Israel 7.2-14.2 2009

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Team:
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Prices:
(SEK=Swedish crownes, 1 Euro = 11 SEK at the time of the trip)

- Flight from Arlanda, Sweden to Aqaba, Jordan: 2000 SEK
- Taxi from Aqaba airport to the border: 100 SEK
- Taxi from the border to central Eilat: 70 SEK
- Dormroom at Coreen Hostel, Eilat: 100 SEK/night
- Rental car with free km: 2400 SEK/Week
- Lift up on Mount Hermont: 80 SEK
- Petrol: 9-10 SEK/Liter
- Food: ~100 SEK/day
- Exit fee at the border when leaving Israel: 190 SEK

Weather during the trip:
- 7.2 Sun, some wind
- 8.2 A little bit windy, but sunny
- 9.2 Cloudy and some wind
- 10.2 Sandstorm, fair in the morning though, Urim was useless.
- 11.2 No wind at dawn, but increasing during the morning, sunny.
- 12.2 No wind at all during the whole day, sunny. Best of the days.
- 13.2 Sunny and light wind.

General information:

Safety
We had no troubles at all during the whole week even though they had election the 11th. We crossed the West Bank without any problems along road 90. We were recommended to do this in daylight. Otherwise just don’t walk off the roads where there are mine fields or shooting ranges, but this is quite obvious I presume. Urim was not any problem to reach at all even though it is close to the Gaza-area.

You will of course notice military activity all the time, but as long as you are friendly to them and do what they tell you to do at barriers and borders then they are really easy to deal with.

Flight ticket
Bought a last minute ticket from El-al over phone about three weeks before departure from Arlanda to Aqaba. It takes about 15 minutes to drive from the airport in Aqaba to the border station.
Rental car
We rented our car from Budget, worth noting is that they reserved 1000 US dollars as a guarantee during our rental period. Extra driver was 2 US/Day. We drove 2500 km from Sunday morning until Friday noon. Worth noting is also that this car-company as most of the stores in Israel are closed on Saturdays and closes about 14.00 on Friday afternoon.

Lift up on Mount Hermon
Open between 12.00 to 15.30. We were not allowed to walk down the slope, so the birdwatching must take place either on the top where we saw the Crimson-Winged Finches and the Shore Larks or from the lift on the way up and down.

Entering Jordan from Israel
Don’t bring a GPS, at least the guards on the Jordan side told us that we were not allowed to bring GPS:s into Jordan unless you are a military. Though we had no trouble with this on the airport when we arrived. But it took us some extra 45 minutes to enter Jordan on our way to the airport due to this. Of course we had some other ”strange” equipment as walkie-talkies, scopes, binoculars, spotlight, camera-equipment and camping-equipment. So I guess that it was rather the combination of stuff we brought that made them suspicious.

Program:
7.2 Arriving at Aqaba in the afternoon -Eilat.
8.2 IBRCE- Road 90 to Tiberias with stop at Kefar Ruppin, night in tent at Mount Arbel
9.2 Morning at Mount Arbel – Hula-area – Mount Hermon – Kibbutz El Rom – Hula-area – Drive to Nizzana during the night.
10.2 Nizzana – Urim – Km 20 - Eilat
11.2 Km 33 – Elifaz – Wadi Quetura – Yotvata – Yoseftal hospital – Drive north to Hazeva
12.2 Hazeva – Km 186 – Wadi Mishmar – Wadi Salvadore – Mietspe Dragot – Neot Hakikar – Night outside the reserve at Ammran’s Pillars
13.2 Ammran’s Pillars – Eilat-area
14.2 IBRCE – Aqaba - Home

Living:
7.2 Coreen Hostel, Eilat
8.2 Camping at Mount Arbel
9.2 Camping at Nizzana
10.2 Coreen Hostel, Eilat
11.2 Camping a few km off road 90 along road 227.
12.2 Camping outside the reserve at Ammran’s pillars
13.2 Owl-catching at IBRCE
List of observed species:

Common shelduck
Several seen at Lake Agamon 9.2 and at Km 20 10.2, also seen in Nizzana

Eurasian Wigeon
6 Lake Agamon 9.2

Mallard
Common at fresh-water ponds.

