddenly a loud call attracted our attention, a **Richard's Pipit**. Our goal here was Black-Headed Penduline Tit, but unfortunately we couldn't find any. Nightfall brought a calling **Pin-tailed Sandgrouse** and **Barn Owl** from the tent (*map 9, point 19*).

Next day we explored an extensive coastal plain with some reedbeds (*map 9, point 20*). Still no Penduline Tits. But birding was nice, waders were numerous, **White-tailed Eagle** on the shore, thousands of **Cormorants** in the air intermixed with some **Flamingo's**. **Meadow Pipits** were omnipresent and bearing in mind the putative Buff-bellied I was on edge. Again I heard some single calls which sounded different. Also **Red-throated Pipits** were fairly common. So I armed myself with my camera in video mode to record the calls, but first I was surprised by an **Eagle Owl** taking off, only some meters in front of me! I managed to record some calls and judging from the spectrogram, it was likely **Buff-bellied Pipit**!

We walked along a ditch with reeds and saw some **Moustached Warblers** and 3 **Golden Jackals**.

Then moving a bit more north, but weather turned bad so we decided to go to Gorgan, where we stayed in a motel.

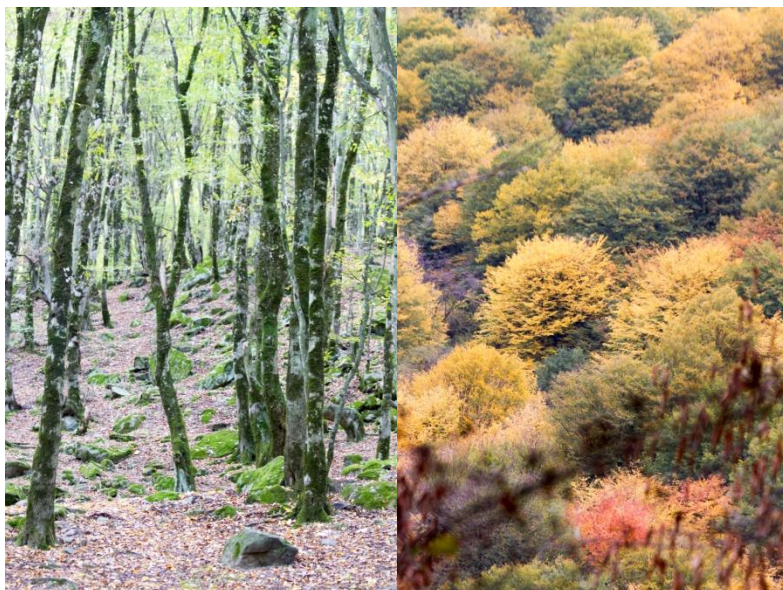


Map 9: Detail of Gorgan Bay. Start point at camp area (18), camping place (19), coastal plain (19).



### **Gorgan (24-25/11)**

We spent a day in the “jungle” south of Gorgan to search for Caspian Tit. But were not successful. It was however a nice walk in a forest were autumn just started. Some forest birds were added to the list: **Coal Tit, Hawfinch, Greater Spotted Woodpecker, Eurasian Nuthatch** and **Eurasian Treecreeper** . Also some **Masked Wagtails** next to the road. In the afternoon I made a small tour in the rural outskirts and found a group of **Woodlarks, White-tailed Eagle** and a **Hen Harrier**. Next day we took the bus back to Tehran. In the Alborz mountains we had 2 **Golden Eagles** to end our trip.



## Annotated Checklist

This list is composed using the Willybase software. Observation dates are not complete for common species, only for targets. Coordinates or info are given for target species. Red List status is given, if other than Least Concern.

