



# ROCKJUMPER

Worldwide Birding Adventures

## Kazakhstan & Uzbekistan

### Best of Central Asia

*17<sup>th</sup> May – 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2019 (17 days)*

### Trip Report



**Trip report compiled by Tour Leader: Yoav Perlman**

### Tour summary

*This was the first Rockjumper tour to Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan. The tour covered varied biogeographical zones and the bird specialities across these two land-locked countries. From the deserts of Kyzylkum in Uzbekistan and Taukum in Kazakhstan, through steppes and wetlands to mountains of anti-Pamir in Uzbekistan and Tien Shan in Kazakhstan, the tour connected with some of Central Asia's most sought-after species, enjoyed fantastic scenery and tasted from the rich cultures and histories of the region.*

## Detailed daily log

**17<sup>th</sup> May:** We assembled at our hotel in Tashkent, met up with our local guide, Timur, and left very early towards the ski resort of Beldegray in the mountains to the east. Along the way, we picked up a few species of interest, including brief Blue Whistling Thrush. We spent much of the day birding the grounds of Hotel Beldegray, under the mighty Mt Chimgan. Birding was nothing short of excellent. We received a good introduction to common Uzbek specialities, such as Yellow-breasted (Azure) Tit, Turkestan (Great) Tit and Hume's Whitethroat. We had good views of most of our target species, including White-capped Bunting, Rufous-naped Tit and White-winged Woodpecker. We had good raptor activity including three vulture species. We even had a flyover Amur Falcon, potentially a first for Central Asia! In the afternoon, we headed back to Tashkent, stopping to check a couple of wetlands in the Chirchik river valley, adding quite many species, including our first large flocks of Rosy Starling. In the evening, we took the speed train from Tashkent to Bukhara.



White-capped Bunting by Yoav Perlman



White-winged Woodpecker by Yoav Perlman



Yellow-breasted (Azure) Tit by Yoav Perlman

**18<sup>th</sup> May:** We left Bukhara early in the morning and headed south into the desert. We first stopped at Gibs Hill, overlooking the conservation zone of Jeyran Eco-center. No bustards, but we enjoyed a great selection of mammals, including Przewalski's Horse, Asian Wild Ass (Onager) and Goitered Gazelle. We then birded around the eco-centre headquarters and adjacent wetlands that were teeming with birds. The *Tamarix* scrub held both Sykes's and Eastern Olivaceous Warblers, allowing good close comparative

views. Rufous-tailed Scrub Robins were very active too, and the plantations were full of migrants. The wetlands held a lovely array of waterbirds, including the globally threatened Marbled Duck, Red-crested Pochard, Pygmy Cormorant, Collared Pratincole, White-tailed Lapwing and Temminck's Stint. Stunning Blue-cheeked Bee-eaters were hawking for dragonflies over the water, and surprisingly a flock of four Shikra were seen hawking for migrating Painted Ladies very high up.



**Marbled Duck by Yoav Perlman**



**Sykes's Warbler by Yoav Perlman**



**White-tailed Lapwing by Yoav Perlman**

In the afternoon, we went on a fascinating sightseeing tour of the fabled old city of Bukhara, admired its ancient monuments and even enjoyed some urban birding.



**Bukhara Old City Gate by Yoav Perlman**



**19<sup>th</sup> May:** We left Bukhara at silly o'clock and headed towards the Kyzylkum desert. After a long drive, we arrived at a desert site about half an hour past Gazli. We ventured out into the desert and soon found our target species, and one of the most wanted of the entire trip – Turkestan (Pander's) Ground Jay. We first found a male perched up on top of a bush in the golden light, then we followed him for a while as he did what it says on the tin – ran on the ground and fed on grubs and beetles. What a fabulous bird, and the entire group enjoyed breathtaking views. Other quality birds we had in the area were Booted Warbler, Asian Desert Warbler and Desert Finch.



**Turkestan (Pander's) Ground Jay by Yoav Perlman**

We then continued further west to Kyzylkum teahouse, where we had breakfast, but primarily birded the teahouse grounds that held excellent birds, including Shikra, and had good views of Greenish Warblers. We then stopped at a couple of other rest stops along the main road, and a small lake that attracted many migrants crossing the vast desert. We added quality birds such as Upcher's Warbler, Greater Sand Plover and Red-necked Phalarope. The last birding stop of the day was at the beautiful habitat by the Karaqir canals. We added a few common wetland birds to our ever-growing list, and enjoyed good birds such as Pygmy Cormorant, Turkestan Shrike, Savi's Warbler and a great density of Clamorous Reed Warbler. Then we took the long way back to Bukhara.



**Pygmy Cormorant by Yoav Perlman**

**20<sup>th</sup> May:** We left Bukhara early and spent the morning birding near the eco-centre again, to catch up with some species we missed during our first visit. Looking across the vast plains off Gibbs Hill, we were rewarded with flight views of two MacQueen's Bustards and three Ruddy Shelducks. In the scrub by the Aralo-Bukhara Canal, we had a few Menetries's Warblers. They were hard work, but eventually the whole group obtained good views.



**Menetries's Warbler by Yoav Perlman**

The rest of the day was spent driving to Samarkand. Late in the afternoon, we went on a sightseeing tour of some of the city's finest monuments that, to our delight, hosted Alpine Swifts...



**Gur A-Emir Mausoleum, Samarkand by Yoav Perlman**

**21<sup>st</sup> May:** Our exciting day was spent in the mountains south of Samarkand, at and near Takhta-Karacha mountain pass of 1,700 m. It was a wonderful day of excellent birds giving breathtaking views, with a backdrop of the mighty Pamir Mountains. The list of quality birds we saw is too long, but Eastern Rock Nuthatch, White-throated Robin, Lammergeier and Red-headed Bunting were some of the favourites. Other highlights included Upcher's Warbler, the rare '*vittata*' morph of Pied Wheatear, Finsch's Wheatear, Hume's Short-toed Lark, Grey-headed Goldfinch, Indian Paradise Flycatcher, Eastern Orphean Warbler, Tawny Pipit and many more. We even had a group rarity find – Rusty-tailed Flycatcher, the first for the Samarkand region. We returned to Samarkand late in the afternoon, tired but very satisfied.



Eastern Rock Nuthatch by Yoav Perlman



White-throated Robin by Yoav Perlman



Rusty-tailed Flycatcher by Yoav Perlman



Takhta-Karacha Mountain Pass by Yoav Perlman

**22<sup>nd</sup> May:** This was a day of passage between Samarkand and Tashkent, yet we saw some excellent birds. The first birding stop was just at the outskirts of Samarkand, where we checked the Zeravshan wetlands. There, we had Citrine Wagtail, Temminck's Stint, White-crowned Penduline Tit and Eastern Olivaceous Warbler. We also had four endemic Bukharan Red Deer. Our next stop was a cliff face by Amir Temur Gate near Jizzakh. We had a great time there, with Saker, Lammergeier, Egyptian Vulture, Long-legged Buzzard and Lesser Kestrel all nesting on the same cliff, and White-winged Woodpecker performed well.





**Bukharan Red Deer by Yoav Perlman**



**Lammergeier by Yoav Perlman**

Our last stop was Sirdarya fish farms, where we added several new birds to our trip list, including the globally threatened Ferruginous Duck, Caspian Tern and Purple Heron. Our final evening in Uzbekistan was spent in a good restaurant with our hosts from Olympic Tours – a great ending to a fabulous stay here.

**23<sup>rd</sup> May:** After a welcome hotel breakfast on our final morning in Uzbekistan, we headed out to Tashkent Botanical Gardens. We enjoyed good urban birding that included displaying Shikra, Greenish Warblers, and Turkestan and Yellow-bellied Tits. We then paid a visit to the bird collection at the adjacent national institute of science, to study some bird skins we might encounter in Kazakhstan. In the afternoon, we flew to Almaty. After arrival, we were transferred to a lovely hotel.



**Turkestan (Great) Tit by Yoav Perlman**

**24<sup>th</sup> May:** After breakfast at our hotel, we left Almaty and headed towards Taukum Desert with our local guide, Valeriy. Our first port of call was at Sorbulaq Lake. It was bustling with birds. There was a huge breeding colony of Rosy Starlings by the lake, creating a true multi-sensual spectacle of sight, sound and smell. We estimated about 10,000 pairs! On the lake and its shores were large numbers of waterfowl, pelicans and shorebirds. Highlights were Dalmatian and Great White Pelicans, Terek Sandpiper and a flyby Saker.