Gadwall
Some individuals seen at Km 188 8.2

Pintail duck
20 Km 20 11.2

Shoveler
Very common in Kefar Ruppin and Hula-area. Thousands seen.

Eurasian Teal
Common in fresh-water ponds.

Garganey
1 Km 188 8.2

Chukar
Fairly common, seen and heard at many places

Sand Partridge
2 Km 186 12.2,
4 Wadi Salvador 12.2
4 Wadi Mishmar 12.2
2 Metzoke Dragot 12.2

Little Grebe
Fairly common

Greater Flamingo
5 IBRCE 8.2

White Pelican
4 Lake Agamon 9.2

Great Cormorant
Common

Pygmy Cormorant
Common in the Hula-area 9.2
**Black-Crowned Night Heron**  
Common in Kefar Ruppin 8.2 and the Hula-area 9.2

**Cattle Egret**  
Common in the north, hundreds seen.

**Little Egret**  
20 IBRCE 8.2 and 13.2

**Squacco Heron**  
1 Hula-area 9.2

**Great White Egret**  
Fairly common.

**Grey Heron**  
Fairly common

**Black Stork**  
15 Kefar Ruppin 8.2  
1 Wadi Salvadora 12.2

**Glossy Ibis**  
50 Lake Agamon 9.2

**Osprey**  
2 Hula-area 9.2

**Crested Honey Buzzard**  
1 in the Date plantation north of the border station.

**Black Kite**  
Common around Kefar Ruppin 8.2 and in the Urim-area 10.2

**White-Tailed Sea-Eagle**  
2 In the Hula-area 9.2

**Griffon Vulture**  
9 Wadi Mishmar 12.2

**Hen Harrier**  
1 ad male at Kibbutz El Rom.

**Marsh Harrier**  
1 IBRCE 8.2  
2 Lake Agamon

**Montague’s Harrier**  
1 2nd cy at Km 236 8.2
**Pallid Harrier**  
1 IBRCE 8.2  
3 Nizzana 10.2

**Sparrowhawk**  
5 in the Eilat-area 13-14.2  
1 Yotvata 11.2

**Levant Sparrowhawk**  
1 Ad male, Yotvata 11.2

**Steppe Buzzard**  
Fairly common

**Long-legged Buzzard**  
Fairly common

**Bonelli’s Eagle**  
2 ad Metzoke Dragot 12.2

**Imperial Eagle**  
2 Urim 10.2

**Steppe Eagle**  
3 Eilat 8.2  
20 IBRCE 13.2  
15 IBRCE 14.2

**Booted Eagle**  
1 IBRCE 8.2  
1 dark morph Date-plantation north of IBRCE 13.2

**Kestrel**  
Common, especially in the north

**Lesser Kestrel**  
1 Km 335 8.2

**Peregrine Falcon**  
1 ad Urim

**Barbary Falcon**  
1 pair Yotvata 8.2  
1 pair Km 33 11.2  
1 pair Wadi Salvadora 12.2

**Merlin**  
1 Mount Hermon 9.2
**Moorhen**  
Common in the Hula-area

**Coot**  
Common in Kefar Ruppin 8.2

**Maqueen’s Bustard**  
2 Nizzana 10.2

**Common Crane**  
Thousands in the Hula-area 9.2

**Stone Curlew**  
2 Mount Arbel 8.2  
4 Hula-area 9.2  
4 Nizzana 10.2

**Cream-Colored Courser**  
1 Km 33 11.2

**Black-Winged Stilt**  
Fairly common

**Avocet**  
10 Lake Agamon 9.2  
5 Nizzana 10.2

**Ringed Plover**  
10 IBRCE 8.2 and 13-14.2

**Kentish Plover**  
20 Km 20 11.2

**Spur-winged Plover**  
Fairly Common

**Lapwing**  
5 Lake Agamon 9.2

**Ruff**  
15 IBRCE 8.2

