



**Ornithological PIONER voyage to Saudi Arabia with Miksture: 29.03 – 08.04 2023**

ORNITOLOGICAL JOURNEY TO SAUDI ARABIA WITH MIKSTURE; Dream species - desert species, a single endemic species and a number of near-endemics...

This is a trip we are making for the first time! We have been in extensive contact with local ornithologists and local organizers. The journey is thoroughly prepared, of course - and there may be minor adjustments along the way - to increase the ornithological experience. Many of the areas are not known and previously visited, so lots of exciting birds can be expected. It must be emphasized that accommodation, food, transport, etc. are well organized - in a way that meets maximum ornithological benefits. We will also make the trip in April 2023, but the November trip is our first in KSA

Saudi Arabia, officially the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia borders Jordan to the northwest, Iraq to the north, Kuwait to the northeast, Qatar, Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates to the east, Oman to the southeast and Yemen to the south. The country is adjacent to the Persian Gulf and the Red Sea and is the only country that has shores towards both of these Seas. Saudi

Arabia, has not been on the ornithologists' travel cards for so long, and has only recently opened up to foreign tourists. In continuation of our very successful trips in the centralasiatic desert lands; Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan, as well as Morocco - we go in search of all the specialties that make our trips successful.

Species previously only thought to be available in Yemen are all found here along with Saudi Arabia's only endemic species, the endangered Asir Magpie.

Key-birds (170-220 species) Helmeted Guineafowl, Arabian Partridge, Philby's Partridge, Dusky Turtle-Dove, African Collared-Dove, Namaqua Dove, Bruce's Green-Pigeon, White-browed Coucal, Nubian Nightjar, Montane Nightjar, African Palm Swift, Spur-winged Lapwing, Lesser (Tibetan) Sand-Plover ssp pamirensis, Crab Plover, Terek Sandpiper, Black-winged Pratincole, White-eyed Gull, Sooty Gull, Saunders's Tern, Lesser Crested Tern, Abdim's Stork, African Openbill, Pink-backed Pelican, Western Reef-Heron, Imperial Eagle, Pallid Harrier, Levant Sparrowhawk, Arabian Scops-Owl, Arabian Eagle-Owl, African Grey Hornbill, White-throated Bee-eater, Arabian Green Bee-eater, Abyssinian Roller, Arabian Woodpecker, African Paradise-flycatcher, Red-tailed Shrike, Isabelline Shrike, Great Grey Shrike ssp pallidirostris, Masked Shrike, Asir Magpie, Fan-tailed Raven, Greater Hoopoe-Lark, Thick-billed Lark, Bar-tailed Lark, Black-crowned Sparrow-Lark, Rufous-capped Lark, Greater Short-toed Lark, Arabian Lark, Temminck's Lark, Graceful Prinia, Upcher's Warbler, Clamorous Reed Warbler, Pale Crag-Martin, White-spectacled Bulbul, Brown Woodland-Warbler, Scrub Warbler, Yemen Warbler, Arabian Warbler, Rüppell's Warbler, Abyssinian White-eye, Arabian Babbler, Violet-backed Starling, Tristram's Starling, Hypocolius, Yemen Thrush, Black Scrub-robin, Rufous-tailed Scrub-robin, Little Rock-thrush, African Stonechat, Red-breasted (Buff-breasted), Wheatear, Eastern Black-eared Wheatear, Arabian Wheatear, Nile Valley Sunbird, Palestine Sunbird, Arabian Sunbird, Rüppell's Weaver, African Silverbill, Arabian Waxbill, Long-billed Pipit, Arabian (Olive-rumped) Serin, Yemen Serin, Yemen Linnet, Cinnamon-breasted Bunting and several southern European and Central Asian species.

On this trip we will visit the areas around the capital Riyadh in the northern part of the country. Here we find a lot of desert specialties. Then we travel south to very varied nature with lush Dhofar mountains, desert, lagoons and lakes along the coast.

The bird life in this part of Saudi Arabia is really exciting. On the one hand, there are the local species such as bulbuls, sunbirds, paradise flycatchers, starlings and others. Many migratory birds from both Europe and Asia also pass through Saudi Arabia: waders, Passerinas and birds of prey. Other species such as Abdim's stork are an African breeding bird that migrates north to Oman. So we can expect a wonderful mix of European, Asian, Middle Eastern and African species

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) is home to a rich heritage and ancient customs. Seen as a symbol of hospitality, food plays a very important role in traditional Saudi Arabian culture. Generosity, warmth and a sense of sharing are the hallmarks of this country's heritage, and this can be seen reflected in the food they eat: Majboos / Kabsa - Meat and vegetable dishes with rice, Gursan, Jalamah, Dajaj Mashwi, Arabian Grilled Chicken, Manti, Sambousek - Saudi Arabian Samosa, etc