**Rosy Starlings by Yoav Perlman**



**Dalmatian pelican by Yoav Perlman**

We then drove on towards our tented camp near Kanshengel in the Taukum Desert. In the afternoon, we birded on foot out of our camp and enjoyed watching birds coming in to drink at a nearby waterhole. Highlights included Bimaculated, Calandra, Asian and Lesser Short-toed Larks, Black-bellied Sandgrouse, many Red-headed Buntings, Pallid Harrier, Steppe and Eastern Imperial Eagles and Greater Sand Plover.



**Red-headed Bunting by Yoav Perlman**

**25<sup>th</sup> May:** In the early morning, we birded deep within the Taukum Desert. The weather was not good, with cold temperatures and strong winds, so some of our target birds evaded us. Yet, we still had quality birds, including Cinereous Vultures and Eurasian Griffons feeding on a cow carcass, and Greater Sand Plovers breeding on the dry desert plains.





**Cinereous Vulture by Yoav Perlman**



**Greater Sand Plover by Yoav Perlman**

After lunch, we travelled up toward Turanga Forest and Topar Lakes. We had great views of the unique Saxaul Sparrow singing and in a nest burrow – a Central Asian speciality in the bag. Yellow-eyed Doves were harder to get but, eventually, we got some brief views of them. White-winged Woodpeckers were common. We added two tit taxa, Azure and Great – they could be new trip species, depending on which taxonomy we use...



**Saxaul Sparrow by Yoav Perlman**



**Azure Tit by Yoav Perlman**

**26<sup>th</sup> May:** It was beautiful to wake up very early, before dawn, and listen to the fabulous dawn chorus of larks. We set off early to reach our site, deep in the desert west of Kanshengel, at dawn. This was a good decision, as early on we found a fantastic male MacQueen's Bustard, shortly followed by a pair of stunning Caspian Plovers who were attending two chicks.



**Caspian Plover by Yoav Perlman**



**Sunrise over the Taukum Desert by Yoav Perlman**

After breakfast back at the camp, we set off on our long journey to the Charyn region. We stopped to bird at Kokpek mountain pass. White-capped and Rock Buntings, Chukar and Crag Martin, both rock thrushes, made for very enjoyable birding. We arrived at our accommodation at Shunja quite exhausted, but full of excitement to bird in this breathtaking region, on the frontier with China.

**27<sup>th</sup> May:** Today's birding was characterised by quality species and breathtaking scenery. We walked the lovely Sogety Valley plains that were alive with Brandt's Horned Larks, Desert Wheatears and the scarce Asian Desert Warbler that performed beautifully.



**Brandt's Horned Lark by Yoav Perlman**



**Desert Wheatear by Yoav Perlman**



**Asian Desert Warbler by Yoav Perlman**



**Birding Sogety Valley by Yoav Perlman**



We spent a lovely time by a mountain spring, where hundreds of thirsty seedeaters came in to drink, including big numbers of Mongolian and Asian Crimson-winged Finches and the subtle Grey-necked Bunting that were also seen holding territories on the nearby hills.



**Mongolian Finches by Yoav Perlman**



**Grey-necked Bunting by Yoav Perlman**

We crossed the impressive Charyn Canyon on the way to the mountain pass of Temirlik, overlooking the frontier zone with Kyrgyzstan. A roadside stop produced Siberian Stonechats and a singing male Meadow Bunting. In the evening, we headed back to Almaty for a much-needed hot shower and chill-out.



**Charyn Canyon by Yoav Perlman**

**28<sup>th</sup> May:** Today, we spent our first day in Ile-Alatau NP, up in the Tien Shan Mountains, above Almaty. It was a fantastic day with many quality species. A couple of birding stops along the access road produced Brown Dipper and Black-throated Accentor. We walked around the scenic Big Almaty Lake, under mighty snow-capped mountains. Himalayan Snowcocks called from the mountaintops, and we even managed to spot one at a distance from down below. At the far end of the lake, we found an Ibisbill pair – we had breathtaking moments as we enjoyed watching both parents attending at least one super-cute fluffy chick. Other star birds were Eversmann's Redstart and Red-fronted Serin.

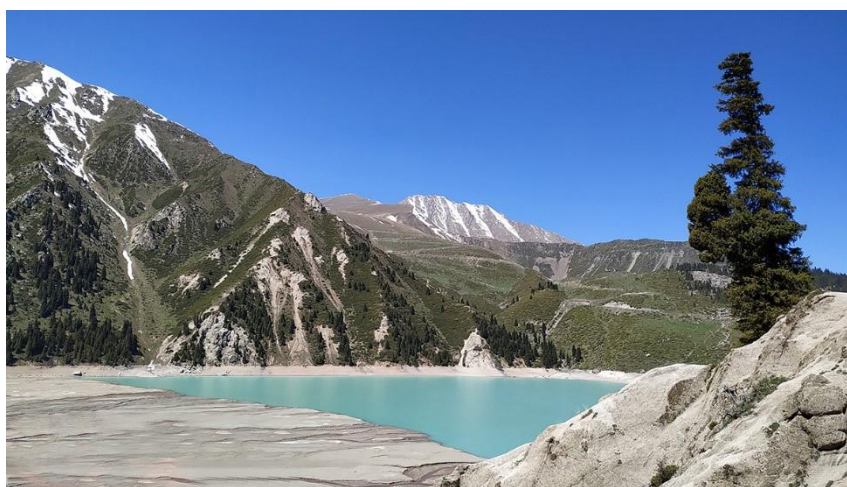




**Ibisbill by Yoav Perlman**



**Eversmann's Redstart by Yoav Perlman**

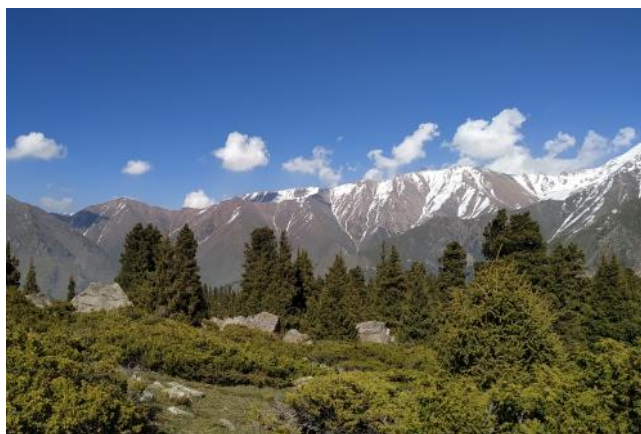


**Big Almaty Lake by Yoav Perlman**

After a lovely picnic lunch with the best view in the world, we headed further up and birded around the observatory in some fantastic upland habitat. There, we had brief views of White-browed Tit-Warbler, but Himalayan Rubythroat, Red-mantled Rosefinch and White-winged Grosbeak all showed very well.



**Red-mantled Rosefinch by Yoav Perlman**



**Birding in Ile-Altau National Park by Yoav Perlman**

**29<sup>th</sup> May:** It was a tougher day, with rather strenuous walking in high-altitude, but birding was enjoyable at most parts, and we connected with cool birds in spectacular scenery. We started up at Kosmos Station, at 3,500 m. Views of two Himalayan Snowcocks feeding and singing on a grassy slope above the station generated some ‘wows’ and ‘oooohs’ from the guests. Other quality species around the station were Güldenstädt's Redstart, Brown Accentor, both choughs and three Lammergeiers.



**Himalayan Snowcock by Yoav Perlman**



**Güldenstädt's Redstart by Yoav Perlman**



**Tien Shan panorama by Yoav Perlman**

After lunch, we returned to the beautiful valley behind the Observatory, where we again had multiple Himalayan Rubythroats, Eversmann's Redstart, Black-throated Accentor and Blakiston's Water Pipits. On the way back down to Almaty, we added Blue Whistling Thrush to our trip list, watching a singing male on overhead wires.





**Himalayan Rubythroat by Yoav Perlman**

**30<sup>th</sup> May:** Today was our last day in the Almaty region. We left early and headed straight up to Kosmos Station. We saw good high-altitude species up there – Altai and Brown Accentors, Plain Mountain Finch, Güldenstädt's Redstart and Himalayan Snowcock.