**Dunlin**  
10 IBRCE 8.2

**Little Stint**  
10 IBRCE 8.2
Redshank
10 IBRCE 8.2

Common Sandpiper
4 Kefar Ruppin 8.2
6 Hula-area 9.2

Green Sandpiper
2 IBRCE 8.2

Marsh Sandpiper
2 IBRCE 8.2 and 13-14.2

Greenshank
1 IBRCE 13.2

Common Snipe
8 Hula-area 9.2
2 Km 19 11.2

White-Eyed Gull
2 North Beach 13.2

Slender-Billed Gull
20 Km 20 11.2

Black-Headed Gull
Fairly common

Palla’s Gull
Fairly common Kefar Ruppin 8.2
Fairly common Hula-area 9.2
1 Km 20 11.2

Armenian Gull
5 Hula-area 9.2

Yellow-Legged Gull
1 IBRCE 8.2

Caspian Tern
2 North Beach 11.2

White-Winged Black Tern
3 IBRCE 8.2

Black-Bellied Sandgrouse
50 Nizzana 10.2 Drinking between 08.30-09.30
Parked the car at 30o53.590 N 34° 26.257 E, then the birds went down to drink in the southeastern pond.
Spotted Sandgrouse
20 Nizzana 10.2 Drinking between 08.30-09.30
Parked the car at 30°53.590 N 34° 26.257 E, then the birds went down to drink in the
southeastern pond.

Crowned Sandgrouse
3 Nizzana 10.2 Drinking between 08.30-09.30
Parked the car at 30°53.590 N 34° 26.257 E, then the birds went down to drink in the
southeastern pond.

Pin-Tailed Sandgrouse
9 Nizzana 10.2 Drinking between 08.30-09.30
Parked the car at 30°53.590 N 34° 26.257 E, then the birds went down to drink in the
southeastern pond.

Pterocles sp.
150 Nizzana 10.2 just flew by the ponds between 08.30-09.30

Rock Dove
Common

Collared Dove
Common

Laughing Dove
Common

Namaqua Dove
4 Ein Tamal, Neot Hakikar 12.2

Great-Spotted Cuckoo
1 Km 283 8.2

Ring-Necked Parakeet
Common in Eilat

Long-Eared Owl
1 ringed at IBRCE 13.2

Striated Scops Owl
1 Wadi Quetura 11.2, Seemed to prefer the greenest densest tree in the wadi, which of course
is found quite close to the end of the wadi, that is 2-3 km walk from Road 90.

Little Swift
5 Mount Arbel 9.2
Common Swift
2 Km 19 11.2

Pallid Swift
Common

Nubian Nightjar
2 displaying at Ein Tamal, Neot Hakkikar 12.2

Common Kingfisher
2 Hula-area 9.2

White-Breasted Kingfisher
2 Kefar Ruppin 8.2
12 Hula-area 9.2
4 Eilat-area 13-14.2

Pied Kingfisher
1 Kefar Ruppin 8.2
6 Hula-area 9.2

Little Green Bee-Eater
Fairly common

Hoopoe
1 Km 327 8.2
2 Yotvata 11.2

Syrian Woodpecker
10 Kibbutz El Rom 9.2

Skylark
Common

Oriental Skylark
2 Yotvata Fields 11.2, southern circular field, but flew off to the northern.

Crested Lark
Common

Bar-Tailed Lark
Fairly common

Desert Lark
Fairly common, more common than Bar-tailed Lark
Shore Lark
7 Mount Hermont 9.2

Temminck’s Lark
1 Km 33 11.2

Hoopoe Lark
1 Km 34 11.2

African Rock Martin
Fairly Common

Crag Martin
3 Km 212 8.2

House Martin
Fairly common in Eilat 8.2 and 13-14.2.

