

## **Jordan: October 11<sup>th</sup> to October 16<sup>th</sup> 2018**

**Nick and Sam Page**



*Mourning Wheatear Oenanthe lugens, Near Wadi Rum*

I rarely write trip reports, but there are so few on Jordan available, especially recent, and we want to encourage others to visit this beautiful, friendly and safe destination. Under-birded (we met **no** other birders), overshadowed by Israel but offering comparable birding. Perhaps not in terms of quantity, but certainly quality. No doubt a lot more to find, especially in spring and autumn passage.

This was a very short tour, just 6 full days, missing some key places and habitats eg Petra and Aqaba bird observatory, forest north of Amman. Species list small at 65, as no decent wetlands or woodlands visited. But it's the quality that counts. I got 7 lifers although have been previously to Morocco, Tunisia and Egypt. And my son Sam got lots! Pics by Sam.

**Itinerary:** Arrived late night of 10/10. Overnight Amman Airport hotel. Expensive!

**Day 1** 11/10 Drive towards Dead Sea via Madaba, Suwayma. Check in at Mujib Chalets (on Dead Sea shore). Explored Dead sea coast south beyond Potash city, irrigated farmlands around al-Safi. Overnight Mujib Chalets.

**Day 2** 12/10 Explored locally, south to Fayfa/Fifa, through mountains via at-Tafila, al-Karak. Overnight Mujib chalets.

*Highlights: Blackstart, Little Green Bee-Eater, Dead Sea Sparrow, Fan-tailed and Brown-necked Ravens, Sooty Falcon, Mourning Wheatear, Namaqua Dove, Graceful Prinia, Masked Shrike.*



*Little Green Bee-eater Merops orientalis, Near Mujib Chalets*

**Day 3** 13/10 Long drive down Dead sea highway to Aqaba. Turned off to explore sandy desert towards Feynman eco- lodge on way. Overnight Bait al-Aqaba hotel south of Aqaba near Saudi border.

**Day 4** 14/10 Approach road to Wadi Rum, drive into desert with Bedouins in 4X4, Irrigated farmland near ad-Disa. Overnight Bait al-Aqaba hotel.

*Highlights: Palestine Sunbird, Sinai Rosefinch, White-eyed Gull, Whiskered Tern, House Crow, Long-legged Buzzard, Spur-winged Lapwing.*





*Sinai Rosefinch Carpodacus sinoicus, Bedouin Camp in Wadi Rum*

**Day 5** 15/10 Very long drive to Azraq along Desert Highway and Route 40. Stopped only in stony desert, last 50km before Azraq best. Overnight Azraq Lodge.\_

**Day 6** 16/10 Half day Azraq Wetland reserve (not very wet!), nearby Basalt desert, road to Shaumari reserve, then drive back to Amman airport hotel for early morning flight home.

*Highlights: Cream-coloured Courser, Temminks Lark, Hoopoe Lark, Desert Wheatear, Booted Eagle, Rock Thrush, Garganey.*



*Temmink's Lark Eremophila bilopha, Stony desert west of Azraq*



*Cream-coloured Courser Cursorius cursor, Route 40  
approx 50km from Azraq*

**Bye!**

## **SPECIES LIST:**

1	Garganey	<i>Anas Querquedula</i>	1 Azraq wetland reserve 16/10
2	Cattle Egret	<i>Bubulcus ibis</i>	Small flocks
3	Great Egret	<i>Casmerodius albus</i>	Azraq wetland reserve 16/10
4	Grey Heron	<i>Ardea Cineria</i>	Azraq wetland reserve 16/10
5	Purple Heron	<i>Ardea pupurea</i>	Azraq wetland reserve 16/10
6	Osprey	<i>Padeon haliaetus</i>	1 over Red Sea Aqaba 13/10
7	Booted Eagle	<i>Aquila pennata</i>	1 in sand dunes near Shaumari reserve 16/10
8	Black Kite	<i>Milvus milvus</i>	1 flew across road 13/10
9	Long-legged Buzzard	<i>Buteo rufinus</i>	Numerous in south, especially Wadi Rum area
10	Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>	Widespread
11	Lesser Kestrel	<i>Falco naumanni</i>	Widespread
12	Sooty Falcon	<i>Falco concolor</i>	3 over Dead sea at dawn in front of our chalet 12/10
13	Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>	2 seen Azraq reserve 16/10
14	Coot	<i>Fulica atra</i>	2 seen Azraq reserve 16/10
15	Cream-coloured Courser	<i>Cursorius cursor</i>	3 beside Route 40 in desert approx 50km from Azraq 15/10
16	Spur-winged Lapwing	<i>Vanellus spinosus</i>	2 in farmland ad-Disa 14/10
17	Black-headed gull	<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>	6 Red sea, Aqaba 13,14/10
18	White-eyed Gull	<i>Larus leucophthalmus</i>	5 Aqaba 13/10
19	Whiskered Tern	<i>Chlidonias hybrida</i>	Approx 50 Aqaba 14/10
20	Rock Dove	<i>Columba livia</i>	Widespread in mountainous areas
21	Namaqua Dove	<i>Oena capensis</i>	2 al-Safi, irrigated farmland next to Dead sea 11and12/10
22	Collared Dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>	Widespread
23	Laughing Dove	<i>Streptopelia senegalensis</i>	Numerous and widespread
24	Hoopoe	<i>Upupa epops</i>	1 In sandy desert on road to Feynman ecolodge 13/10
25	Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>	1 Azraq reserve 16/10
26	White-throated Kingfisher	<i>Halcyon smyrnensis</i>	fairly regular, usually near water, especially Dead sea region
27	Little Green Bee-eater	<i>Merops orientalis</i>	Fairly common Dead sea coast only 11-13/10
28	Crested Lark	<i>Galepioa cristata</i>	Widespread
29	Desert Lark	<i>Ammomanes</i>	Fairly common in deserts eg Azraq,