**Brown Accentor by Yoav Perlman**



**Altai Accentor by Yoav Perlman**

We made a few more birding stops on our way back to Almaty, to catch an afternoon flight to Nursultan (until recently named Astana). On our way from the Nursultan airport to the city, we added Pallas's and Steppe Gulls to our trip list.

**31<sup>st</sup> May:** Our first of two days on the Kazakh steppes outside of Nursultan was memorable, and arguably one of the best of the trip. We birded through the day with our local guide, Andrey. Sometimes conditions were hard due to extreme numbers of insects, but birding was outstanding in quality, diversity and numbers. We started off with a mind-blowing hour of dawn birding by Karasu River – Short-eared Owl day-hunting, many Booted Warblers and huge numbers of birds and species (especially Sykes's Yellow Wagtail and Bluethroat) made it difficult for us to leave this magical spot.





**Booted Warbler by Yoav Perlman**



**Short-eared Owl by Yoav Perlman**

We headed further west, picking up quality species along the road, such as Black and White-winged Larks, Demoiselle Crane and Pallid Harrier. Not too far from Nursultan, we found a pair of the critically endangered Sociable Lapwing, alongside tens of Black-winged Pratincoles. We watched them in awe, from a safe distance – such a privilege.



**Black-winged Pratincole by Yoav Perlman**

We then moved on to check a series of wetlands and steppes that form a part of the Lake Tengiz complex. Every wetland was different – one had tens of thousands of swirling Red-necked Phalaropes; another had hundreds of Greater Flamingos; hundreds of beautiful White-winged Terns picked up insects from the water surface of another, and hundreds of breeding pairs of Pallas's Gulls took up residence in another.



**White-winged Tern by Yoav Perlman**



**Red-necked Phalaropes, Curlew Sandpipers, Dunlin, Little Stint and White-winged Tern by Yoav Perlman**

On the outskirts of Nursultan, we had a pretty male Pine Bunting – what a fine bird to end an excellent day.



**Pine Bunting by Yoav Perlman**

**1<sup>st</sup> June:** Today was our last day of the birding program. We left early again and headed south from Nursultan. We enjoyed birding in wetlands and steppes of Terektisor and Krasnoyarka. Highlights included White-headed Duck, day-roosting Long-eared Owl and superior views of Sociable Lapwings. We enjoyed further views of Kazakh steppe specialities, such as White-winged and Black Larks, Pallid Harrier and Demoiselle Crane. Our final birding session of the trip was along Ishim River in Nursultan, where we added Eurasian Penduline Tits and Smew, which was the last bird species added to the trip list of 276 species.



**Sociable Lapwing by Yoav Perlman**



**White-winged Lark by Yoav Perlman**



**Black Lark by Yoav Perlman**



**Pallid Harrier by Yoav Perlman**



## Annotated List of species recorded

**Note:** Number in brackets ( ) indicate number of days on the tour the species was recorded. Species marked by \* - seen by only part of group, heard only or not seen well.

List powered through the report generator of our partner iGoTerra.

### Birds (275 in total: 264 seen well by the entire group)

Nomenclature and taxonomy follows Gill, F and D Donsker (Eds). 2018. IOC World Bird List (v 8.2).

**Status codes:** **E** = Endemic, **NE** = Near-endemic, **I** = Introduced

**IUCN codes:** **CR** = Critically endangered, **EN** = Endangered, **VU** = Vulnerable, **EW** = Extinct in the Wild, **NT** = Near Threatened, **DD** = Data Deficient

#### Ducks, Geese & Swans Anatidae

##### **Greylag Goose**

*Anser anser rubrirostris*

(2) Common breeding species on wetlands around Nursultan (Kazakhstan).

##### **Mute Swan**

*Cygnus olor*

(2) Small numbers breeding on wetlands around Nursultan (Kazakhstan).

##### **Whooper Swan**

*Cygnus Cygnus*

(3) Common breeding species on wetlands around Nursultan (Kazakhstan).

##### **Common Shelduck**

*Tadorna tadorna*

(3) Common breeding species on wetlands around Nursultan (Kazakhstan).

##### **Ruddy Shelduck**

*Tadorna ferruginea*

(6) Small numbers were seen on wetlands in Kyzylkum Desert (Uzbekistan) and Taukum Desert (Kazakhstan). A large concentration of 400 individuals was on Lake Sorbulaq on 24/5.

##### **Garganey**

*Spatula querquedula*

(6) Common breeding species on wetlands in Kazakhstan, including 150 on Lake Sorbulaq, 24/5.

##### **Northern Shoveler**

*Spatula clypeata*

(4) Common on wetlands in Kazakhstan.

##### **Gadwall**

*Mareca strepera strepera*

(6) Common breeding species on wetlands in Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan.

##### **Eurasian Wigeon**

*Mareca penelope*

(2) 4 Lake Sorbulaq 24/5 and 2 Zhumai Lakes 31/5.

##### **Mallard**

*Anas platyrhynchos platyrhynchos*

(8) Common breeding species on wetlands in Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan.

##### **Northern Pintail**

*Anas acuta*

(2) Small numbers seen on wetlands in Kazakhstan.

##### **Eurasian Teal**

*Anas crecca*

(2) 3 Jeyran Ecocentre (Uzbekistan) 18/5 and 1 Lake Sorbulaq 24/5.

##### **Marbled Duck (VU)**

*Marmaronetta angustirostris*

(1) 3 of this globally Vulnerable duck seen at Jeyran Ecocentre on 18/5.

##### **Red-crested Pochard**

*Netta rufina*

(6) Rather common in small numbers on wetlands in Uzbekistan and Kazakhsan. A concentration of 170 on Lake Sorbulaq is noteworthy.

**Common Pochard (VU)***Aythya ferina*

(4) Rather common on wetlands in Kazakhstan. A concentration of 800 on Zhumai Lakes, 31/5 is noteworthy.

**Ferruginous Duck (NT)***Aythya nyroca*

(1) 2 at Sirdarya fishponds (Uzbekistan) on 22/5, and 3 at Topar Lakes (Kazakhstan) on 25/5.

**Tufted Duck***Aythya fuligula*

(2) Common on wetlands in northern Kazakhstan.

**Common Goldeneye***Bucephala clangula*

(1) 1 male seen on Zhumai Lakes, Kazakhstan, 31/5.

**Smew***Mergellus albellus*

(1) 1 female seen along Ishim River, Kazakhstan, 1/6.

**White-headed Duck (EN)***Oxyura leucocephala*

(1) The only observation included 6 birds, possibly breeding, on Zhangiv-Kuduk wetlands, Kazakhstan, 1/6.

**Pheasants, Grouse, and Allies Phasianidae****Himalayan Snowcock***Tetraogallus himalayensis*

(3) Several birds were heard and seen very well at high altitude in Ile-Altau NP, Tien Shan mountains, Kazakhstan.

**Chukar Partridge***Alectoris chukar*

(2) Seen in small numbers in Sogety Valley (Kazakhstan) - 2 at Kokpek, 26/5, and 2 at nearby Temirliq Pass, 27/5.

**Grey Partridge***Perdix perdix*

(1) 1 seen near Nursultan, 31/5.

**Common Quail***Coturnix coturnix coturnix*

(4) Many males singing on the steppes around Nursultan, 31/5-1/6.

**Common Pheasant***Phasianus colchicus*

(3) 5 Jeyran Ecocentre 18/5, 7 Tashkent Botanical Gardens, 23/5 and 1 Topar Lakes. 25/5.

**Grebes Podicipedidae****Little Grebe***Tachybaptus ruficollis albescens*

(1) Small numbers seen on wetlands around Nursultan.

**Red-necked Grebe***Podiceps grisegena grisegena*

(2) Small numbers seen on wetlands around Nursultan: 1 Zhumai Lakes 31/5 and 2 Zhangiv-Kuduk wetlands 1/6.

**Great Crested Grebe***Podiceps cristatus cristatus*

(5) Common breeding species on wetlands in Kazakhstan.

**Horned Grebe***Podiceps auritus*

(2) Small numbers seen breeding on wetlands around Nursultan: 4 en route 31/5 and 2 Zhangiv-Kuduk wetlands 1/6.

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

(4) Common breeding species on wetlands around Nursultan.