NC=not counted, HO= heard only

### **Greylag Goose** *Anser anser*

23/11/2017 - Gorgan Bay

### **Northern Shoveler** *Spatula clypeata*

22/11/2017 - Gorgan Bay

23/11/2017 - Gorgan Bay

### **Mallard** *Anas platyrhynchos*

21/11/2017 - Fereydunkenar

22/11/2017 - Gorgan Bay

### **Northern Pintail** *Anas acuta*

21/11/2017 - Fereydunkenar

### **Eurasian Teal** *Anas crecca*

14/11/2017 - Tiab

22/11/2017 - Gorgan Bay

### **See-see Partridge** *Ammoperdix griseogularis*

16/11/2017 – Minab (27.154684, 57.092366)

### **Grey Francolin** *Francolinus pondicerianus*

15/11/2017 - Minab - NC - Feral

### **Common Pheasant** *Phasianus colchicus*

24/11/2017 - Gorgan - NC

### **Little Grebe** *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

21/11/2017 – Fereydunkenar

**Great Crested Grebe** *Podiceps cristatus*

21/11/2017 - Fereydunkenar

22/11/2017 - Gorgan Bay

**Black-necked Grebe** *Podiceps nigricollis*

21/11/2017 - Fereydunkenar

22/11/2017 - Gorgan Bay

23/11/2017 - Gorgan Bay

**Greater Flamingo** *Phoenicopterus roseus*

13/11/2017 - Bandar Abbas

23/11/2017 - Gorgan Bay

**Black Stork** *Ciconia nigra*

13/11/2017 - Tiab

**Eurasian Spoonbill** *Platalea leucorodia*

13/11/2017 - Bandar Abbas

**Indian Pond Heron** *Ardeola grayii*

13/11/2017 - Tiab

14/11/2017 - Tiab

16/11/2017 - Qeshm

multiple in tidal area's of Tiab (27.107,56.8326) and Hara protected forest on Qeshm (26.7813,55.7238)

**Western Cattle Egret** *Bubulcus ibis*

21/11/2017 - Fereydunkenar

**Grey Heron** *Ardea cinerea*

13/11/2017 - Bandar Abbas

13/11/2017 - Tiab

14/11/2017 - Tiab

16/11/2017 - Qeshm

21/11/2017 - Fereydunkenar

22/11/2017 - Gorgan Bay

**Great Egret** *Ardea alba*

13/11/2017 - Bandar Abbas

13/11/2017 - Tiab

14/11/2017 - Tiab

16/11/2017 - Qeshm

21/11/2017 - Fereydunkenar

22/11/2017 - Gorgan Bay

23/11/2017 - Gorgan Bay

**Little Egret** *Egretta garzetta*

21/11/2017 - Fereydunkenar

22/11/2017 - Gorgan Bay

23/11/2017 - Gorgan Bay

**Western Reef Heron** *Egretta gularis*

13/11/2017 - Bandar Abbas

14/11/2017 - Tiab

16/11/2017 - Qeshm

common along the south coast

**Dalmatian Pelican** *Pelecanus crispus* **Vulnerable (VU)**

14/11/2017 - Tiab

only seen in Tiab, up to 8 individuals (27.0976,56.8321)

**Great Cormorant** *Phalacrocorax carbo*

13/11/2017 - Bandar Abbas

13/11/2017 - Tiab

14/11/2017 - Tiab

16/11/2017 - Qeshm

21/11/2017 - Fereydunkenar

22/11/2017 - Gorgan Bay

23/11/2017 - Gorgan Bay

**Western Osprey** *Pandion haliaetus*

14/11/2017 - Tiab

**Egyptian Vulture** *Neophron percnopterus* **Endangered (EN)**

16/11/2017 - Qeshm

17/11/2017 - Qeshm

**Crested Honey Buzzard** *Pernis ptilorhynchus*

15/11/2017 - Minab

Only seen in Minab, in Melat park (27.1346,57.0828) and the date groves (27.158,57.0485)

**Greater Spotted Eagle** *Clanga clanga* **Vulnerable (VU)**

13/11/2017 - Bandar Abbas

14/11/2017 - Tiab

21/11/2017 - Fereydunkenar

fairly common in the mangroves and Fereydunkenar

**Steppe Eagle** *Aquila nipalensis* **Endangered (EN)**

21/11/2017 - Fereydunkenar

Only seen in the North

**Eastern Imperial Eagle** *Aquila heliaca* **Vulnerable (VU)**

18/11/2017 - Shahr e babak

21/11/2017 - Fereydunkenar

1 Shahr e Babak, 4 in Fereydunkenar

**Golden Eagle** *Aquila chrysaetos*

25/11/2017 – Alborz

**Shikra** *Accipiter badius*

13/11/2017 - Tiab

15/11/2017 - Minab

16/11/2017 - Qeshm

17/11/2017 - Qeshm

several unidentified *Accipiters* where probably this species. Seen in Minab (27.1607,57.0499), Tiab and Qeshm