## **DAY-TO-DAY PROGRAM**

**Day 1: 29.03. Departure Scandinavia to Riyadh International Airport via a stopover.**

**Day 2 and 3: 30.03 and 31.03. Jebel Towki, Rawdat Nourah and Al Ha'ir - Arabian Desert Birds**

We move around the desert areas around Jebel Towki: Arabian Lark, a recent split from Dunn's Lark. Other interesting species: Greater Hoopoe-Lark, Lesser Short-toed Lark, Desert Lark, Bimaculated Lark, Black-crowned Finch-Lark, Crested, Temminck's Lark, Bar-tailed Lark, Great Grey Shrike, og Asian Desert Warbler. Good chances for Thick-billed Lark. More interesting species of Wheatears: White-crowned, Hooded og Mourning Wheatear, Fan-tailed Raven, Brown-necked Raven, African Collared-Dove, Sand Partridge, Pallid Swifts, Pale Crag Martins, Trumpeter Finch, Blackstart, Red Avadavat, "Caspian" Stonechat, Black-crowned Night-Heron og Arabian Green Bee-eater. Wintertime is good for Steppe Eagle, Eastern Imperial Eagle and Long-legged Buzzard. Next day we continue exploring more desert-areas, and more vegetation-rich habitats south of Riyadh: Spur-winged Lapwing, Collared and Black-winged Pratincole, African Collared-Dove, Namaqua Dove, White-spectacled Bulbul, Indian Silverbill, White-throated Kingfisher, Green Bee-eater, Black Scrub-robin, Desert Finch, and Spanish Sparrow. Winter-time: Western Marsh Harrier, Long-legged Buzzard, Short-toed Snake-Eagle, Steppe and Greater Spotted Eagle. Breeding Pharaoh Eagle-Owl in the area. O/N near Riyadh. BD

**Dag 4-7: 01 - 04.04. Riyadh – Abha. Asir-region and Sarawat Mnts**

Three full days of bird watching in the Asir region. We visit a number of habitats, but mainly the wooded wadis in the area. The most important bird in the area is the endemic Asir Magpie, of which there may be fewer than 100 pairs left. In addition, we are looking for near-Saudi endemics: Arabian Partridge, Philby's Partridge, Arabian Scops Owl, Arabian Eagle Owl, Arabian Warbler, Arabian Woodpecker, Arabian Wheatear, Buff-breasted Wheatear (mulig split fra Red-breasted), Yemen Thrush, Yemen Warbler, Rufous-capped Lark, Arabian Waxbill, Arabian Sunbird (recent split from Shining Sunbird), Arabian (Olive-rumped) Serin, Yemen Serin and Yemen Linnnet. Other good birds: Hammerkop, Fan-tailed Raven, Grey-headed Kingfisher, African Grey Hornbill, White-throated Bee-eater, White-browed Coucal, Black-crowned Tchagra, Bruce's Green Pigeon, Dusky Turtle-Dove, Little Swift, African og Long-billed Pipits, Brown Woodland-Warbler, Abyssinian White-eye, White-spectacled Bulbul, African Pipit, Gambaga Flycatcher, Little Rock-thrush, Tristram's and Violet-backed Starling, Starling, Scrub Warbler, Palestine and Nile Valley Sunbirds, Black Scrub-robin, Cinnamon-breasted Bunting, and Ruppell's Weaver. Mammals: Hamadryas Baboon. O/N Abha. BD

### **Dag 8 og 9: 05.04 og 06.04. Jazan – coastal wetlands**

In the coastal lowlands around Jazan, the primary target will be the local (and never guaranteed) Arabian Golden Sparrow that has been recorded in this area in recent years. Lots of other species are possible in this area: Harlequin Quail, Nubian Nightjar, Singing Bushlark, Helmeted Guineafowl, Abyssinian Roller, 'Mangrove White-eye', possible split from Abyssinian White-eye, "'Mangrove Reed Warbler' – potentielt split from Eurasian Reed Warbler. White-eyed and Sooty Gulls, Saunders's Tern, Crab Plover, Goliath Heron. In addition, there will be opportunities for a number of overwintering such as White-throated Robins, Masked Shrike, as well as a number of Sylvia and Acrocephalus warblers, Western Yellow Wagtails, Rufous-tailed Bush-Robins, and birds of prey such as the Pallid Harrier. O/N Jazan

### **Dag 10. Jazan - Riyadh**

07.04. We return to Riyadh, and enjoy a good farewell-dinner. O/N Riyadh, BD

### **Day 11. Tour concludes**

08.04. Welcome home

MWA, Miksture Expeditions, Bishkek 25.08.2022