**Flamingos *Phoenicopteridae*****Greater Flamingo***Phoenicopus roseus*

(1) 600 Zhumai Lakes 31/5.

**Storks *Ciconiidae*****White Stork***Ciconia ciconia asiatica*

(3) Common breeding species in Uzbekistan.

**Ibises, Spoonbills *Threskiornithidae*****Glossy Ibis***Plegadis falcinellus*

(3) 4 Kyzylkum Desert 19/5, 1 en route 22/5 and 15 Lake Sorbulaq 24/5.

**Hérons, Egrets, and Bitterns *Ardeidae*****Eurasian Bittern***Botaurus stellaris stellaris*

(2) 1 Pavlogradka wetland 1/6 and 1 Karasu River 2/6.

**Grey Heron***Ardea cinerea cinerea*

(9) Common in small numbers on wetlands in Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan.

**Purple Heron***Ardea purpurea purpurea*

(1) 10 Sirdarya Fishponds (Uzbekistan), 22/5.

**Great Egret***Ardea alba alba*

(5) Present in small number on wetlands in Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan.

**Little Egret***Egretta garzetta garzetta*

(1) 1 Kyzylkum Desert 19/5.

**Pelicans *Pelecanidae*****Great White Pelican***Pelecanus onocrotalus*

(1) 80 Lake Sorbulaq 24/5.

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

(3) 3 Lake Sorbulaq 24/5, 1 Maishukur Lakes 31/5 and 7 Zhangiv-Kuduk wetlands 1/6.

**Cormorants and Shags *Phalacrocoracidae*****Pygmy Cormorant***Microcarbo pygmeus*

(4) Seen on several wetlands in Uzbekistan. A record of 9 in Tuz wetland, Kazakhstan, 1/6 is noteworthy.

**Great Cormorant***Phalacrocorax carbo sinensis*

(7) Common breeding species in Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan.

**Kites, Hawks & Eagles *Accipitridae*****Bearded Vulture (NT)***Gypaetus barbatus barbatus*

(3) 1 Takhta-Karacha Pass (Uzbekistan) 21/5, 2 near Gur A-Emir Gate, Jizzakh, 22/5 and 3 Ile-Alatau NP 29/5.

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

(3) 3 Takhta-Karacha Pass 21/5, 2 breeding near Gur A-Emir Gate, Jizzakh 22/5 and 1 Kanshengel Desert Camp 24/5.

**Crested Honey Buzzard\****Pernis ptilorhynchus orientalis*

(1) 1 Kanshengel Desert Camp 25/5.



**Himalayan Vulture (NT)***Gyps himalayensis*

(2) 6 Hotel Beldersay (Uzbekistan) 17/5 and 4 Takhta-Karacha Pass 21/5.

**Griffon Vulture***Gyps fulvus fulvus*

(3) 2 Hotel Beldersay 17/5, 12 Takhta-Karacha Pass 21/5 and 20 Kanshengel Desert Camp (Kazakhstan) 25/5.

**Cinereous Vulture (NT)***Aegypius monachus*

(2) 3 Hotel Beldersay 17/5 and 12 Kanshengel Desert Camp 25/5.

**Short-toed Snake Eagle***Circaetus gallicus gallicus*

(1) 1 Hotel Beldersay 17/5, 1 Kyzylkum Desert, 19/5.

**Booted Eagle***Hieraaetus pennatus*

(5) 3 Hotel Beldersay 17/5, 4 Takhta-Karacha Pass 21/5, 1 en route 24/5, 2 Temirliq River 27/5 and 1 Ile-Alatau NP 29/5.

**Steppe Eagle***Aquila nipalensis*

(2) Singles seen in Taukum Desert: 1 en route 24/5 and 1 Kanshengel Desert Camp 26/5.

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

(1) 1 in Kanshengel Village 24/5.

**Shikra***Accipiter badius cenchroides*

(8) Frequently seen in Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan, including 4 in Jeyran Ecocentre 18/5 and 4 in Tashkent Botanical Gardens, 23/5.

**Eurasian Sparrowhawk***Accipiter nisus*

(2) 1 Hotel Beldersay 17/5 and 1 Ile-Alatau NP 28/5.

**Western Marsh Harrier***Circus aeruginosus aeruginosus*

(11) Frequently seen near wetlands in Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan.

**Pallid Harrier (NT)***Circus macrourus*

(6) Singles seen in Taukum Desert, and good numbers on steppes around Nursultan.

**Black-eared Kite***Milvus (migrans) lineatus*

(7) Frequently seen in Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan.

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

(8) Frequently seen in Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan.

**Common Buzzard***Buteo buteo vulpinus*

(1) 1 Ile-Alatau NP 29/5.

**Bustards Otidae****Macqueen's Bustard (VU)***Chlamydotis macqueenii*

(2) 2 seen from Gib's Hill, Uzbekistan 20/5 and 1 deep in the Taukum Desert 26/5.

**Rails, Crakes & Coots Rallidae****Little Crane\****Porzana parva*

(1) 1 heard only Lake Sorbulaq 24/5.

**Common Moorhen***Gallinula chloropus chloropus*

(6) Common on wetlands in Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan.

**Eurasian Coot***Fulica atra atra*

(7) Common on wetlands in Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan.

**Cranes Gruidae****Demoiselle Crane***Grus virgo*

(4) Fine numbers of this graceful bird seen breeding on the steppes around Nursultan 31/5-1/6.

**Oystercatchers Haematopodidae****Eurasian Oystercatcher***Haematopus ostralegus*

(4) Small numbers seen in Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan.

**Ibisbill Ibiborhynchidae****Ibisbill***Ibidorhyncha struthersii*

(1) Two adults and one or two young seen very well at Big Almaty Lake 28/5.

**Stilts and Avocets Recurvirostridae****Black-winged Stilt***Himantopus himantopus*

(9) Common breeding species on wetlands in Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan.

**Pied Avocet***Recurvirostra avosetta*

(2) 120 in a large breeding colony Maishukur Lakes (Kazakhstan) 31/5 and 3 Zhangiv-Kuduk wetlands 1/6.

**Plovers and Lapwings Charadriidae****Northern Lapwing (NT)***Vanellus vanellus*

(6) Breeding near wetlands Kazakhstan.

**Sociable Lapwing (CR)***Vanellus gregarius*

(2) Brilliant views of this rarity in several sites on the steppes around Nursultan – 2 on 31/5, and 12 1/6.

**White-tailed Lapwing***Vanellus leucurus*

(4) Small numbers seen on wetlands in Uzbekistan.

**Common Ringed Plover***Charadrius hiaticula tundrae*

(2) 2 Lake Sorbulaq 24/5 and 1 Zhangiv-Kuduk wetlands 1/6.

**Little Ringed Plover***Charadrius dubius curonicus*

(5) Small numbers seen breeding on wetlands and rivers in Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan.

**Kentish Plover***Charadrius alexandrinus alexandrinus*

(4) Seen on several wetlands in Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan.

**Greater Sand Plover***Charadrius leschenaultii*

(5) 3 Kyzylkum Desert 19/5, good numbers breeding in Taukum Desert 24-26/5 and 4 Sogety Valley 27/5.

**Caspian Plover***Charadrius asiaticus*

(2) A pair with two tiny chicks seen very well deep in the Taukum Desert 26/5.

**Sandpipers and Allies Scolopacidae****Black-tailed Godwit (NT)***Limosa limosa*

(4) Small numbers seen in wetlands in Uzbekistan, and breeding on wet steppes around Nursultan.

**Ruff***Calidris pugnax*

(1) 4 Kyzylkum Desert 19/5.



**Curlew Sandpiper***Calidris ferruginea*

(3) 1 Jeyran Ecocentre 18/5, but more frequent on wetlands around Nursultan, e.g. 400 Zhumai Lakes 31/5 and 40 Zhangiv-Kuduk wetlands 1/6.

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

(4) 1 Jeyran Ecocentre 18/5, 1 Zerevshan NR 22/5, 20 Lake Sorbulaq 24/5 and 1 Krasnoyarka wetlands 1/6.

**Dunlin***Calidris alpina*

(3) 1 Lake Sorbulaq 24/5, 250 Zhumai Lakes 31/5 and 30 Zhangiv-Kuduk wetlands 1/6.

**Little Stint***Calidris minuta*

(5) Frequent on wetlands in Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan, including 500 Zhumai Lakes 31/5.