**Eurasian Sparrowhawk** *Accipiter nisus*

21/11/2017 - Fereydunkenar

**Western Marsh Harrier** *Circus aeruginosus*

13/11/2017 - Bandar Abbas

13/11/2017 - Tiab

15/11/2017 - Minab

16/11/2017 - Qeshm

17/11/2017 - Qeshm

21/11/2017 - Fereydunkenar

22/11/2017 - Gorgan Bay

23/11/2017 - Gorgan Bay

**Hen Harrier** *Circus cyaneus*

21/11/2017 - Fereydunkenar

22/11/2017 - Gorgan Bay

23/11/2017 - Gorgan Bay

**Black Kite** *Milvus migrans*

13/11/2017 - Bandar Abbas

**White-tailed Eagle** *Haliaeetus albicilla*

23/11/2017 - Gorgan Bay

24/11/2017 - Gorgan

**Long-legged Buzzard** *Buteo rufinus*

14/11/2017 - Tiab

18/11/2017 - Shahr e babak

19/11/2017 - Shahr e Babak

**Common Buzzard** *Buteo buteo*

21/11/2017 - Fereydunkenar

24/11/2017 - Gorgan

**Macqueen's Bustard** *Chlamydotis macqueenii* **Vulnerable (VU)**

19/11/2017 - Shahr e Babak

**Water Rail** *Rallus aquaticus*

21/11/2017 - Fereydunkenar

**Common Moorhen** *Gallinula chloropus*

21/11/2017 - Fereydunkenar

**Eurasian Coot** *Fulica atra*

21/11/2017 - Fereydunkenar

**Great Stone-curlew** *Esacus recurvirostris* **Near-threatened (NT)**

13/11/2017 - Tiab

14/11/2017 - Tiab

Only seen in Tiab, group of 12, likely the same group was seen multiple times (27.1123,56.859)

**Eurasian Oystercatcher** *Haematopus ostralegus* **Near-threatened (NT)**

13/11/2017 - Bandar Abbas

**Crab-plover** *Dromas ardeola*

17/11/2017 - Qeshm

only seen on Qeshm in Tabl (26.7813,55.7238)

**Black-winged Stilt** *Himantopus himantopus*

13/11/2017 - Bandar Abbas



**Pied Avocet** *Recurvirostra avosetta*

14/11/2017 - Tiab

**Northern Lapwing** *Vanellus vanellus* **Near-threatened (NT)**

22/11/2017 - Gorgan Bay

23/11/2017 - Gorgan Bay

**Red-wattled Lapwing** *Vanellus indicus*

13/11/2017 - Tiab

**Grey Plover** *Pluvialis squatarola*

13/11/2017 - Bandar Abbas

14/11/2017 - Tiab

22/11/2017 - Gorgan Bay

**Common Ringed Plover** *Charadrius hiaticula*

13/11/2017 - Bandar Abbas

14/11/2017 - Tiab

22/11/2017 - Gorgan Bay

23/11/2017 - Gorgan Bay

**Kentish Plover** *Charadrius alexandrinus*

13/11/2017 - Bandar Abbas

14/11/2017 - Tiab

23/11/2017 - Gorgan Bay

**Lesser Sand Plover** *Charadrius mongolus*

13/11/2017 - Bandar Abbas

14/11/2017 - Tiab

fairly common on tidal flats of Bandar Abbas (27.1857,56.3374), Tiab (27.1018,56.8497)

**Greater Sand Plover** *Charadrius leschenaultii*

13/11/2017 - Bandar Abbas

14/11/2017 - Tiab

fairly common on tidal flats of Bandar Abbas and Tiab

**Whimbrel** *Numenius phaeopus*

14/11/2017 - Tiab

17/11/2017 - Qeshm

**Eurasian Curlew** *Numenius arquata* **Near-threatened (NT)**

13/11/2017 - Bandar Abbas

14/11/2017 - Tiab

17/11/2017 - Qeshm

23/11/2017 - Gorgan Bay

**Bar-tailed Godwit** *Limosa lapponica* **Near-threatened (NT)**

13/11/2017 - Bandar Abbas

14/11/2017 - Tiab

**Black-tailed Godwit** *Limosa limosa* **Near-threatened (NT)**

13/11/2017 - Bandar Abbas

14/11/2017 - Tiab

23/11/2017 - Gorgan Bay

**Ruddy Turnstone** *Arenaria interpres*

13/11/2017 - Bandar Abbas

**Great Knot** *Calidris tenuirostris* **Endangered (EN)**

13/11/2017 - Bandar Abbas

8 on the tidal flats of Bandar Abbas (27.1861,56.3392)