		<i>deserti</i>	Feynman road
30	Temminck's Lark	<i>Eremophila bilopha</i>	1 in stony desert west of Azraq 16/10
31	Hoopoe Lark	<i>Alaemon alaudipes</i>	1 in basalt desert north of Azraq 16/10
32	Rock Martin	<i>Ptyonoprogne fuligula</i>	Common in mountains eg Dead sea area
33	Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	Widespread on passage
34	House Martin	<i>Delichon urbicum</i>	A few on passage
35	White Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>	Common
36	Yellow Wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava</i>	A few overhead at al-Safi, race unknown
37	Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus phoenicurus</i>	1 in sandy desert road to Feynman ecolodge 13/10
38	Northern Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe oenanthe</i>	1 on beach Aqaba
39	Mourning Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe lugens</i>	Most numerous Wheatear in mountains
40	White-crowned Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe leucopyga</i>	Fairly common in desert and rocky areas
41	Desert Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe deserti</i>	Seen only in Azraq area where fairly common
42	Blackstart	<i>Cercomela melanura</i>	Fairly common in desert and rocky areas especially Dead sea area
43	Rock Thrush	<i>Monticola saxatilis</i>	1 male passage bird Azraq reserve 16/10
44	Graceful Prinia	<i>Prinia gracilis</i>	1 al-Safi 12/10
45	Blackcap	<i>Sylvia atricapila</i>	1 passage bird in desert, road to Feynman ecolodge 13/10
46	Spotted Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa striata</i>	A few passage birds eg al-Safi 11/10
47	Great Grey Shrike	<i>Lanius excubitor</i>	A few in suitable habitats
48	Red-backed Shrike	<i>Lanius collurio</i>	2 al-Safi 11/10
49	Masked Shrike	<i>Lanius nubicus</i>	1 al-Safi 11/10
50	White-spectacled Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus xanthopygos</i>	Common ,widespread
51	White-eared Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus leucotis</i>	1 Azraq reserve 16/10. Spreading from Syria
52	Palestine Sunbird	<i>Cinnyris osea</i>	1+ in desert road to Feynman ecolodge 13/10
53	Jay	<i>Garrulus glandarius</i>	1 over Madaba, 11/10
54	Hooded Crow	<i>Corvus cornix</i>	1 or 2 in Aqaba, 13/10
55	Brown-	<i>Corvus ruficollis</i>	Common and widespread

	necked Raven		
56	Fan-tailed Raven	<i>Corvus rhipidurus</i>	Fairly common, especially Dead sea area
57	House Crow	<i>Corvus splendens</i>	Common in Aqaba
58	Tristram's Starling	<i>Onychognathus tristrami</i>	Numerous and widespread, especially Dead sea area
59	House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	Common
60	Spanish Sparrow	<i>Passer hispaniolensis</i>	A few al-Safi, 12/10
61	Dead Sea Sparrow	<i>Passer moabiticus</i>	A few near Mujib chalets and several other flocks near Dead sea probably this species 12/10
62	Rock Sparrow	<i>Petronia petronia</i>	Flock 20+ In mountains near at-Tafila 12/10
63	Sinai Rosefinch	<i>Carpodacus sinoicus</i>	Colony at Bedouin camp, Wadi Rum 14/10
64	Common Myna	<i>Acridotheres tristis</i>	1 crossing road northern Dead sea. Breeds Israel, possibly spreading (originally escapes) 11/10
65	Indian Silverbill	<i>Lonchura malabarica</i>	Small flocks al- Safi. (originally escapes, now breeding) 11/10