**Terek Sandpiper***Xenus cinereus*

(3) 1 Lake Sorbulaq 24/5, 1 en route 31/5 and 2 Zhangiv-Kuduk wetlands 1/6.

**Red-necked Phalarope***Phalaropus lobatus*

(3) Huge numbers seen on wetlands around Nursultan, including 20000 Maishukur Lakes 31/5.

**Common Sandpiper***Actitis hypoleucos*

(5) Small numbers seen on wetlands in Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan.

**Green Sandpiper***Tringa ochropus*

(1) 1 Kyzylkum Desert 19/5.

**Common Redshank***Tringa totanus*

(3) Common on wetlands and wet steppes in Kazakhstan.

**Marsh Sandpiper***Tringa stagnatilis*

(3) Breeding on wetlands around Nursultan.

**Wood Sandpiper***Tringa glareola*

(5) Common on wetlands in Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan.

**Spotted Redshank***Tringa erythropus*

(1) 1 Lake Sorbulaq 24/5.

**Pratincoles and Coursers Glareolidae****Collared Pratincole***Glareola pratincola pratincola*

(4) 4 Jeyran Eco-centre 18/5, 1 Kyzylkum Desert 19/5, 12 en route 22/5 and 2 Lake Sorbulaq 24/5.

**Black-winged Pratincole (NT)***Glareola nordmanni*

(3) Good numbers seen breeding on steppes around Nursultan, including 60 on 31/5.

**Gulls, Terns & Skimmers Laridae****Slender-billed Gull***Chroicocephalus genei*

(2) 2 Jeyran Ecocentre 18/5 and 40 breeding on a wetland near Nursultan 31/5.

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

(5) Common on wetlands in Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan.

**Pallas's Gull***Ichthyiaetus ichthyiaetus*

(2) Seen on wetlands around Nursultan, including a large breeding colony of 350 pairs Maishukur Lakes 31/5.

**Russian Mew Gull***Larus canus heinei*

(1) 1 Maishukur Lakes 31/5.

**Caspian Gull***Larus cachinnans*

(3) 6 Kyzylkum Desert 19/5, 20 Lake Sorbulaq 24/5 and 1 Topar 25/5.

**Steppe Gull***Larus fuscus barabensis*

(5) Common breeding species on wetlands around Nursultan, including a large breeding colony of 250 pairs Maishukur Lakes 31/5.

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

(3) 1 Jeyran Ecocentre 20/5, 9 breeding Maishukur Lakes 31/5 and 2 Zhangiv-Kuduk wetlands 1/6.

**Caspian Tern***Hydroprogne caspia*

(2) 4 en route 22/5 and 1 Zhumai Lakes 31/5.

**Little Tern***Sternula albifrons albifrons*

(3) Small numbers breeding on wetlands in Uzbekistan.

**Common Tern***Sterna hirundo hirundo*

(9) Common breeding species on wetlands in Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan.

**Whiskered Tern***Chlidonias hybrida hybrida*

(1) 5 Jeyran Ecocentre 18/5.

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

(4) Breeding on wetlands around Nursultan, including 150 Zhumai Lakes 31/5, and 20 Zhangiv-Kuduk wetlands 1/6.

**Black Tern***Chlidonias niger niger*

(2) Breeding on wetlands around Nursultan, including 30 en route 31/5 and 15 Krasnoyarka wetlands 1/6.

**Sandgrouse Pteroclididae****Black-bellied Sandgrouse***Pterocles orientalis arenarius*

(5) Seen in Kyzylkum, Taukum and Sogety Valley: 3 Jeyran Ecocentre 18/5, up to 70 Kanshengel Desert Camp 24-26/5 and 13 Sogety Valley 27/5.

**Pigeons and Doves Columbidae****Rock Dove (Feral Pigeon)***Columba livia*

(12) Common in Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan.

**Yellow-eyed Pigeon (VU)\****Columba eversmanni*

(1) 3 seen briefly in Turanga Forest, 25/5.

**Common Wood Pigeon***Columba palumbus*

(8) Common in Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan.

**European Turtle Dove***Streptopelia turtur*

(3) Seen in a few sites in Uzbekistan: 1 Hotel Beldersay 17/5, 4 Jeyran Ecocentre 18/5 and 2 Kyzylkum Desert 19/5.

**Oriental Turtle Dove***Streptopelia orientalis meena*

(10) Common in Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan.

**Eurasian Collared Dove***Streptopelia decaocto decaocto*

(8) Common in Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan.

**Laughing Dove***Spilopelia senegalensis*

(5) Common in Uzbekistan.

**Cuckoos Cuculidae****Common Cuckoo***Cuculus canorus*

(10) Seen frequently in Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan.



**Owls Strigidae****Bactrian Little Owl***Athene noctua bactriana*

(2) 1 Kyzylkum Desert 19/5 and 1 en route 20/5.

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

(1) 1 day-roosting near Pavlogradka wetland 1/6.

**Short-eared Owl***Asio flammeus flammeus*

(2) Seen foraging over steppes at a few sites around Nursultan 31/5-1/6.

**Swifts Apodidae****Alpine Swift***Tachymarptis melba tuneti*

(2) 20 breeding in Samarkand Old City 20/5 and 1 Zerevshan NR 22/5.

**Common Swift***Apus apus*

(10) Frequently seen in Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan.

**Rollers Coraciidae****European Roller (NT)***Coracias garrulus*

(10) Frequently seen, mainly in Uzbekistan.

**Kingfishers Alcedinidae****Common Kingfisher***Alcedo atthis atthis*

(3) 1 Kyzylkum Desert 19/5, 2 Zerevshan NR 22/5 and 1 Ishim River 1/6.

**Bee-eaters Meropidae****Blue-cheeked Bee-eater***Merops persicus persicus*

(4) Seen in good numbers in Uzbekistan.

**European Bee-eater***Merops apiaster*

(6) Seen in small numbers in Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan.

**Hoopoes Upupidae****Eurasian Hoopoe***Upupa epops epops*

(8) Frequently seen in Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan.

**Woodpeckers Picidae****White-winged Woodpecker***Dendrocopos leucopterus*

(4) 3 Hotel Beldersay 17/5, 1 near Jizzakh 22/5, 1 Tashkent Botanical Gardens 23/5 and 4 Turanga Forest 25/5.

**Falcons and Caracaras Falconidae****Lesser Kestrel***Falco naumanni*

(3) 1 Takhta-Karacha Pass 21/5, 3 near Jizzakh 22/5 and 1 Turanga Forest 25/5.

**Common Kestrel***Falco tinnunculus tinnunculus*

(15) Common in Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan.

**Red-footed Falcon (NT)***Falco vespertinus*

(3) good numbers seen breeding on steppes around Nursultan 31/5-1/6.

**Amur Falcon\****Falco amurensis*

(1) 1 possible over Hotel Beldersay 17/5.

**Eurasian Hobby***Falco subbuteo subbuteo*

(5) 2 en route, Jizzakh Region 22/5, 1 en route 25/5, 1 Kokpek 26/5, 3 Big Almaty Lake 28/5 and 1 Ile-Alatau NP 30/5.

**Saker Falcon (EN)***Falco cherrug*

(2) 1 near Jizzakh 22/5 and 1 Lake Sorbulaq 24/5.

**Shrikes Laniidae****Red-backed Shrike***Lanius collurio*

(2) 1 Kanshengel Desert Camp 26/5 and 1 Maishukur Lakes 31/5.

**Isabelline Shrike***Lanius isabellinus isabellinus*

(2) Common in Taukum Desert 25-26/5.

**Red-tailed (Turkestan) Shrike***Lanius phoenicuroides*

(4) Locally common in Uzbekistan, also in Sogety Valley.

**Long-tailed Shrike***Lanius schach erythronotus*

(1) 1 en route 17/5.

**Lesser Grey Shrike***Lanius minor*

(4) Seen at several sites in Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan.

**Old World Orioles Oriolidae****Eurasian Golden Oriole***Oriolus oriolus*

(7) Frequently seen in Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan.

**Indian Golden Oriole\****Oriolus kundoo*

(1) 1 briefly Jeyran Ecocentre 18/5.

**Monarchs Monarchidae****Indian Paradise Flycatcher***Terpsiphone paradisi leucogaster*

(2) 1 briefly Hotel Beldersay 17/5 and 2 seen well below Takhta-Karacha Pass 21/5.