**Ruff** *Calidris pugnax*

22/11/2017 - Gorgan Bay

**Broad-billed Sandpiper** *Calidris falcinellus*

14/11/2017 - Tiab

less common than expected, 1 at Bandar Abbas and Tiab

**Curlew Sandpiper** *Calidris ferruginea* **Near-threatened (NT)**

14/11/2017 - Tiab

**Temminck's Stint** *Calidris temminckii*

13/11/2017 - Bandar Abbas

13/11/2017 - Tiab

22/11/2017 - Gorgan Bay

23/11/2017 - Gorgan Bay

**Sanderling** *Calidris alba*

13/11/2017 - Bandar Abbas

**Dunlin** *Calidris alpina*

13/11/2017 - Bandar Abbas

16/11/2017 - Qeshm

22/11/2017 - Gorgan Bay

23/11/2017 - Gorgan Bay

**Little Stint** *Calidris minuta*

13/11/2017 - Bandar Abbas

14/11/2017 - Tiab

22/11/2017 - Gorgan Bay

23/11/2017 - Gorgan Bay

**Jack Snipe** *Lymnocyptes minimus*

23/11/2017 - Gorgan Bay

**Common Snipe** *Gallinago gallinago*

21/11/2017 - Fereydunkenar

22/11/2017 - Gorgan Bay

23/11/2017 - Gorgan Bay

**Terek Sandpiper** *Xenus cinereus*

13/11/2017 - Bandar Abbas

14/11/2017 - Tiab

16/11/2017 - Qeshm

22/11/2017 - Gorgan Bay

Fairly common on the tidal flats of Bandar Abbas and Tiab, 1 Gorgan Bay

**Common Sandpiper** *Actitis hypoleucos*

13/11/2017 - Bandar Abbas

13/11/2017 - Tiab

14/11/2017 - Tiab

**Green Sandpiper** *Tringa ochropus*

13/11/2017 - Bandar Abbas

**Common Redshank** *Tringa totanus*

13/11/2017 - Bandar Abbas

13/11/2017 - Tiab

16/11/2017 - Qeshm

**Marsh Sandpiper** *Tringa stagnatilis*

13/11/2017 - Bandar Abbas

22/11/2017 - Gorgan Bay

Some on the tidal flats if Bandar Abbas, fairly common Gorgan Bay

**Spotted Redshank** *Tringa erythropus*

22/11/2017 - Gorgan Bay

**Common Greenshank** *Tringa nebularia*

13/11/2017 - Bandar Abbas

13/11/2017 - Tiab

23/11/2017 - Gorgan Bay

**Slender-billed Gull** *Chroicocephalus genei*

13/11/2017 - Bandar Abbas

22/11/2017 - Gorgan Bay

**Black-headed Gull** *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

13/11/2017 - Bandar Abbas

**Little Gull** *Hydrocoloeus minutus*

21/11/2017 - Fereydunkenar

**Caspian Gull** *Larus cachinnans*

17/11/2017 - Qeshm

21/11/2017 - Fereydunkenar

22/11/2017 - Gorgan Bay

**Lesser Black-backed Gull** *Larus fuscus*

13/11/2017 - Bandar Abbas

**Gull-billed Tern** *Gelochelidon nilotica*

13/11/2017 - Bandar Abbas

14/11/2017 - Tiab

16/11/2017 - Qeshm

**Caspian Tern** *Hydroprogne caspia*

13/11/2017 - Bandar Abbas

**Greater Crested Tern** *Thalasseus bergii*

13/11/2017 - Bandar Abbas

17/11/2017 - Qeshm

Only few seen along the coast of Qeshm and Bandar Abbas (on wooden structures for fishing)