Sand Martin
5 Yotvata fields 11.2

Barn Swallow
Common

Red-Rumped Swallow
9 IBRCE 13-14.2

Water Pipit
Fairly common

Buff-Bellied Pipit
2 Elifaz sewage pond 11.2

Meadow Pipit
Fairly common in the north

Red-Throated Pipit
Fairly common

Tawny Pipit
1 Km 34 11.2

Long-Billed Pipit
1 Mount Arbel 9.2

White-Spectacled Bulbul
Common

White Wagtail
Common
Grey Wagtail
5 Hula-area 9.2

Black Bush Robin
1 Yoseftal Hospital, Eilat 11.2

Common Nightingale
1 Kefar Ruppin 8.2
1 Hazeva 12.2

Alpine Accentor
1 Mount Hermont 9.2

Robin
2 IBRCE 8.2
Fairly common in the north

Bluethroat
10 IBRCE 8.2 and 13-14.2

Black Redstart
Fairly common

Blackstart
Common

Caspian Stonechat
1 Km 277 8.2

Stonechat
Common

Isabelline Wheatear
2 Nizzana 10.2

Desert Wheatear
2 Nizzana 10.2
2 Km 33 11.2

Mourning Wheatear
Fairly common along road 90 8.2, also seen in Nizzana

Hooded Wheatear
Uncommon along road 90 8.2

Finsch’s Wheatear
1 Nizzana 10.2
1 Shiwta 10.2
White-Crowned Wheatheart
Fairly common along road 90

Kurdish Wheatheart
1 Wadi Mishmar 12.2

Blackbird
5 Kefar Ruppin 8.2

Song Thrush
2 IBRCE 8.2

Blue Rock Thrush
2 Mount Arbel 9.2

Graceful prinia
Common

Scrub Warbler
Fairly Common

Cetti’s Warbler
6 Kefar Ruppin 8.2

Western Clamorous Warbler
1 Km 188 8.2
2 Kefar Ruppin 8.2
1 Hula-area 9.2

Reed Warbler
1 IBRCE 8.2

Sedge Warbler
2 IBRCE 14.2

Spectacled Warbler
1 Km 278 8.2

Blackcap
1 IBRCE 13.2

Sardinian Warbler
Fairly common

Lesser Whitethroat
3 Yotvata 11.2

Common Whitethroat
1 wadi Quetura 11.2
Cyprus Warbler
1 Km 161 8.2
5 Km 186 12.2
4 Wadi Mishmar 12.2

Arabian Warbler
3 Along Road 227 (30°49.632N 35°13.611E)

Chiffchaff
Common

Western Rock Nuthatch
1 Mount Hermont 9.2

Great Tit
Common in the north

Penduline Tit
3 Hula-area 9.2

Arabian babbler
4 IBRCE 8.2
2 Km 186 12.2
A few more birds seen, but don’t remember where

Palestine sunbird
Common

Southern Grey Shrike
Fairly common along road 90

Jay
2 Kefar Ruppin 8.2
2 Arbel 9.2

Starling
500 Ofaquim 10.2

Tristram’s Crackle
Common around Dead sea
2 Eilat 13.2

Brown-Necked Raven
Common

Raven
2 Km 257 8.2
**Fan-tailed Raven**  
Fairly common Metzoke Dragot 12.2

**Crow**  
Fairly common

**Indian House Crow**  
Common in Eilat

**House Sparrow**  
Common

**Spanish Sparrow**  
Common

**Dead-Sea Sparrow**  
Fairly Common

**Indian Silverbill**  
30 IBRCE 13-14.2

**Chaffinch**  
Common

**Greenfinch**  
Fairly common in the north

**Hawfinch**  
40 Kibbutz El Rom

**Desert Finch**  
10 Km 33 11.2

**Goldfinch**  
Common in the north

**Red-Fronted Serin**  
2 Mount Hermont 9.2

**Syrian Serin**  
2 Mont Arbel 9.2

**Linnet**  
Common in the north

**Sinai Rosefinch**  
10 Ammran´s Pillar´s 13.2
Trumpeter Finch
7 Km 186 12.2
50 Wadi Mishmar 12.2

Crimson-Winged Finch
2 Mount Hermont 9.2

Yellowhammer
10 Mount Hermont 9.2

Rock Bunting
1 Mount Hermont 9.2

Corn Bunting
Common in the north

Cretschmar’s Bunting
1 Mount Arbel 9.2

Striolated Bunting
1 Wadi Mishmar 12.2
1 Wadi Salvadora 12.2