**Crows, Jays, and Magpies Corvidae****Eurasian Magpie***Pica pica bactriana*

(16) Very common in Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan, ubiquitous.

**Pander's Ground Jay***Podoces panderi*

(1) 1 male seen very well deep in the Kyzylkum Desert 19/5. One of the highlights of the trip.

**Red-billed Chough***Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax centralis*

(2) Common at high elevations in Tien Shan mountains.

**Alpine Chough***Pyrrhocorax graculus forsythi*

(3) Common at high elevations in Tien Shan mountains, e.g. 80 at Kosmos Station, Ile-Alatau NP 29/5.

**Western Jackdaw***Coloeus monedula soemmerringii*

(10) Common in Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan.

**Rook***Corvus frugilegus frugilegus*

(8) Common in Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan.

**Carrion Crow***Corvus corone*

(9) Common in Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan.

**Hooded Crow***Corvus cornix*

(3) Common around Nursultan.

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

(2) Seen only in Taukum Desert: 8 on 25/5 and 3 on 26/5.

**Northern Raven***Corvus corax*

(3) 1 Takhta-Karacha Pass 21/5, 1 Temirliq Pass 27/5 and 1 Ile-Alatau NP 29/5.

**Tits, Chickadees *Paridae*****Rufous-naped Tit***Periparus rufonuchalis*

(1) 3 seen well at Hotel Beldersay 17/5.

**Coal Tit***Periparus ater*

(2) Seen in coniferous forests up in Tien Shan mountains 28-30/5 .

**Azure Tit***Cyanistes cyanus*

(1) Several individuals of the nominate taxon seen in Turanga Forest and nearby Topar Lakes on 25/5.

**Yellow-breasted (Azure) Tit***Cyanistes (cyanus) flavipectus*

(3) This distinctive form, which may be a separate species, was seen at several sites in Uzbekistan, including Hotel Beldersay 17/5.

**Great Tit***Parus major*

(4) The nominate, green-and-yellow taxon was seen in Kazakhstan.

**Bukharan Tit***Parus (major) bukharensis*

(5) This distinctive monochromatic form, which may be a separate species, was seen at several sites in Uzbekistan and Turanga Forest in Kazakhstan, including Tashkent Botanical Gardens 23/5.

**Penduline-Tits *Remizidae*****Eurasian Penduline Tit***Remiz pendulinus*

(3) Seen in reedbeds by several wetlands near Nursultan 31/5-1/6.

**White-crowned Penduline Tit***Remiz coronatus*

(4) Seen at several woodland sites in Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan.

**Bearded Reedling *Panuridae*****Bearded Reedling\****Panurus biarmicus russicus*

(2) Heard only in two wetlands in northern Kazakhstan 31/5.

**Larks *Alaudidae*****White-winged Lark***Alauda leucoptera*

(3) Rather common on steppes around Nursultan 31/5-1/6.

**Oriental Skylark\****Alauda gulgula inconspicua*

(1) Heard only in Karaqir Canals, Kyzylkum Desert 19/5.

**Eurasian Skylark***Alauda arvensis dulcivox*

(6) 2 Takhta-Karacha Pass 21/5, common on steppes around Nursultan 31/5-1/6.

**Crested Lark***Galerida cristata*

(8) Common in Uzbekistan and Taukum Desert.

**Brandt's Horned Lark***Eremophila alpestris brandti*

(1) Good densities of this distinctive form were seen in Sogety Valley on 27/5.



**Hume's Short-toed Lark***Calandrella acutirostris acutirostris*

(1) 3 Takhta-Karacha Pass 21/5.

**Greater Short-toed Lark***Calandrella brachydactyla longipennis*

(8) Common in Taukum Desert, e.g. up to 150 Kanshengel Desert Camp 24-26/5, also in lower densities on steppes around Nursultan.

**Bimaculated Lark***Melanocorypha bimaculata*

(3) Up to 7 daily in Taukum Desert 24-26/5.

**Calandra Lark***Melanocorypha calandra*

(3) Common in Taukum Desert 24-26/5.

**Black Lark***Melanocorypha yeltoniensis*

(2) Common on steppes around Nursultan, e.g. 30 en route 31/5.

**Asian Short-toed Lark***Alaudala cheleensis*

(2) Found breeding in low densities in Taukum Desert 24-25/5.

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

(2) Found breeding in moderate densities in Taukum Desert 24-26/5.

**Swallows *Hirundinidae*****Sand Martin***Riparia riparia riparia*

(6) Seen at several sites in Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan.

**Barn Swallow***Hirundo rustica rustica*

(11) Common in Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan.

**Eurasian Crag Martin***Ptyonoprogne rupestris*

(1) Seen only at one site in Sogety Valley: 2 at Kokpek, 26/5.

**Common House Martin***Delichon urbicum*

(6) Rather common in Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan.

**Red-rumped Swallow***Cecropis daurica*

(3) 1 Bukhara 18/5 and 3 Takhta-Karacha Pass 21/5.

**Cettia Bush Warblers and allies *Cettiidae*****Cetti's Warbler***Cettia cetti albiventris*

(6) Found at several sites in Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan.

**Streaked Scrub Warbler *Scotocercidae*****Streaked Scrub Warbler***Scotocerca inquieta platyura*

(3) Seen at several sites in Kyzylkum Desert: 3 Jeyran Ecocentre 18/5, 3 Kyzylkum Desert 19/5 and 4 en route 20/5.

**Long-tailed Tits *Aegithalidae*****White-browed Tit-Warbler\****Leptopoeile sophiae sophiae*

(1) 2 seen briefly by the Astronomic Observatory in Ile-Alatau NP 28/5.

**Leaf warblers and allies *Phylloscopidae*****Hume's Leaf Warbler***Phylloscopus humei humei*(8) The commonest *Phylloscopus* warbler of the trip – many migrants seen in Uzbekistan, and good densities breeding up in Tien Shan mountains.

**Siberian Chiffchaff***Phylloscopus collybita tristis*

(3) 1 Jeyran Ecocentre 18/5, 1 Kyzylkum Desert 19/5 and 1 Temirliq Pass 27/5.

**Greenish Warbler***Phylloscopus trochiloides viridanus*

(12) Frequently seen in Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan, and found breeding in good densities up in Tien Shan mountains.

**Reed warblers and allies Acrocephalidae****Great Reed Warbler***Acrocephalus arundinaceus zarudnyi*

(2) 1 Lake Sorbulaq 24/5, 1 en route 25/5 and 1 Zhumai Lakes 31/5.

**Clamorous Reed Warbler***Acrocephalus stentoreus*

(4) Common in wetlands in Uzbekistan, including high densities at Karaqir Canals - 40 on 19/5.

**Moustached Warbler***Acrocephalus melanopogon*

(1) 2 seen at Ozero Taldykol wetland on the outskirts of Nursultan, 31/5.

**Sedge Warbler***Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*

(2) Found at a few sites on wetlands around Nursultan.

**Paddyfield Warbler***Acrocephalus agricola*

(4) Found breeding in fine densities on wetlands in Kazakhstan.

**Blyth's Reed Warbler***Acrocephalus dumetorum*

(14) Common in Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan, found on migration and breeding at many sites – reedbeds and woodland.

**Booted Warbler***Iduna caligata*

(5) Few found in sparse desert vegetation in Kyzylkum Desert 19/5, and higher densities in breeding on vegetated steppes in northern Kazakhstan, e.g. 30 Karasu River 31/5.

**Sykes's Warbler***Iduna rama*(5) Found breeding in fair densities in *Tamarix* scrub in Uzbekistan, and 1 Kanshengel Desert Camp 25/5.**Eastern Olivaceous Warbler***Iduna pallida elaeica*(5) Found breeding in fair densities in *Tamarix* scrub in Uzbekistan.**Upcher's Warbler***Hippolais languida*

(2) 1 migrant in Kyzylkum Desert 19/5 and found breeding near Takhta-Karacha Pass 21/5.

**Grassbirds and allies Locustellidae****Common Grasshopper Warbler***Locustella naevia straminea*

(3) Found breeding in wet steppes in northern Kazakhstan.

**Savi's Warbler***Locustella luscinioides*

(2) Found breeding along rivers at few sites in Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan, i.e. 4 Kyzylkum Desert 19/5 and 2 Karasu River 2/6.