**Lesser Crested Tern** *Thalasseus bengalensis*

13/11/2017 - Bandar Abbas

16/11/2017 - Qeshm

17/11/2017 - Qeshm

fairly common south coast

**Sandwich Tern** *Thalasseus sandvicensis*

21/11/2017 - Fereydunkenar

**Whiskered Tern** *Chlidonias hybrida*

22/11/2017 - Gorgan Bay

**White-winged Tern** *Chlidonias leucopterus*

13/11/2017 - Tiab

22/11/2017 - Gorgan Bay

**Pin-tailed Sandgrouse** *Pterocles alchata*

23/11/2017 - Gorgan Bay - HO

heard after sunset in Gorgan Bay

**Chestnut-bellied Sandgrouse** *Pterocles exustus*

13/11/2017 - Tiab

**Black-bellied Sandgrouse** *Pterocles orientalis*

18/11/2017 - Shahr e babak

1 in Shahr e Babak

**Crowned Sandgrouse** *Pterocles coronatus*

18/11/2017 - Shahr e babak

19/11/2017 - Shahr e Babak

18/11: 3 Shahr e Babak, 19/11: About 100, different groups, Shahr e Babak

**Eurasian Collared Dove** *Streptopelia decaocto*

23/11/2017 - Gorgan Bay

**Laughing Dove** *Spilopelia senegalensis*

13/11/2017 - Bandar Abbas

13/11/2017 - Tiab

15/11/2017 - Minab

16/11/2017 - Qeshm

**Western Barn Owl** *Tyto alba*

23/11/2017 - Gorgan Bay - HO

**Eurasian Eagle-Owl** *Bubo bubo*

23/11/2017 - Gorgan Bay

23/11: 1 flushed, Gorgan Bay

**Little Owl** *Athene noctua*

18/11/2017 - Shahr e babak

**Spotted Owlet** *Athene brama*

14/11/2017 - Minab

**Long-eared Owl** *Asio otus*

21/11/2017 - Fereydunkenar

**Pallid Swift** *Apus pallidus*

13/11/2017 - Bandar Abbas

**Indian Roller** *Coracias benghalensis*

13/11/2017 - Tiab

15/11/2017 - Minab

fairly common around Minab

**White-throated Kingfisher** *Halcyon smyrnensis*

13/11/2017 - Bandar Abbas

13/11/2017 - Tiab

14/11/2017 - Minab

15/11/2017 - Minab

Most days seen 1 to multiple in Bandar Abbas-Minab area

**Common Kingfisher** *Alcedo atthis*

14/11/2017 - Tiab

15/11/2017 - Minab

23/11/2017 - Gorgan Bay

**Green Bee-eater** *Merops orientalis*

13/11/2017 - Bandar Abbas

13/11/2017 - Tiab

14/11/2017 - Minab

15/11/2017 - Minab

**Sind Woodpecker** *Dendrocopos assimilis*

15/11/2017 - Minab

15/11: 1 male (27.1493,57.0421)

**Great Spotted Woodpecker** *Dendrocopos major*

24/11/2017 - Gorgan

**Black Woodpecker** *Dryocopus martius*

24/11/2017 - Gorgan - HO

**Common Kestrel** *Falco tinnunculus*

22/11/2017 - Gorgan Bay

23/11/2017 - Gorgan Bay

**Peregrine Falcon** *Falco peregrinus*

14/11/2017 - Tiab

**Southern Grey Shrike** *Lanius meridionalis*

13/11/2017 - Tiab - ssp *aucheri*

**Steppe Grey Shrike** *Lanius pallidirostris*

18/11/2017 - Shahr e babak

19/11/2017 - Shahr e Babak



23/11/2017 - Gorgan Bay

19/11: 1 adult Shahr e Babak, 23/11: 1 winter Gorgan Bay

**Ashy Drongo** *Dicrurus leucophaeus*

14/11/2017 - Minab

**Eurasian Magpie** *Pica pica*

12/11/2017 - Teheran

**Pleske's Ground Jay** *Podoces pleskei* Country endemic

18/11/2017 - Shahr e babak

19/11/2017 - Shahr e Babak

18-19/11: 2 birds in the shrubby area (30.1464,54.8955)