**Sylviid Babblers Sylviidae****Barred Warbler***Sylvia nisoria merzbacheri*

(2) 1 Jeyran Ecocentre 18/5 and 1 Kyzylkum Desert 19/5.

**Lesser Whitethroat***Sylvia curruca*

(4) 4 Jeyran Ecocentre 18/5, 2 Kyzylkum Desert 19/5, 1 Turanga Forest 25/5 and 1 Temirliq Pass 27/5.

**Hume's Whitethroat***Sylvia althaea*

(4) 8 Hotel Beldersay 17/5, 4 Takhta-Karacha Pass 21/5, 1 Temirliq Pass 27/5 and 1 Big Almaty Lake 28/5.

**Eastern Orphean Warbler***Sylvia crassirostris jerdoni*

(1) Found breeding in good densities at Takhta-Karacha Pass – 12 on 21/5.

**Asian Desert Warbler***Sylvia nana*

(2) 3 Kyzylkum Desert 19/5 and 1 Sogety Valley 27/5.

**Common Whitethroat***Sylvia communis*

(6) Frequently seen in Kazakhstan.

**Menetries's Warbler***Sylvia mystacea turcmunica*

(1) 4 found breeding in *Tamarix* scrub by Jeyran Ecocentre 20/5.

**Kinglets Regulidae****Goldcrest***Regulus regulus*

(1) 2 seen in coniferous forests on Tien Shan mountains 28/5.

**Wrens Troglodytidae****Eurasian Wren***Troglodytes troglodytes*

(2) Several seen and heard up in Tien Shan mountains, 28-29/5.

**Nuthatches Sittidae****Eastern Rock Nuthatch***Sitta tephronota*

(1) 4 seen very well at Takhta-Karacha Pass 21/5.

**Starlings Sturnidae****Common Myna***Acridotheres tristis tristis*

(13) Common and ubiquitous in Uzbekistan and southern Kazakhstan (not near Nursultan, yet).

**Rosy Starling***Pastor roseus*

(9) Large flocks seen at many sites and en route in Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan, including a fantastic breeding colony of approximately 10000 pairs at Lake Sorbulaq 24/5.

**Common Starling***Sturnus vulgaris*

(6) Frequently seen in the countryside of Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan.

**Thrushes and Allies Turdidae****Common Blackbird***Turdus merula*

(5) 40 Hotel Beldersay 17/5, 1 Samarkand 20/5, 4 Takhta-Karacha Pass 21/5, 20 Tashkent 23/5 and 4 Big Almaty Lake 28/5.

**Fieldfare***Turdus pilaris*

(3) Found breeding only in riparian forest in northern Kazakhstan, e.g. 10 Karasu River 31/5.

**Mistle Thrush***Turdus viscivorus*

(5) 50 Hotel Beldersay 17/5, 2 Temirliq River 27/5, 6 Big Almaty Lake 28/5, 2 Ile-Alatau NP 29/5 and 2 Ishim River 1/6.



**Chats, Old World Flycatchers *Muscicapidae*****Spotted Flycatcher***Muscicapa striata*

(9) Found breeding at Hotel Beldersay – 20 on 17/5, and many migrants seen at many sites in Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan.

**Bluethroat***Luscinia svecica*

(5) In Uzbekistan found breeding at Karaqir Canals, 2 on 19/5, and found breeding in good densities in wet steppes and wetland edges in northern Kazakhstan.

**Common Nightingale***Luscinia megarhynchos golzii*

(11) Frequently seen and heard in Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan, on migration and breeding birds.

**White-throated Robin***Irania gutturalis*

(1) 3 seen very well up in Takhta-Karacha Pass 21/5.

**Himalayan Rubythroat***Calliope pectoralis ballioni*

(3) Seen very well at several high-altitude sites in Tien Shan mountains 28-30/5.

**Blue Whistling Thrush***Myophonus caeruleus temminckii*

(3) 1 briefly below Hotel Beldersay 17/5, and seen well in Tien Shan mountains 28/5 and 29/5.

**Rusty-tailed Flycatcher***Ficedula ruficauda*

(1) 1 was found by our group at Takhta-Karacha Pass 21/5, seen well, photographed and sound-recorded. First record for Samarkand region.

**Eversmann's Redstart***Phoenicurus erythronotus*

(2) Several individuals of this beautiful, range-restricted redstart were seen in Ile-Alatau NP 28/5 & 29/5.

**Black Redstart***Phoenicurus ochruros*

(2) Seen in Ile-Alatau NP 28/5 and 30/5.

**Common Redstart***Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

(2) 1 Kyzylkum Desert 19/5 and 1 Maishukur Lakes 31/5.

**Güldenstädt's Redstart***Phoenicurus erythrogastrus grandis*

(2) This charismatic species was found only in very high altitude at Kosmos Station, Ile-Alatau NP 29-30/5.

**Common Rock Thrush***Monticola saxatilis*

(4) Migrants seen passing through Kyzylkum desert 18-20/5, and several breeding pairs found at Kokpek 26/5.

**Blue Rock Thrush***Monticola solitarius pandoo*

(2) Found breeding at Takhta-Karacha Pass 21/5 and Kokpek 26/5.

**Siberian Stonechat***Saxicola maurus maurus*

(6) Found breeding in Kazakhstan, in Sogety Valley, Tien Shan mountains and higher densities on steppes around Nursultan.

**Pied Bush Chat***Saxicola caprata rossorum*

(3) Found only in arid parts of Uzbekistan: 4 Jeyran Ecocentre 18/5, 2 Kyzylkum Desert 19/5 and 2 Jeyran Ecocentre 20/5.

**Northern Wheatear***Oenanthe oenanthe*

(4) 1 at high altitude (displaying by a Himalayan Snowcock!) in Ile-Alatau NP 29/5, and found breeding in good densities on steppes around Nursultan.

**Isabelline Wheatear***Oenanthe isabellina*

(8) Found breeding in high densities in Kyzylkum and Taukum Deserts, e.g. up to 60 Kanshengel Desert Camp 24-26/5, and in low densities in northern Kazakhstan.

**Desert Wheatear***Oenanthe deserti deserti*

(1) 2 Sogety Valley 27/5.

**Pied Wheatear***Oenanthe pleschanka*

(3) 1 Uzbekistan found only by Takhta-Karacha Pass – 6 on 21/5 including the rare white-throated morph 'vittata', and in higher densities in hilly regions of Kazakhstan.

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

(1) 2 below Takhta-Karacha Pass 21/5.

**Dippers Cinclidae****Brown Dipper***Cinclus pallasii tenuirostris*

(1) Found breeding and seen very well along several mountain streams in Ile-Alatau NP 28-30/5.

**Old World Sparrows Passeridae****Saxaul Sparrow***Passer ammodendri*

(1) One of the best birds of the trip, a central Asian specialty, and occupied nest with two adults was found in 2 Turanga Forest 25/5.

**House Sparrow***Passer domesticus*(10) Common and ubiquitous, in urban and suburban settings. In Uzbekistan, birds belong to the form Indian House Sparrow (*P. d. indicus*). In northern Kazakhstan, birds belong to the nominate form.**Spanish Sparrow***Passer hispaniolensis transcaspicus*

(5) Seen in large flocks, especially in Uzbekistan and in Taukum Desert.

**Eurasian Tree Sparrow***Passer montanus*

(8) Seen frequently in Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan.

**Rock Sparrow***Petronia petronia*

(2) 15 Takhta-Karacha Pass 21/5 and 15 Sogety Valley 27/5.

**Accentors Prunellidae****Altai Accentor***Prunella himalayana*

(1) 2 individuals of this high-altitude speciality were seen well near Kosmos Station, Ile-Alatau NP 30/5.

**Brown Accentor***Prunella fulvescens*

(2) Several individuals found at high altitude near and in Kosmos Station, Ile-Alatau NP 29/5 and 30/5.

**Black-throated Accentor***Prunella atrogularis*

(3) Found breeding in moderate densities at mid-elevations in Ile-Alatau NP, 28-30/5.

**Wagtails, Pipits Motacillidae****Western Yellow Wagtail***Motacilla flava*(7) Birds found breeding on wetlands in Uzbekistan belonged to the black-headed form 'feldegg' or intergrades. In northern Kazakhstan, Sykes's Yellow Wagtail (*M. f. beema*) were found breeding in high densities.**Eastern Yellow Wagtail\****Motacilla tschutschensis*

(1) 1 seen briefly and heard at Karasu River 31/5.