**House Crow** *Corvus splendens*

13/11/2017 - Bandar Abbas - NC - Feral

**Rook** *Corvus frugilegus*

21/11/2017 - Fereydunkenar

**Hooded Crow** *Corvus cornix*

21/11/2017 - Fereydunkenar

**Brown-necked Raven** *Corvus ruficollis*

17/11/2017 - Qeshm

17/11: 2 birds on Qeshm

**Northern Raven** *Corvus corax*

24/11/2017 - Gorgan

**Coal Tit** *Periparus ater*

24/11/2017 - Gorgan

**Eurasian Blue Tit** *Cyanistes caeruleus*

21/11/2017 – Fereydunkenar

**Great Tit** *Parus major*

21/11/2017 - Fereydunkenar

**Desert Lark** *Ammomanes deserti*

16/11/2017 - Minab

**Bar-tailed Lark** *Ammomanes cinctura*

18/11/2017 - Shahr e babak

19/11/2017 - Shahr e Babak

18/11: fairly common Shahr e Babak

**Woodlark** *Lullula arborea*

22/11/2017 - Gorgan Bay

24/11/2017 - Gorgan

**Eurasian Skylark** *Alauda arvensis*

18/11/2017 - Shahr e babak

22/11/2017 - Gorgan Bay

23/11/2017 - Gorgan Bay

**Crested Lark** *Galerida cristata*

14/11/2017 - Tiab

18/11/2017 - Shahr e babak

19/11/2017 - Shahr e Babak

22/11/2017 - Gorgan Bay

**Calandra Lark** *Melanocorypha calandra*

21/11/2017 - Fereydunkenar

21/11/2017 - Fereydunkenar

21/11: Fairly common on the fields in Fereydunkenar

**Lesser Short-toed Lark** *Alaudala rufescens*

13/11/2017 - Tiab

18/11/2017 - Shahr e babak

19/11/2017 - Shahr e Babak

multiple seen throughout the country, more in central and norther areas

**Sand Lark** *Alaudala raytal*

14/11/2017 - Tiab

14/11: several near outskirts of the village of Tiab (27.100776, 56.862337)

**White-eared Bulbul** *Pycnonotus leucotis*

13/11/2017 - Bandar Abbas

**Barn Swallow** *Hirundo rustica*

13/11/2017 - Bandar Abbas

**Pale Crag Martin** *Ptyonoprogne obsoleta*

13/11/2017 - Bandar Abbas

common south coast

**Streaked Scrub Warbler** *Scotocerca inquieta*

18/11/2017 - Shahr e babak

19/11/2017 - Shahr e Babak

fairly common Shahr e Babak

**Common Chiffchaff** *Phylloscopus collybita*

14/11/2017 – Tiab

**Plain Leaf Warbler** *Phylloscopus neglectus*

17/11/2017 - Qeshm

17/11: around 5 on Qeshm (26.694937, 55.716552)

**Clamorous Reed Warbler** *Acrocephalus stentoreus*

14/11/2017 – Tiab

17/11/2017 – Qeshm

14/11: Singing individual in Tiab (27.106116, 56.841670), 17/11: multiple calling Hara forest, Qeshm

**Moustached Warbler** *Acrocephalus melanopogon*

16/11/2017 - Minab

23/11/2017 - Gorgan Bay

16/11: 1 wadi Minab, fairly common ditch Gorgan Bay (36.980115, 54.029068)