**Citrine Wagtail***Motacilla citreola*

(8) Birds found breeding on wetlands in Uzbekistan belonged to the black-backed form 'calcarata'. In northern Kazakhstan, the grey-backed form 'citreola' was found breeding in moderate densities.

**Grey Wagtail***Motacilla cinerea cinerea*

(3) 4 migrants seen in Kyzylkum Desert 19/5, 2 Takhta-Karacha Pass 21/5 and breeding around Big Almaty Lake 28/5.

**White Wagtail***Motacilla alba*

(9) Several distinctive forms were seen. On 17/5, up in Hotel Beldersay, Himalayan White Wagtail (*M. a. alboides*) was found breeding. Masked Wagtail (*M. a. personata*) is common both in Uzbekistan and southern Kazakhstan. Several migrant Siberian Wagtail (*M. a. ocularis*) were seen en route on 17/5. In northern Kazakhstan, the local breeding form is White-faced Wagtail (*M. a. dukhunensis*).

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

(1) 1 flew over calling in Taukum Desert 25/5.

**Tawny Pipit***Anthus campestris*

(5) In Uzbekistan found breeding on hills below Takhta-Karacha Pass 21/5. In Kazakhstan found breeding in higher densities in Sogety Valley, and on steppes around Nursultan 31/5-1/6.

**Tree Pipit***Anthus trivialis trivialis*

(4) 1 migrant seen at Jeyran Ecocentre 18/5, and found breeding around Big Almaty Lake 28-30/5, and in riparian forest on the outskirts of Nursultan, by Ishim River 1/6.

**Blakiston's Water Pipit***Anthus spinoletta blakistoni*

(3) Found breeding in good densities in high altitudes in Ile-Alatau NP 28-30/5.

**Finches *Fringillidae*****White-winged Grosbeak***Mycerobas carnipes merzbacheri*

(3) Seen very well a few times in mid-elevations of Ile-Alatau NP 28-30/5.

**Hawfinch***Coccothraustes coccothraustes*

(1) 6 Hotel Beldersay 17/5.

**Asian Crimson-winged Finch***Rhodopechys sanguineus*

(1) 4 seen coming in to drink in Sogety Valley 27/5.

**Mongolian Finch***Bucanetes mongolicus*

(1) Big numbers seen coming in to drink in Sogety Valley - 110 on 27/5.

**Plain Mountain Finch***Leucosticte nemoricola altaica*

(1) 12 seen at high altitude of Ile-Alatau NP, below Kosmos Station, on 30/5.

**Common Rosefinch***Carpodacus erythrinus*

(8) Frequently seen and heard singing in Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan.

**Red-mantled Rosefinch***Carpodacus rhodochlamys*

(2) Seen very well a few times in mid-elevations of Ile-Alatau NP 28-29/5.

**European Greenfinch***Chloris chloris*

(2) 20 Hotel Beldersay 17/5 and 1 Takhta-Karacha Pass 21/5.

**Grey-headed Goldfinch***Carduelis carduelis carnipes*

(2) 2 of this distinctive taxon seen by Takhta-Karacha Pass 21/5, and 2 by Big Almaty Lake 28/5.

**Desert Finch***Rhodospiza obsoleta*

(2) Found breeding in Kyzylkum Desert 19/5 and 20/5.

**Twite***Linaria flavirostris*

(1) 4 Zhumai Lakes 31/5.

**Common Linnet***Linaria cannabina*

(2) 1 Takhta-Karacha Pass 21/5 and many birds coming in to drink in Sogety Valley 27/5.



**Red-fronted Serin***Serinus pusillus*

(3) Seen in good numbers in Ile-Altai NP, 28-30/5.

**Eurasian Siskin***Spinus spinus*

(3) 2 Sogety Valley 27/5, 12 Ile-Alatau NP 28/5 and 2 Ile-Alatau NP 29/5.

**Old World Buntings *Emberizidae*****Corn Bunting\****Emberiza calandra buturlini*

(1) 2 Takhta-Karacha Pass 21/5.

**Pine Bunting***Emberiza leucocephalos leucocephalos*

(1) 1 male seen very well on the outskirts of Nursultan 31/5.

**Rock Bunting***Emberiza cia*

(3) Found breeding in Hotel Beldersay 17/5, and on hills of Sogety Valley 25/5 and 26/5.

**Meadow Bunting***Emberiza cioides tarbagataica*

(2) 1 male found singing below Temirliq Pass 27/5 and 1 by Big Almaty Lake 28/5.

**White-capped Bunting***Emberiza stewarti*

(3) This beautiful Central-Asian speciality was seen at several sites: 2 Hotel Beldersay 17/5, 2 Takhta-Karacha Pass 21/5 and 4 Kokpek 26/5.

**Grey-necked Bunting***Emberiza buchanani neobscura*

(1) Many birds were seen very well, breeding on hills above Sogety Valley and coming in to drink, 27/5.

**Red-headed Bunting***Emberiza bruniceps*

(4) 12 Takhta-Karacha Pass 21/5 and very common in Taukum Desert 24-26/5.

**Common Reed Bunting***Emberiza schoeniclus*

(3) Seen on several wetlands around Nursultan 31/5-1/6.

## Mammals (18 in total: 17 seen well by entire group)

**Status codes:** E = Endemic, NE = Near-endemic, I = Introduced

**IUCN codes:** CR = Critically endangered, EN = Endangered, VU = Vulnerable, EW = Extinct in the Wild, NT = Near Threatened, DD = Data Deficient

### Rabbits, Hares *Leporidae*

**European Hare** *Lepus europaeus*

(1) 2 Zhumai Lakes 31/5.

**Tolai Hare** *Lepus tolai*

(2) 3 Jeyran Ecocentre 18/5 and 3 Jeyran Ecocentre 20/5.

### Pikas *Ochotonidae*

**Turkestan Red Pika** *Ochotona rutila*

(1) 1 Ile-Alatau NP 30/5.

### Nutria *Myocastoridae*

**Coypu (I)** *Myocastor coypus*

(1) 2 Topar 25/5.

### Jerboas, Birch Mice, Jumping Mice *Dipodidae*

**Great Jerboa\*** *Allactaga major*

(1) 1 Kanshengel Desert Camp 26/5.

### True Mice and Rats, Gerbils, Spiny Mice, Crested Rat *Muridae*

**Great Gerbil** *Rhombomys opimus*

(1) 1 Jeyran Ecocentre 20/5.

### Squirrels *Sciuridae*

**Bobak Marmot** *Marmota bobak*

(1) Common on steppes around Nursultan, 31/5-1/6.

**Long-tailed Marmot** *Marmota caudata*

(3) Found in Ile-Altai NP, 28-30/5..

**Eurasian Red Squirrel** *Sciurus vulgaris*

(1) 1 Nursultan City 30/5.

**Yellow Ground Squirrel** *Spermophilus fulvus*

(1) Common in the outskirts of Bukhara, 18-19/5.

### Wolves, Coyote, Foxes, Jackals *Canidae*

**Red Fox** *Vulpes vulpes*

(3) 1 Bugly 27/5, 1 Big Almaty Lake 28/5 and 1 Zhumai Lakes 31/5.

### Weasels, Skunks, Otters *Mustelidae*

**Least Weasel** *Mustela nivalis*

(1) 1 Ile-Alatau NP 29/5.

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**Deer Cervidae****Bukharan Red Deer***Cervus elaphus bokharensis*

(1) 4 Zerevshan NR 22/5.

**Cattle, Antelopes, Sheep, Goats Bovidae****Siberian Ibex***Capra sibirica*

(1) 3 Big Almaty Lake 28/5.

**Goitered Gazelle (VU)***Gazella subgutturosa*

(4) Large numbers seen inside Jeyran Ecocentre 18-20/5, few seen in Taukum Desert 28-30/5.

**Saiga (CR)***Saiga tatarica tatarica*

(1) 3 (2 young and their mother) of this extremely rare antelope were seen by Zhumai Lakes 31/5.

**Horses Equidae****Asiatic Wild Ass (Onager) (NT)***Equus hemionus*

(2) Several tens seen inside Jeyran Ecocentre 18-20/5.

**Przewalski's Horse (EN)***Equus ferus przewalskii*

(2) One individual of the reintroduction program seen inside Jeyran Ecocentre 18-20/5.

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