**Afghan Babbler** *Turdoides huttoni*

13/11/2017 - Tiab

**Eurasian Blackcap** *Sylvia atricapilla*

24/11/2017 - Gorgan

**Lesser Whitethroat** *Sylvia curruca*

13/11/2017 - Tiab

14/11/2017 - Minab

15/11/2017 - Minab

17/11/2017 - Qeshm

**Asian Desert Warbler** *Sylvia nana*

18/11/2017 - Shahr e babak

18/11: fairly common Shahr e Babak

**Eurasian Wren** *Troglodytes troglodytes*

24/11/2017 – Gorgan

**Eurasian Nuthatch** *Sitta europaea*

24/11/2017 - Gorgan

**Eurasian Treecreeper** *Certhia familiaris*

24/11/2017 - Gorgan

**Common Myna** *Acridotheres tristis*

13/11/2017 - Bandar Abbas - NC - Feral

**Common Starling** *Sturnus vulgaris*

21/11/2017 - Fereydunkenar

23/11/2017 - Gorgan Bay

**Common Blackbird** *Turdus merula*

21/11/2017 - Fereydunkenar

**Fieldfare** *Turdus pilaris*

22/11/2017 - Gorgan Bay

**Redwing** *Turdus iliacus* **Near-threatened (NT)**

21/11/2017 - Fereydunkenar

22/11/2017 - Gorgan Bay

23/11/2017 - Gorgan Bay

**Song Thrush** *Turdus philomelos*

21/11/2017 - Fereydunkenar

23/11/2017 - Gorgan Bay

**European Robin** *Erithacus rubecula*

21/11/2017 - Fereydunkenar

**Black Redstart** *Phoenicurus ochruros*

22/11/2017 - Gorgan Bay

**Blue Rock Thrush** *Monticola solitarius*

15/11/2017 - Minab

**Isabelline Wheatear** *Oenanthe isabellina*

13/11/2017 - Tiab

**Desert Wheatear** *Oenanthe deserti*

18/11/2017 - Shahr e babak

19/11/2017 - Shahr e Babak

18/11: Fairly common Shahr e Babak

**Variable Wheatear** *Oenanthe picata*

13/11/2017 - Bandar Abbas

15/11/2017 - Minab

17/11/2017 - Qeshm

Fairly common south coast

**Hume's Wheatear** *Oenanthe albonigra*

16/11/2017 - Minab

**Finsch's Wheatear** *Oenanthe finschii*

18/11/2017 - Shahr e babak

18/11: 1 male Shahr e Babak

**Purple Sunbird** *Cinnyris asiaticus*

13/11/2017 - Bandar Abbas

common south coast

**House Sparrow** *Passer domesticus*

18/11/2017 - Shahr e babak

**Spanish Sparrow** *Passer hispaniolensis*

15/11/2017 - Minab

**Eurasian Tree Sparrow** *Passer montanus*

21/11/2017 – Fereydunkenar

**Indian Silverbill** *Euodice malabarica*

13/11/2017 - Bandar Abbas

15/11/2017 - Minab

common south coast

**Western Yellow Wagtail** *Motacilla flava*

14/11/2017 - Tiab

**Citrine Wagtail** *Motacilla citreola*

14/11/2017 - Tiab

22/11/2017 - Gorgan Bay

23/11/2017 - Gorgan Bay

occasionally seen south coast, fairly common North coast.

**Grey Wagtail** *Motacilla cinerea*

15/11/2017 - Minab

**White Wagtail** *Motacilla alba*

13/11/2017 - Bandar Abbas

15/11/2017 - Minab

22/11/2017 - Gorgan Bay

23/11/2017 - Gorgan Bay - *ssp personata*

**Richard's Pipit** *Anthus richardi*

22/11/2017 - Gorgan Bay

**Meadow Pipit** *Anthus pratensis* **Near-threatened (NT)**

13/11/2017 - Tiab

21/11/2017 - Fereydunkenar

23/11/2017 - Gorgan Bay

**Red-throated Pipit** *Anthus cervinus*

23/11/2017 - Gorgan Bay

23/11: fairly common at 1 location near the coast (36.974410, 54.017493)

**Buff-bellied Pipit** *Anthus rubescens*

21/11/2017 - Fereydunkenar - NC - Possibly this species

23/11/2017 - Gorgan Bay

21/11: 1 possibly calling, 23/11: Flushed individuals with a suggestive call. Spectrogram seems to fit

**Water Pipit** *Anthus spinoletta*

21/11/2017 - Fereydunkenar

23/11/2017 - Gorgan Bay

**Common Chaffinch** *Fringilla coelebs*

21/11/2017 - Fereydunkenar

**Brambling** *Fringilla montifringilla*

21/11/2017 - Fereydunkenar

**Hawfinch** *Coccothraustes coccothraustes*

24/11/2017 - Gorgan

**Eurasian Siskin** *Spinus spinus*

24/11/2017 - Gorgan

**Corn Bunting** *Emberiza calandra*

21/11/2017 - Fereydunkenar

**Striolated Bunting** *Emberiza striolata*

16/11/2017 - Minab

**Common Reed Bunting** *Emberiza schoeniclus*

21/11/2017 - Fereydunkenar

22/11/2017 - Gorgan Bay

**Total number of birds: 179**

**Total number of counted birds: 175**